

Contributed by John Taylor

SUBJECT: OL' 991 Readiness for Sea; Special Report of

Now our ol' ship, she's a lot of fun
She's the LST nine ninety one.
And I'm willing to stake this little bet
There's 10,000 beachings in the old baby yet.

Her small boat's gone, her fuel tank leaks.
Her bow ramp slips, and the fantail squeaks.
She shakes her bolts and her nuts all loose
But she'll run hell on kanakee juice.

When we can't get fuel we burn kerosene.
(Last week we beached on paris green)
There's a rattle in the bow and a grind in the rear.
And a Chinese puzzle for retracting gear.

Her voids are buckled, her lights won't burn
She takes her time on every turn.
She'll yaw and skid and hog and wallow
And defy a snake her wake to follow.

She backs out of the wind on every occasion.
Knocks holes in her bottom on every invasion.
I won't put her down as being a treasure
But I'm beginning to think she'd make swimming a pleasure.

When she hits a sea she shivers and shakes,
(You'd think she'd crack the way she quakes)
The men in the bow are soaked with spray
And word is passed "All hands will pray".

Commanders raise hell cause she can't keep station
(We thought we were here to fight for our nation)
But eventually they'll learn that an LST
Won't work like a cruiser when she's at sea.

They'll also learn that the Amphibious force
Is fighting a war - helping its course,
We're not USN - (very few will say)
But back to my subject - I'm starting to stray.

Her magnetic's gone, her gyro's off.
It takes "all hands" when she's in a trough.
But she coughs and sneezes and staggers along
In spite of her "innards" that've all gone wrong.

The skipper's gone crazy, so's most of the crew
Our stern cable's missing (it's around the screw!)
The bow doors are now opened with TNT
It's time she was worked on - if your're asking me.

Her evaps are dead, her guns won't fire
Her piston rings are made of wire.
Yet save for this she'll pull us through
And that's about all our ship will do.

With high priced ships they give you tools,
Some extra parts and a book of rules.
Some wire stretchers and a pair of shears
Is all we've had for the past two years.

And if I live, I'll see the day
She'll fall apart like "The One Horse Shay"
But by the grace of God, (within reasonable limits)
We'll hit the next beach for Admiral Nimitz.

The Skipper