



# Galatea, 1933

WPC-108

Radio Call Sign: NRGF

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The cutter *Galatea* was named for the sea nymph Galatea, the daughter of Nereus and Doris. She was loved by the brutish Polyphemus, a Cyclops who wooed her with love songs; but Galatea loved Acis, the handsome son of a river nymph. When Polyphemus discovered them together, he crushed the youth under a huge boulder. In response to his pitiful cries, Galatea turned Acis into a river.

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Builder: John H. Mathis Company, Camden, New Jersey

Launched: 16 December 1932

Commissioned: 3 February 1933

Decommissioned: 15 March 1948

Disposition: Sold, 1 July 1948 to Southeastern Terminal and SS Company

Displacement: 1933: 337 tons full load

1945: 350 tons full load

Dimensions:

Length: 165' oa

Beam: 25' 3"

Draft: 7' 8" (1933); 10' (1945)

Machinery: 2 x Winton Model 158 6-cylinder diesels; 1,340 bhp

Propellers: twin, 3-bladed

Performance: Maximum speed: 16.0 knots

Maximum sustained: 14.0 knots for 1,750 statute miles

Cruising: 11.0 knots for 3,000 statute miles

Economic: 6.0 knots for 6,417 statute miles

Complement: 1933: 5 officers, 39 men

1945: 7 officers, 68 men

Armament: 1933: 1 x 3"/23; 1 x 1-pounders;

1941: 1 x 3"/23; 1 x Y-gun; 2 x depth charge tracks;

1945: 2 x 3"/50 (single-mounts); 2 x 20mm/80 (single mounts); 2 x depth charge tracks; 2 x Y-guns; 2 x Mousetraps.

Electronics: 1933: none

1945: Radar: SF; Sonar: QCO

Cost: \$258,000

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## Class History:

The 165-foot "B" Class cutters, sometimes referred to as the Thetis-Class, were a follow on to the 125-foot cutters. Both types of cutters were designed for the enforcement of Prohibition, but the 165-footers primary mission was to trail the mother ships that dispensed alcohol to smaller, faster vessels well beyond the territorial waters of the U.S. Hence these cutters had to have excellent sea-keeping qualities, good accommodations for the crew, and long range. Although Prohibition ended soon after most entered service, their design nevertheless proved to be adaptable to the many other missions of the Coast Guard. An article written soon after they entered service noted that: "the new cutters are low and rakish, without excessive superstructure or freeboard. A raking stem, well flared bow and cruiser stern give the appearance of speed as well as contribute to the seaworthiness of the vessels, a quality which has been demonstrated in actual service. . .The new ships are twin-screw driven by two 670 horse power Diesel engines, furnished by the Winton Engine Co. of Cleveland, Ohio. The shafting and propellers are arranged and supported in a novel manner. The ship is equipped with two overhanging rudders on a line with and just aft of the propellers. The rudders are supported by a streamline rudder post at the forward end which is bossed out for a bearing to take a stub shaft which extends through the propeller. This method of

arranging the rudders has proved remarkably successful. At full speed, the ships turn a complete circle in two minutes and eighteen seconds, and can be docked with ease under the most difficult conditions. On trial runs, the *Atalanta* averaged 16.48 knots at 468 RPM with practically no vibration and the engine under no evident strain. Due to the arduous service for which these vessels were built, only the finest materials available were used. . . It is interesting to note that genuine wrought iron pipe was used for practically all the services where resistance to corrosion, vibration, and strain was required. The fuel oil, lubricating oil, and water service to the main engines and auxiliaries; the fire and bilge system; and the steam heating system were all installed with genuine wrought iron pipe. At the Lake Union plant this pipe was furnished by the Reading Iron Company through the Crane Company's Seattle office and Bowles Company of Seattle. The new ships are a distinct contribution to modern shipbuilding and should be of great value to the Coast Guard."\*

They certainly did prove to be of great value to the Coast Guard. Most saw service as coastal convoy escorts during World War II and two, the *Icarus* and the *Thetis*, each sank a U-boat. Many saw service well into the 1960s and some still service as tour boats in New York City with the Circle Tour Line, testament to their sturdy and well-thought out design.

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### **Cutter History:**

CGC *Galatea* was built by the John H. Mathias Company of Camden, New Jersey. She was commissioned on 3 February 1933 under the command of LCDR Beckwith Jordan, USCG, and was assigned to Stapleton, New York as part of the New York Division's Special Patrol Force. She departed Camden on 16 February 1933 for a 10-day shakedown cruise and arrived at Stapleton on 26 February 1933. She was ordered to San Juan, Puerto Rico for temporary duty on 27 June 1934 and returned to Stapleton on 12 July 1934.

She was rearmed at the Merrill-Stevens Company plant in Jacksonville, Florida from 17 October 1940 to 14 November 1940. She was temporarily transferred to the Navy on 25 March 1941 for use as a training vessel for sonar operators at the Navy Sound School at Key West. She was permanently transferred to Key West on 16 July 1941. During the war, she escorted "KS" and "KN" convoys along the eastern seaboard and to Cuba and conducted anti-submarine and search and rescue patrols. In June 1945 she was reassigned to Stapleton, New York, with the Air-Sea Rescue unit based there.

She was placed "in reserve, in commission" status in April 1946 when most of her crew were needed to fill out the complements of buoy tenders and explosive loading fireboats in New York Harbor. She was decommissioned on 15 March 1948 and was stored at the Coast Guard Moorings at Cape May, New Jersey. She was sold on 1 July 1948 to the Southeastern Terminal and Steamship Company.

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### **Sources:**

Cutter files, USCG Historian's Office.

Canney, Donald L. *U.S. Coast Guard and Revenue Cutters, 1790-1935*. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995).

\*Nickum, W. C. "New 'Sisters' of the Coast Guard Patrol Go Into Service." *The Reading Puddle Ball* 3, No. 11 (February 1935), pp. 6-7.

Scheina, Robert L. *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters and Craft in World War II*. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1982).

U.S. Coast Guard. Public Information Division. Historical Section. *The Coast Guard at War: Transports and Escorts*. (Vol. V, No. I). (Washington, DC: Public Information Division, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, 1949).

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