



Wistaria, 1933

WAGL / WLI-254

Wistaria: a climbing woody vine of the genus *Wistaria*, with compound leaves and drooping purplish or white flower clusters.

Builder: United Dry Dock, Inc., New York, New York

Length: 121' 4"

Beam: 25'

Draft: 6' 9"

Displacement: 400 tons

Cost: \$129,800

Commissioned: March, 1933

Decommissioned: 7 October 1966

Disposition: Sold on 6 December 1968

Machinery: 1 electric motor driven by 2 General Electric generators driven by 2 Winton diesel engines; 240 SHP; single propeller

Performance & Endurance:

Max: 9.0 knots

Cruising: 8.0 knots; 1,600 mile range

Deck Gear: 10-ton boom; electric winch (1965); originally a lifting gear

Complement: 16 (1936)

Armament: None

Electronics: SPN-11 detection radar (1965)

Class History:

The United States Lighthouse Service Tender *Wistaria* was one of three tenders of the *Linden*-Class launched by the Lighthouse Service in the early 1930s. The other two were the *Columbine* and the *Linden*. They were designed as bay and sound tenders and were constructed of steel with a large open deck and hold space forward and a wood and steel superstructure. They were the first tenders built with diesel-electric drive. They were well designed and constructed and had a long service career with both the Lighthouse Service and the Coast Guard. A report issued by the Coast Guard in 1962 noted that the *Columbine*, sister ship to the *Wistaria*, that "although *Columbine* was designed for operation in inside waters, the last inclination experiment conducted on this vessel on 22 June 1948 . . . states . . . that the vessel . . . would have satisfactory stability under all normal operating conditions as a buoy tender on coastwise waters."

Tender History:

The *Wistaria* entered service in March of 1933 and was assigned to the 5th Lighthouse District. She was home ported in Baltimore, Maryland where she served from throughout her entire government career. She serviced aids to navigation in the Delaware Bay and Delaware River. During World War II she was assigned to the 5th Naval District and continued to serve out of Baltimore.

After the war she also began light icebreaking operations in addition to servicing aids to navigation. On 23 April 1949 she assisted a grounded barge in the Pocomoke Sound. From 11 to 12 June she fought a fire aboard the Colombian M/V *Ciudad de Neiva* near Baltimore along with other firefighters.

She was, throughout the latter part of her government career, known sometimes as the *Wisteria*. The *Wistaria* was decommissioned on 7 October 1966 and was sold on 6 December 1968.

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:
Eastwind Publishing, 1982.

