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2005

### Oral History Interview: F. E. Elliott

F. E. Elliott

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# Veteran's Release Form

**TO BE COMPLETED BY VETERAN OR CIVILIAN**

(In cases of deceased veterans, to be completed by the donor of the material.)

I, FE Elliott, am a participant in the Veterans History Project (hereinafter "VHP"). I understand that the purpose of the VHP is to collect audio- and video-taped oral histories of America's war veterans and of those who served in support of them as well as selected related documentary materials (such as photographs and manuscripts) that may be deposited in the permanent collections of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. The deposited documentary materials will serve as a record of American veterans' wartime experiences; and may be used for scholarly and educational purposes. I understand that the American Folklife Center plans to retain the product of my participation as part of its permanent collection and that the materials may be used for exhibition, publication, presentation on the World Wide Web and successor technologies, and for promotion of the Library of Congress and its activities in any medium.

I hereby grant to the Library of Congress ownership of the physical property delivered to the Library and the right to use the property that is the product of my participation (for example, my interview, performance, photographs, and written materials) as stated above. By giving permission, I understand that I do not give up any copyright or performance rights that I may hold.

I also grant to the Library of Congress my absolute and irrevocable consent for any photograph(s) provided by me or taken of me in the course of my participation in the VHP to be used, published, and copied by the Library of Congress and its assignees in any medium.

I agree that the Library may use my name, video or photographic image or likeness, statements, performance, and voice reproduction, or other sound effects without further approval on my part.

I release the Library of Congress, and its assignees and designees, from any and all claims and demands arising out of or in connection with the use of such recordings, documents, and artifacts, including but not limited to, any claims for defamation, invasion of privacy, or right of publicity.

**ACCEPTED AND AGREED**

Signature FE Elliott Date 4/24/05

Printed Name FE Elliott

Address 1434 15<sup>th</sup> St

City Huntington State WV ZIP 25701

Telephone ( 304 ) - 697-6506

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Narrative Journalism Piece, "I'd Rather Ride Than Walk"

Oral Story, "Life on Board a Fighting Amphib" -

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Picture of F E Elliott and Susan Harvey

Harvey

670

F7 north, TX

nide than walk

Not bad - marching  
wash clothes

1. Were you drafted or did you  
enlist?

2. Where were you living at the  
time?

3. Why did you join?

4. Why did you pick the  
service branch you joined?

5. Do you recall your first days in  
service?

~~6. What did it feel like?~~

7. Tell me about your boot camp/  
training experience(s).

~~8. Do you remember your instructors?~~

~~9. How did you get through it?~~

March 5, 2005  
March 24, 2005

Feb. 22, 2005  
The Elliott household

Mar. 23, 1921

1434 15th St. Htgn, WV 25701  
~~Bert Elliott~~  
Susan H. - Int - Marshall U.

March 26

Make introductory announcement:

- date & place
- Name of interviewee
- birthdate & current address
- names of attending the interview (inc interviewer) & institutional affiliation or relationship to interviewee

WWII

Navy

RM2C

South Pacific

1. What war did you serve in?

2. What branch of service?

3. What was your rank?

4. Where did you serve?

5. ~~Where exactly did you go?~~

6. Do you remember anything & what it was like?

Dining room table

- Fruit in center

Green shirt

- Medical bracelet

- photo of ship - large  
wall hanging

- 2 books

- coffee

Discharge paper

San Diego

Beans - breakfast

**TYPHOON**

Look at map

tungod?  
Ann Margaret?

say thank you  
-card

5 letter codes

SALV?

Signal flags

need = bathroom

\$20 - shower  
- Ship service fund  
- records, players,  
punching bag, crimmage  
boards dominos, cards  
- Beach party

Ranks?

3-5-05

Tell me about...

First days in service

Boot camp training

Typhoon

What's a tungoat

Don't remember

Typhoon

- didn't get sick

- 12 hours

Duty - 4 on, 4 off

one death - gunner

↓ wife  
Roger Dean (Virginia) Neighbors

- died last week

- lots of money



March 5, 2005  
F. G. Elliott  
The Elliott Household

Mar. 25, 1921 - 13 day  
1434 15th St High, WV 2570  
Swan H. int - MU

March 24, 2005

I T M

4 hrs on

0 hrs off

CRibotage?

Sea Stories

Sharks

Praying - good luck

No church/chaplain

Leave

March 26, 2005

F011H system

↓

3 months

↓

whole ship

one of largest  
Became & still is LaGuardia Martin  
Foreman at

General Dynamic  
Aircraft Ass. - Held job  
retire nothing  
Find new job

AT&T - Texas

Engineer

non healthcare,  
hospitalization, citizenship  
& raises in retirement

Smartest move  
ever made

Southwestern Bell

Retire 7-14-79

33 yrs 4 mth 26 days

tall dude  
Felix Muldoon

Bill Mason

Captain - morale

Maurice Jensen

Wife skies in Switzerland

VFA - Veterans of Foreign  
War Ass.

34 came back  
131 ships →

American Legion  
National Ass. of LCS's

Huntington

Lee Ann

Huntington after retirement



When Sarah diagnosed



13 yrs now 21

Chiming of Hour  
Memorial Service  
each year

- lost men on LCS
  - different location
  - DC this year
- see new WWI  
memorial

plant tree at  
tomb of unknown  
soldier

conventions - rent bus

125,302

2 millions every year  
Been to all but 4 or 5

1st Jacksonville, FL

Taught:

① Have more  
respect for more  
people  
- different  
nationalities

Cato-only Black  
on all BILCS's

↑  
mess boy

cajune

② Understanding  
rules, regulations,  
laws

③ Discipline

Number  
Letters

# Interviewer's Release Form

**TO BE COMPLETED BY INTERVIEWERS, RECORDING OPERATORS, AND PHOTOGRAPHERS**

I, Susan Harvey, am a participant in the Veterans History Project (hereinafter "VHP"). I understand that the purpose of the VHP is to collect audio- and video-recorded oral histories of America's war veterans and of those who served in support of them as well as selected related documentary materials such as photographs and manuscripts that may be deposited in the permanent collections of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. The deposited documentary materials will serve as a record of American veterans' wartime experiences; and may be used for scholarly and educational purposes. I understand that the American Folklife Center plans to retain the product of my participation as part of its permanent collection and that the materials may be used for exhibition, publication, presentation on the World Wide Web and successor technologies, and for promotion of the Library of Congress and its activities in any medium.

