

DE 386 - DER 386
U.S.S. SAVAGE

CHRONOLOGICAL
HISTORY

BEGINNING TO END

JULY 15, 1943

OCTOBER 17, 1969

Prepared by:

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U.S.S. SAVAGE (DE-386) (DER-386)

15 July 1943 - 1200 - Brown Shipbuilding Yards, Houston, Texas. Mrs. Walter S. Savage christened the ship with the following blessing:

"May God bless and protect this ship and all the men that sail her. I christen thee, United States Ship Savage." The champagne bottle was broken across her prow, and as the band played "Anchors Aweigh," the ship slowly slid down the way. As she hit the water, the band broke into "The Star Spangled Banner." Mrs. Walter S. Savage, sponsor of the vessel, was accompanied by her husband, Walter S. Savage, her son, John F. Savage, and her daughter, Mrs. Mary Hart of San Diego, California.

29 October 1943 - U.S.S. SAVAGE (DE 386) placed in commission while docked at Tennessee Coal and Iron Dock, Houston, Texas by Capt. DeWitt C. Redgrave, Jr., USN. Lt.Cmdr. Oscar C. Rohnke, USCG, assumed command.

19 November - 23 December 1943 - Bermuda shakedown and combat training.

25 December 1943 - enroute Navy Yard, Charleston, South Carolina. Emergency appendectomy performed on John E. Moore, F.lc., by Dr. J. W. Todd, U. S. Public Health Service, who was transferred by small boat from U.S.S. VANCE (DE 387).

1 February 1944 - moored Basin Delande, Casablanca, Morocco, North Africa (1st convoy)

1 April 1944 - 0400 - attacked by German Luftwaffe. Only casualty was member of depth charge crew struck in ankle by shell fragments. (This action earned the SAVAGE and its crew a World War II battle star.)

3 April 1944 - moored Bizerte Harbor, Tunisia, North Africa. (2nd convoy)

May 1944 - Lt.Cmdr. Randolph Ridgely III assumed command of SAVAGE in New York.

6 June 1944 - D-Day. Invasion of France.

8 June 1944 - entered Strait of Gibraltar and Mediterranean Sea.

12 June 1944 - moored Point de la Carriere, Bizerte Harbor, Tunisia, North Africa. (3rd Convoy)

25 July - 7 August 1944 - Hussey Sound, Casco Bay, Maine. Extensive training exercises: anti-submarine, night illumination, night spotting practice, gunnery, aircraft simulated attack, smoke screen, sl-allow pattern depth charges, shore bombardment, rescue of survivors, fueling, landings at fuel pier, general school and fire fighters school.

23 August 1944 - moored Lishally Fuel Docks, NOB, Londonderry, County Antrim, Northern Ireland. (4th convoy)

10 October 1944 - moored Herdman's Dolphins, Belfast, County Antrim, Northern Ireland. (5th convoy)

22 October 1944 - J.735 - Edward C. Moritz, S.l.c., received fractured skull, lacerations of scalp, minor lacerations about right ear while attempting to close water-right door. Door hit by wave. Injured in line of duty. Reduced speed to 12 knots for purpose of treating injured man. Reduced speed to 10 knots. 2125 - completed transferring Lt. W. P. Bradburn, USNR (M.C.) from U.S.S. WINSLOW (DD 359) by boatswain's chair. Also received two oxygen tanks. Night illumination utilized. Resumed patrol on assigned station.

23 October 1944 - shot line aboard U.S.S. FINCH (DE 328). Received five tanks of oxygen, medical supplies and two shot lines. Resumed assigned station.

24 October 1944 - shot line aboard U.S.S. RICHEY (DE 385). Completed transfer of two oxygen tanks and two shot lines. U.S.S. WINSLOW (DD 359) alongside to pass medical supplies. Resumed station. Detached from convoy and set course at 280 degrees, speed 20 knots.

25 October 1944 - standing into Ambrose Channel to Brooklyn Navy Yard at full speed. 0623 - moored Brooklyn Navy Yard. 0655 - Edward C. Moritz transferred to U. S. Naval Hospital, Brooklyn, New York. Death occurred at hospital.

26 November 1944 - moored Gladstone Docks, Liverpool, England. (6th convoy)

23 December 1944 - Lt.Cmdr. J. A. Norton, USCGR, assumed command.
8 January 1945 - rescued William M. Colyard, TM3c., USNR, washed overboard in gale from U.S.S. WINSLOW (DD 359). Left assigned station to patrol astern of several ships straggling due to gale force wind.

