



Maple, 1939

WAGL / WLI-234

Builder: Marine Iron & Shipbuilding Company, Duluth, Minnesota

Length: 122' 3"

Beam: 27'

Draft: 7' 6"

Displacement: 350 tons

Cost: \$190,000

Commissioned: June, 1939

Decommissioned: 1 June 1973

Disposition: Transferred to U.S. Navy on 8 August 1973

Machinery: 2 x General Motors diesels; twin propellers; 800 BHP

Performance & Endurance:

Max: 10 knots; 1,200 mile range

Economic: 6.0 knots; 3,500 mile range

Deck Gear: Electrically powered hoist; 10-ton capacity

Complement: 20

Electronics: SO-1 detection radar (1945); SPN-11 detection radar (1960)

Armament: None

Class History:

The *Maple* was one of three 122-foot bay and sound tenders built just prior to the transfer of the Lighthouse Service to the Coast Guard, the others being *Narcissus* and *Zinnia*. They were the first tenders to be constructed primarily by welding. Although Peterson disagrees that *Maple* was one of this class (*United States Lighthouse Service Tenders, 1840-1939*, p. 143) the official Lighthouse Service publication, the *Lighthouse Service Bulletin*, noted in its June 1939 issue (Vol. V, No. 42, pp. 186-187), that these tenders were in fact considered to be all of the same class:

NEW TENDERS FOR THE LIGHTHOUSE SERVICE

. . .The *Zinnia* class of tenders, which include the tenders *Zinnia*, *Narcissus*, and *Maple*, are the most recent tenders added to the Service. These tenders are for work in the harbors and bays of the fourth, seventh, and tenth districts, and all have been launched this year.

The principal improvements of this design of tenders over the preceding design are in seaworthiness, derrick capacity, stability, sized of buoy deck, power for propulsion, and maneuverability. Factors in bringing about these improvements included a moderate increase of the principal dimensions and the use of greater power with twin screws in lieu of a single screw, the substitution of pipe struts for the derrick mast in place of wire-rope rigging.

The dimensions of the *Zinnia* class of tenders are length over all 122 feet 3 inches, beam molded 27 feet, minimum depth at side 9 feet 6 inches, draft loaded 6 feet 6 inches. The total shaft horsepower is 400 and is obtained from two four-cycle Diesel engines with reduction gears. The speed is 10 knots in loaded condition.

Although there are differences in physical appearance of *Maple* from her sisters, included *Maple's* rounded forecastle and enclosed main deck abaft the boom, the Lighthouse Service considered these three tenders to be of the same class.

Tender History:

The United States tender *Maple* was designed as a bay and sound tender for the U.S. Lighthouse Service. Her design included a distinctive rounded forecastle that would prevent buoys from snagging on the deck. She was built by the Marine Iron & Shipbuilding Company in Duluth, Minnesota and was launched on 29 April 1939 and was assigned to the 10th Lighthouse District on the Great Lakes. She was commissioned in June of 1939, just in time to see the Lighthouse Service merged into the Coast Guard. Her assignments included tending aids to navigation and search and rescue (SAR) and law enforcement duties on Lake Ontario and Lake Erie as needed out of her home port of Ogdensburg, New York. When the Coast Guard was transferred to the Navy in November 1941, all Coast Guard cutters began receiving hull numbers and designations and *Maple* was designated as WAGL-234.

After the war she remained stationed at Ogdensburg until 1958. Besides carrying out her traditional aids to navigation duties she frequently conducted other missions. From 23-24 August of 1949 she patrolled the Rochester Race. On 15 August 1951 she assisted the tanker A. C. Dodge that was aground near Excelsior Shoal. She patrolled the Rochester Race again on 20 August 1951 and assisted the tanker Bruce Hudson, aground at Wells Island. From 3-4 August 1952 she patrolled the Freeman Cup Races at Toronto, Canada and the Rochester Race again on 23 August 1953.

She transferred home-ports to Detroit, Michigan in 1958 where she served out of until the following year. From 15 September 1959 until 1967 she was stationed at Buffalo, New York. In 1967 until her decommissioning, she was stationed back at Ogdensburg, New York. Here her operating area encompassed the Canadian border on the Saint Lawrence River and Lake Ontario to the Niagara River. Here she tended 17 lighted buoys, 30 unlighted buoys, 1 lighthouse, 1 daybeacon, and 7 winter buoys. A statistical study undertaken in 1972 regarding cutter usage provides a good look at the mission profile of a tender. The study noted that in 1971, the *Maple's* operating hours for the year totaled 684 in all mission areas, 382 of which were attributable to her aids to navigation mission, 186 hours were for port security work, 13 hours were devoted to SAR, and the remaining 103 hours "involved other missions."

She was decommissioned on 1 June 1973 and was transferred to the U.S. Navy on 8 August 1973. The Navy transferred her to the Environmental Protection Agency and her name was changed to Roger R. Simons. She operated as a research vessel, studying pollution levels in the Great Lakes, until 1995 when she was retired from government service. She was then sold.

Commanding Officers:

G. S. Disbury, LT,
D. D. Eubanks, Bosn (TCO), 1946
T. J. Downs, Ch. Bosn; 1946 (S/L)
Carl D. Eubanks, LTJG, 1946-1947
H. M. Brown, Bosn, 1947-1949
G. R. Rollinson, LTJG, 1949
L. S. Auttonson, CBOSN, 1949-1952
C. Fitzpatrick, BMC, 1952-1954
W. G. Kincaide, LT, 1954-1955
Raymond R. Thiele, CHBOSN, 1955-1958
A. Pietrykowski, CHBOSN, 1958-1959
James L. Cropper, CHBOSN, 1959
E. T. Rollins, CHBOSN, 1959-1962
C. L. Miller, CHBOSN (W-3), 1962-1966

Sources:

Douglas Peterson. *United States Lighthouse Service Tenders, 1840-1939*. Annapolis: Eastwind Publishing, 2000.

Robert Scheina. *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft of World War II*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1982.

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

