

US COAST GUARD CUTTER STORIS
(WMEC 38)
Womens Bay
Kodiak vicinity
Kodiak Island Borough County
Alaska

HAER AK-50
AK-50

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

U.S. COAST GUARD CUTTER *STORIS*
(WMEC-38)

HAER No. AK-50

Rig / Type of Craft: Medium Endurance Cutter (1 July 1972)
WAGB-38 (1 May 1966)
WAGL-38 (30 September 1942)

Trade: Multi-Mission – Bearing Sea patrol, aiding domestic navigation,
search and rescue, buoy tending, and law/fisheries enforcement.

Principal Dimensions: Length (oa): 230'
Beam: 43' 2"
Draft: 15'
Displacement: 1,715 (fl) tons - 1945
2,030 (fl) tons – 2006

(The listed dimensions are “as built,” but it should be noted that draft and displacement were subject to change over time.)

Location: Womans Bay; Kodiak vicinity; Kodiak Island Borough, Alaska

Dates of Construction: 14 July 1941 – 30 September 1942

Designer: The U.S. Coast Guard designed the ship and the Toledo Shipbuilding Company provided the detailed drawings.

Builder: Toledo Shipbuilding Company in Toledo, Ohio.

Present Owner: U.S. Coast Guard

Disposition: Decommissioned, February 2007

Significance: Since 1991, the *Storis* has held the distinction as the “Queen of the Fleet,” the oldest ship in the U.S. Coast Guard. She served her country for sixty-four years, beginning service during World War II. In 1957, the *Storis* with USCG cutters *Spar* and *Bramble* earned the distinction as the first American vessels to circumnavigate North America, via the “Northwest Passage” – the Arctic route above North America navigable by deep draft vessels.

Author: Brian Clayton

Project Information:

This project is part of the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), a long-range program to document historically significant engineering and industrial works in the United States. The Heritage Documentation Programs of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, administers the HAER program.

The project was prepared under the direction of the HAER Maritime Program Coordinator, Todd Croteau, who also generated the vessel drawings; Jet Lowe, HAER photographer. Special thanks to Commander Jim McCauley and the crew of the *Storis* for giving us a tour of the ship. Their help and assistance greatly benefited our project.

In 1941, the United States and Denmark signed the Hull-Kauffmann Agreement, a compact that gave America permission to construct military bases in Greenland during World War II. Prior to the agreement, the United States found Greenland to be important for several reasons: the island exported cryolite (a key mineral used in manufacturing aircraft aluminum); its location was pivotal for refueling aircraft destined for England under the Lend-Lease Act; and meteorologists found the location useful for forecasting the weather in Western Europe. The installations began to take shape when Admiral Harold Stark (Chief of Naval Operations) ordered the creation of the Greenland Patrol, a collection of U.S. Navy and Coast Guard vessels. The navy assigned the patrol two missions: to assist the Army in building an air base, and prevent the Germans from operating weather stations in Greenland.¹

On 14 July 1941, the Toledo Shipbuilding Company in Ohio laid the keel of the *Storis*. Naval architects designed the *Storis* as a supply ship for duty off Greenland and incorporated the Greenland Patrol's previous experiences into the ship's design with a reinforced steel hull for light icebreaking – her hull had a 7/8" steel ice belt.² Her design also resembled the characteristics of the 180-foot buoy tenders. She was 230 feet in length and 43 feet and 2 inches amidships. *Storis*'s fifteen-foot draft and slender beam allowed her to navigate up into the narrow fjords and deliver supplies. The Coast Guard originally named the ship *Arctic*, but towards the end of construction changed the name to *Eskimo*. The State Department thought Greenland's indigenous population might be offended by that name so the Coast Guard again changed the name to *Storis*, a Danish word for "great ice" or "old ice."³

Engineers designed the ship around the *Storis*'s power plant, fuel requirements, and supporting equipment. Architects decided upon a diesel-electric power plant for the *Storis* due to a lack of reduction gears; high priority warships received steam turbines with reduction gears. Cooper-Bessemer provided three diesel engines (GN-8 type, eight-cylinder) that were connected to three

¹ John A. Tilley, "The Coast Guard & the Greenland Patrol," Commandant's *Bulletin* (August 1992), pp. 2-5.

² *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³ Robert Erwin Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea: History of the United States Coast Guard, 1915 to the Present* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1987), pp. 213-214.

generators on the hold level. The ship had one Westinghouse electric-propulsion motor rated at 1,800-brake horsepower (BHP) that drove a single, five bladed propeller that had an eleven-foot diameter. Trial runs revealed the ship's performance during its shakedown cruise: "maximum speed at thirteen knots and a cruising distance of 10,900 miles, maximum sustained speed at twelve and a half knots and a cruising distance of 11,300 miles, cruising speed at ten knots and a cruising distance of 15,500 miles, and an economic speed at eight knots and a cruising distance of 21,300 miles." Located above the engine room were two auxiliary generators on the second deck and a third emergency generator located above that room. The ship held 108,430 gallons of diesel fuel in six tanks on the hold level. Three were directly behind amidships and three more were behind the engine room.⁴

Designers also provided the *Storis* with an assortment of deck equipment, a seaplane, electronics, and armament to assist her in Greenland. The ship had two deck booms with a capacity to lift up to twenty tons and both had electric hoists. The forward boom handled supplies in the forward well and the aft boom serviced a Grumman J2F airplane located on the fantail. To protect the ship from surface attack, architects mounted two single 3"/50 guns, one on the bow and the other behind the exhaust stack. The ship carried four 20mm guns to protect against aerial threats and depth charges to protect against submarine threats. Additional anti-submarine hardware consisted of four Y-guns and mousetraps (anti-submarine rockets). The armory was in the lazarette and gunnery lockers were beneath the captain's quarters. Additional armory stowage was on the hold level in front of the reefers. In 1943, the Coast Guard equipped the ship with air-search radar, but technology was rapidly changing and the ship received a sophisticated radar set and sonar in 1945.⁵

Safety at sea was paramount for the ship's crew during World War II because of the frigid waters off Greenland. The Coast Guard equipped the ship with four 25-foot, motor surfboats and multiple life rafts around the ship. Water temperatures frequently fell below thirty-two degrees

⁴ Robert L. Scheina, *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft of World War II* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1982), p. 91; "USCGC *Storis* WMEC 38," *Booklet of General Plans* (Baltimore, MD: U.S. Coast Guard Engineering Logistics Center, 2001), plate 3.

⁵ Scheina, *Cutters & Craft of World War II*, p.91; *Booklet of General Plans*, plates 3-8.

and the survival rate of an individual that fell into those waters was measured in minutes. A person would drown because hypothermia set in quickly and would numb a man's limbs, preventing him from swimming.⁶

Storis's original complement of crew consisted of seventeen officers and 131 enlisted personnel. Architects placed the berthing for the lower enlisted crew on the second deck, just forward amidships, and the living quarters had showers and heads. Senior enlisted personnel, Chief Petty Officers and First Class, had living quarters on the main deck, along the portside just aft of the scullery. Officers were along the starboard side of the main deck, aft of the wardroom. The captain had his private suite on first level that contained a cabin, two staterooms, and a shared shower and head.⁷ Up until the end of World War II, the Coast Guard had the rank of Commodore and the ship could accommodate the flag rating. With the Commodore on board, his flagship could command a squadron of ships.⁸

Above the captain's room, the navigation and command of the ship took place on the bridge (second level). The ship's wheel provided maneuverability through a connection to the electro-hydraulic steering gear. The steering room was in the aft compartment on the second deck. The equipment in the wheelhouse was basic during World War II, but through time became very sophisticated. The radio room was behind the bridge and a coding room behind the radio room. The bridge also had navigation wings on each side complete with gyro repeaters and peloruses. Atop the wheelhouse, there was a binnacle, gyro repeater, and pelorus. Engineers placed the gyrocompass on the main deck behind the emergency generator room. The mast on the upper level contained the essential electronics for the bridge equipment and supported an enclosed crow's

⁶ "Donald L. Atkins, "Photograph of *Storis* Ship Model," n.d., *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC; Tilley, *Greenland Patrol*, p. 13.

