

## **Rockaway, 1948**



AVP/WAVP/WHEC/WAGOWOLE-377  
Radio call sign: NBTM

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The *Rockaway* was named for an inlet at the southwestern part of Long Island at the entrance to lower New York Bay.

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Builder: Associated Shipbuilders, Inc., Seattle, WA

Commissioned: 6 January 1943 (USN); loaned to USCG 24 December 1948; transferred permanently to USCG 26 September 1966

Decommissioned: 20 January 1972; returned to USN; sold for scrap

## **PARTICULARS, AS OF 1967:**

Length: 310 7 3/4" oa; 300' 0" bp

Draft: 13' 1" rear (full load) max

Beam: 41' max

Displacement: 2,390 tons full load

Main Engines: Fairbanks-Morse, direct reversing diesels

SHP: 6,080

Performance, Maximum Sustained: 18.2 kts, 9,902-mi radius

Performance, Economic: 13.2 kts, 18,289-mi range

Complement: 10 officers, 3 warrants, 138 men

Electronics: Radar: SPS-23, SPS-29D  
Sonar: SQS-1

Armament: 2 x 81mm Mk 2; 2 x .50 Cal MG, Mk 2; 2 x Mk 32, Mod 5 torpedo launchers

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### **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, Suitability [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.

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### **Cutter History:**

*Rockaway* was stationed at Staten Island, New York from 24 December 1948 through 20 January 1972. She was used for law enforcement and ocean station duties, oceanographic cruises, and search and rescue operations in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

In September 1958, *Rockaway* salvaged a USN seaplane 180 miles from Bermuda. In December 1964, she rescued four from M/V *Smith Voyager*. She was redesignated in 1965 as WAGO-377 (oceanographic ship). *Rockaway* took part in a cadet cruise in August 1965. On 24 February 1966, she stood by the British M/V *Parthia* awaiting a commercial tug.

From 20 January to 30 March 1967 she conducted an "Eastern Tropical Pacific Cruise" in the Pacific off Mexico where she undertook an oceanographic survey. From November 1967 through January 1968, she conducted an oceanographic survey off Norfolk, Virginia. *Rockaway* was involved in more oceanographic surveys over the mid-Atlantic shelf from 6 to 12 May 1968 and again from 11 to 18 July. From 14 to 19 January 1969, she conducted a survival craft drift project 159 miles east of the Chesapeake Bay. In August 1969, she conducted extensive oceanographic work associated with the Barbados Oceanographic and Meteorological Experiment. She then conducted more oceanographic surveys from Nova Scotia to Cape Hatteras from 20 October to 23 November 1969, over the mid-Atlantic outer Continental Margin from 30 March to 5 April 1970, from Nova Scotia to Cape Hatteras between 19 May and 14 June 1970, and near the Grand Banks between 6 and 21 October 1970. In November 1970, *Rockaway* surveyed a nerve-gas dump site.

On 23 September 1971 she was once again redesignated as WOLE-377 (off-shore law enforcement vessel). She then conducted a fisheries research cruise from Nova Scotia to Cape Hatteras between 2 March and 3 April 1971. Another research cruise took her back to the Grand Banks in May of 1971. From 15 July to 18 September 1971, *Rockaway* studied the influence of Mediterranean effluent upon the Atlantic.

*Rockaway* was decommissioned on 20 January 1972 and sold for scrap to BV Intershift of Rotterdam, Netherlands.

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**Photographs:**



CGC *Rockaway*, no date/photo number; photographer unknown.

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**Sources:**

*Rockaway*, Cutter Subject File, USCG Historian's Office

*Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, Vol. VI (1976), pp. 139-140.

"Listings: AVP's"; compiled and written by LCDR J. P. Smith, USCGR

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

*Ship's Characteristics Card*, USCGC *Rockaway*, 10 October 1967.