16 January 1945 - moored buoy 8, Hamoaze, Plymouth, England. (7th convoy)

2 March 1945 - moored Queen Alexandra Dock, Cardiff, Wales. (8th convoy)

7 March 1945 - moored portside to starboard side H.N.M.S. HEEMSCERCK, outboard of H.M.S. DUKE OF YORK, north wall, Gladstone Docks, Liverpool, England.

8 April 1945 - underway Ambrose Channel and New York swept channel to escort Convoy CU 65 - CTG 61.1.

9 April 1945 1956 - fire observed in convoy. Collision between S. S. MIHIEL and S. S. NASHFOLK. S.S. MIHIEL ablaze, abandoning ship, S.S. NASHFOLK partially abandoning before clearing. Following escorts proceeded to area: U.S.S. SELLSTROM (DE 255), U.S.S. BRISTER (DE 327), U.S.S. MILLS (DE 383), U.S.S. RHODES (DE 384), U.S.S. RICHEY (DE 385) and U.S.S. EDISON (DD 439). CCD 57 in U.S.S. GARY (DE 326) in charge of escort screen during absence of CI-G 61.1. U.S.S. SAVAGE (DE 386) on patrol station at 4,580 yards from leader of starboard column on order from CCD 57.

10 April 1945 - CTG 61.1 in U.S.S. EDISON (DD 439) rejoined and reassumed command of screen. U.S.S. MILLS (DE 383) rejoined. U.S.S. SELLSTROM (DE 255), U.S.S. BRISTER (DE 327), U.S.S. RHODES (DE 384) and U.S.S. RICHEY (DE 385) at position of collision of S.S. ST. MIHIEL and S.S. NASHFOLK. U.S.S. SAVAGE (DE 386) commenced patrol on station five (5).

12 April 1945 - U.S.S. SELLSTROM (DE 255), U.S.S. BRISTER (DE 327), U.S.S. RHODES (DE 384) and U.S.S. RICHEY (DE 385) rejoined screen. S.S. ST. MIHIEL and S.S. NASHFOLK returned to New York. U.S.S. SAVAGE (DE 386) relieved on station five (5). Proceeded to station F1.

20 April 1945 - moored berth 107, Netley Docks, Southampton, England. (9th convoy)

7 May 1945 - moored berth 4, Pier "D", Brooklyn Navy Yard.
UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER OF GERMANY

30 May - 5 June 1945 - extensive training exercises off Culebra Island, Puerto Rico: tactical exercises, damage control drills, ready gun drills, simulated shore bombardment, beach neutralization, night firing, night illumination.

5 June - 15 June 1945 - moored Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

17 June 1945 - moored Coco Solo, Canal Zone.

18 June 1945 - passed through Panama Canal, enroute San Francisco.

27 June 1945 - moored U. S. Naval Frontier Base, Treasure Island, California.

30 June 1945 - enroute Adak, Aleutian Islands.

8 July 1945 - moored Adak. Assigned to Task Group 91.2. Enroute Dutch Harbor, Fox Islands (Aleutians).

10 July 1945 - moored submarine base, NOB, Dutch Harbor.

20 July 1945 - enroute Cold Bay via Akutan Pass (Aleutians).

21 July 1945 - anchored Cold Bay

23 July 1945 - pilot vessel for FS convoy of eight (8) vessels. Escorted to Russian waters where American escort ships were dismissed.

26 July 1945 - moored Adak, Andreanof Islands (Aleutians).

27 July 1945 - continued as pilot vessel for FS convoy.

29 July 1945 - completed escort assignment. Enroute Attu (Aleutians).

30 July 1945 - moored west pier, Pyramid Cove, Massacre Bay, Attu.

5 August 1945 - reported to CTF 92 for duty. CIT 92 was involved with bombarding of Hapanese shore installations in the Kuril Islands.

7 August 1945 - assigned to TG 91.1. With U.S.S. SELLSTROM (DE 255), escorted U.S.S. SALINAS (AO-19), an oiler refueling TF 92.