⁷ *Booklet of General Plans*, plates 3-7.

⁸ *Ibid.*; Captain Joseph N. Shrader, "Commodore versus Rear Admiral (Lower Half), <http://www.uscg.mil/reservist/mag2004/V51-5/ltrs.htm>, assessed 10 April 2007.

nest (lookout tower). A crewmember stood in the tower during icebreaking operations and scanned ahead for openings in the ice.⁹

Architects arranged the galley on the centerline, forward amidships. The enlisted crew's messroom was on the port side off the galley and the officer's wardroom was on the starboard side off the galley. The scullery was behind the crew's mess on the port side and behind the scullery was the CPO's messroom. Reefers were on the hold level directly beneath the galley and dry stores were on the second deck forward of the enlisted crew's space. Water supply came from various tanks located in the forepeak tanks and aft tanks located behind the electric motor. Developments in technology led to the creation of an osmosis plant that treated water on board the ship, which in turn led to greater endurance and extended periods at sea.¹⁰

In 1972, the Coast Guard authorized the first major renovations of the *Storis*. While in Seattle, Washington, the Coast Guard converted the *Storis* during a refit, removing her cargo hold and transforming the ship from a light icebreaker (WAGL) to a medium endurance cutter (WMEC). With the new conversion, the Coast Guard eliminated thirty men from the ship's roster. As a medium endurance cutter, her mission changed to fisheries and law enforcement in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska. The ship's new mission also required new boats for the boarding parties. At her decommission, the *Storis* had two rigid hull inflatable (RIB) boats onboard.¹¹

The Coast Guard performed another significant renovation on the *Storis* in 1986. All three of her main engines were replaced with Electric Motive Diesels coupled to Westinghouse generators. Each generator created 290 volts at 700 rpm for the single Westinghouse motor that ran between 160 and 170 rpm. Normal operations allowed two engines to run online and the third stood as a backup. Additional work encompassed new berthing for women, port side, and a female crew's

⁹ *Booklet of General Plans*, plates 1-6.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, plates 6-8.

¹¹ "*Storis* Brochure," n.d., *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC; site visit August 2006.

lounge, starboard side, forward of frame seventy-seven to the bulkhead. This addition also increased the crew's roster to seventeen officers and seventy-four enlisted personnel.¹²

The Coast Guard modified the ship in other ways, too. During her last refit, it moved the old sickbay, from behind the galley, to the port side, behind the new female berthing. The ship received a new 25 mm cannon where the old 3"/50 had been mounted on the foredeck and two .50 caliber machine guns. The Coast Guard also removed the old double-top boom and replaced it with a new Alaskan Marine crane, which allowed the *Storis* to handle heavy buoys.¹³

The Toledo shipyard launched the *Storis* on 4 April 1942 and the Coast Guard commissioned her on 30 September 1942. She headed for Greenland to begin duty as a supply ship for the U.S. Army's "BLUIE bases," military installations. The *Storis* also participated in convoy protection due to German submarines in the area and the lack of American vessels in the surrounding area. On 13 June 1943, four Coast Guard vessels, including the *Storis*, were escorting a convoy from Greenland to Newfoundland. Early in the morning, the *Storis*'s crew watched as a torpedo slammed into the Coast Guard cutter *Escanaba*. The cutter sank within minutes and only two men survived out of a crew of 105 men.¹⁴

In 1944, two incidents occurred that involved the *Storis* and German weather stations. In July 1944, the *Northland* and *Storis* embarked on a mission to capture a German weather station operating on the east coast of Greenland. By the time the Coast Guard arrived, the Germans were gone, but American personnel did find a crude structure, radio transmitters, and a damaged trawler named the *Coberg*. In October 1944, the Coast Guard dispatched four ships to locate another German weather station operating on the east coast. The *Eastwind*, *Northland*, *Southwind*, and *Storis*, departed in route to North Little Koldewey Island. This time Coast Guard personnel found and subdued twelve German soldiers and captured a German trawler, *Externsteine*, in the vicinity.¹⁵

¹² "Storis Brochure"; *Booklet of General Plans*, plate 6.

¹³ *Ibid.* plates 3-4.

¹⁴ Tilley, Coast Guard, pp. 8, 13-14. Later evidence suggests that the *Escanaba* struck a mine.

After World War II, the *Storis* returned to the United States and performed a variety of tasks. Her next homeport was in Curtis Bay, Maryland, but on 15 September 1948, the Coast Guard reassigned her to Juneau, Alaska. In Alaska, the *Storis* performed civic missions for the towns and hamlets inside the state. One of her first duties was to provide medical, dental, and legal assistance to the outlying villages in Alaska. In another civic mission on 27 March 1964, the *Storis* diverted from her patrol to Cook Inlet where she broke ice after a major earthquake hit Alaska, centered in Prince William Sound, Alaska. The earthquake spawned several tsunamis and one that damaged major parts of Kodiak, Alaska, *Storis*'s homeport.¹⁶

In March 1965, the *Storis* visited St. Paul, Pribilof Islands to supply a LORAN station and helped raise the spirits of the kids on island. The schoolchildren on the island received a surprise visit from the *Storis*'s mascot, Red Dog — a St. Bernard. Most of the children had never seen a dog before because the town forbids dogs due to the migration of seals to the island. The dog was an instant hit with the children and provided a lot of excitement during the day.¹⁷

Another civic mission occurred in 1989 when crewmembers from the *Storis* contributed their time to repair a small cemetery in Unalaska, Alaska. Several Revenue Cutter and Coast Guard sailors were buried there and the Coast Guard wanted to renovate the cemetery because it was in a state of disrepair. Over the course of four visits, crewmembers restored the cemetery and burial plots of sailors from the *Haida*, *Perry*, *Rush*, and *Bear*.¹⁸

The *Storis* also contributed time to perform scientific missions for multiple federal agencies. The *Storis* supported the creation of new LORAN stations in Alaska and during the summers of 1955

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 15-16.

