



USS LST-66

Builder: Jeffersonville Boat and Machine Company, Jeffersonville, Indiana

Commissioned: 12 April 1943

Assigned to: LST Flotilla 11, Group 31, Division 61

Decommissioned: 26 March 1946

Disposition: Sold for scrap on 7 April 1948, to Kaiser Company, Inc., Seattle, Washington.

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 Howard A. White, USCG: 12 April 1943 - (Jan or Mar) 1944

LT(jg) William H. McGowan, USCGR

LT(jg) B. C. Reed, USCGR: 1 November 1944 -
LT Wendell J. Holbert, USCGR
LT George Z. Wagley: 15 September 1945 - 28 September 1945
LT Kenneth P. Howard, USCGR: 28 September 1945 - 26 March 1946

History:

USS *LST-66* LST Flotilla 11, Group 31, Division 61

The Coast Guard-manned USS *LST-66* was laid down at Jeffersonville, Indiana, by the Jeffersonville Boat and Machine Company and commissioned on 12 April 1943 with a complement of 8 officers and 66 enlisted men of the U. S. Coast Guard and Coast Guard Reserve. She was sponsored by Mrs. A. D. Landwehr. Her first commanding officer was LT Howard A. White, USCG. In April 1943 she proceeded down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and dry-docked on 15 May 1943, at New Orleans for final inspection, painting and repairs.

On May 21, 1943, she sailed from New Orleans for Brisbane, Australia via the Panama Canal, arriving there August 1, 1943 and being assigned to LST Flotilla 7, Seventh Fleet on October 10, 1943. Her first mission was the support landing at Finschafen, New Guinea, on October 25, 1943. She was in the landing at Lee, New Guinea, on December 7, 1943, and at Cape Gloucester, New Britain on December 26, 1943. In this engagement two men were killed and seven wounded from near miss bombs during an enemy air raid. The *LST-66* was officially credited with shooting down three Japanese planes.

On January 19, 1944, the *LST-66* was engaged in landing first support forces at Saidor, New Guinea. On completion of this mission she was ordered to join Group 21, Division 41, LST Flotilla 7 as of 1 February 1944. From then until August 1944 she was engaged in the following operations:

- 9 March 1944: first assault landing, Seeadler Harbor, Admiralty Islands
- 23 April 1944: first support landing, Tanah Merah Bay, New Guinea
- 16 May 1944: first support landing, Aitape, New Guinea
- 19 May 1944: first support landing, Wakde Island, Dutch New Guinea
- 8 June 1944: first reinforcement landing, Biak Island, Schouten Islands
- 16 July 1944: first reinforcement landing, Noemfoor Island
- 30 July 1944: first assault landing; Cape Sansapor, Dutch New Guinea

After the Sansapor landing and, returning with reinforcements, the *LST-66* was dry-docked at Alexishafen, New Guinea, from 20 - 23 August 1944, and on the completion of repairs participated in the first reinforcement landing on the south coast of Morotai, in the Moluccas. On 20 October 1944, she participated in the assault landing on Leyte, Philippine Islands. On 12 November 1944, following

the landing a Japanese suicide plane crashed on the boat deck, starboard side aft, killing eight men and wounding 14 of the gun crews.

On 11 January 1945, the LST landed a part of the first reinforcements at Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, Philippine Islands, one of the Army troops being wounded during the landing by artillery fire. On 5 March 1945, an Army enlisted man fell overboard from an LCM being towed by the *LST-66* and was lost at sea. On March 10, 1945, she participated in the first assault landing at Zamboanga, Mindanao, and on completion of the mission, returned to Leyte, being dry-docked for repairs on 19 - 20 March 1945. From March to June 1945 she was employed in transporting troops equipment and supplies from rear bases being evacuated in the Solomons and New Guinea to the forward areas in the Philippines. In July 1945 she participated in the first support landing at Balikpapan, Borneo, Netherland East Indies, the last engagement of the war.

During August and September, 1945, she was again employed in transporting troops, equipment and supplies from rear areas in the New Guinea area to forward areas in the Philippines, being dry-docked from 15 - 18 September 1945, for hull repairs and returning to transport troops and equipment from Morotai to Leyte. She then sailed to Zamboanga, arriving on 9 October 1945.

On 11 October 1945 she departed Zamboanga for Morotai, arriving there on 14 October. For the next few weeks she continued to sail between Zamboanga, Morotai, Leyte and other ports in the Philippines until she received orders to return state-side. She departed Manila on 7 November 1945 for San Francisco, via Guam, Eniwetok, and Pearl Harbor, arriving at San Francisco on 19 December 1945, reporting to Commandant, 12th Naval District, for disposal. She was decommissioned and her Coast Guard crew removed at Mare Island, California on 26 March 1946.

The USS *LST-66* earned eight battle stars and the Navy Unit Commendation for her service during World War II.



"USS LST-66 in San Francisco Bay, Calif., in 1945-46."; Photo No. NH-82165-A; photographer unknown; courtesy of J.A. Casoly; Naval Historical Center photograph, released.



"CG lands 'em. . ."; no date; (December, 1943?); Photo No. 3406; photographer unknown.

The USS *LST-66* disembarks troops during the invasion of Cape Gloucester.



"CG disembarks troops near Hollandia. . ."; no date (April/May, 1944?); Photo No. 2184; photographer unknown.



"Hollandia road to Tokyo. . ."; no date (April/May, 1944?); Photo No. 2301; photographer unknown.

The USS *LST-66* is the third LST from the bottom of the photo.



"CG brings tanks. . ."; no date (July, 1944?); Photo No. 2642; photographer unknown.

The Coast Guard-manned LSTs 67 (left) and 66 (right) disembark M4 Sherman tanks and other vehicles during the invasion of Noemfoor.



"Giant sea-going freight cars. . ."; no date; Photo No. 3575; photographer unknown.

USS *LST-66* is second from the left.

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.