I hereby grant to the Library of Congress ownership of the physical property delivered to the Library and the right to use the property that is the product of my participation (for example, my interview, performance, photographs, and written materials) as stated above. By giving permission, I understand that I do not give up any copyright or performance rights that I may hold.

I also grant to the Library of Congress my absolute and irrevocable consent for any photograph(s) provided by me or taken of me in the course of my participation in the VHP to be used, published, and copied by the Library of Congress and its assignees in any medium.

I agree that the Library may use my name, video or photographic image or likeness, statements, performance, and voice reproduction, or other sound effects without further approval on my part.

I release the Library of Congress, and its assignees and designees, from any and all claims and demands arising out of or in connection with the use of such recordings, documents, and artifacts, including but not limited to, any claims for defamation, invasion of privacy, or right of publicity.

**ACCEPTED AND AGREED**

Signature Susan E. Harvey Date 5/1/05

Printed Name Susan E. Harvey

Signature of Parent or Guardian (if interviewer is a minor) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Address 331 Tenth Avenue

City Huntington State WV ZIP 25701

Telephone (304) - 697-9561

Relationship to veteran/civilian friend

# Manuscript Data Sheet

Please complete this form when donating letters, diaries, and other printed and handwritten manuscripts to the Veterans History Project. It is to be used in conjunction with the required Checklist, Biographical Data Form, and Veteran's Release Form.

1. Name and address of collector.

Name of Collector/Interviewer Susan Harvey  
Address 331 Tenth Avenue  
City Huntington State WV ZIP 25701  
Telephone (304) - 697 - 9561 Email sooie1331@adelphia.net

2. Full name and life dates (birth-death) of the person about whom the manuscripts relate. In most instances, this person is the veteran or civilian whose name appears on the Biographical Data Form.

F. E. Elliott, born 3/25/21 and not deceased

3. Types and dates of manuscripts submitted, for example:

Diary, November 20, 1942-February 17, 1944; Service records, 1951-1953; Letters, 1969-1972; Commendations, 1991; Unpublished memoir, 2001; etc.

Unpublished memoir, 2002

4. Number of items: 1 Is this an exact  or estimated  figure?

5. If these items are copies of originals, describe how they were reproduced. Are they transcripts, photocopies, or photographic prints? Identify when the copies were made, and give the name and address of the person or group who holds the originals. Please note that the Veterans History Project encourages you to donate the originals to the Library of Congress or another trusted institution for long-term preservation and for access by researchers. (Continued on back.)



Form(s) of reproduction: photocopies

Date(s) reproduced: February 21, 2005

Location of originals: EE Elliott 1434 15th Street  
Huntington, WV 25701

6. Occupation or type of activity of the principal person represented in the manuscripts, including significant events and dates in his or her career and the place of residence or location of the activity described. If this information is already recorded in the Biographical Data Form, there is no need to repeat it here.

Recorded in Biographical Data Form

7. Describe the scope and content of the manuscripts by addressing the following:

Please identify by name the writers and recipients of the letters and other documents. What is their relationship to the veteran or civilian whose name appears on the Biographical Data Form?

FE Elliott - he is the veteran

What historical time period and theaters of war are covered?

WWII Pacific Theater

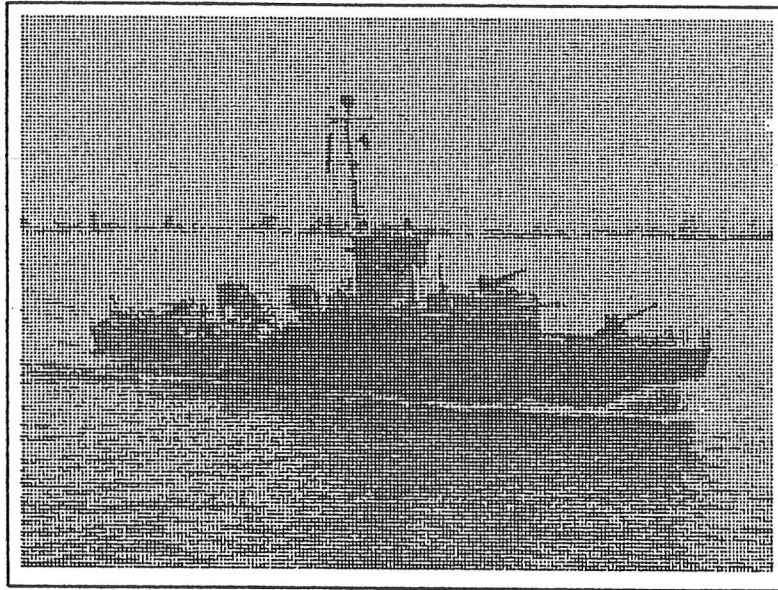
What are the most interesting/important topics and events described in these documents?

The rescue of the USS Braine

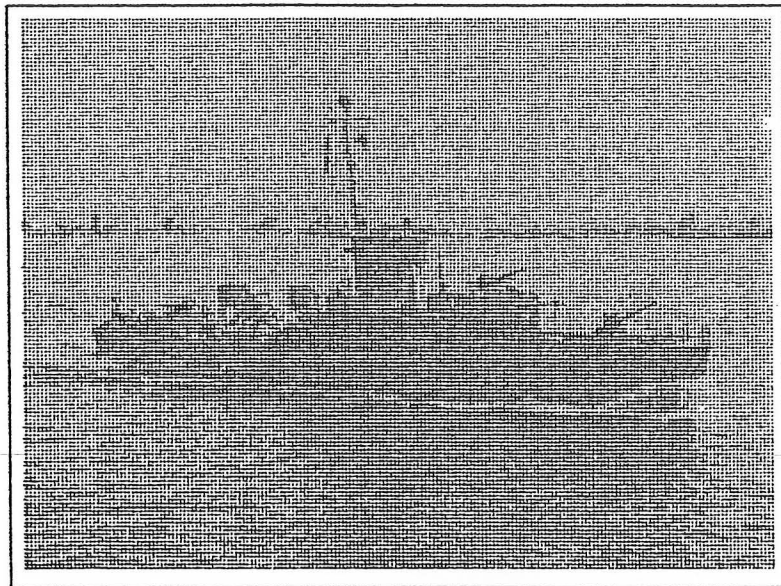
The rescue of the USS William D Porter

8. Have any of these materials been published or have copies of them been donated elsewhere? If so, please provide full citation of the publication or the location of the copies.

