



## *U.S. Coast Guard History Program*

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# *Hollyhock, 1937*

WAGL / WLM-220



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Builder: Defoe Boat & Motor Works, Bay City, Michigan

Length: 174' 10"

Beam: 32'

Draft: 11' 3"

Displacement: 885 tons

Cost: \$347,800

Commissioned: 7 August 1937

Decommissioned: 31 March 1982

Disposition: Sold

Machinery: 2 triple-expansion horizontal steam engines; 2 Babcock & Wilcox oil-fired water-tube boilers; twin propellers; SHP 1000 (1937); 2 Fairbanks-Morse diesels with reduction gears; 1,350 BHP (1954)

Performance & Endurance:

Max: 11.9 knots

Cruising: 7.5 knots; 13,400 mile range

Deck Gear: 20-ton capacity hydraulic boom

Complement: 38 (1966)

Armament: None

Electronics: SO-1 detection radar (1945); SPM-11 detection radar (1967); UNQ-1 sonar (1966)

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### **Class History:**

There were three 175-foot tenders designed and built for the U.S. Lighthouse Service: *Fir* (launched 22 March 1939), *Hollyhock* (launched 24 March 1937) & *Walnut* (launched in 1939). They were constructed wholly of steel with triple-expansion steam engines as their main propulsion. The *Hollyhock*-class ships were designed as coastwise (Type "A") tenders for use in construction and repair work, tending aids to navigation, and supplying remote light stations. *Hollyhock*, the lead ship of the class, cost \$347,800 with *Walnut* and *Fir* costing 389,746 each. *Fir* spent her service life based out of Seattle, WA; *Walnut* out of Honolulu, HI and later San Pedro, CA; and *Hollyhock* out of Milwaukee, WI and Detroit, MI.

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### **Tender History:**

The *Hollyhock* was one of three tenders of the *Hollyhock*-class that entered service between 1937 and 1940, the other two being the *Fir* and the *Walnut*. The *Hollyhock*, along with another tender of a different class, the *Tamarack*, were authorized in 1934 and PWA funds were set aside for their construction. The *Hollyhock* was the lead ship of the 175-foot class tenders and she was built to replace the tender *Sumac*. A press release issued to announce her launching noted: "The new lighthouse tender will be fitted with the latest navigating equipment, including a fathometer, a gyro compass, a radio direction finder, and radio telegraph and radio telephone communication." She was launched on 24 March 1937 during the city's worst blizzard of the season. "A host of Lighthouse Service officials attended the launching." The *Hollyhock* was sponsored by Miss Geraldine Park, the daughter of Mr. C. A. Park, the Deputy Commissioner of Lighthouses.

After fitting out and final trials, she was formally commissioned on 7 August 1937. She was assigned to the 12th Lighthouse District and was based out of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where she tended aids to navigation and conducted SAR operations as needed on Lake Michigan.

During World War II up to her transfer to Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, in 1958 she continued operating out of Milwaukee on Lake Michigan. In 1954 she was re-engined with two diesels with reduction gears but the conversion proved to be problematic. A later press release noted: "The installation of the class-unique Universal 'red' gear was to prove a constant source of frustration to commanding officers and engineer officers throughout the rest of *Hollyhock*'s career. It seems

that of all casualties that subsequently affected Hollyhock's operational readiness, at least half of the down time involved the reduction gears." During the war she was designated as WAGL WAGL-220.

On 15 October 1954 she assisted following a collision between the Dutch M/V *Prins Willem V* and the tug *Sinclair No. 12* with barges at Milwaukee. She was transferred to Sturgeon Bay on 1 July 1958 where she served out of until 14 September 1959. Here she conducted some light-icebreaking in addition to servicing aids to navigation. From 19 through 21 November she assisted the disabled M/V *Carl D. Bradley* in northern Lake Michigan.

On 15 September 1959 she transferred to Detroit, Michigan where she continued to service aids to navigation and conduct light ice-breaking when needed. She transferred on 1 August 1962 to Miami, Florida, where she remained for the rest of her Coast Guard career. Here her duties consisted of "primary responsibility for the maintenance of floating and fixed aids to navigation from Dry Tortugas to Bethel Shoal along the South Florida coast. Hollyhock also serviced aids at Navy facilities outside CONUS at Andros Island, Bahamas, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Occasionally Hollyhock would get 'tapped' to make logistics run to resupply the Greater Antilles Section in San Juan, Puerto Rico" as well as SAR and law enforcement operations as needed. In March, 1964, she refueled a USAF UF-1G amphibian 140 miles east of Great Abaco Island in the Bahamas. The UF-1G, part of the 48th Air Rescue Squadron at Eglin Air Force Base, had made an open-sea landing to recover a film capsule that had been ejected from a "Cape Kennedy launched space vehicle." She participated in the Coast Guard operations off Florida during the 1980 Cuban Refugee Boatlift, otherwise known as the Mariel Boatlift.

Budgetary and maintenance issues forced the Coast Guard to retire *Hollyhock*. She was decommissioned on 31 March 1982 and was then sold. After she was sold she was renamed the *Good News Mission Ship*. She was sunk as an artificial reef off Pompano Beach, Florida, in 1990.

She was awarded the National Defense ribbon with bronze star for her service during World War II and the Korean Conflict, the Coast Guard Unit Commendation ribbon with the operational device for her part in a helicopter recovery effort in the 1970s and the Humanitarian Service ribbon for her part in the 1980 Mariel Boatlift.

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Images:



No official caption/date/photo number; photographer unknown.

USCGC *Hollyhock* works a buoy on the Great Lakes.



No official caption/date/photo number; photographer unknown.

USCGC *Hollyhock* underway.

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**Sources:**

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