

New Jersey Shipbuilding at Barbra, New Jersey saw the commissioning of the LCI (L) 481 at 1200 on the 13th day of October, 1943. From Barbra the ship proceeded to Pier 42 New York for outfitting.

From Pier 42 the ship proceeded to Little Creek, Virginia where the usual shake down cruise began. Then followed the many GQ's, Fire Drills, Big Zap Drills, Inspections, etc. Day after day it was drills and still more drills.

On the 7th of December the 481 sailed for Key West, Florida arriving there on 12 December.

Got underway for the Canal Zone on 19 December and the 24th of December, 1943 found us at Coco Solo, Canal Zone. Passed through the locks of the canal on the 26th of December arriving at Balboa, Canal Zone that night.

On 27 December, 1943 35 enlisted men and one officer came aboard for transportation to a US port. The US port turned out to be San Diego, California. From the 27th of December, 1943 until the 9th of January, 1944, when the ship arrived at San Diego, there were still more drills.

After arriving at San Diego the ship divided it's time between there and San Clemente Island, where a lot of training took place.

The LCI (L) 481 left San Diego on the 4th of April, 1944 for the last time and set sail for Pearl Harbor. After 10 days at sea the ship arrived at Pearl Harbor. Thirty-four passengers made this trip with us.

On the 16th of May the ship headed into the beautiful blue Pacific again setting course for Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands arriving at Kwajalein on 25 May. From these islands the ship did not move until it's return to the United States.

The first job was the Roi-Kwajalein Mail Run which the 481 took over on 21 June. It was not until the 1st of October, that the ship was relieved.

7 October, 1944 set course for Yili Island, arrived there on the 8th and then took on a strange cargo of 21 pigs, five crates of ducks and chickens, 10 natives and their gear plus two outriggers. Took the cargo to Ailinglaplap Atoll.

Left for Majuro Atoll on the 29th of October arriving there on the 30th. Then began a not too dangerous, but often interesting job of reconnaissance of Jap held Atolls, evacuation of Marshallese natives from the Jap held Atolls, and Psychological Warfare.

Came the floods when the ship hit a coral head on the 5th of December, 1944. Tore a hole 1 ft. by two inches in the bottom and as a result of this, the whole engine room became flooded. Our handy billys would not control the water so we borrowed some more handy billys from the 479 and at the height of the pumping seven handy billys were in operation and still the water was coming in faster than it could be pumped out. Commenced diving on the 9th in an effort to patch up the hole. Finally got the hole temporarily patched on the 10th. The 479 towed us back to Majuro and we entered dry dock that night.

We took our first Jap at Aur Atoll at 2345, January 3rd, 1945. Three more Japs were taken on the 4th.

6 February, 1945 sent our crew party ashore at Bigen Island, Aur Atoll. Made a reconnaissance of the island and found one Jap sitting under a native hut. The Jap was directed to surrender, but instead he ran from the hut and was killed.

On 26 February the ship got underway for Mille Atoll arriving there that night. One native canoe with three native scouts were sent ashore that night at a point about 1500 yards from Urloze Island, Mille Atoll. These natives made a reconnaissance with no success and they were picked up in the morning of the 27th and the ship returned to Majuro.

14 March we lunched ourselves on Babi Island, Aur Atoll. Rang up "all back one third" to check our headway. At the execution of this order the ship kept moving forward. The order "all back two thirds" was given and the headway became more pronounced and all engines were then stopped. "All back full" was then ordered and the ship lurched forward and became grounded amidships. An inspection of the engine room showed that the orders had been answered properly, but the pitch was jammed at 64 inches ahead pitch. The pitch control shaft had become disengaged from the pitch control motor and though the motor and indicator continued to operate it did not effect the pitch of the screw. With the aid of the anchors and the 479 the ship finally was able to get off the beach.

27 March departed for Erikub Atoll and arrived there on the 28th. A partially camouflaged whaleboat was sighted on the seaward side of Enego Island. Upon coming in close to the island many foot prints were observed and it was assumed that Japs from the boat were on the island. A Japanese speaking native asked anyone on the island to surrender, but no one showed himself; After about an hour they were told that we were going to send in a heavily armed party and someone would get hurt. After this threat nine men with two white flags came out of the end of the island and were picked up by the 481.

On the morning of 11 April, this vessel got underway for Erikub to search for a raft reported by search planes. Upon reaching Erikub at 1740, the raft nor any trace of it could be located. The loud speaker was used in an attempt to get anyone who may be on the island to come out to the ship. No results. A native party was sent ashore that night. 5 natives were seen in the morning with three prisoners. Later the last two natives came out in an outrigger with two more prisoners.

