



**Wilbur
Sorenson**
Army

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Jun 14, 1918 - Jan 9, 2004

BIRTHPLACE: Crystal Lake, Iowa

SOLDIER DETAILS

DIVISION: Army, 727th Amphibian Tractor Battalion

THEATER OF OPERATION: Pacific

SERVED: Jun 16, 1942 - Dec 22, 1945

HONORED BY: Terry L. Sorenson

BIOGRAPHY

After his enlistment at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, Cpl. Sorenson was transferred to Fort Knox for Armed Forces Basic Training. After the three months of basic training, he was promoted to Corporal and assigned to the Armed Forces Replacement Training Center. He served as an Instructor of Wheeled Vehicles from September 1942 through February 1944. He was then transferred to the 727th Amphibian Tractor Battalion that was formed and training at Fort Ord, California. In June 1944, this unit sailed from San Francisco Bay to join the Sixth U. S. Army in Hollandia, New Guinea. This was their staging area for Operation King Two, the invasion of Leyte Island, Philippines. On October 20, 1944, Cpl. Sorenson with Third Platoon, Company A, 727th Amphibian Tractor Battalion landed at Red Beach at 1130 hours. Their platoon was assigned to aid the 34th Infantry Regiment in the fight to recapture northern Leyte. They carried out two additional combat landings on November 3, 1944, and November 10, 1944. Daily supply, troop movements and return trips with wounded were made. Third Platoon spent three weeks behind enemy lines at Calubian ensuring that the supply line with the battalion of the 34th Infantry Regiment that occupied Kilay Ridge remained open. Their mission continued until relieved on December 14, 1944. On December 27, 1944, Cpl. Sorenson and his LVT crew were assigned to the resupply mission to Mindoro, designated at U+15. The ship convoy enroute to Mindoro was subjected to the largest concentration of kamikaze attacks thus far in the war. An ammunition ship was completely obliterated from such an attack and several other ships were damaged or lost during the voyage. Upon their return on January 3, 1945, Cpl. Sorenson and his LVT and crew were loaded on a LST bound for Luzon (Operation Mike-One), where they landed on January 11, 1945. They were assigned to Base M to unload supplies from ships in Lingayen Gulf, where they spent 12 hours on and 12 hours off each day. This activity lasted until relieved on March 21, 1945. On this day, the 727th Amphibian Tractor Battalion was transferred to the Eighth U.S. Army. At the end of March, shipping was provided to move the Battalion to Morotai as a staging point with operational control of Australian Army. On May 1, 1945, a Provisional Company from the Battalion brought Australian troops to Tarakan, off the northeast coast of Borneo, codenamed Operation Oboe One. They returned to Morotai on May 10, 1945. Then, on June 10, 1945, the entire battalion landed

Australian troops at Brunei Bay, British North Borneo (Operation Oboe Six), with Company A landing on Muara Island and Company B landing on Labuan Island. Company A was returned to Morotai. On July 1, 1945, Company A LVTs were used to transport Australian troops ashore at Balikpapan, Borneo (Operation Oboe Two). They landed at Klandasan (Green Beach) in the first and second waves, and Cpl. Sorenson's Third Platoon landed Australian artillery in the sixteenth wave. Daily supply runs of artillery, troops and returning with wounded were made until relieved on July 12, 1945. On July 20, 1945, Company A sailed for Aparri, Luzon, to stage for the invasion of Japan, landing on July 30, 1945. After the succession of hostilities, Lt Gen. Styer, commanding AFWESPAC, placed the responsibility of the Port of Aparri and port command with the 727th Amphibian Tractor Battalion. In September and October 1945, thousands of Japanese POWs moved through this port during the repatriation operations. Cpl. Sorenson departed the Pacific Theater on November 27, 1945, arriving in San Francisco on December 11, 1945. He was honorably discharged on December 22, 1945, and arrived home on Christmas Day.