¹⁶ Robert L. Scheina, *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft 1946-1990* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1990), p. 47; Alaska Patrol Report USCGC *Storis* (WAG-38), Annex A, 1964, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

¹⁷ "Storis Mascot Makes Big Hit in Dogless Island of the Seals," 17 March 1965, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

¹⁸ "Storis Crew Restores Grave Sites," July-Sept 1989, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

and 1956, the *Storis* participated in the U.S. Navy's Arctic Operations. These smaller operations ultimately lead to her most famous mission the following year¹⁹

On 1 July 1957, the *Storis*, *Bramble*, and *Spar* (USCG buoy tenders) set out on mission to survey a deepwater passage across the top of North America through the Arctic. The military sought an alternative route for resupplying the DEW radar stations because the Arctic's western side was blocked by glacial ice most of the year. The Coast Guard vessels set sail from Seattle with a convoy of supply vessels headed to the distant DEW stations. After leaving the convoy behind, the *Storis* and two buoy tenders set out eastward into the Beaufort Sea to chart the Arctic waters and to set buoys that marked the deepwater channels off Canada's Northwest Territories. By 11 August, the three ships charted a route through Mackenzie Bay to Queen Maud Gulf. The flotilla proceeded north towards Boothia Peninsula and through the Bellot Straights on 5 September – the straight links Peel Sound to Prince Regent Inlet. The *Storis*, *Bramble*, and *Spar* succeeded in their mission and became the first American vessels to traverse the North American continent from the Pacific to the Atlantic. They returned to Boston on 19 September 1957 and received a large celebration for completing their mission. In December 1957, the U.S. Coast Guard assigned the *Storis* to her new homeport in Kodiak, Alaska; the following summer, the *Storis* supported the U.S. military by carrying supplies to the DEW line stations. The *Storis* remained in Kodiak from 1958 to 2007 conducting law enforcement, SAR missions, scientific endeavors, and civic work until her decommissioning.²⁰

Additional scientific missions took place in the 1960s. After the devastating "Great Alaskan Earthquake" on 27 March 1964, the *Storis* assisted the University of Alaska in building experimental seismological stations in the Aleutian Islands.²¹ In August 1969, the *Storis* facilitated another

¹⁹ "Welcome Aboard the United States Coast Guard Cutter *Storis*," n.d., *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.; Scheina, *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft 1946-1990*, p. 47.

²⁰ Johnson, *Guardians*, pp. 307-308; "No. 214-57, Northwest Passage Conqueror to Visit NYC for Three Days," 27 September 1957, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC; http://www.uscg.mil/d17/cgcstoris/about/1957_NW_Pass_Expedition.pdf, pp. 1-9, assessed 10 April 2007.

²¹ "Alaska Patrol Report."

scientific study between the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and the U.S. Geological Survey, east of Point Barrow, Alaska in the Beaufort Sea.²²

On December 1954, the *Storis* completed her first of many SAR missions in the United States. She rescued the occupants of Coast Guard airplane crash in Haines Harbor, Alaska and helped extinguish a fire at the cold-storage factory in Juneau, AK on 17 January 1956.²³

In April 1959, the U.S. Coast Guard received an emergency request from the Russian Embassy in Washington, DC to aid an injured Soviet sailor. The sailor became injured on the ship when he fell into a hatch, hit his head, and suffered brain damage. On 7 April, the *Storis* set sail overnight in rough weather from Akun Bay and met the Soviet trawler, *Pischavaya Industria*, 100 miles north of Pribilof Island in the Bering Sea. The Coast Guard removed the seaman and took him on board the *Storis* where a navy doctor administered treatment. Afterward, the Coast Guard flew the sailor to a hospital in Anchorage, Alaska for care.²⁴

From 1965 to 1970, the *Storis* was busy conducting search and rescue missions in Alaskan waters. On 18 May 1965, the *Storis* rescued a Russian sailor and returned him to the fishing vessel *Dozorny* in Seward, Alaska. *Storis'* crew took aboard the survivors from the fishing vessel *Emerald C* that sunk at sea and returned them to port on 13 November 1966. On 26 December 1967, the *Storis* removed an injured sailor from the fishing vessel *Koshin Maru No. 2* that was 180 miles south of Kodiak, Alaska. On 30 July 1968, the *Storis* rescued the sinking fishing vessel *Rebecca* and towed it to Dutch Harbor, Alaska. On 15 May 1969, the *Storis* took aboard an injured Russian sailor from the motor vessel *Topol*. On September 1969, ice punctured the *Storis's* hull while she was trying to

²² "Silver City Daily Press," 19 August 1969, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

²³ Scheina, *Cutters & Craft 1946-1990*, p. 47.

²⁴ "U.S. Cutter Battles Storm to Save Red," 7 April 1959, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC; "U.S. Top Alaska Officer Aids Red Sailor's Rescue," 10 April 1959, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

free the ice bound tug and barge *Active* close to Point Barrow, Alaska. On 15 July 1970, the *Storis* aided the disabled fishing vessel *Kaare* until a commercial tug interceded.²⁵

In January 1980, the *Storis* responded to an emergency involving two South Korean ships beset in ice near St. Mathew Island, Alaska. The *Gae Cheog*, a cargo ship, was transferring supplies to the *Gae Yang*, a fishing trawler, when an ice flow enveloped both vessels. The *Gae Cheog* and *Gae Yang* were drifting towards the rocky coastline and the ships summoned the Coast Guard for help. The *Storis* arrived on the scene and eventually freed both vessels from the ice.²⁶

During the 1960s, the *Storis* patrolled the Bering Sea and provided fisheries enforcement – a majority of the work that the *Storis* accomplished in the Bearing Sea and the Gulf of Alaska was to enforce American fishing treaties and regulations among domestic and foreign vessels. In one incident, the *Storis* caught a Russian trawler fishing within Alaskan waters that resulted in a \$5,000 fine.²⁷

During the 1960s, the *Storis* performed seven law enforcement operations. One key duty was to protect the Alaskan fishing grounds from Russian and Japanese encroachment, as well as illegal harvesting of marine resources. Before the advent of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in 1982, the United States protected its marine resources by enforcing the laws pertaining to its territorial waters that prohibited foreign vessels from fishing or crabbing within twelve nautical miles from the U.S. shoreline.²⁸

On 17 January 1972, the *Storis* found two Soviet fishing vessels within the territorial waters of the United States. The *Storis*'s radar picked up the two vessels inside the protective zone and upon

²⁵ Scheina, *Cutters & Craft 1946-1990*, p. 48.

²⁶ *The Kodiak Mirror*, 15 January 1980, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

²⁷ "Russian Trawler SRTM-8-457 Seized by USCGC *Storis* off Aleutians, Alaska," 22 March 1967, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC; "John R. Malloy III, ex-LT, USCG," n.d., *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

²⁸ Scheina, *Cutters & Craft 1946-1990*, pp. 47-48; Christopher K. Vanderpool, "Marine Science and the Law of Sea," *Social Studies of Science* 13, no. 1 (February 1983): p. 115.

further investigation, the *Storis* found the 278-foot fishing vessel, *Kolyvan*, offloading its catch to the 362-foot fish processor, *Lamut*, in violation of U.S. laws. The *Storis* sent two armed boarding parties aboard the ships and ordered the ships to the naval base in Adak, Alaska. While the ships were in route to Adak, the *Lamut* tried to flee with the Coast Guard personnel aboard. After an intense one-hour chase, the *Storis*'s captain, Commander William P. Allen, received permission from the commandant to fire a shot across the bow of the *Lamut*. *Storis* sent a message to the *Lamut* that it was prepared to open fire and the Soviet vessel stopped. The *Storis* arrested both Russian masters and placed them on board the ship. All three ships arrived in Adak and charges were assessed against the two Russian ships. In the end, the Soviets paid \$80,000 in fines and \$170,000 in an out-of-court arrangement with the United States marking an end to the event.²⁹ Afterwards, the Coast Guard awarded the *Storis* with a Unit Commendation in Seattle, Washington. The *Storis*'s captain received a Meritorious Service Medal and the boarding parties' officers received Commendation Medals from Admiral James Palmer, District 17 Commander.³⁰

The remainder of her work in the 1970s consisted of four fisheries violations. Japanese fishing vessels were the primary violators and the *Storis* seized four ships for intrusions into American waters: *Kaki Maru* (18 August 1970), *Kohoyo Maru* and *Ryoyo Maru* (April 1972), and *Kaiyo Maru* (June 1979).³¹

During the 1980s, the *Storis* continued to perform fisheries enforcement in the Bearing Sea and issue citations. On 27 March 1983, the *Storis* seized the Japanese fishing vessel, *Shinei Maru*, for fisheries infringement, as well as the two Japanese fishing vessels *Hiyo Maru* and *Tomi Maru* on 30 March 1983.³² In September 1987, the *Storis*'s crew boarded the fishing vessel, *Mary Ellen*, and found 6,000 pounds of illegal sablefish on board the ship. In another incident the following month,

²⁹ "Soviet Fishermen Intercepted," n.d., *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

³⁰ Don Page, "Of Confrontations and Tons of Gold," 1972, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

³¹ Scheina, *Cutters & Craft 1946-1990*, p. 48.

