

# FACT SHEET

## ICEBREAKER MACKINAW MARITIME MUSEUM, INC.

PO Box 39, Mackinaw City, MI 49701  
Phone/Fax 231.436.9825  
www.themackinaw.org



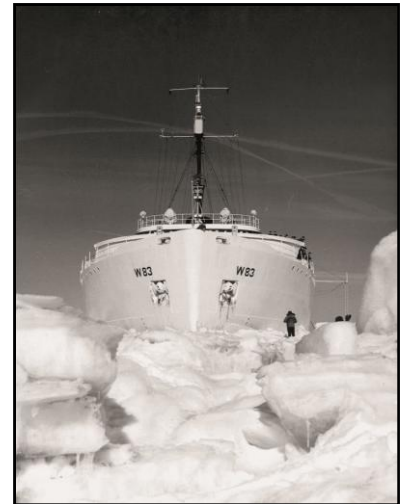
### History of the US Coast Guard Cutter *Mackinaw* WAGB-83

#### ***“Semper Paratus – Always Ready”***

The mission of the USCG Cutter *Mackinaw* WAGB 83 is captured powerfully in the motto of the US Coast Guard; “*Semper Paratus – Always Ready*”! From its very beginning, the *Mackinaw* proved it was *always ready* to accomplish great things. By keeping the Great Lakes shipping lanes open under the harshest winter conditions during World War II, the *Mackinaw* made it possible for iron ore and copper from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to be transported to the wartime factories in the lower Great Lakes. From these raw materials, tanks, airplanes, jeeps and other critical machinery were built with a single purpose – to win the war! Was the *Mackinaw* critical to the success of the war? The record is clear...yes!

After the war, the *Mackinaw* was regarded as the foremost icebreaker in the world. Marine engineers and shipbuilders from across the globe came to study the “Queen of the Great Lakes”. For 62 years, the *Mackinaw* performed remarkable icebreaking feats keeping important shipping lanes in the Great Lakes open to commercial traffic. As a result, the *Mackinaw* earned the reputation; “We move ships when no one else can”!

The *Mackinaw* is a wonder of marine engineering with a length of 290 feet, a beam of 74 feet, 4 inches and a displacement of more than 5,200 tons. She is powered by six 10 cylinder opposed-piston Fairbanks-Morse diesel engines which drive generators that produce electricity to power motors providing 10,000 shaft horsepower to turn two 14’ stern propellers. These stern propellers – each weighing 10.7 tons – drive the *Mackinaw* to a top speed of 19 knots (22 miles per hours) in open water or push her through three feet of solid ice at four knots or 20 or more feet of windrow ice.



The *Mackinaw*’s innovative 12’ bow propeller – weighing 7.2 tons – draws water from under the ice causing it to weaken and sag under its own weight and then, when crushed by the force and the weight of the ship, sends it streaming along both sides of the ship reducing friction. The protective ice belt of the hull is constructed of steel plates 1 5/8 inches thick. The *Mackinaw* also has a heeling system which can shift 112,000 gallons - or 467 tons - of ballast water from one side of the ship to the other in 90 seconds. This rocking action helps the *Mackinaw* free itself if stuck in the ice.



In six decades on the Great Lakes, the *Mackinaw* aided in many search and rescue (SAR) operations including the tragic sinking of the 588 foot freighter *SS Cedarville* on May 7, 1965. When struck by the *MV Topdalsfjord* in heavy fog just east of the Mackinac Bridge, the *Cedarville* was first aided by the *MV Weissenburg* and then the *Mackinaw* which transported rescued survivors to Mackinaw City. Today, the wreck of the *Cedarville* lies in 80 to 100 feet of water in Lake Huron one mile off the stern of the current location of the *Mackinaw*. The museum is proud to participate in an annual memorial ceremony remembering the tragic event and the 10 crew lost.

Beginning in 2000, the *Mackinaw* was proud to serve as the Christmas Tree ship bringing Christmas trees – cut down by the *Mackinaw's* crew in northern Michigan – to needy families in Chicago. Because of its participation in this and many other important community events, the *Mackinaw* enjoyed the reputation as the premier “goodwill ambassador” for the US Coast Guard on the Great Lakes.

