



Then and Now . . .

War-time photos of Wallace Nelson (left), and Burman Elkins (right).

Below, left to right: Skipper Dick Baruth, Wally Nelson and Burman Elkins pose for a photograph during the recent LCT reunion in Omaha, Nebraska.



gunwale of the small boat. He was reaching for a line when the sea swell rode the small boat up under the ship. He had to be returned to the States.

Next was Saipan in the Marianas Island group to embark 1st Marine Division personnel, their water buffalo tanks, and ammo for Iwo Jima.

19 February, 1945, we were part of the D-Day invading force at Iwo Jima. We disembarked Marine personnel and their amphibious tanks while standing off the beach. We did not beach until D plus 3 days. Since no anchoring positions off Iwo were available, we would steam at night in convoy. While awaiting beaching orders we saw our first Jap action when shells from Mt. Suribachi dropped around us. There were no casualties of either the LCT or LST crews. We left the Iwo Jima area 5 days after D-Day.

From Iwo to Leyte, in the Philippines we picked up small cargo and then went to Ulithi (approximate position 10 degrees N – 160 degrees E) to load men and equipment of the 3rd Marine Div. Our LST skipper had orders along with other LST's to round the island

and beach to pick up Marine amphibious tanks directly off the beach. Our LST skipper decided he had a better idea and would take on the tanks while standing off shore and then beat the other LST's back to port for the best movie selection. His idea was to lower the bow ramp into the water and signal the Marines to come out in the surf and board via the lowered ramp. He failed to count on the tremendous ground swell that picked up the bow of the ship forcing the ramp under the bow and slamming as the wave broke. Result was neither the ramp nor bow doors would be closed, 6 feet of water on the tank deck, flooded food and munitions and broken welds on the LCT. He was forced to back down in reverse to the port for 3 miles!

We backed into the harbor and blinker signals from the port commander demanded the captain report ASAP to the port commander. Entire crew thought we would finally lose him and he'd be relieved of duty. No such luck! He came back. We spent about 3 days in dry dock getting the LST and LCT repaired. Headed north.

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