On April 18th while at Mille the ship went along the reef at Waldoren Island using the loud speaker. After working the island for awhile two Japs showed themselves on the beach. The ship was maneuvered so that the bow was into the beach and the Japs were told to walk out into the surf (which they did), and they would be picked up by a boat. An LCR, manned by four natives, was launched. When the raft was half way to the island small arm fire was heard and on the second shot one of the natives pitched over sideways. By this time it was seen that the firing was coming from the small island to the east of Waldoren. The ship opened fire on the island with its 20MM's. The firing from the island then stopped. The natives were told to get into the water on the protected side of the boat and swim back to the ship. The two Japs went into hiding shortly after this.

The wounded native was transferred to a 40 which was present and emergency treatment was given, but the native died.

We then returned close to the island using the loudspeaker. No results were obtained so the ship proceeded to the westward islands still using the loudspeaker. On the southern end of Euzjet Island four Japs came out on the reef and swam out to the ship and were taken aboard. A little further down the island two more Japs were taken aboard. The ship proceeded easterly along the islands to Chirubon where two Koreans came out on the beach. One of these men swam to the ship, but the other could not swim. Efforts were made to get a line to this man, but all efforts failed. The Korean finally went back into the island.

On 5 May this vessel got underway with the LCI (L)'s 479, 482, 392, and 394 for Jaluit Atoll arriving there that night. Departed from the other LCI (L)'s and proceeded to Pikijin Island. Launched three native scouts and a three man native working party at 2030 about a half mile off Pikijin Island. After disembarking the natives the ship took a station about three miles off Pikijin. At 2225 a blinking white light was seen on Rikekin Island. According to plan this signal meant that the scouts were coming out to the ship, but no further sign was seen of them until 0550 when a steady white light was seen in the lagoon west of Pikijin Island. At 0630 ship proceeded south along Medyai Island. Natives were sighted running to reef on south end of Medyai Island, and at 0725 the stern anchor was dropped in 25 fathoms of water and 34 natives were taken aboard by use of a three rafts. At 0831 more natives were seen about one quarter of the way up Medyai Island and a total of 51 natives were brought aboard in the same manner as before. While bringing these natives aboard two Japanese with rifles were sighted on the southern tip of Medyai. The ship opened fire on these two Japanese as it was believed that they were preparing to fire on natives in the water. One of the Japanese was definitely hit. The other ran for cover. At 0900 many natives were seen coming to the reef in the center of Medyai Island. The stern anchor was dropped and three rubber rafts were put over to bring them aboard. Because of the rising surf the operation proved to be most difficult. At 0950 the Japs on the island opened fire with one machine gun and two rifles. Lt. Bales a Civil Affairs Officer, native guide Calico, and one member of the crew were hit; Lt. Bales seriously. Location of the enemy fire could not be determined, but the whole area of the beach within range was kept under fire. Enemy fire ceased as the ship opened fire. When the enemy had opened fire there were about ten natives in the water and the ship was held in position until these natives were aboard. Lt. Bales was being treated all this time. At 1120 the ship got underway at full speed for the lee of the atoll so that Lt. Bales could be put aboard a PEM and taken to the Base Hospital at Majuro; however the doctor reported Lt. Bales dead at 1147. A total of 142 natives were evacuated by this ship.

In compliance with orders the 481 departed from Majuro and proceeded to Mille arriving there at 0735 15 June. At 0740 many white flags were sighted on the reef off Pigiros Island. Upon pulling in close to the reef, one Marshallese and one Japanese swam out to the ship and reported that there were 130 Marshallese and Japanese on the island who wished to surrender. Although there was little surf, it would have been difficult to take all the evacuees aboard as there were several women and babies in the party. The LCI 393, which had a raft was sent for. The evacuation was completed at 1230. On the 16th three Japs were taken. On the 19th one Korean was taken out of the water west of Haldogai Island. At 2047 the Korean was put ashore with the idea that he was to go back to Haldogai Island, get word of his friends, and meet the ship at the next spot on the night of 1 June. Later to Majuro.

On the 21st the 461 returned to the reef in between Garu and Madagai Islands, Mille Atoll, arriving there at 2035 for scheduled rendezvous with the Korean and his party. Several Japanese were seen at the south end of Garu and the north end of Madagai and it was believed that the Japanese intercepted the Korean and his party.

On the 29th of June at Mille Atoll one Japanese was taken off Chiraton Island. He was observed standing at the edge of the undergrowth; he was armed with a rifle. As the ship made the second circle by him, he pointed the rifle in the air, fired once, threw the rifle down and ran for the surf. He was shot at once but was not hit and he swam out to the ship.

