



# USS LCI(L)-87

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Builder: Brown Shipbuilding Corporation, Orange, Texas

Commissioned: 2 February 1943

Decommissioned: 20 March 1946

Disposition: Transferred to the Maritime Commission on 2 February 1948 for disposal.

Length: 158' 6" oa

Beam: 23' 3"

Draft: 2' 8" (forward), 5' 3" (aft -- beaching condition)

Displacement: 216 tons (light); 234 tons (beaching condition); 389 tons (full load)

Propulsion: 8 x GM diesels; twin shafts (4 diesels per shaft); 1,600 hp; twin variable-pitch propellers

Range: 4,000 @ 12 knots

Top Speed: 15.5 knots

Complement: 3 officers, 21 enlisted

Troops: 188

Cargo capacity: 75 tons

Initial armament: 4 x 20mm (single-mount): 1 forward, 1 amidships, 2 aft; 2 x .50 caliber; 2" plastic splinter armor on gun shields, conning tower, and pilot house.

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## **Commanding Officers:**

LT John C. Whitbeck, USCG

LT Luther E. Smith, USCGR

LTJG Albert B. Vernon, USCGR

LTJG Fred L. Wadleigh, USCGR

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## History:

### **Flotilla 4 / 10 / 35, Group 104, Division 207**

The Coast Guard-manned USS *LCI(L)-87*, built by the Brown Shipbuilding Corporation of Orange, Texas, was commissioned on 2 February 1943 under the command of LT John C. Whitbeck, USCG. She was assigned as flagship of Coast-Guard LCI(L) Flotilla 4 which was under the command of CDR Miles Imlay, USCG. Outfitted in Houston, Texas, she departed for Norfolk, Virginia, where she was further outfitted and provisioned prior to departure for North Africa on 1 April 1943. After sailing across the Atlantic with the other LCI(L)'s of her flotilla, she participated in the North African occupation in Tunisia, from 1 June to 9 July 1943. She then landed troops during the invasion of Sicily on 9 July 1943 and the landings at Salerno on 9 September 1943.

In November of 1943 she sailed for England as part of the same flotilla, now renamed Flotilla 10 which was still under the command of CDR Imlay, in preparation for the invasion of Normandy. From December 1943 through May 1944 she underwent training and maneuvers off the southern coast of England in preparation for the invasion. As CDR Imlay's flagship, who was concurrently serving as a deputy assault commander, the 87 participated in the landings at Omaha Beach on 6 June 1944 and remained off the beach all day, under constant enemy fire, as Imlay directed incoming vessels to their assigned landing areas. She continued in this function from 7 June to 4 July 1944, and from July to October 1944 she escorted landing craft from England to the northern coast of France.

She left Falmouth on 5 October 1944 for Charleston, South Carolina, where from October 26th to December 14 she underwent repairs and alterations at the Charleston Navy Yard, Flotilla Ten being redesignated to Flotilla Thirty during this period. On 14 December 1944 she proceeded to Little Creek, Virginia. Here and at Solomons Island, Maryland she underwent amphibious training until December 18th, when she proceeded to Lamberts Point, Norfolk, Virginia, for repairs and alterations prior to departure for San Diego on December 27th. She proceeded via Key West and the Canal Zone to San Diego where from 27 January to 18 April 1945, she was attached to Ship Training Group, Naval Repair Base, San Diego. On 20 April 1945, she departed San Diego for Pearl Harbor as flagship of LCI(L) Flotilla 35 in company with LCI(L) Group 104. After five days for repairs she departed Pearl Harbor 6 May 1945, for Eniwetok.

Arriving at Eniwetok on 18 May 1945, she proceeded to Guam on May 22nd, where until July 26th she was based while engaged in off shore patrol and training B-29 crews in ditching practice. Returning to Eniwetok on 1 August 1945, she was engaged in inter-island ferry trips until 24 November 1945, when she departed for home.

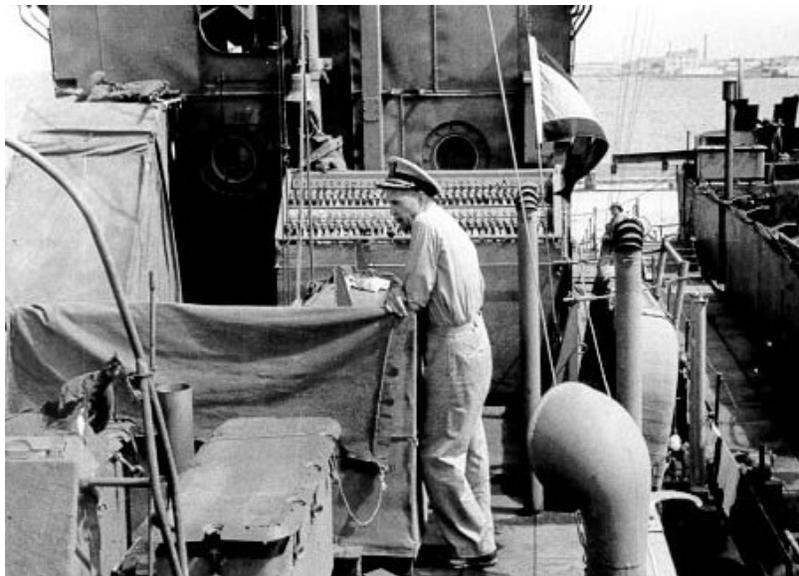
She arrived at San Pedro, California, on 6 February 1946, via Pearl Harbor and San Diego. Here she was decommissioned on 20 March 1946.

The *LCI(L)-87* earned four battle stars for her service in World War II. All *LCI(L)*s of Flotilla 10 were retroactively awarded the Coast Guard Unit Commendation for their service in the invasion of Normandy.

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No caption/date/photo number; photographer unknown.



"FLOT 4 CDR Imlay aboard LCI(L) 87, Sousse, Tunisia.:"; 5 June 1943; no photo number; photographer unknown. From Miles Imlay file, USCG Historian's Office.



No caption/date/photo number; photographer unknown.

LCI(L)s 87 and 488 (Navy-manned) beached. Possibly Slapton Sands, England, spring, 1944?



"LCI(L) 87 #2 - 20 MM Gun Crew at Gen'l Qtrs."; 6 June 1944; Photo No. 14 (Imlay collection); photographer unknown. From Miles Imlay file, USCG Historian's Office.



"USS LCI(L)-87: Returns to a U. S. port after service in European waters; photographed in 1944 - 1945. She was Coast Guard manned. Note SPAR photographers on boat in foreground."; 1944-1945; Photo No. 26-6-3506; photographer unknown. Official USCG photo in care of the National Archives.

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**Sources:**

LCI(L) file, Coast Guard Historian's Office.

United States Coast Guard. *The Coast Guard At War. V. Transports and Escorts. Vol. 2.* Washington: Public Information Division, Historical Section, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, May 1, 1949, pp. 117-130.

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