

U.S. Coast Guard History Program

Chincoteague, 1949



WHEC-375
Radio call sign: NBOZ

Chincoteague was named for a bay on the coast of Maryland and Virginia.

Builder: Lake Washington Shipyards, Houghton, WA

Commissioned: 15 Apr 1943 (USN); loaned to USCG 7 March 1949
7 Mar 1949 (USCG); permanently transferred to USCG 26 September 1966

Decommissioned: 21 Jun 1972; transferred to South Vietnam

PARTICULARS, AS OF 1965

Length: 310 9 1/2" oa; 300' 0" bp

Navigation Draft: 12' 5" max

Beam: 41' max

Displacement: 2,497 fl

Main Engines: Fairbanks-Morse, direct reversing diesels

SHP: 6,400

Performance, Maximum Sustained: 17.0 kts, 10,000 nautical mile range

Performance, Economic: 11.5 kts, 15,000 nautical mile range

Complement: 10 officers, 3 warrants, 136 men

Electronics: Radar: SPS-23, SPS-29D

Sonar: SQS-1

Armament: 1 x 5"/38 Mk 12, Mod 1; 1 x Mk 52 Mod 3 director; 1 x Mk 26 fire control radar; 1 x Mk 11 A/S projector; 2 x Mk 32 Mod 5 torpedo tubes;

Class History:

The *Casco* class ships were built as small seaplane tenders by the US Navy. They were designed to operate out of small harbors and atolls and had a shallow draft. The fact that the class was very seaworthy, had good habitability, and long range made them well suited to ocean-station duty. In fact, an assessment made by the Coast Guard on the suitability of these vessels for Coast Guard service noted:

"The workmanship on the vessel is generally quite superior to that observed on other vessels constructed during the war. The vessel has ample space for stores, living accommodations, ships, offices and recreational facilities. The main engine system is excellent. . . . The performance of the vessel in moderate to heavy seas is definitely superior to that of any other cutter. This vessel can be operated at higher speed without storm damage than other Coast Guard vessels." [Memo, CDR W. C. Hogan, Commanding Officer, CGC MC CULLOCH to Commandant "SUBJ; CGC MC CULLOCH, Sutiability [sic] for use as CG Cutter.", 12 February 1947; copy in 311-Class Cutter File, USCG Historian's Office.]

Once they were accepted into Coast Guard service, a number of changes were made in these ships to prepare them for ocean-station duty. A balloon shelter was added aft; there were spaces devoted to oceanographic equipment and a hydrographic winch and an oceanographic winch were added.

See *DANFS* for naval service.

Cutter History:

Chincoteague was homeported in Norfolk, VA for the duration of her stay in the Coast Guard. She was used for law enforcement, ocean station, and search and rescue operations in the Atlantic Ocean.

In December 1955, she pulled M/V *Canadian Observer* from danger of going aground off the south coast of Newfoundland. On 30 October 1956, the *Chincoteague* rescued 33 crewmen from the German M/V *Helga Bolten* in the North Atlantic by using two inflatable lifeboats during heavy seas and then stood by distressed vessels for seven days until they could be towed to the Azores by commercial tug. On 5 October 1969, she towed the disabled M/V *Kenyon Victory* 30 miles south of San Salvador Island until relieved by a commercial tug.

After her transfer to South Vietnam, the *Chincoteague* was renamed *Ly Thoung Kiet*. She fled to the Philippines at the fall of South Vietnam, was renamed *Andres Bonifacio*, and was still listed as active in July 1993.

Photographs:



Chincoteague, 2 November 1964, no caption.



Chincoteague, 2 August 1968, near the Chesapeake light tower.

Sources:

Chincoteague, Cutter Subject File, USCG Historian's Office

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, Vol. II (1963), p. 110.

"Listings: AVP's"; compiled and written by LCDR J. P. Smith, USCGR, copy in 311' Class Cutter File, USCG Historian's Office.

Olsen, A. L., Jr., Commander. Senior Coast Guard Officer, Philippines. *Report*: "Ships returned from Viet Nam: Preliminary Inspection Ex-WAVP/WHEC", 1975, copy in 311' Class Cutter File, USCG Historian's Office.

Robert Scheina, *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft, 1946-1990* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1990), pp. 10-16.

Ship's Characteristics Card: USCGC *Chincoteague*, 11 July 1965.