At Jaluit Atoll on the 8th of July a boat with a white flag was seen off Rue Island. The boat contained 19 natives who were taken aboard. They reported that they were from Jaluit Island and had stolen a boat three nights before. After picking the natives up from Rue Island the ship proceeded down the reef toward Pinglap Island. Eleven natives guarded by Japanese were seen fishing on the reef north of Pinglap. As the ship drew near to the reef the Japs ran for cover and the natives were able to swim out to the ship.

While returning from Kwajalein this ship made a reconnaissance of Bokku Island Malcelap Atoll. Nine Japs were observed on the beach. Six of them went into the island and returned with a boat. As these six men came toward the ship, a raft manned by ships company was put over and the remaining three Japanese were brought aboard.

In company with two other LCI's and DE 162, the 461 proceeded to Jaluit Atoll on 31 July. At 1920 the 461 proceeded independently to Eneoldak Island where a scouting party of eight native men in three boats were put ashore. The ship then took a position about three miles off Eneoldak Island. At 0230 a flashing red light was seen on Eneoldak Island and the ship moved in closer and launched two rubber rafts. At 0250 one of the boats used by the scouts came alongside. The people aboard it reported that they were from Jaluit Island and that when they had left many natives were getting ready to cross the reef from Jaluit Island to Eneoldak Island; however when the first raft load came out they said that the Japs on Jaluit Island had been alerted and that most of the people on the reef had been captured. At 0420 considerable small arm fire directed both at the ship and Eneoldak Island was received. There were no casualties and no damage was done. At 0635 the operation was completed with a total of 26 Oon natives and 33 Jaluit natives aboard. All the scouts returned.

Another psychological warfare trip was made to Mille on 7 August. Dowagain Island was approached on the 9th and at 0600 six armed POW's were put ashore. At 1345 the ship returned to Dowagain Island and picked up the six POW's put ashore there and four Japanese they had captured.

15 August - the war is over, but the work continues.

On the 15th of August the 461 returned to Mille Atoll on the 15th of August arriving there the morning of the 16th. Japs were sighted on the beach at Abu Island and a party was sent in to talk to the Japs. The Commander of Abu said that he could not carry on

any kind of surrender talk. He said that AtCom Mille would receive AtCom Majuro any time that he would come to Mille and that surrender terms could be talked over then. On the morning of the 19th we proceeded to Mille Island itself and arranged a meeting between AtCom Majuro and AtCom Mille.

26 August went to Jaluit to see if it was safe and arrange a meeting.

On 28 August we took a Navy landing party to Mille Atoll arriving there about noon. At 1400 Old Glory, fanned by an approving Pacific Breeze was raised over Mille Atoll and the first unconditional surrender of any Japanese territory had been completed.

Sailed for Jaluit on 2nd September with a Navy landing party on board. Arrived the 3rd and took part in another flag raising, unconditional surrender, occupation.

On 9 September sailed for Maloelap Atoll with a Navy landing party on board. Reached Maloelap Atoll the morning of the 10th, but it was decided not to go into the pier with the troops as the waters were mined there. The 481 had only been over those very waters twice two days before. Fine time to find out that they were mined.

24 September on our way to Jaluit. Arrived Jaluit the morning of the 25th, where we took on 85 sick and wounded Japanese. Then proceeded to Mille Atoll to put the Japs aboard the Hikawa Maru which is a Jap hospital ship. The morning of the 26th at Mille we went out to meet the Hikawa Maru and lead her into the lagoon. Went along side her just outside the pass and put a US Naval Officer and Jap party aboard her. Later put sick and wounded aboard the Jap ship. Then began the evacuation of the whole of Mille Atoll. Assisted by the LCI (L)'s 1052 and 850, 2400 Japanese were evacuated.

Sailed to Jaluit on October 21st to evacuate the Japanese. On the 22nd the Jap Cruiser Kaszima arrived and 900 Japanese were evacuated to it via the LCI 481. On the 27th the Jap Carrier Horyo arrived and the rest of the Japanese were evacuated from Jaluit via the LCI 481. Another 900 were evacuated to the Horyo making a total of 1800 Japanese evacuated from Jaluit.

From Jaluit we proceeded to Wotje to evacuate the Japanese that were still there. The Horyo arrived there on the 30th and the 481 evacuated 600 Japs.

To the best of our knowledge a record has been set for a vessel of this size. Over it's decks have passed 4500 Japanese, 120 Koreans, and 2200 Marshallese.