



## *Triumph, 1935*

CG-52301

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To be victorious.

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Builder: Coast Guard Yard, Curtis Bay, Maryland

Length: 52'

Beam: 14' 4"

Draft: 6' 8"

Displacement: 30 tons

Cost: ?

Commissioned: 1935

Decommissioned: N/A

Disposition: Lost at sea, 12 January 1961

Machinery: 1 Buda solid injection, 6-cylinder diesel engine; single propeller; 205 HP

Performance & Endurance:

Max: 10.5 knots  
Cruising:

Complement: 4

Armament: None

Electronics: 1 Motorola-type FMTR-80B transmitter-receiver with a remote unit model P-9204 with a 4-foot whip antenna; 1 C.G.-type TRC-121 transmitter-receiver with a C.G.-type MZ-102 whip antenna; 1 Raytheon-type 1080-C fathometer; 1 Janette CS12F alternator.

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## History:

The 52-foot motor lifeboat originally designated as "Type F" class was a developmental design. There were only two built, the *Triumph*, CG-52301 and her sister, the *Invincible*, CG-52300. These craft were given an improved cruising radius over the standard 36-foot class of motor lifeboats, a more powerful engine, and accommodations for crew and for rescued survivors. The 52-footer was not self-bailing or self-righting, but her initial stability was very high. The superstructure, including the wheelhouse, engine-room trunk, companionway, and the survivor compartments were constructed of bronze. The hull was divided into six watertight compartments, any two of which could be flooded and the boat would remain afloat. The watertight bulkheads were made of bronze and both were all welded construction. They were designed by the Coast Guard and both were built at the Coast Guard Yard.

Sixty persons could be carried below in their watertight compartments and an additional 100 could be carried on deck, weather permitting. They were not intended to replace the standard 36-foot class of motor lifeboats, but rather were designed to meet the need for a larger, more powerful lifeboat for use at locations with extreme sea conditions. During their time in service, they were the only Coast Guard craft under 100-feet in length that received names.

The *Triumph* was stationed at the Point Adams Lifeboat Station during her service life. She was lost while on a SAR case on 12 January 1961. On that date, two Coast Guard craft from the Cape Disappointment Lifeboat Station [LBS], CG-40564 and CG-36454, answered a call for assistance from the 38-foot crab boat *Mermaid*, with two crew on board, which had lost its rudder near the breakers off Peacock Spit. CG-40564 located the *Mermaid* and took her in tow. Due to adverse sea conditions the crew of CG-40564 requested the assistance of CG-52301 "*Triumph*," stationed at Point Adams LBS, which took up the tow upon her arrival on scene. Heavy breakers capsized CG-40564 and battered the CG-36454 but the 36-foot motor lifeboat [MLB] stayed afloat. The crew of 36454 then located and rescued the crew of the 40564 and then made for the Columbia River Lightship. The crew of the 36454 managed to deposit safely all on board the lightship before it too foundered. Soon thereafter a heavy breaker hit the *Triumph* which parted the tow line, set the *Mermaid* adrift, and capsized the *Triumph*. The crew of the *Mermaid* then rescued one of the six crewman on board *Triumph*. CG-36554 and CG-36535, also from the Point Adams LBS, then arrived on scene and 36535 took the *Mermaid* in tow. Another large breaker hit, snapping the 36535's tow line and sinking the *Mermaid*. The cutter *Yocona* arrived on scene soon after CG aircraft UF 2G No. 1273 from Air Station Port Angeles and began searching for survivors. Other CG aircraft, including UF 2G 2131, UF 2G 1240 and HO 4S 1330, arrived and began dropping flares. Foot patrols from the life-boat stations searched the beaches as well and recovered one Coast Guard survivor. Ultimately five Coast Guard crewman, all from MLB CG-52301 *Triumph*, drowned, as did both of the *Mermaid's* crew.

The Coast Guardsmen who gave their lives in the line of duty that night were:

BM1 John L. Culp, USCG; Coxswain

BM2 John S. Hoban, USCG; Crewman

SNBM Ralph E. Mace, USCG; Crewman

EN3 Joseph E. Petrin, USCG: Engineer

SN Gordon, F. Sussex, USCG: Crewman

BM1 Culp was posthumously awarded the Gold Lifesaving Medal. BM2 Hoban, SNBM Mace, EN3 Petrin, and SN Sussex were posthumously awarded the Silver Lifesaving Medal.

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52-Foot MLB *Triumph*, CG-52301.

No caption/date/photo number; photographer unknown.

Probably late-1930s-era photograph.

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**Sources:**

52-Foot MLB History File. USCG Historian's Office, USCG HQ, Washington, D.C.

Robert Scheina. *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft of World War II*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1982.

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