NO



U.S.S. LCS (L)(3) 86  
"THE Mighty Midget"



U.S.S. LCS (L)(3) 86  
"THE Mighty Midget"

MY LIFE ON THE LCS (L)(3) 86  
WORLD WAR 11

FOREWARD

"Any man who may be asked in this century, what he did to make his life worthwhile, can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction, "I served on an LCS(L) in the United States Navy."

President JOHN F. KENNEDY  
Extract from a speech given  
at the UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY  
AUGUST 1 1963

## PREFACE

My time on the LCS(L)(3) 86, was during the world war years of 1944 thru 1946. My ship was a small one. It was only 158' long and 23' abeam, with a crew of 65 enlisted men and 6 officers.

The officers and crew of the ship were a unique bunch of guys. We came from all walks of life, from many different states. During the months we were together, we endured many adversities. As a result of this, we developed close working relationships, and an appreciation for each other. These feelings have probably never occurred in such depth to any of us since the days of the "86".

Our ship received the Navy's highest award, the Navy Unit CITATION.

The officers and men distinguished themselves in battle as well as in peace time on four occasions; (1) the rescue and damage control given to the U.S.S. BRAINE (DD 630) when it was hit by two kamikaze suicide planes at Okinawa on 27 May 1945, that resulted in 67 being killed and 103 wounded; (2) The rescue and damage control given to the U.S.S. WILLIAM D. PORTER (DD 579) at Okinawa on 10 June 1945, when it too was hit by a kamikaze plane and eventually sunk without a loss of a single life. (3) the rescue and damage control given to the LCS(L)(3) 122, when it was hit by a kamikaze plane at Okinawa on 11 June 1945, which caused the death of 5 enlisted men and 1 officer as well as 14 wounded, and (4) the rescue and damage control given to a Japanese tug and barge, when their load of ammunition exploded, killing 14 Japanese, and injuring 9 others on 4 October 1945 in Tokyo Bay, Japan.

Having participated in these actions, the officers and men of the U.S.S. LCS (L)(3) 86 played a significant role in the making of U.S. NAVY HISTORY.

MY DISCHARGE REFLECTS THE FOLLOWING AWARDS:

WORLD WAR 11 VICTORY MEDAL  
AMERICAN CAMPAIGN MEDAL  
ASIATIC PACIFIC MEDAL  
PHILIPPINE LIBERATION MEDAL  
NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION RIBBON

ITINERARY  
OF THE  
U.S.S. LCS (L) (3) 86

14 December 1944	U.S.S. LCS (L) (3) 86 commissioned at Commercial IRON Works, Portland, Oregon.
2 January 1945	Departed Portland, Oregon
10 January 1945	Arrived San Diego, California
11 February 1945	Departed San Diego, California
20 february 1945	Arrived Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
1 March 1945	Departed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
6 March 1945	Arrived Johnson Island
7 March 1945	Departed Johnson Island
18 March 1945	Arrived Majuro, Marshall Islands
20 March 1945	Departed Majuro, Marshall Islands
25 March 1945	Arrived Eniwetok, Marshall Islands
30 March 1945	Departed Eniwetok, Marshall Islands
6 April 1945	Arrived Guam, Marshall Islands
9 April 1945	Departed Guam, Marshall Islands
10 April 1945	Arrived Saipan, Marshall Islands
12 April 1945	Departed Saipan, Marshall Islands
17 April 1945	Arrived Okinawa
10 July 1945	Departed Okinawa
14 July 1945	Arrived Tacloban, Leyte Gulf, Philippine Islands
3 September 1945	Departed Tacloban, Leyte Gulf, Philippine Islands

11 September 1945	Arrived Tokosuka Naval Base, Tokyo Bay, Yokosuka, Japan
3 December 1945	Daparted Yokosuka Naval Base. Tokyo Bay, Yokosuka, Japan
9 December 1945	Arrived Saipan, Mariana Island
16 December 1945	Departed Saipan, Mariana Islands
30 December 1945	Arrived Pearl Harbor , Hawaii
4 January 1946	Departed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
17 January 1946	Arrived Seattle, Washington
23 January 1946	Departed Seattle, Washington
24 January 1946	Arrived Astoria, Oregon
5 February 1946	Departed Astoria, Oregon
5 February 1946	Arrived Portland, Oregon
26 March 1946	Departed Portland, Oregon
26 March 1946	Arrived Astoria, Oregon
26 April 1946	Decommissioning of the U.S.S. LCS(L)(3) 86 at Astoria, Oregon

The LCS (L) (3) 86 along with the 54,77, and the 91 were acquired by the Republic of Korea in 1945. The dispositon of these ships are not known at the present time.



NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION

In the name of the President of the United States, the  
Secretary of the Navy presents the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION to;

THE UNITED STATES SHIP LCS( L)(3) 86

for services as set forth in the following:

CITATION

For heroism and extraordinary achievements as a ship, when on the morning of 27 May 1945, the morning of 10 June 1945 and the evening of 11 June 1945, while serving on radar Picket duty in the vicinity of OKINAWA SHIMA, NANSEI SHOTO, she took part in three enemy air attacks and shot down two (2) planes and assisted in shooting down (1) other. During these actions the USS BRAINE, the USS PORTER, and the USS LCS(L)(3) 86 were hit and damaged by enemy suicide planes. By their initiative, energy, and diligent devotion to duty, the members of this small ship contributed materially in saving two (2) of the three (3) damaged vessels. The efficient salvage work and the picking up of numerous survivors by the USS LCS(L)(3) 86 is deserving of the highest traditions of the Naval Service.

For the President,

JAMES FORRESTAL  
Secretary of the Navy

AWARD OF APPRECIATION  
FROM CREW OF THE  
U.S.S. BRAINE (DD630)

Captain Howard Newton was invited by the officers and crew of the U.S.S. BRAINE (DD 630) to attend their reunion at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on October 19, 1991.

The purpose of the invitation was to give recognition to the crew of the U.S.S. LCS (L)(3) 86 for their excellent rescue and damage control assistance given to the BRAINE 27 May 1945 at Okinawa, Japan.

