



USS LST-760

Builder: American Bridge Co., Ambridge, PA.

Commissioned: 28 August 1944

Decommissioned: 24 May 1946

Disposition: Sold for scrap

Length: 327' 9" oa

Beam: 50'

Draft: 1' 6" bow, 7' 5" stern (unloaded); 8' 2" bow, 14' 1" stern (loaded -- at sea);
3' 1" bow, 9' 6" (loaded -- beaching)

Displacement: 1,625 (light); 4,080 (w/ full load of 2,100 tons)

Propulsion: 2 x General Motors 12-567 diesels, twin shafts/rudders

Range: 24,000 nm @ 9 knots

Top Speed: 11.6 knots

Complement: 111

Troops: 163

Initial Armament: 7 x 40mm (single mount); 6 x 20 mm (single mount); 2 x .50-caliber mgs; 4 x .30-caliber mgs

Commanding Officers:

LT R. T. A. McKenzie, USCGR: 28 August 1944 - 5 November 1945

LT. Littleton W. Parks, USCGR: 5 November 1945 - 11 March 1946

LT(jg) Fred R. Hough, USN: 11 March 1946 - 27 March 1946

LT Martin L. Jackson: 27 March 1946 - 24 May 1946

History:

USS LST-760 LST Flotilla 29, Group 85, Division 169

The Coast Guard-manned USS *LST-760* was built at the American Bridge Company of Ambridge, Pennsylvania and was completed in early 1944. She was ferried down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans, where she was placed in commission on 28 August 1944 under the command of LT R. T. A. McKenzie, USCGR. After proceeding to Panama City, Florida, for a two-week shakedown cruise the LST returned to New Orleans for final alterations and provisioning prior to departure for duty in the Pacific theatre.

The LST-760 departed New Orleans on 30 September 1944 and arrived at Pearl Harbor on 7 November 1944, via San Diego. On 7 January 1945 she proceeded to Hilo, Hawaii, to receive her first combat load of US Marine Corps artillery scheduled for the invasion of Iwo Jima. Pre-invasion maneuvers in Maaleae Bay on the Island of Maui followed and the ship departed Kanehoe, Oahu, on 21 January 1945, for Saipan, via Eniwetok, the point of rendezvous with the invasion fleet.

She cleared Saipan late in the afternoon of 15 February 1944, and after a four day passage enlivened by submarine alerts arrived off Iwo Jima in the early hours of D-day, 19 February 1945. From midnight to dawn, the horizon skies were illumined with the criss-cross patterns of bright tracer and fiery phosphorous shells poured into the island stronghold by the offshore naval support force. By 0800, the 760 had taken up position in the rendezvous area a few thousand yards from the beach. H-hour came at 0900 with small, heavily-loaded landing craft churning by the ship like a plague of water bugs on a stagnant back woods pond. The offshore shelling force, combined with dive bombers, continued to claw and tear at enemy installations, concentrating particularly heavy fire on Suribachi, a small volcano commanding one end of the island and honeycombed with caves and recesses, housing all variety of artillery. During the first three days of the assault, save for one night of retirement, and several runs close in to the beach to launch and retrieve DUKWs manned by reconnaissance parties, the ship remained in the LST area. On D+3 she beached on Green Beach, a littered waste of black volcano ash at the foot of Mt. Suribachi and began unloading despite a heavy rain.

Unloading continued steadily for two days. During the first night 16 casualties, an overflow from a nearby crowded field hospital unit, were taken aboard and treated by the ship's pharmacist's mates. Occasional mortar shells burst on the beach close to the bow. On the morning of the 23rd those on the beach watched the sealing of Mt. Suribachi and the raising of the first American flag on its summit. The following day the ship retracted from the beach to receive a second

load from a transport. Unable to remain safely alongside the transport in the rough, open sea, the 760 returned early next morning to Black Beach with only a partial load. During midmorning the ship received its only serious hit, a heavy mortar shell which crashed on the main deck forward, scattering shrapnel and wounding two men in the compartment beneath. That afternoon, 25 February 1945, the ship retracted from the beach and joined a convoy bound for Saipan.

After a one night layover at Saipan the 760 proceeded to Leyte in the Philippines, arriving on 9 March 1945, and the following two weeks were spent preparing the ship for the invasion of Okinawa. Against six days of rain and heavy weather the convoy reached Okinawa on 1 April 1945. At 0530 while proceeding against the southwest side of the island, the ship went to general quarters and at 0300 arrived in the LST area in the vicinity of Magushi.

Late the next day she nosed up on the coral reef at Purple Beach and commenced unloading. Seven hectic days and nights followed, four on the beach and three at Kerama Rhetto, a small group of islands off the southwest coast of Okinawa. They were exhausting days and nights of standing almost a continuous general-quarters on guard against fanatical suicide air attacks, sleeping barely an hour at a time, eating cold chow, tensely watching and firing on the deadly planes winging in, some to crash headlong into nearby ships, others to go down in withering fire or careen harmlessly into the sea. At last the welcome end of this phase of operations came for the 760 on 9 April 1945, when she departed Okinawa for Guam.

A day out of Guam the destination of the LST was changed to Ulithi. After a brief layover there she returned by way of Palau to Leyte to begin a time table schedule of runs transporting troops and material from the Philippines to Okinawa. This continued until VJ-day which found the LST en route Subic Bay from a third trip to Okinawa. She arrived at Leyte on 21 August 1945, and on the 28th set out for Tokyo, via Lemery and Batangas, Philippine Islands, where she loaded garrison forces for the occupation of Japan. Two other runs from the Philippines to Yokohama and Tokyo followed and on 7 December 1945, the 4th anniversary of Pearl Harbor she departed on the first leg of the homeward voyage to San Francisco, via Pearl Harbor and San Pedro, California.

She arrived in San Francisco on 18 January 1946. She was decommissioned there on 24 May 1946. She was struck from the Naval Register on 3 July 1946 and was sold for scrap on 29 May 1948 to the Bethlehem Steel Company of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

The *LST-760* was awarded two battle stars for her service during World War II.



No caption/date/photo number; photographer unknown.

The *LST-760* (fourth beached landing vessel from the right) at Omaha Beach, Normandy, France, sometime in June, 1944.

Sources:

LST files, Coast Guard Historian's Office.

United States Coast Guard. *The Coast Guard At War. V. Transports and Escorts. Vol. 2.* Washington: Public Information Division, Historical Section, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, May 1, 1949, pp. 66-116.

United States Navy. *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships.* Volume VII. Washington: Naval Historical Center, 1981, pp. 574-742.