³² *Ibid.*

the *Storis*'s crew boarded another fishing vessel, *Rebecca Irene*, and found an illegal catch of sablefish aboard the ship too. The Coast Guard detained both ships, offloaded their catch, and fined both vessels.³³

In a historic ceremony on 1 October 1991, the Coast Guard decommissioned the oldest ship in its fleet, the lighthouse tender *Fir*, and transferred the title "Queen of the Fleet," along with the gold hull numbers, to the *Storis* in Seattle, Washington. The U.S. Lighthouse Service ordered the construction of the *Fir* in 1939, but when the Lighthouse Service merged with the U.S. Coast Guard, the ship was commissioned as a Coast Guard cutter. The *Fir* served the Coast Guard as a buoy tender for fifty-two years before her retirement.³⁴

Another historic event occurred on 17 October 1992 when the *Storis* visited the Russian port of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski. Previously, the Russian cutter *Volga* visited San Francisco, California to take part in the Coast Guard's two-hundredth anniversary in May 1990. The *Volga* is part of the Russian Frontier Troops, an organization very similar to the U.S. Coast Guard, and patrols the Bearing Sea. While in port, the *Volga* moored beside the *Storis* and entertained the *Storis*'s crew with an elaborate ceremony. The visit helped to forge a greater bond between both nations and the ships that patrol the Maritime Boundary Line in the Bearing Sea.³⁵

After sixty-four years of service, the Coast Guard decommissioned the *Storis* in February 2007. The *Storis* provided assistance to the outlying towns and hamlets as far out as the Aleutians and assisted Alaskan fishermen in their time of need. In addition, the *Storis* protected the fishing grounds from foreign vessels and illegal catches so the natural resources would not become

³³ *Coast Guard News*, 3 September 1987, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC; "A Helluva Way to Come to Port," 8 October 1987, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

³⁴ "Queen of the Fleet: *Storis* Becomes Coast Guard's Oldest Cutter at *Fir* Retirement," December 1991, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

³⁵ "Coast Guard 'Opens' Kamchatka," n.d., *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

depleted. During a ceremony in February 2007, the *Storis* passed its title, “Queen of the Fleet,” and the gold hull numbers to the *Acushnet*, another World War II cutter based in Ketchikan, Alaska.³⁶

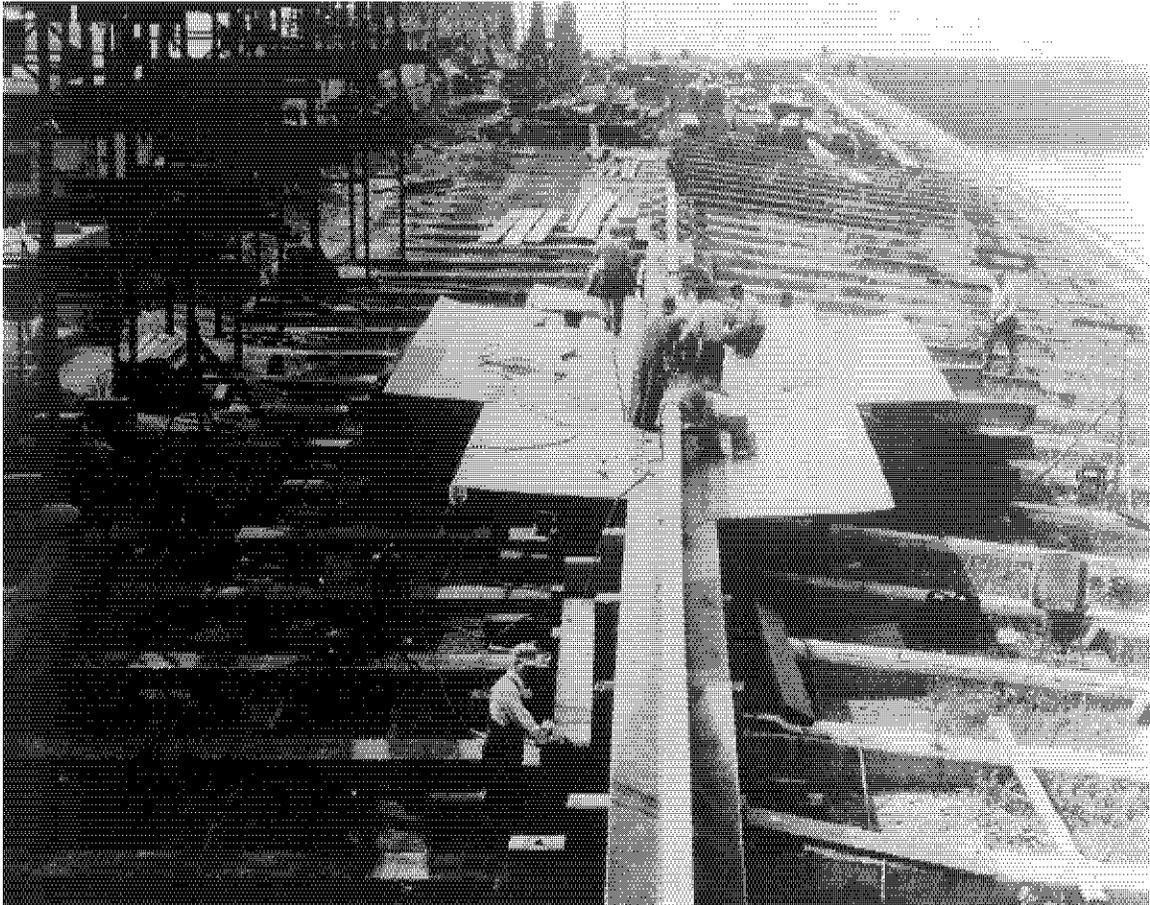
³⁶“Cutter *Storis* to be Decommissioned,” 27 November 2005, *Storis* Collection, U.S. Coast Guard Historian’s Office, Washington, DC.

