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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NEVER-BEFORE-TOLD STORY IS A MUST READ  
FOR EVERYONE INTERESTED IN WWII HISTORY**

*On a cold, blustery day in April 1941, a group of raw recruits—many of them from Chicago—stood alongside a ship known as the USS Fuller. They were in Seattle, Washington, and were about to embark on one of the most amazing journeys ever chronicled in naval history. Over four years later, those recruits, now seasoned Old Salts, victoriously returned to America at the end of World War II. Their ship, then hailed by many as the Queen of the Attack Transports, had valiantly participated in many of the toughest battles fought in the South Pacific. But until now, her story has remained untold.*

On April 1, 2009, Cable Publishing will release *The Lady Gangster: A Sailor's Memoir*, a combination of Irvin Staecker's first-hand account and author Del Staecker's fascinating and, in many cases, little-known facts about attack transports, the vital ships that carried supplies and men to the beaches in the Pacific theater during World War II.

This unique tale began because of a broken car radio over forty years ago. Author Del Staecker, then sixteen, was on a cross-country trek with his father, Irvin Staecker. In a desperate effort to break the uncomfortable silence, Staecker asked, "Dad, will you tell me what you did in the war?"

During the next eighteen hours Staecker listened—often in disbelief—as his father candidly recounted one life-threatening experience after another. One example, from the chapter titled "Praying All Night for a Man to Die," states: "The sun was almost up. I knew that he knew that time was running out. He started firing faster. *Zap! Zap! Zap!* He didn't pause. *Zap! Zap! Zap!* He wasn't going to wait for a good shot. He was going to make one by destroying what little protection I had left. One shot creased my shirt and another hit the edge of my foxhole at what seemed the same instant. I knew the next shot, or the one after that, would hit me...."

The USS *Fuller*, known affectionately by her crew as *The Lady Gangster*, began her Pacific theater duties as one of the first ships to deliver men and supplies to the Guadalcanal campaign. As Imperial Japan's forces were steadily driven back toward Japan, *The Lady Gangster* outperformed all other attack transports with a reliability that

the Allied forces needed, all the while defending herself against enemy torpedoes and kamikaze pilots. Passages from the ship's journal and Staecker's personal journal relive many of those exciting and very dangerous moments, and maps throughout the text expertly document the withdrawal of Imperial Japan from the Pacific region.

*Contains numerous photos and maps.*

Del Staecker served in the U.S. Army after graduating from The Citadel with a degree in history. He is now a full-time writer, and *The Lady Gangster*, his first nonfiction work, follows *The Muted Mermaid* and *Shaved Ice*. Staecker lives with his wife in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and has one son. He may be contacted through his publicist, Ray Litrides, at the above information, or Cable Publishing.

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## **What others are saying about *The Lady Gangster***

*Few books have previously been written about the vital role played by attack transports during World War II, so Del Staecker's book about his father's ship, the U.S.S. Fuller, comes as a great revelation. During that truly global war, millions of American troops had to be carried immense distances across all the oceans, and attack transports were the unglamorous but necessary mode of transportation. Staecker's superbly written voyage back in time (with his father narrating) provides the reader with an intimate and personal glimpse of what life was really like for the sailors involved in this almost totally overlooked (and very dangerous) aspect of World War II.*

**Flint Whitlock**

Author of *The Depths of Courage* and

Co-author of *Capt. Jepp and the Little Black Book*

*A true labor of love, Del Staecker's *The Lady Gangster* vividly captures the wartime spirit and experiences of the men aboard the U.S.S. Fuller, a World War II assault transport ship. From their introduction into combat at Guadalcanal until the titanic invasion of Okinawa, a span lasting almost the entire war, the members of the Fuller, including the author's father, stifled fears and frustrations and contributed to victory*

*over a ready foe. Staecker provides an illuminating glimpse into one of the Pacific War's less publicized arenas.*

**John Wukovitz**

Author of *Pacific Alamo: The Battle for Wake Island* and  
*One Square Mile of Hell: The Battle for Tarawa*

*This book is a story of men and a ship, and also the author's homage to his father... The account is soundly based on research in ship records, journals of crewmen, and the memories of the men who served on the vessel... [Staecker] has furnished his readers with a valuable perspective on the war, the ships, and the men who manned them.*

**Larry H. Addington**

Professor of History Emeritus, The Citadel