The present is a miniature ships bell attached to an anchor on which is inscribed "U.S.S. LCS (L)(3) 86." An inscription hangs below the anchor. This gift was accepted on behalf of the U.S.S. LCS (L)(3) 86 crew by our commanding Officer now Commander Howard Newton Houston, USNR(RET).

The inscription reads;

This ship's bell was presented to the crew of the U.S.S. LCS 86 by the crew of the U.S.S. BRAINE (DD 630) in appreciation for the excellent rescue and damage control assistance given to the BRAINE on 27 May 1945 at Okinawa when two Japanese Kamikaze suicide planes struck the destroyer.

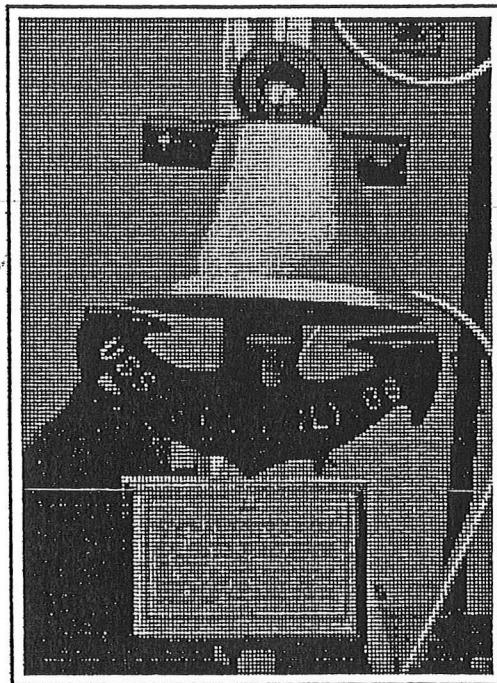
This tribute was accepted on behalf of the crew, by the commanding officer of that ship, Commander at that time Lieutenant Howard N. Houston USNR(Ret) during the Braine's crew reunion at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on the 19th of October 1991.

The actions taken by the officers and crew on behalf of the BRAINE and the other events of this fateful day are described in the "Report of Action, 27 May 1945," "Report of Action by U.S.S. BRAINE (DD630), 27 May 1945,"

The official casualty count for the BRAINE was 67 killed and 103 wounded. She suffered the heaviest casualties of any destroyer that wasn't sunk during World War II.

The BRAINE was subject to the same fate as the LCS 86 after World War II. The Braine was acquired by Argentina while the LCS 86 went to Korea. What a fate for two of the most heroic and meritorious U.S. navy ships during World War II.

TO: THE U.S.S.LCS (L)(3) 86



FROM: THE OFFICERS AND CREW  
U.S.S. BRAINE (DD630)

## THE BATTLE OF THE SEAS

### The Little Ships

The Navy last week totted up its losses off Okinawa: 4,907 men missing, 4,824 wounded—nearly 20% of its total casualties in all oceans for the entire war. Okinawa was also the war's costliest operation for the ships, according to the Navy's own figures; 33 ships sunk, more than 50 damaged.

One of the big reasons for this damage was finally passed by censors; the gallant little ships (destroyers, destroyer escorts, LCSs) which formed the "picket line" 25 to 50 miles above the main anchorage had been severely mauled. By staying out front, the little ships with thin hulls had been able to warn the big transports and gunnery ships of the approaching Jap planes. But they became the first Okinawa targets in the sights of the Jap suicide planes, and they took the greatest concentrated damage, plus more than 1,000 casualties.

But the little ships stuck to their picket line, and the men stuck to their guns. They set a world's antiaircraft record by shooting down 490 planes during the 82 day battle. They went to "general quarters" 150 times. The picket linemen's spirit was set down for history in a message sent by one little ship in April; "Have been hit by two suicide planes; shot down the third, am taking damaged destroyer in tow."

"Battle of the seas"  
Time Magazine, July 9, 1945

## RYUKU GLORY WON BY THE LITTLE WARSHIPS

Picket Line Guarding Fleet Off Okinawa Balked Enemy Air Force in Blazing War.

ABOARD A FLAGSHIP. in the East China Sea off Okinawa, June 26 (delayed) the Navy threw a picket line across "Bogey Highway" to keep Japanese ship breakers out of the Okinawa transport area.

These picket ships none larger than destroyers fought and won the longest and hardest battle in the history of naval warfare. They suffered the greatest losses in men and ships ever sustained by the United States Navy, but they fulfilled their mission of keeping the bulk of enemy aircraft out of the transport area, where vital supplies for the soldiers and marines were being unloaded. It is no exaggeration to say that these little ships, which seldom have the chances for glory given to the aircraft carriers and the battle ships, performed a major role in our great victory on Okinawa.

### AN EPIC IN NAVAL WARFARE

This thrilling story, which can now be told for the first time now that the Okinawan campaign is won, constitutes an epic that will live forever in the annals of the Navy. It is a story of little ships and brave men whose extra ordinary gunnery took care of the best the Japanese air force could throw at our Okinawan operation. They were at "General Quarters" more than 150 times during the eighty-two days of the land fighting on Okinawa. These air alerts lasted from a few minutes to several hours, and came at all hours of the night and day, as the Japanese sent over 1 to 200 aircrafts in a single attack. Only comparatively few of the enemy got through to the transport area.

Commanded by Commodore Frederick Moosbrugger, 44, of Philadelphia, himself a hero of the naval fighting off Vella La Vella in 1943, these picket ships stood guard as much as sixty miles away from the Hagushi anchorage. They were the sentinels to fight approaching Japanese planes, surface craft or submarines.

The shattered Japanese fleet never got near our main anchorage, but the pickets did have to cope with scores of small suicide boats carrying powerful explosive charges, which naval men called "skunks." A few submarines were encountered and depth charges dropped. Whether any submarines were sunk has not been announced.

But it was the enemy aircraft, which fighting men men call "bogey", that made this the toughest duty naval men have had to face in this war.

#### MOVE BACK AND FORTH

To form the picket line, the Navy stationed destroyers, destroyer escorts, and LCS(L) craft in great arcs before the approaches to the Hagushi anchorages. Those pickets move back and forth through out the day and night.

The enemy chose to fight the main battle along the picket line.

It in itself to the men who manned this outer line to report that the statistics on ships sunk or damaged in the battle of Okinawa reflect the splendid manner in which they did their job of keeping the enemy away from the crowded transport area that once sheltered more than 1000 ships.