Appendix A***Storis's* Commanding Officers**

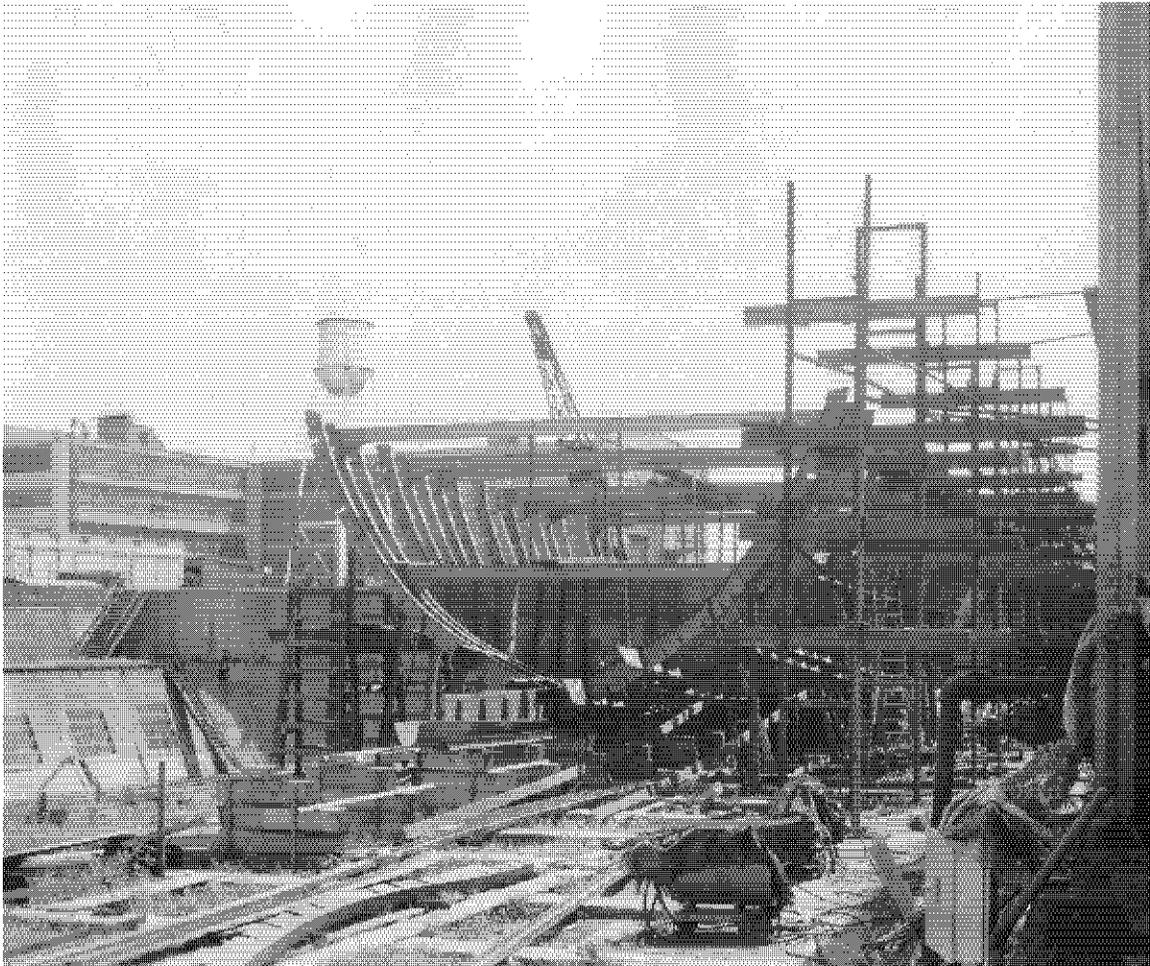
CDR C.W. Dean 1944 – 1946	CDR L.G. Krumm 1976 – 1978
Decommissioned 1946 – 1947	CDR D.H. Freeborn 1978 – 1980
CDR J.R. Kurcheski 1942 – 1952	CDR H.E. C Budd, Jr. 1980 – 1982
CDR P.E. Trimble 1952 – 1953	CDR J.T. Cushman 1982 – 1984
CDR G.W. Playdon 1953 – 1956	CDR J.J. Shaw 1984 – 1986
CDR H.L. Wood 1956 – 1958	CDR A.F. Walker 1986 – 1988
CDR W.C. Foster 1958 – 1960	CDR J.A. Doty 1989 – 1990
CDR O.L. Dawson 1960 – 1962	CDR P.E. Sherer 1990 – 1992
CDR R.B. Clark 1962 – 1964	CDR D.W. Mackenzie 1992 – 1994
CDR R.A. Ratti 1964 – 1966	CDR G.M. Davis 1994 – 1996
CDR G.W. Hardy, Jr. 1966 – 1968	CDR B.D. Horrocks 1996 – 1998
CDR J.H. Byrd 1968 – 1970	CDR M.L. Miller 1998 – 2000
CDR W.P. Allen 1970 – 1972	CDR C.A. Gilbert 2000 – 2002
CDR M.J. Stewart 1972 – 1974	CDR M.B. Cerne 2002 – 2004
CDR B.S. Little 1974 – 1976	CDR J.L. McCauley 2004 – 2007 (Decommissioned)

Appendix B

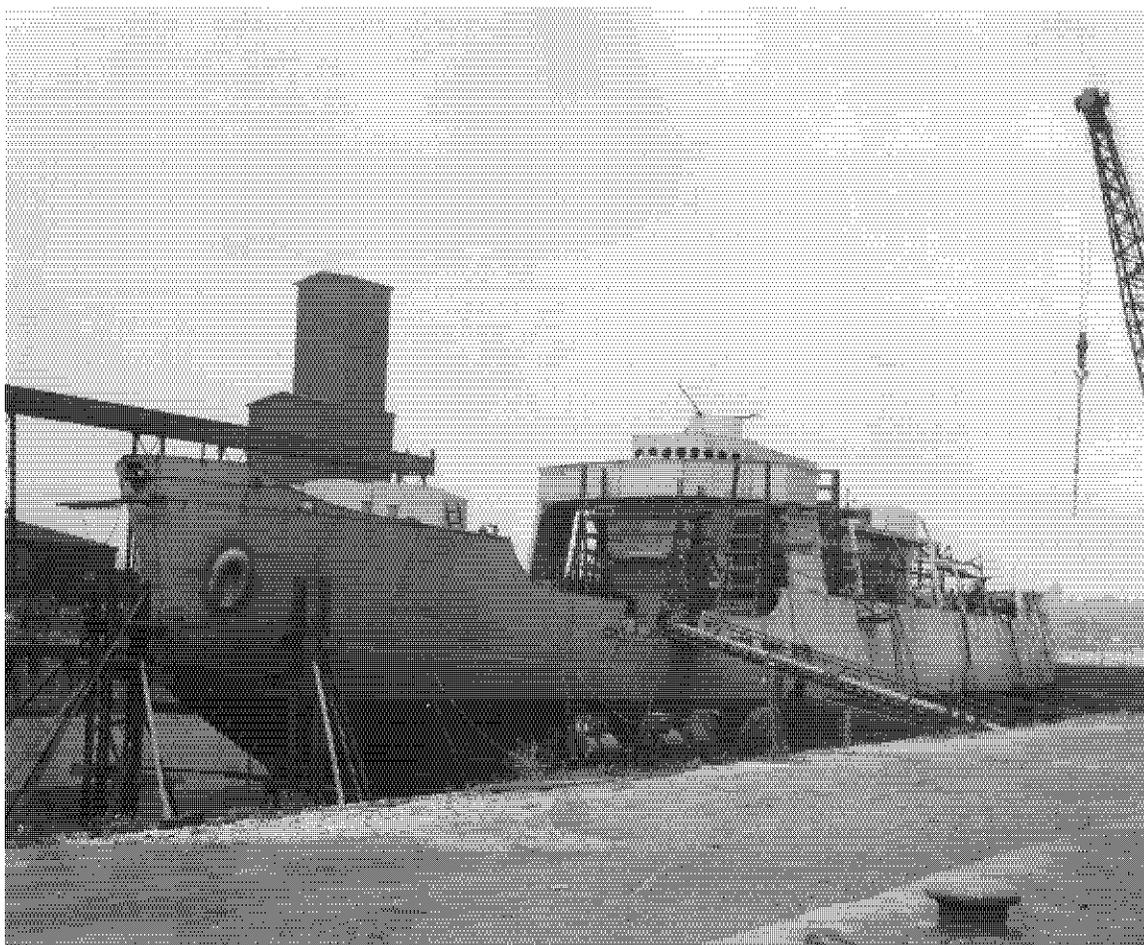
Historic Photos



Shipyard workers laying the keel of *Storis* at the Toledo Shipbuilding Company - July 1941
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Frames being added during construction - August 1941
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Hull completed - July 1942

Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Builder's model of *Storis*

Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Storis underway, September 1943

Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC

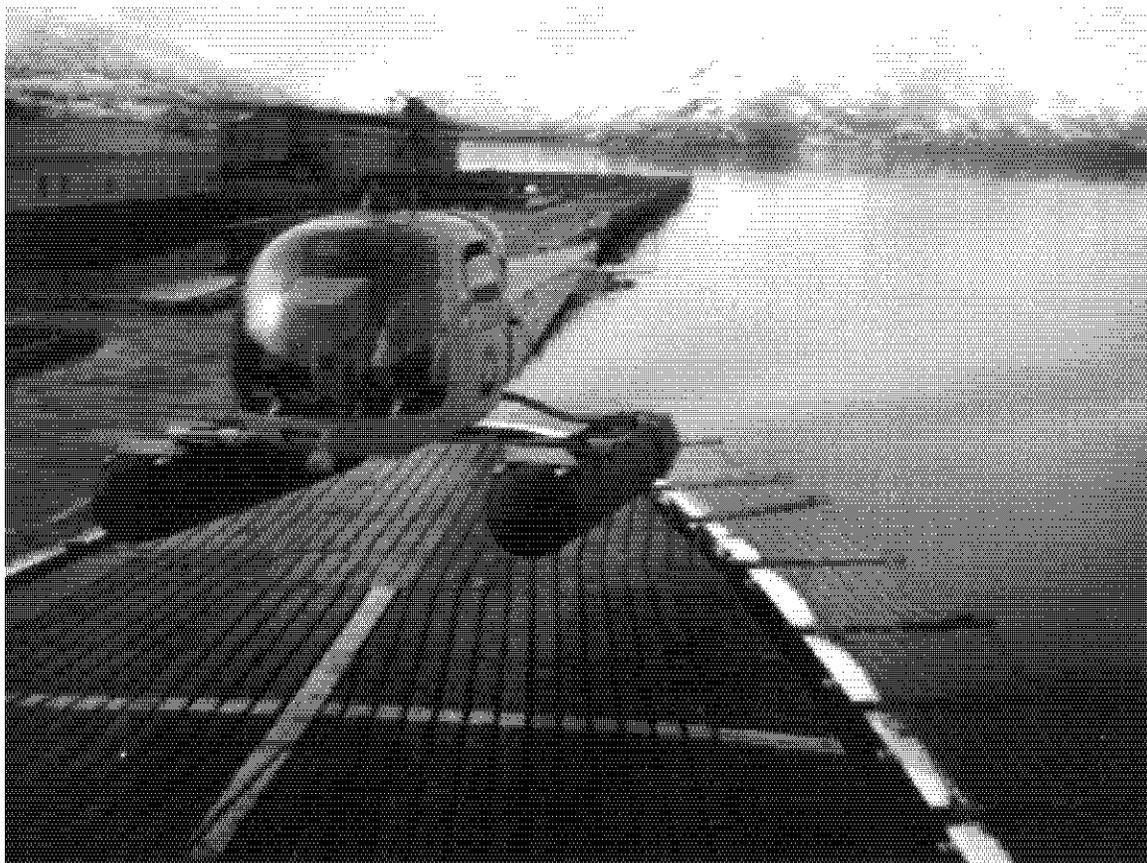


Storis underway circa 1940s

Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



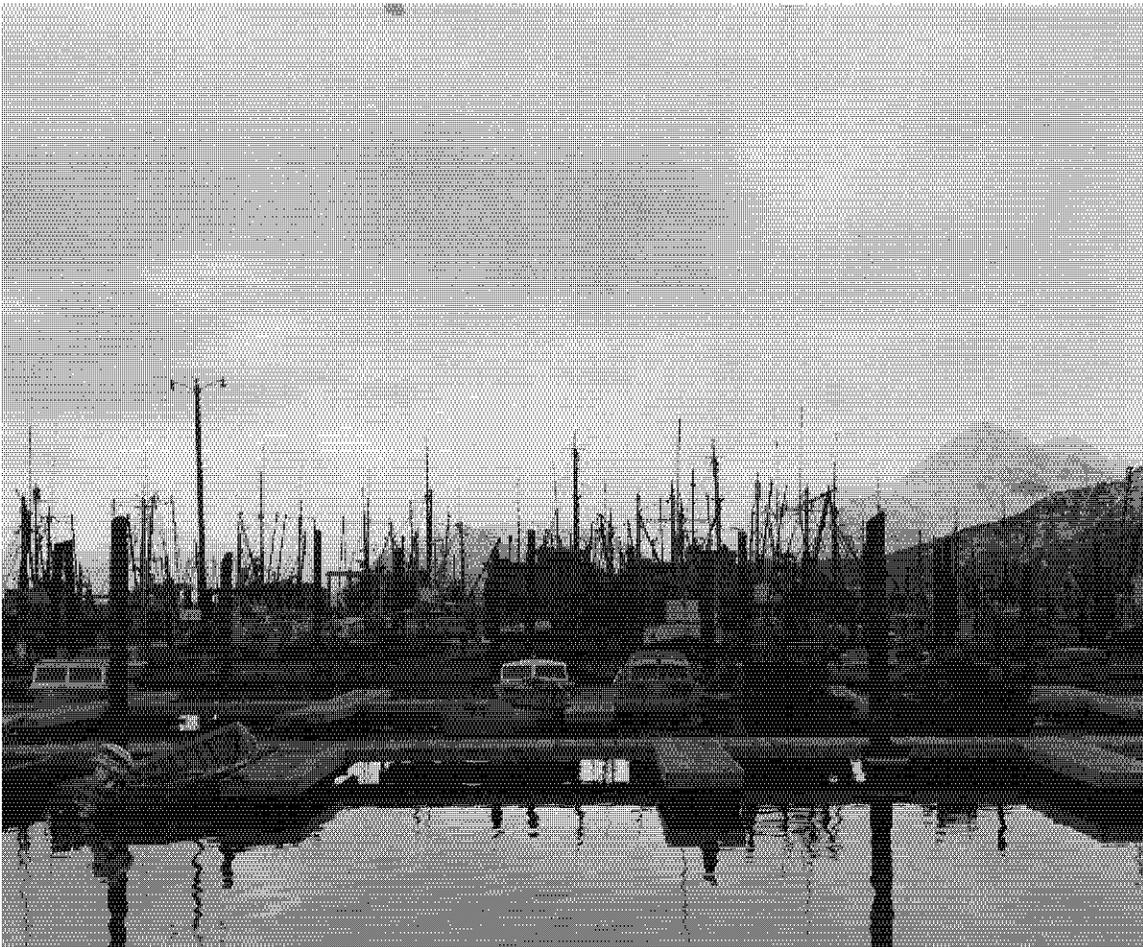
Storis off Greenland during WWII carrying its patrol plane
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Helo landing on the fantail circa 1950s
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