11 August 1945 - arrived first rendezvous position. Proceeded to second rendezvous position.

12 August 1945 - services of TG 91.1 not required by TF 92. Returned to Attu, Attu Island (Aleutians).

14 August 1945 - completed escort mission. Detached by CTG 91.1. Moored Pyramid Cove, Massacre Bay, Attu (Aleutians).

15 August 1945 - enroute Adak, Andreanof Islands (Aleutians) escort for U.S.S. SALINAS (AO-19).

17 August 1945 - moored Kuluk Bay, Adak (Aleutians). Enroute Dutch Harbor, Fox Islands (Aleutians).

19 August 1945 - moored NOB pier, Dutch Harbor, Anaknok Island (Aleutians). Moored pier C-2 at Submarine Base, Iliuluik Bay, NOB, Dutch Harbor.

22 August 1945 - standing out of Iliuluik Bay enroute Cold Bay.

23 August 1945 - anchored Cold Bay.

25 August 1945 - pilot vessel for "HO" convoy of seven (7) ships. Anchored Kuluk Bay, Adak (Aleutianis) to await departure of convoy from Finger Bay, Adak. Standing out of Sweepers Cove. Escorted "HO" **convoy to Russian waters where American escort vessels were dismissed.**

28 August 1945- anchored Kuluk Bay, Adak (Aleutians).

29 August 1945- underway as pilot vessel of "HO" convoy.

31 August 1945 - Task Force designation changed from 91 to 41. U.S.S. SAVAGE (DE 386), U.S.S. MILLS (DE 383), and U.S.S. RICHEY (DE 385) comprise Escort Unit Two, Task Unit 41.3.4. Pilot duty completed. "HO" convoy of seven (7) ships proceeded independently.

1 September 1945 - moored west pier, NOB, Attu (Aleutians).

2 September 1945 - enroute Alcon Cove, Shemya Island (Aleutians). Moored dock A2, Alcon Cove.

FORMAL SURRENDER OF JAPAN ABOARD U.S.S. MISSOURI

3 September 1945 - escort for SS WILLIAM L. THOMPSON.

4 September 1945 - moored Sweepers Cove, Adak (Aleutians).

5 September 1945 - enroute Finger Bay, Adak (Aleutians).

11 September 1945 - Lt. Cmdr. James A. Norton, USCGR, detached as commanding officer. Lt. Lewis W. Tibbits assumed command pending arrival of new commanding officer.

17 September 1945 - Lt. John M. Waters, Jr. assumed command.

24 September 1945 - enroute Sweepers Cove, Adak (Aleutians) for fueling. Enroute Attu, Attu Island (Aleutians).

26 September 1945 - moored pier 3, Massacre Bay, Attu.

27 September 1945 - enroute Petropavlovsk, Siberia, U.S.S.R.

1 October 1945 - anchored Akhomten Bay, U.S.S.R.

2 October 1945 - enroute Akhomten Bay to Petropavlovsk with Lt. Popov, Russian Navy, as pilot. Standing into Avachinshays Bay, U.S.S.R. on various courses and speeds. Anchored in Petropavlovsk Harbor. Delivered supplies and mail to HARRY L. CORL (APD 108) for Toma Weather Project. Underway Avachinshaya Bay enroute Akhomten Bay. Standing into Akhomten Bay. Dropped pilot. Out of Akhomten Bay enroute Attu (Aleutians).

3 October 1945 - moored pier 3, Massacre Bay, Attu.

10 October 1945 - enroute Adak (Aleutians).

11 October 1945 - anchored Kuluk Bay, Adak. Moored pier 10, Sweepers Cove, Adak.

18 October 1945 - standing out Kuluk Bay, Adak (Aleutians) in company with CortDiv 23 (less U.S.S. MILLS (DE 383). Division formed in column with SAVAGE third in column behind U.S.S. RAMSDEN (DE 382) and flagship.

22 October 1945 - detached from CortDiv 23 with U.S.S. RICHEY (DE 385) and U.S.S. RHODES (DE 384). Assumed station as third ship in column with U.S.S. RHODES as guide. Proceeded to point six (6) miles bearing 270 degrees from Middleton Island, Prince William Sound, Alaska.

24 October 1945 - arrived detachment point, six (6) miles from Middleton Island. Detached from formation. Proceeded to Seward, Alaska. Moored Alaskan Railroad Dock, Seward, Alaska.

27 October 1945 - full dressed and rigged ship for Navy Day. Ship open to visitors. Vessel visited by approximately 1,200 persons.

November 1945 - enroute Okinawa to join Seventh Fleet. Two weeks at Okinawa in middle of monsoon season. Departed Okinawa for Tsingtao, China.