One out of every three ships that served on the outer picket line was sunk or damaged in this fierce, never ending vendetta with the "Kamikaze Kids." Of the ships engaged at various times in this duty, nine were sunk and twenty-one damaged. Our casualties among these ships exceeded 1,000.

But the Japanese could not win. Guns of the ships on the outer line accounted for 490 enemy aircraft.

Between the outer line and the transport area there was another stream of light naval units, which took on the Japanese planes that managed to get by the first group of pickets. During the campaign we employed several hundred ships in this work, of which three were sunk and more than a score damaged. It was the inner screen that handled most of the suicide boats.

It was the fine work of these ships, and especially their superb gunnery, that demonstrated conclusively that the Kamikaze weapon will never win the war.

It cannot be denied that this form of attack is damaging. But it could not destroy many of the ships it hit, and it could not diminish the fighting spirit of the brave officers and the men who sailed with them.

Ryuku Glory Won by Little Warships," The new York Times, July 9, 1945

## A LITTLE ABOUT MYSELF

When I was 23 years old, I enlisted in the United States Navy at Dallas Texas, was immediately sent to San Diego naval base. There I went through six weeks of "Boot Training" and was then sent to radio school to become a Radio Man. The school lasted ten weeks.

When school was out, I was assigned to the LCS (L)(3) 86 as a radio striker ( a sailor trying to become a radio man). While being a seaman 2/c I stood radio watches as did every one else. May 1, 1945 I was promoted to seaman 1/c. My promotions continued to radio man 3/c and then to radio man 2/c. At this rating I was made second in command of the "Radio Shack".

In the radio shack, were the Radios, Sonars, Depth finders, Code breaking machines, plus it was where the Ships Log was kept, and where the quarter master filled his reports.

My "Battle Station was of course in the radio shack maning a radio. When we were hit by a Kamikaze plane, it was at the porthole right by my desk. The plane hit the deck there and did little damage as our gunners had hit it and it was in flames, and already coming apart.

We went on the "picket line" soon after arriving at Okinawa in April 1945.

On 27 May, 1945 the U.S.S BRAINE (DD 630) was hit by Kamikaze planes. She was seriously damaged and had a loss of 67 killed and 103 wounded. We assisted in keeping her afloat, putting out fires, and later picking up men from the water.

10 June 1945 the U.S.S. WILLIAM D. PORTER (DD 579) was hit by suicide planes. We pulled along side to assist any way we could. Our fire control people fought fires. The LCS (L)(3) 122 was also hit. We picked up 23 survivors from the water and removed the others from the 122. We watched the Porter sink, it's bow sticking out of the water. This was a hair raising experience one could never forget.

4 October 1945 a Japanese tug and barge blew up in Tokyo bay killing 14 Japanese and injuring 9 others. It was carrying ammunition. We rescued the crew and gave damage control, putting out the fire.

Homeward bound we sighted an Australian sailing vessel. It was a four master with full sails. We circled the ship while talking by radio. It is their naval training vessel. Those sailors were climbing all over those sails and yard arms. We talked about this event until we arrived back at Pearl Harbor.

Seeing the skyline of Seattle Washington and the coast of the good old USA, was the most welcome sight one could ever wish for.



WHERE ARE WE NOW  
(SOME 55 YEARS LATER)

F E ELLIOTT (March 25, 1921) and BETTY ELLIOTT (Sept. 2, 1921)  
We are well and living a good life with 61 years of married  
life behind us. I am a retired Engineer from Southwestern  
Bell Telephone Company, Fort Worth, Texas (now SBC Corporation)  
Betty is a home maker, the best wife and mother in the world.  
We live in Huntington, West Virginia.

DONNA ANN (August 20, 1942) our oldest daughter is married to  
CARLTON REVERE THOMAS III and he is a Supervisor with American  
Air Lines at the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, Fort  
Worth, Texas. Donna is a home maker. They live in Fort  
Worth, Texas.

LEANNE (JULY 24, 1945) our youngest daughter is married to  
MICHAEL TAYLOR and he is in the Property Management with his  
uncle. Leanne is the Activities Director at the Mariner  
Nursing Homes Inc. They live in Huntington, West Virginia.

AMY ANN PERRY (December 2, 1970) our oldest grand daughter is  
married to BRIAN LEEDY and he is a computer Image Designer  
with Gala Industries in Hurricane, West Virginia. Amy is the  
Secretary to the president of Valley Health Services in  
Huntington, West Virginia. They live in Milton, West Virginia.

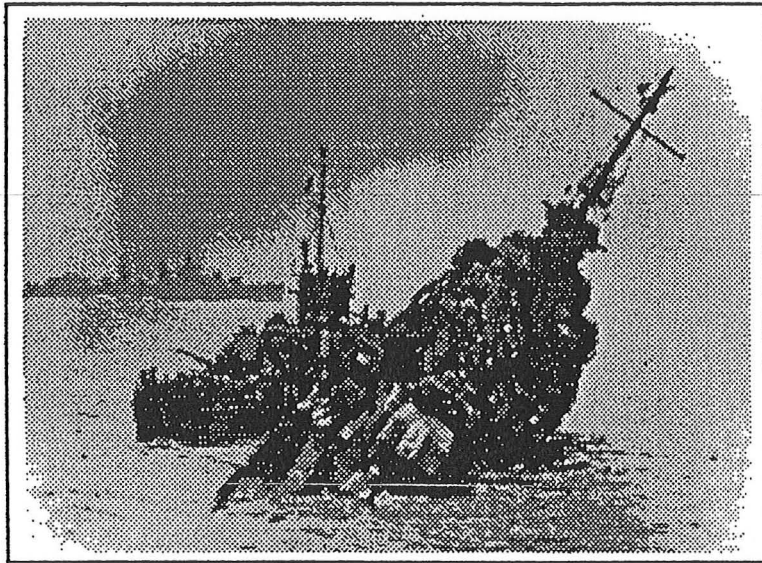
SARAH LEE PERRY (JANUARY 24, 1974) Our youngest grand daughter  
is married to MARVIN FLEET and he works for a Baltimore  
Food Processing Company. Sarah is a second grade school  
teacher at the Westside Elementary School in Baltimore.  
They live in Baltimore, Maryland.