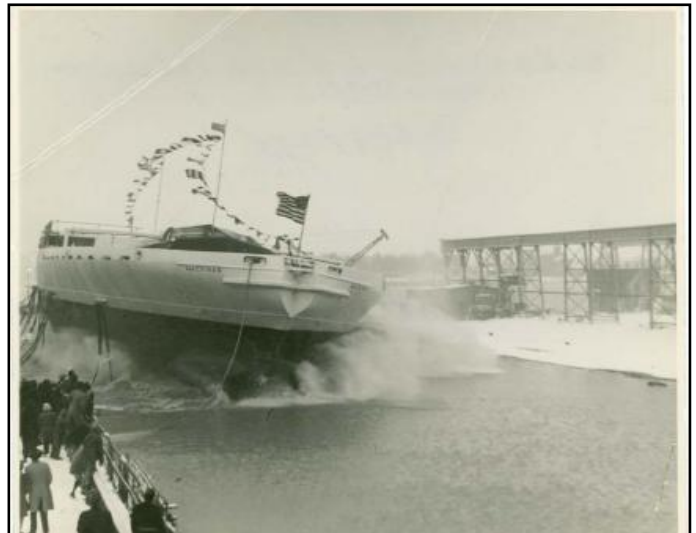


## USCG Cutter *Mackinaw* WAGB – 83: Ship Specifications

Built By:	Toledo Shipbuilding Co. and American Shipbuilding and Drydock Co., Toledo, Ohio
Keel Laid:	March 20, 1943
Commissioned:	December 20, 1944
Home Port:	Cheboygan, Michigan
Decommissioned:	June 9, 2006
Crew Complement:	8 Officers and 67 Enlisted
Length:	290 feet
Beam:	74 feet, 4 inches
Draft (Full Load):	19 feet, 6 inches
Displacement (Full Load):	5,252.4 tons
Main Engines:	6 Fairbanks-Morse, 10 cylinder
Propulsion:	Diesel Electric
Shaft Horsepower:	10,000
Propellers:	2 stern, 14 feet in diameter; 1 bow, 12 feet in diameter
Maximum Speed:	19 knots
Anchors:	2-3,000 lb. Bower Stockless with 2 inch diameter links
Diesel Fuel:	276,000 gallons
Potable Water:	7,000 gallons
Ballast Water:	121,631 gallons
Heel & Trim Ballast Water:	345,828 gallons



Women Workers on *Mackinaw*  
Toledo Shipbuilding Company  
June 1943



Launch of *Mackinaw*  
March 1944

<b>United State Coast Guard; Department of Homeland Security</b>	
Established:	1790
Motto:	<i>Semper Paratus – Always Ready</i>
2010 Budget:	\$10.1B
Number on Active Duty:	42,000
Assets:	Cutters (>65 ft.) = 250 Boats (<65 ft.) = 1,784 Aircraft = 198
Mission:	Ports, waterways and coastal security Drug interdiction Aids to navigation Search and rescue Living marine resources Marine safety Defense readiness Migrant interdiction Marine environmental protection Ice operations Other law enforcement

### **Did you know?**

On an average day, the US Coast Guard...

- Saves 13 lives!
- Responds to 64 search and rescue cases!
- Rescues 77% of mariners in imminent danger!
- Keeps 959 lbs of cocaine off the streets!
- Saves \$260,000 in property!
- Interdicts 10 undocumented workers!
- Services 49 buoys!
- Provides a presence in all major ports!
- Screens 679 commercial vessels!
- Investigates 10 pollution incidents!
- ...and much more!

# Images of the US Coast Guard Cutter *Mackinaw* WAGB-83



*Mackinaw* underway in the ice



*Mackinaw's* bell



*Mackinaw* crew on the ice



*Mackinaw's* last sail



*Mackinaw* in Chicago

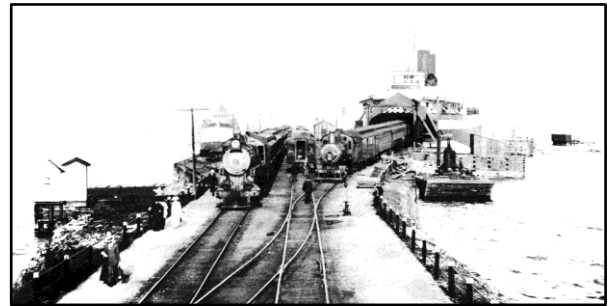


*Mackinaw* near Sault Ste. Marie, MI in 2004

## History of the Icebreaker Mackinaw Maritime Museum, Inc.

When the US Coast Guard decided to retire the *Mackinaw* and replace her with a new and more efficient icebreaker, a group of local citizens, determined to preserve the history and legacy of the Icebreaker *Mackinaw*, came together and secured the ship with the assistance of the Coast Guard and elected officials. Thus was born the Icebreaker Mackinaw Maritime Museum, Inc.

The *Mackinaw* was brought to her new home in her namesake city, Mackinaw City, and moored at the historic Chief Wawatam railroad ferry dock. Since the Icebreaker *Mackinaw* was decommissioned in 2006 and the museum opened to the public, approximately 80,000 visitors have climbed the brow to tour the ship. Given the fact the museum is only open from late May to early October, these visitor numbers are truly impressive.



Unlike similar ships, stripped at the time they were decommissioned, the Icebreaker *Mackinaw* displays the engines, equipment, furniture, charts, awards, tools and related artifacts as though she is virtually ready to get underway. The preservation and display of these historic items portrays the reality of life aboard the *Mackinaw* and, when combined with video and docent presentations, a truly engaging and exciting educational experience is provided to visitors.



The location of the Icebreaker Mackinaw Maritime Museum at the historic Chief Wawatam dock is nothing short of spectacular. From the fantail of the *Mackinaw*, the visitor is treated to a stunning panoramic view of the Straits of Mackinac including the five-mile long Mackinac Bridge, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and historic Mackinac, Round and Bois Blanc Islands. Freighter, ferry and recreational boating traffic are very active throughout the warmer months in the straits. And, for decades, the Straits of Mackinac have been known as the finish line for the famous Chicago Yacht Club Race to Mackinac and Bayview Mackinac Race.

The Chief Wawatam dock, situated near the heart of downtown Mackinaw City between two well-equipped marinas and the Mackinac Island ferry boat docks, is a hub of summer activity. For decades the region has been one of the top tourist destinations in Michigan enjoying more than one and a half million visitors each season. Mackinaw City is also the home of Fort Michilimackinac - a “living” colonial-era fort at the water’s edge - and the well-known Old Mackinac Point and McGulpin Point lighthouses which further add to the rich history of the region.



For more information on the Icebreaker Mackinaw Maritime Museum, Inc., please visit our website – [www.themackinaw.org](http://www.themackinaw.org).