17 December 1945 - Ready destroyer at Tsingtao. Escorted loaded troop transports from Yellow Sea and East China Sea. Scouted mines and sent out warnings. Destroyed mines with gun fire. Escorted attack transport, U.S.S. EGGINGHAM, into Inchon, Korea. Quick trip to Seoul, capitol of South Korea. Proceeded to Shantung coast of Yellow Sea and conducted search for five Marine F7F fighters believed to be down in that area. One located on Shantung beach. Territory occupied by Chinese Communist 8th Route Army. Enroute Weihaiwai, former British submarine base on north coast of Shantung, in Communist hands. They had recovered two of the pilots, one dead and one wounded. Departed Weihaiwai and continued search for other missing pilots.

25 December 1945 - Bright and clear day in Yellow Sea. West of Weihaiwa is group of islands, largest of which called Changshan Tao. One plane had crashed near there. Encountered sniper fire from beach. Ordered not to fire back and leave area. Returned to Tsingtao.

January 1946 - escorted Coast Guard transport, U.S.S. WAKEFIELD, Capt. Roy Raney, USCG, through the East China and Yellow Seas. Water very shallow at western end of Yellow Sea in Gulf of Pohia. Only light draft craft able to get over Taku Bar into port serving Tientsin. Gale swept down from northeast second night at Taku anchorage. Received replacements from WAKEFIELD for men eligible for demobilization as she was returning to the States.

March 1946 - sailed for Pearl Harbor. With detachment of Division Commander, Lt. John M. Waters, as senior skipper, assumed command of division. Enroute San Diego. Over 300 passengers of all services enroute from Hawaii to West Coast for demobilization.

March 1946 - Enroute Charleston, South Carolina via Panama Canal. Spent one night in Panama.

April 1946 - After short availability at Charleston, South Carolina sailed to Green Cove Springs, Florida where U.S.S. SAVAGE (DE 386) was laid up in Reserve Fleet.

13 June 1946 - U.S.S. SAVAGE (DE 386) decommissioned and turned over to Navy maintenance crew. As men of the U.S.S. SAVAGE and Escort Division 42 filed ashore, they were last of over 200,000 Coast Guardsmen who served under the U. S. Navy in World War II to return to service with their parent service organization, the United States Coast Guard, or to be discharged.

3 September 1954 - U.S.S. SAVAGE redesignated a U. S. Navy radar picket escort destroyer (DER 386). Converted at Boston.

18 February 1955 - Recommissioning of U.S.S. SAVAGE (DER 386).

July 1955 - transferred to Pacific Fleet, home port in Seattle, Washington.

6 August 1955 - arrived Seattle. Employed as a radar picket station.

Note: U.S.S. SAVAGE (DER 386) was not involved with Korean conflict which began June 27, 1950 and ended January 31, 1955.

December 1958 - home port changed to Pearl Harbor.

12 January 1959 - arrived Pearl Harbor. Operated as a radar picket ship of the mid-Pacific Barrier until March 1960.

March 1960 - May 1965 - served as search and rescue navigation aid ship.

Note: First U. S. Marine combat contingent went ashore at North Vietnam on 8 March 1965.

17 May 1965 - enroute South Vietnam. Spent more time on station in Operation "Market Time" than any other DER. Guarded against sea infiltration by North Vietnamese and assisted land forces by providing gunfire support. Had no periods out of service until October 1965 when there was a five day visit to Hong Kong.

October 1965 - October 1968 - five tours off Vietnam on Operation "Market Time" as follows: 1 to 15 January, 1966; 12 June to 16 September, 1966; 24 August to 8 September 1967; 16 September to 12 October, 1968, and 2 to 18 December 1968. June, September, December 1967 and July, October 1968 made Taiwan Strait patrols. Earned six battle stars for service in Vietnam.

1 February 1969 - arrived Pearl Harbor. Entered naval shipyard for restricted service.

17 October 1969 - decommissioned after 26 years of service. Of the eighty-five (85) FMR type diesel-driven DEs, only three outlasted the U.S.S. SAVAGE.

Career may have ended as a target for testing of new weapons.

END

ESCORT DIVISION 23 consisted of U.S.S. SELLSTRCM (DE 255), U.S.S. RAMSDEN (DE 382), U.S.S. MILLS (DE 383), U.S.S. RHODES (DE 384), U.S.S. RICHEY (DE 385), and U.S.S. SAVAGE (DE 386).