Written August 24, 2001

F E ELLIOTT

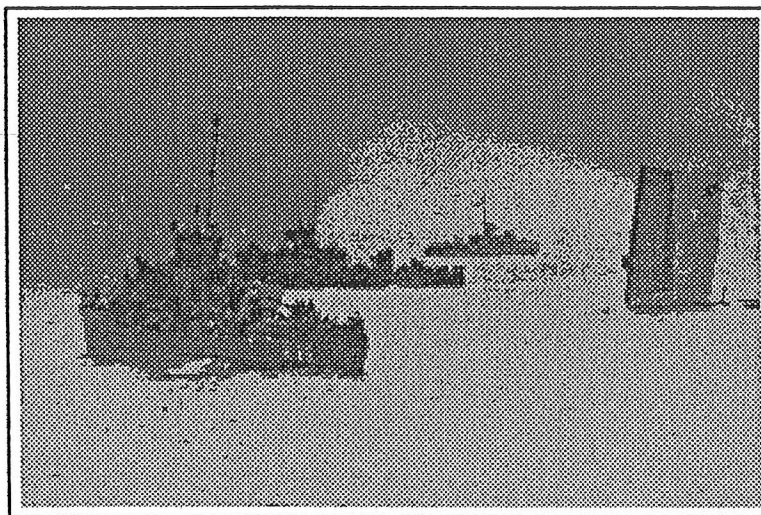
YEAR 2002 UP DATE:

CAITLIN BROOKE LEEDY (JANUARY 25, 2002) Our first great  
grand daughter. she is the first child of Amy and Brian  
LEEDY.



U.S.S. LCS (L)(3) 86 pulling away  
from the U.S.S. PORTER (DD 579)  
with survivors and casualties.

WILLIAM D. PORTER (DD 579)  
SINKS AT OKINAWA



The U.S.S. WILLIAM D. PORTER ((DD 579)  
with the LCS (L) (3) standing by after  
putting out the fire, and picking up  
nearly all of the survivors.



FOUR OS MY MEDALS

Printed in the Huntington Herald Dispatch June 19, 2002

**In 1945**

The World War II battle for Okinawa officially ended; 12,520 Americans and 110,000 Japanese were killed in the 81-day campaign.

THE WAR HAS COME AND GONE, BUT IT IS NOT  
FORGOTTEN.

Susan Harvey

Dr. Winton and Professor Sias

Honors 396

1 May 2, 2005

Basis for Oral  
Presentation

### Life on Board a Fighting Amphib

When F E Elliott enlisted in the Navy, he broke a big family tradition. You see, his father was Army. So, then why did he join the Navy instead? He decided he would rather ride than walk. But when he enlisted, the recruitment officers didn't believe F E was his real name. They didn't want to let him sign. He finally convinced them that F E truly was his name. And then, the real adventure began. He left his wife, Betty, who was pregnant at the time, and his daughter, Donna, behind to defend his beloved country.

He arrived at 9:00 a.m. to the U.S. Navy Recruiting Station in San Diego, California just in time to eat a breakfast of beans in the Mess Hall. F E was shocked at the thought of beans for breakfast, but in the end, bean breakfasts turned out to be one of the best breakfasts on board ship. Boot camp was not bad for F E. The thing that was bad for him was washing his own clothes. The first time he tried to hang his clothes on the 60 foot high mast, he untied the line to let it down. Unfortunately, the clothes weighed more than he did. He went up the pole, holding the line, and the clothes all fell to the ground. He had to wash everyone else's clothes that had been on the ground and then hang them all back up again—not a fun experience.

On January 2, 1945, the U.S.S. LCS (L) (3) 86 (Landing Craft Support, Large), the naval ship F E sailed on throughout WWII, departed from Portland, Oregon. It was only 158 feet long and 23 feet across, yet it housed a crew of 65 enlisted men and 6 officers! F E's rank on board was Radioman 2<sup>nd</sup> Class. He spent his time communicating with other ships.

Well, F E was sick all the way to Honolulu. The Captain sent him to the hospital. As soon as he got off the ship and into the jeep, he felt alright. He went on the hospital, and then they sent him back to the ship. But, he was never sick another day after that. Even when his ship hit a typhoon, the only two people on board who weren't sick were F E and the executive officer.

At Johnson Island, F E and the others on his ship were in for an experience they would never forget. He went to the island with the work crew to get some coconuts. He spent an hour trying to open up one coconut, when this huge, bear-like native took a machete and in one quick motion, chopped the tree down. He then took a coconut, banged on it three times, and it just fell out of its shell. To repay him, F E gave him a canned ham. The native did not like the ham so much. He opened it with his knife, smelled it, and threw it to the ground. F E ended up giving him a bunch of sack covers, the mats the crew slept on.

The next morning when F E awoke, he felt as though the ship was tilted to one side. When he went up on deck, the whole crew was on the port side, looking at the beach. F E made his way to the side of the ship, and what he saw made him laugh. The native had given the sack covers to all of the girls, who were wearing them as clothing. The girls had cut out a hole for their head, two holes for their arms, and two holes for their breasts.

Now before F E left for the vast Pacific Ocean, he sat down with his wife, Betty, and a map of the islands in the Pacific. They named each island after an acquaintance from high school so she would know where he was. He could send her a letter that read, "Yesterday, I got a message from George," and she would look on her map and tell where he was. This worked pretty well for the most part, but in one very important instance, it did not.



When Betty finally had her baby, a little girl named Leanne, she could not find F E to let him know the wonderful news. She sent a message to a friend, the wife of the quartermaster of the LCS 122. The quartermaster was a good friend of F E's and had been since high school. Well, he received the message from his wife that F E now had a little, bitty girl. He flagged down F E's ship and told him the news using flags, called semaphore.

The Captain on board the LCS 86 was not very well liked. He was always doing things to shake up the crew. He would come up to F E and ask, "Are your men mad at you today?" If F E answered no, he would reply, "Then do something to make them mad," and walk off. It wasn't until later that F E understood the logic in this method. If the men were mad at an officer, someone above them in rank, they wouldn't do anything about it. Also, they wouldn't fight among each other. This method worked. There were no problems on board ship, unlike most of the others.

Every man on F E's ship was thoroughly qualified for his position. You see, when you are out there in the middle of the ocean, you have to fix what's wrong yourself. You can't just run down to the parts house. Everybody has to know their job inside and out, and everyone on the LCS 86 did. The engine mechanics, called motor machs, had to really become mechanics—if they didn't have a part that they needed, they had to make it. The same with the radio shack. F E was amazed that a group of kids with an average age of 17 could form such an efficient group.

