



Yakutat, 1948

WHEC-380

Radio call sign: NBWJ

Visual call sign: NBWJ/GERMANY ZULU

The *Yakutat* was named for a bay on the southern coast of Alaska.



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."

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 as well as an oceanographic winch were added.

See *DANFS* for naval service.

Builder: Associated Shipbuilders, Inc., Seattle, WA

Commissioned:

31 May 1944 (USN) ; loaned to USCG 31 August 1948

23 Nov 1948 (USCG); permanently transferred to USCG 26 September 1966

Decommissioned: 1 January 1971; transferred to South Vietnam that same day

PARTICULARS, AS OF 1966:

Length: 310' 9 1/4" oa; 300' 0" bp

Navigation Draft: 12' 11" full load

Beam: 41' max

Displacement: 2,529 tons full load

Main Engines: Fairbanks-Morse, direct reversing diesels

SHP: 6,400

Performance, Maximum Sustained: 17.6 kts, 9,500 nautical mile range

Performance, Economic: 11.0 kts, 20,000 nautical mile range

Fuel Capacity: 165,625

Complement: 10 officers, 3 warrants, 138 men

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

Sonar: SQS-1

Armament: 1 x 5"/38 Mk 12-1; 1 x Mk 10-1 A/S projector; 2 x Mk 32 Mod 2 torpedo tube launchers (3 tubes each);

Ship's History:

The *Yakutat* was homeported in New Bedford, MA from 23 November 1948 to 1 January 1971. She was used for law enforcement, ocean station, and search and rescue operations.

In February 1952, the crew earned one gold and five silver Life-Saving Medals for the rescue of crew members from the tankers *Fort Mercer* and *Pendleton* off Cape Cod after they had broken in two and foundered. In December 1952, she rescued four people from a downed private aircraft off St. George's, Bermuda. On 14 September 1953, *Yakutat* performed emergency repairs by constructing a concrete bulkhead and pumping bilges of the Spanish M/V *Marte*, which had a large hole at waterline, while some 750 miles southeast of Argentia, Newfoundland.

In the fall of 1955, *Yakutat* assisted the Portuguese F/V *Jose Alberto*. From 27 April to 3 May 1965 she dewatered and shored the damaged Liberian M/V *Bordabere* 400 miles south of Cape Race, Newfoundland, and escorted her to Halifax, NS. In late November of 1965, she assisted the U.S. M/Vs *American Pilot* and *Maumee Sun* following their collision west of Cape Cod Canal.

From 4 May 1967 to 1 January 1968, the *Yakutat* was assigned to Coast Guard Squadron Three, Vietnam. On 28 February 1969 minor damage was caused when the *Yakutat* was hit by F/V *Seafreeze Atlantic* while docking at New Bedford, MA. The *Yakutat* was reassigned to Coast Guard Squadron Three, Vietnam, from 17 May to 31 December 1970.

After her transfer to South Vietnam, she was renamed *Tran Nhat Duat* and managed to escape to the Philippines at the fall of South Vietnam. She was there used for spares and ultimately disposed of (scrapped?) in 1982.



USCGC *Yakutat*, circa 1960.

Sources:

Yakutat, Cutter Subject File, USCG Historian's Office

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships,

"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 Yakutat, 2 May 1966.
