



# ***Point Highland, 1962***

**WPB 82333**

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Point Highland: A prominent point of land located within the Everglades National Park on South Florida's Gulf coast.

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Builder: Coast Guard Yard, Curtis Bay, MD

Commissioned: 27 June 1962

Decommissioned: 24 July 2001

Disposition: Scheduled for transfer to Trinidad & Tobago on or after 30 September 2001

Length: 82'10" oa, 78' bp

Navigation Draft: 5'11" max (1960)

Beam: 17'7" max

Displacement: 69 fl; 60 light (1960)

Main Engines: 2 Cummins diesel (see class history)

BHP: 1,600

Performance, Maximum Sustained: 18.0 kts, 542-mi radius (1,600 hp, 1963)

Performance, Economic: 9.4 kts, 1,500-mi radius (1,600 hp, 1963)

Maximum Speed: 22.9 kts (1963)

Fuel Capacity: 1,840 gal

Complement: 8 men (1960), 2 officers, 8 men (1965)

Electronics:

Radar: SPN-11, CR-103 (1960), or SPS-64

Armament: 1 x 20mm (1960), 5 x .50 cal mg, 1 x 81 mm mortar (Vietnam service)

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**Class history**—The 82-foot patrol boats have mild steel hulls and aluminum superstructures. Longitudinally framed construction was used to save weight.

These boats were completed with a variety of power plants. 82301 through 82313, 82315 through 82317, and 82319 through 82331 were powered by two Cummins 600-hp diesels. Boats 82318 and 82332 through 82379 received two Cummins 800-hp diesels. The 82314 was fitted with two 1,000-hp gas turbines and controllable-pitch propellers. The purpose of this installation was to permit the service to evaluate the propulsion equipment. All units were eventually fitted with the 800-hp diesels. Units remaining in 1990 were re-equipped with Caterpillar diesels.

WPB 82301 through 82344 were commissioned without names; at that time the Coast Guard did not name patrol craft shorter than 100 feet. In January 1964 they were assigned names.

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### **Ship's history:**

Point Highland was built by the Coast Guard Yard and entered commissioned service on 27 June 1962 under the command of BMCP John R. Hearn, Jr. She was stationed at Little Creek, Virginia, from the time of her commissioning in 1962 to 1965. She was used for law enforcement and search and rescue operations. On 16 June 1965, she stood by the Norwegian M/V *Blue Master* and USS *Hartley* following a collision off Cape Henry.

She transferred to Crisfield, Maryland in 1965 to replace the USCGC Point Grace which had been assigned to duty in Vietnam. On 22 February 1967, *Point Highland* assisted following a collision between M/Vs *Bodoro* and *Beaver State* on the Potomac River. On 22 February 1967, she towed the disabled tug. On 22 February 1967, she towed the disabled tug *Hay-de* and a barge following a collision with M/V *Hellenic Halcyon* 10 miles north of Smith Point. On 21 January 1970, she located and towed a barge containing 1,200 tons of sulfuric acid 4 miles northwest of Tangier Island until she was relieved by a commercial tug, an operation for which she was awarded her first Coast Guard Unit Commendation. On 23 March 1970, she recovered a Navy LCM that had been abandoned in the Chesapeake Bay. She was ordered to Key West, Florida, for TDY during the Mariel Boatlift, in the summer of 1980. While assigned to this operation she assisted seven refugee boats and was awarded the Humanitarian Service Award.

*Point Highland* transferred to Chincoteague, Virginia, in April of 1981. She made her first drug bust later that year on 2-4 October when she seized a 61-foot pleasure yacht on the Chesapeake Bay that was smuggling 10 tons of marijuana. During a winter storm in February, 1983, the cutter was called out to assist the disabled F/V *Theodora*. At the same time, 30 miles east of Chincoteague, the 605-foot coal freighter *Marine Electric* reported that she was taking on water. After escorting the *Theodora* to Chincoteague Inlet, *Point Highland* raced to answer the *Marine Electric's* distress call. Battling 30-foot seas, 40 knot winds, and below-freezing temperatures, she arrived on scene and began what proved to be a futile search for survivors. *Point Highland* then recovered 17 bodies. She was awarded her second Unit Commendation for these actions. On 26 December 1985 the cutter again distinguished herself in a marathon rescue case by saving four persons from the distressed sailing vessel *Canisvliet* 336 miles off of Oregon Inlet, North Carolina. *Point Highland* battled 25-foot seas and 50 knot winds to effect the rescue which took 77 hours to complete, and at that time this was the longest offshore rescue by a WPB in Fifth Coast Guard District history. For her actions with this rescue she was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation.

On 17 July 1987, she towed the disabled F/V *Betty J* safely to Chincoteague. She participated in the military exercises Solid Shield '89 and Ocean Venture '90. During this same time she escorted the carrier USS *John F. Kennedy* into Norfolk, escorted three Soviet warships during their port call to Norfolk, and conducted MLE operations with the Virginia Air National Guard.

From 1997 to 2001, she was stationed at Cape May, New Jersey but during Operation Desert Storm she was assigned to patrol a security zone at the Sunny Point Military Ocean Terminal, in Southport, North Carolina. She spent three weeks in March, 1991 on the Cape Fear River protecting this vital depot. She was awarded her third Unit Commendation and a second Special Operations Service Ribbon for this operation. She then earned two Meritorious Unit Commendations and a Special Operations Service Ribbon for "aggressive and productive maritime law enforcement operations." From August 1991 to August 1992 *Point Highland* initiated 35 Federal Fisheries cases, six zero tolerance drug cases, one illegal immigrant case, one Boating While Intoxicated cases and apprehended five fugitives from justice.

She was decommissioned on 24 July 2001 and transferred to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago at a dockside ceremony in Cape May. She was renamed the *Bacolet Point*.

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#### **Sources:**

Cutter History File. USCG Historian's Office, USCG HQ, Washington, D.C.

"The 82-Foot Class Patrol Boat." *U.S. Coast Guard Engineer's Digest* No. 133 (Mar-Apr 1962), pp. 2-5.

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