One of the motor machs, Feliz Muldoon, was about 6'3" tall. The hatchways on the ship were short—F E himself had to stoop passing through them, and he is only 5'10". F E can still remember seeing Feliz through them, ducking down low and standing up straight, ducking and standing up.

Now, the motor machs were a problem. They made a still and kept brewing up some brew and getting drunk. No one could figure out where it was coming from. It took three months to discover their trick. One day, everyone was airing out their sleeping sacks. A little piece of copper tube was found under the sack of all of the motor machs. They would screw all the tubes together, making the still, and brew some whiskey. Then they would dismantle it, take the tubes, and put them under their sacks.

Trying to take a simple shower on the LCS 86 could be a problem. The ship processed a very small amount of water, barely giving them enough to drink. So that meant no one could have a shower every single day. And when you did get to shower, it was in salt water, not fresh water. Every man got a three minute shower because the pumps on the ship were not strong enough for anything longer.

The bathroom, called the head, was very crude. The wash basin was a trough with taps attached. There was no hot or cold water; whatever water came out was the water you got. The toilet, as well, was a trough. Planks of wood sat overtop of the trough, with little cut outs in them. There was a hole in each far end of the trough, with pipes sticking out, and the water came in one side of the ship, through the trough, and out the other side.

When F E was in Honolulu, some of the crew got drunk and stole the Admiral's jeep. Now, this is something that just isn't done. They drove it back to the ship and winched it aboard. The LCS 86 left Honolulu the next morning. About 20 miles out, F E received a message on the radio, "Where's my jeep?"

F E sent a message to the Captain. He came down to the radio shack and asked, "What jeep? We don't have a jeep."

“Sir, I’ve got the Admiral’s aide over here and he says that we have his jeep,” F E replied.

“Do we really?” asked the Captain.

“No, Sir, I don’t know. You’ll have to ask some of the others,” F E said.

Off went the Captain. He discovered that the black gang, or engine machs, had stolen the Admiral’s jeep. He told them he would take care of it, but that they were in serious trouble. He told them to drop it overboard, and they did. The Captain came back to down to the radio shack, where F E was waiting.

“Tell the Admiral that we do no have his jeep on board this ship,” the Captain said.

F E radioed Admiral Halsey and told him that the LCS 86 did not have his jeep. About 55 years later, F E and Betty were having dinner with the Captain and his wife. F E recounted that infamous event, and the Captain said, “You know, I never did tell you guys that, but Halsey took \$15 out of my paycheck until I paid for that jeep.” But, you know, technically it wasn’t a lie—there was no jeep on board.

Off the coast of Leyte, F E and his ship were hit with a typhoon. Even the larger ships struggled to stay upright. The LCS 86 headed straight into the waves so that the ship would not flip over. Up the ship would go, and the top half out of the ship would completely stick out of the waves. And as soon as the wave passed, the ship would crash down, and everything not welded down broke lose. The crew struggled to secure the drums of oil rolling back and forth across the ship, wrecking everything they hit. The deck crew tied a line around their waists and then tied the other end of the line to the stancheon. Then, they would not be washed out every time water rushed across the deck. They could pull themselves back up on the line. All except of two of the men on board, F E and the executive officer, were sick as dogs. The whole ship

was a mess. Water was sloshing around inside the quarters below. In fact, it was up the conn, about 35 feet above sea level. F E didn't get wet because he was a radioman. He was inside, up in the conn, the top part of the ship. The typhoon lasted a total of twelve hours. F E was very thankful they had only one, and not more.

Waxman, the chief cook on F E's ship, was a baker. He could turn something dull into the tastiest dish. For about thirty days after picking up food from a larger ship, the whole ship would eat wonderfully. After that ran out, they ate sandwiches. And after the sandwiches ran out, sea rations began. A sea ration was a little packet of dried, condensed food, which F. E liked to dip in a cup of coffee to eat. A chocolate bar, filled with wax to keep it from melting, was always in the packet. The more you chewed it, the bigger the chocolate.

When Richard Barry's appendix burst, F E had to contact a cruiser to come pick him up and operate on him. (Richard Barry was one of F E's radiomen.) The cruiser said that they would take him, but only if the LCS 86 could bring him over to them. So they did. The 86 shot a line across to the big cruiser, who looked like a giant next to the little LCS. The cruiser ran a basket down the line, and F E and others strapped Barry in it. The basket was on a set of pulleys, and the cruiser pulled Barry up to them. As they were pulling, the ships were rocking on the waves, so as Barry went up the line and the boats rocked together and apart, he was dunked under the water repeatedly.

Once on board the ship, the surgeon performed the operation. About two hours later, the corpsman came to see him and asked him if he wanted lunch. When Barry said yes, he replied that it was two decks up and a hatch (100 yards) down to the mess hall. Barry said that he had just been operated on, but the corpsman didn't care, if Barry wanted lunch, that was where it was. When the corpsman came back to ask if Barry wanted dinner, he said nope, there's no way

I can walk there. The next morning, when asked if he wanted breakfast, Barry said that yep, he would, and asked for help up there. When Barry returned to the LCS 86, he told F E, "You guys tried to kill me!" F E thought that the way Barry was treated on that cruiser was the most horrible thing he had every heard.

About two months later, the LCS picked up a guy from the Braine, and his appendix burst. The corpsman came to F E and asked him to get in touch with a doctor because they couldn't do anything about it. F E reached a doctor on board a cruiser, but they couldn't stop to get the man because they were under fire. He told F E that they were going to have to operate on the man themselves. F E told him that they didn't know what to do, and the doctor told F E to tell the corpsman to get his kit and lay certain tools on the table. They laid the man on the mess hall table, and the corpsman and F E operated on him—F E narrating to the corpsman what the doctor had said to do—and the man lived. The scar he had was three inches wide and eight inches long, while Barry's scar was about as thin as a dime and as long as a dime.

One time, the LCS 86 picked up a Japanese soldier from a plane they shot down. They took him down the mess hall and attempted to get any information out of him. The man somehow got hold of a knife and lunged at one of F E's shipmates, ripping into him with the knife. After he did this, the crew killed him. Even after all of this, the crew gave him a burial at sea, something F E was against at the time, even though it was the "Christian" thing to do. They wrapped up the body along with lead weights and laid him on a board. Then, they put him on the side of the ship, said a small prayer over the body, and dropped him overboard.

