

“It was a busy time. After we pumped out the generator room the motor macs rigged slings, pulled the Hercules/generator and set it on the deck. It was really unbelievable what they were able to do. We were making landing after landing and trip after trip while all this was going on. After the engine was pulled we let the void fill up again. On the morning of the 27th we went into drydock in LSD 5. We knocked out the plug and water poured out of our generator compartment. The Commander was standing there with me, congratulating us for our work when a beer can came shooting out of the hole. He didn’t say a word and I didn’t either. When you are working around the clock in conditions like that and happen to have beer on board you don’t waste it. We got our hole patched up and miscellaneous welding done to put us in good shape.

We got out of the drydock at midnight and went to work immediately. I noted we carried ‘everything imaginable, tanks, trucks, canned milk (it stunk), food, beer, army troops, ammunition, gasoline and everything else.’

While we were making trips to the beach and transports the motor macs rebuilt the Hercules engine/generator, dropped it back into the generator compartment and got it running again. A remarkable job. It was still running when I left the ship a year later. The army Ducks could not handle the surf and we watched several swamp. Other LCTs rescued some of the men. We had air raids the 28th and 29th. Everyone in the harbor was firing though we couldn’t see anything. One bomber was shot down about midnight of the 30th. It burned all the way down.

I note we had trouble staying on the beach without bulldozers or cats to hold us on. Then when the tide started going out the bulldozers shoved on our ramp



while we took in on our anchor and backed all engines at 1400 to get off. I note that three of us went to Amsterdam island where I swapped a soldier a case of the beer which we had stolen from the army for a gear box, bearings, pulleys etc. to build a washing machine. LCT’s didn’t rate a washing machine and we needed one. I find this note, “Washed sheets, mattress covers, shirts, pants, etc. Hard work, scrubbing on the chow table with brush and laundry soap.” Eventually we took a 55 gallon drum and used the parts we had scrounged, together with an electric drill for power, and came up with a washing machine. It worked though I ruined a good pair of khakis trying it out.

We did not eat well in New Guinea. Wendell Dew, our cook, was great if he had anything to cook but generally he didn’t. We would swap what we had to the army for K rations and were glad to get them. The low point was the morning when we were reduced to canned chili con carne and beer for breakfast. It wasn’t always that bad. In one

go to page 14 . . .

Top Photo:
Officers and crew of LCT-685 in Subic Bay, Philippines, August of 1945. John Dizer is at far right.

Photo at Right:
The LCT-685 at Subic Bay in the summer of 1945. Liberty Ship in background.