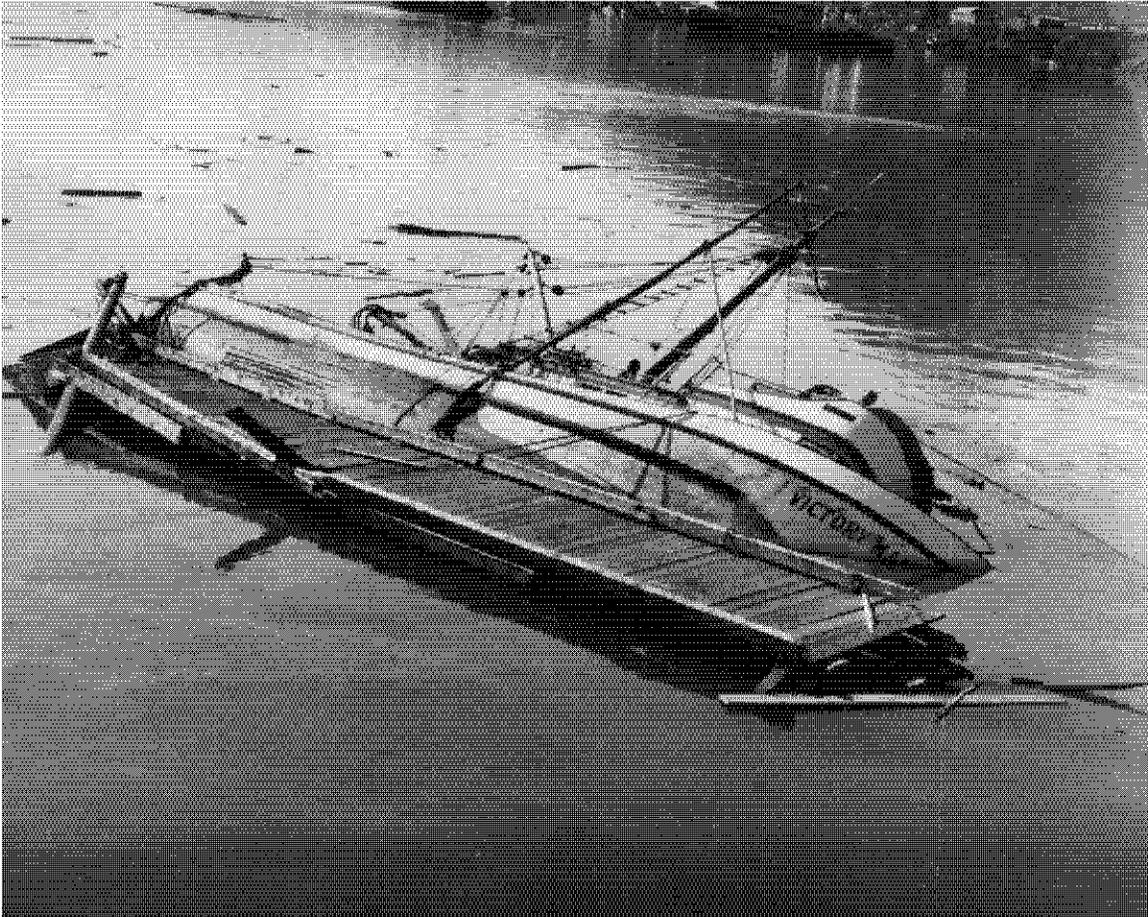
Storis moored in Womens Bay Kodiak, Alaska circa 1960s
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



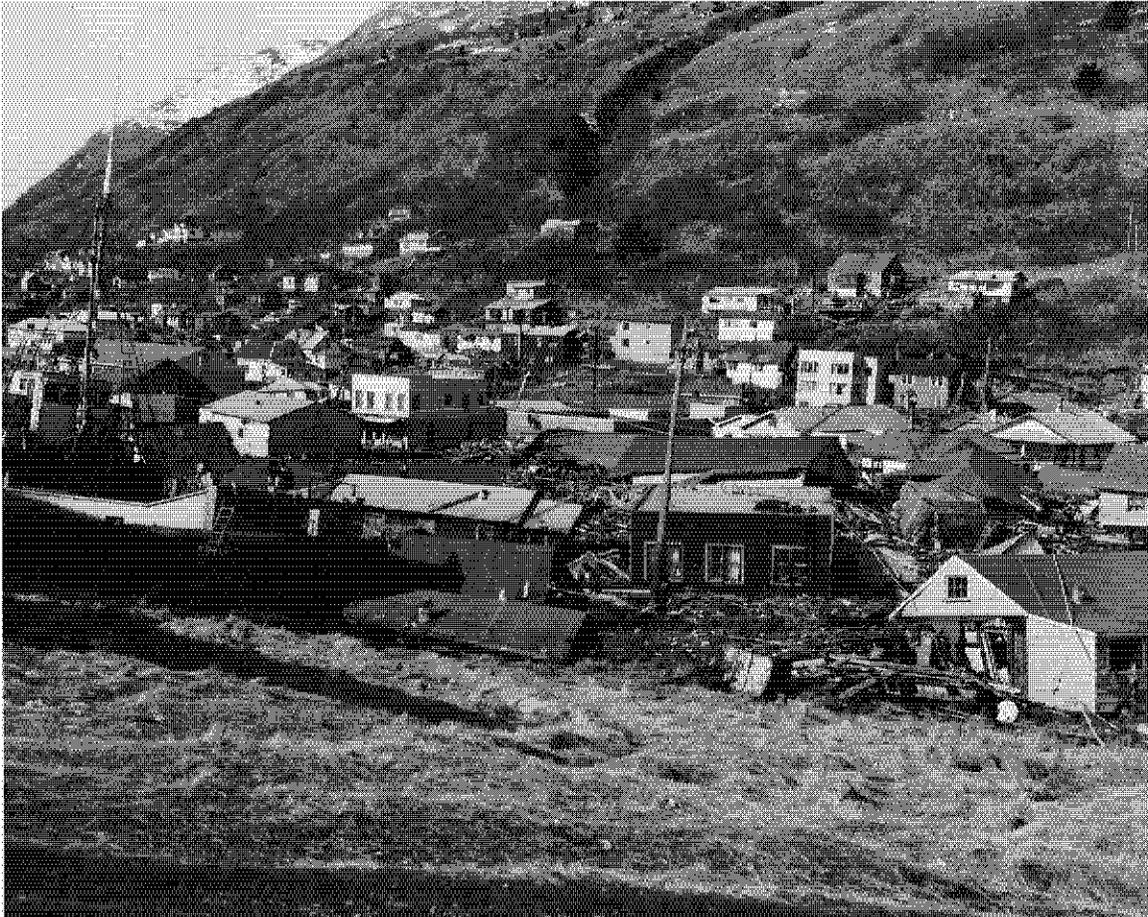
Kodiak, Alaska before the earthquake of 1964, which created a tsunami that hit the island
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