F E's ship was also involved in the rescue of the U.S.S. Braine, a completely different situation. When she was hit, F E's ship was close by. Well, part of the control system was hit, causing the Braine to take off and go crazy, making circles and going into reverse. The LCS 86

chased after her, but the Braine was faster since it was a destroyer. But the 86 stayed with her, and most of the crew stayed on board. Finally, they caught her and tried to take her into tow until she got too far down in the water and threatened to sink the LCS. They cut the line and let her go down. They got the majority of the people off.

When the U.S.S. William D. Porter was hit by a kamikaze plane, the LCS 86 was the ship closest to the scene. They watched her get hit. They took off towards the ship, grabbing men from the water as they flew by. You see, the Navy has this rule that you cannot stop to save the life of one, if there is a ship in danger with hundreds of lives in danger. Some of the men they picked up had limbs missing from shark bites. Seeing the Porter sink with her bow sticking up in the air was one of the most awesome sights F E had ever seen. No one was lost on the Porter—every single man, dead or alive, was recovered from the sea.

The LCS 86 provided damage control to two other ships. The first was the LCS (L) (3) 122. It was hit by a kamikaze plane at Okinawa. The second was a Japanese tug and barge. Its load of ammunition exploded in Tokyo Bay, Japan.

At one point in the war, F E received a false message saying, “The war is over!” Unfortunately, he did not know that it wasn’t true. His ship immediately began to celebrate. The Captain unlocked the locker that had all the beers and Cokes in it, and they fired off flares, as did the other ships around them. This led up to one of the worst experiences F E ever remembers his ship being in. Since the message was false, they had just lit themselves up for the enemy, revealing their position and getting them into trouble for a few hours.

At the end of WWII, a point system determined which ships came back first, compiled from days spent under fire. F E was very happy when he learned that he had more than enough points to come home. He wasn’t so happy when he didn’t get to come home until three months

later. His whole ship got to come home at one time. They came into Seattle and were decommissioned a couple of weeks later, but F E had already gone home to Texas by then.

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Dr. Winton and Professor Sias

Honors 396

1 May 2005

Narrative Journalism  
Piece

I'd Rather Ride Than Walk

Big band music hums lowly in the background. A bowl of delicious-looking artificial fruit serves as the centerpiece of the dining room table. A large picture of a ship hangs on the wall. Mr. F E Elliott recounts his days of service in the Navy as a Radioman Second Class during World War II in this setting. But, even though the present setting is in his home in Huntington, WV, the scene Elliott paints is that of the waves of the South Pacific.

Mr. Elliott lived on the LCS (L) (3) 86, a small navel ship (Landing Craft Support, Large), from 1944 to 1946, a ship only 155' long and 23' across, which housed a crew of 65 men and six officers.

"It was my job to talk to the other ships and them to talk to me," Elliott explained of his rank as Radioman Second Class. From the time Elliott enlisted in the Navy, August 12, 1944, until he was discharged, August 1, 1946, he communicated with other ships.

Of his enlistment in the Navy, Elliott says, "I broke a big family tradition 'cause my Dad was definitely Army. I decided I'd rather ride than walk."

At the time of enlistment, Elliott was already married to his wife, Betty, and had one daughter, Donna. Before Elliott left for war, he and Betty sat down in front of a map and "named" each island in the Pacific after acquaintances from high school. "We decided that I would like for her to know where I was . . . I would say to her that 'yesterday I got a message from George.' And, she could look on her map and tell where we were," Elliott explained.

When Elliott's second daughter, Leann, was born, Betty went through extreme measures to let her husband know. "My friend that I was in high school with and in college with was on another LCS, the 122, and he was the quartermaster . . . His wife had got a message to him that Betty had had a little girl. And, he came up and flagged our ship, and we talked with flags. And he told me we had a little, bitty girl."

Life-changing events mark Elliott's years in service. His little ship rescued the U. S. S. Braine when it was hit by two kamikaze suicide planes at Okinawa. Most of those on board were saved. They also rescued the U. S. S. William D. Porter at Okinawa, also hit by a kamikaze plane. Everyone on board was saved before the ship sank. "We watched the Porter sink; its bow sticking out of the water. This was a hair-raising experience one could never forget," Elliott wrote in a memoir about his days in service.

Elliott's little ship even survived a typhoon. "The waves were so high that we headed into them because if we were running parallel to them, they would flip us over and sink us, so you have to put your bow into them to kind of break them in. And we would go up like this," Elliott explained with gestures. "And the bow and the top half of the ship would completely get out of the water. And, then it would come down as the wave passed with so much force that everything that wasn't welded down broke loose. Everyone on board ship except two of us were sick. It lasted about 12 hours, and it was just something to see. I'm glad that there was just one of them and not several."

But, these are not the only memories Elliott has of this time of his life. One story about the uniforms the men on board wore still remains fresh in his mind. "We just had whites," explained Elliott. "Everybody had white uniforms. But they [the crew] would take their pants

and shirts off, turn them inside out, raise their mattress sack up, spread them out on the canvas, put the mattress sack back down on them, and they slept on them. That pressed them and all.”

Showering on a little LCS was an interesting time. “We could process so little water that we barely had enough to drink. So, you didn’t get a shower every day,” said Elliott. “If you depended on a fresh-water shower, you probably got maybe in my two years, three or four showers. We had the showers rigged up so that you could get in there, and you had three minutes to shower. It stuck together—salt. And your hair was just like it had been shellacked.”

Elliott was decommissioned on August 1, 1946, in Astoria, Oregon. His ship received the highest award the Navy gives, the Navy Unit Citation. He received the following awards: the World War II Victory Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Medal, the Philippine Liberation Medal, and the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon.

Sitting in his home many years after his service, Elliott seems content with life. This August, he and his wife will celebrate 60 years of marriage. His two daughters are grown and married, as are his two granddaughters. He has one great-granddaughter and a great-grandson on the way. A member of the Veteran’s of Foreign War Association, the American Legion, and the National Association of LCS’s, Elliott has attended all but four or five of his reunions and is planning to attend the one this October in Washington D.C.

President John F. Kennedy once said, “Any man who may be asked in this century, what he did to make his life worthwhile, can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction, ‘I served on an LCS (L) in the United States Navy’.” Mr. F E Elliott’s service and life embody President Kennedy’s sentiment.

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