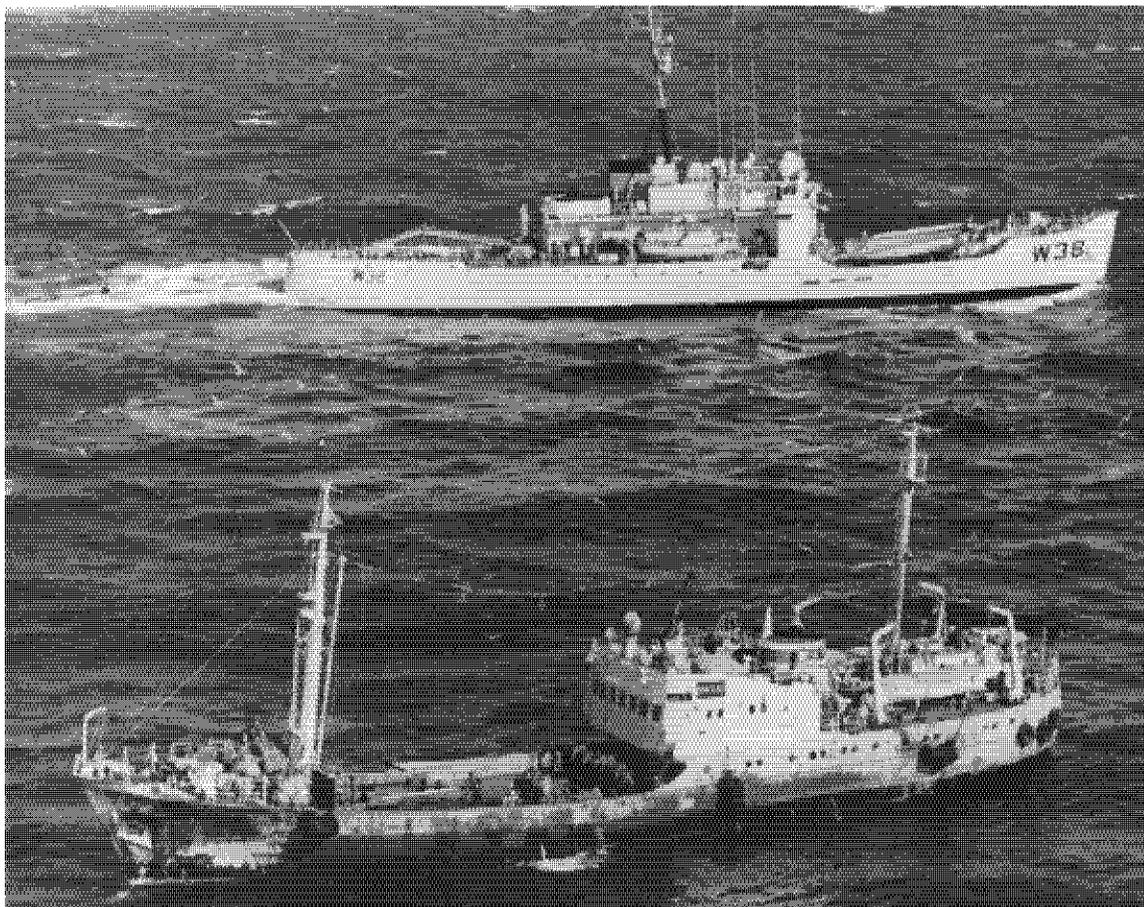
View of Kodiak, Alaska from *Storis* after a tsunami inundates the harbor - 1964
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



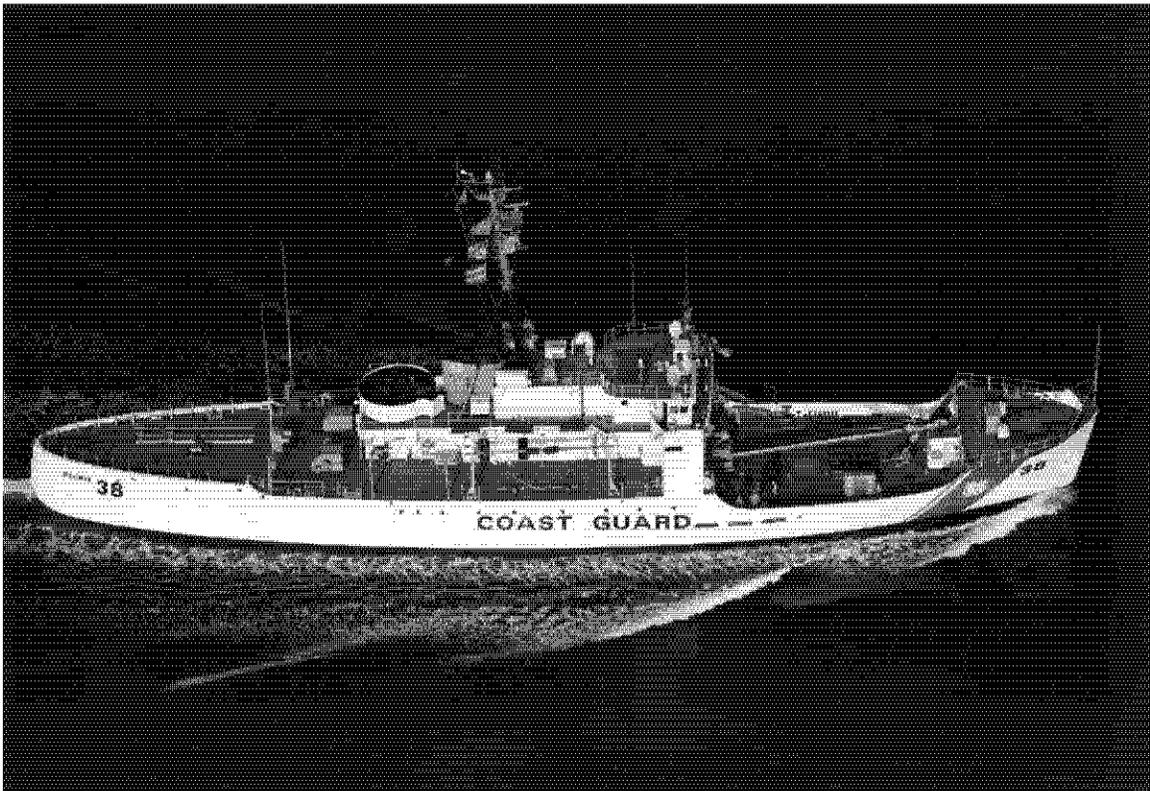
Effects of the tsunami on a fishing vessel in Kodiak, Alaska - 1964
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Houses damaged by the tsunami in Kodiak, Alaska - 1964
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Storis seizing a Russian vessel for illegal fishing in American territorial waters, 24 March 1967
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Storis underway circa 1970s

Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Storis leading a group of tugs towing supply barges & headed towards Prudhoe Bay circa 1975
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Storis cruising through an ice patch circa 1980s
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Storis moored in the Columbia River circa 1980s
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Storis moored in the Columbia River circa 1980s
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Storis underway circa 1990s

Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Storis's bow plows through a wave in heavy seas - August 2004
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Storis moored in Adak, Alaska - November 2005
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Storis crewmembers win the Pacific Fleet pistol championship - May 2006
Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC



Aerial view of *Storis* underway, n.d.

Storis Cutter File. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC

Select Bibliography

Books

Johnson, Robert Erwin. *Guardians of the Sea: History of the United States Coast Guard, 1915 to the Present*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1987.

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

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

Articles

Tilley, John A. "The Coast Guard & the Greenland Patrol." *Commandant's Bulletin* (August 1992): pp. 1-17.

Vanderpool, Christopher K. "Marine Science and the Law of the Sea." *Social Studies of Science* 13, no.1 (February 1983): pp. 107-129.

Documents

Storis Collection. Photographs and History. U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Washington, DC.

Blueprints

"USCG *Storis* WMEC 38." *General Booklet of Plans*. Baltimore, MD: U.S. Coast Guard Engineering Logistics Center, 2001.

Internet Material

Captain Joseph N. Shrader, "Commodore versus Rear Admiral (Lower Half),
<http://www.uscg.mil/reservist/mag2004/V51-5/ltrs.htm>

http://www.uscg.mil/d17/cgcstoris/about/1957_NW_Pass_Expedition.pdf, pp. 1-9.

ADDENDUM TO:
US COAST GUARD CUTTER STORIS
(WMEC 38)
Womens Bay
Kodiak vicinity
Kodiak Island Borough
Alaska

HAER AK-50
HAER AK-50

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001