Command of Escort Division 23 included the following:

Commander Edwin J. Roland
Commander F. P. Vetterick
Commander John R. Forney

Roland also had command of Escort Division 45. He served as Coast Guard commandant 1962-66.

END

Following appeared in Naval History/Winter 1990:

Captain Robert C. Peniston, U. S. Navy (Retired). Reading the article "Barrier Patrol" in the Fall 1989 Naval History prompted me to comment on the surface side of the mid-Pacific barrier operations.

As in the Atlantic, aircraft and surface units made up the barrier forces. The barrier was established on a line from Midway to Unalaska Island.

The planes, Lockheed Constellations (WVs) flew a racetrack pattern between the terminal points with five (5) surface stations manned by radar picket ships located along the line at all times.

The patrol duration was 24 days. The deployment began when the ship left Pearl Harbor en route to the northern station. On arrival, each ship rotated south one station. And so on. Each ship was required to remain within a 30-mile circle of its station, unless weather or some emergency required departure. On leaving the southern station, the ship returned to Pearl Harbor, unless a fuel stop at Midway was necessary.

Much like the Atlantic, rough weather was common and could occur at any time of the year. Ships took a beating and were often in dangerous situations because of high seas and winds. There were periods of calm, however, when it was possible to lie in order to conserve fuel.

It took about 12-15 ships to maintain the five-station barrier. There were several "gold-platers" assigned, meaning they had state-of-the-art surveillance equipment. The U.S.S. SAVAGE (DER 386) was one of these.

At the height of the barrier operations, the schedule was sacrosanct, making for high morale because the crews could make personal plans accordingly. We had a decent reenlistment rate. On board the SAVAGE eight of nine junior officers either augmented or extended their active service.

The barrier was periodically tested by P-2s. I cannot recall a Soviet aircraft ever penetrating the line (DEW LINE). For the most part, it was a lonely tour, save for the flights of WVs. An important function comprised reporting meteorological data every four hours, which was most appreciated by many including the Strategic Air Command.

In the spring of 1960, the barrier was reduced to two stations. Some of the older ships were inactivated; others were sent to other ports. Those remaining at Pearl Harbor manned the barrier and participated in special operations involving the Soviets. One ship monitored an intercontinental ballistic missile shot. The SAVAGE went on two surveillance missions when Soviet range ships came into the central Pacific. During the second, Yuri Gagarin made his famous orbit of the earth on 12 April 1961 with the SAVAGE obtaining important telemetry as he passed overhead.

With the onset of the Vietnam War, the remaining ships were sent to duty in that theatre. The barrier ceased to exist.

In spite of the unfavorable weather encountered on patrol, assignment to a radar picket ship was to be among some most competent sailors. Pound for pound, the SAVAGE was the equal of my more prestigious commands.

END

Following from "GUARDIANS OF THE SEA" "HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD 1915 TO THE PRESENT" by Robert Erwin Johnson, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, Copyright 1987:

"U. S. armed forces were becoming involved in yet another war, this time in Vietnam. By late 1964, their military assistance and advisor~ activities had given way to combat operations, and as 1965 began, it became apparent that junks and other small craft were being used to supply Viet Cong forces ashore, leading the South Vietnamese government to ask the U.S. Navy to conduct offshore surveillance patrols to detect these.

"Operation Market Time, as the naval interdiction campaign was called, began on 12 March, with radar picket destroyer-escorts (DERs) and minesweepers initially assigned. These vessels, however, drew too much water to operate inshore, and the Navy had few craft that could do so. To meet this need, fifty-four (54) 'Swift' boats-aluminum-hulled 50 footers drawing only 5 feet and capable of 25 knots-were ordered, and on 16 April the secretary of the navy queried the Treasury Department about the availability of Coast Guard vessels.

"Admiral Roland has been trying to devise a way to get the Coast Guard involved in Vietnam, fearing that if his service were limited entirely to a support role, as it had been during the Korean War, its prized status as one of the nation's armed forces might be jeopardized. The idea of using coast Guard craft may well have been his; at any rate, he responded promptly that 82-foot patrol boats and 40-foot utility boats could be provided, and on 22 April Coast Guard and Navy agreed that seventeen (17) of the former would join the Market Time forces, with the Navy to provide support in the form of two LSTs that had been converted to repair ships.

"By the end of July, just three months after the initial decision to commit Coast Guard patrol boats to Operation Market Time, the first of them reported to the DERs and minesweepers of the outer patrol, under whose direction they worked.

"With DERs, patrol boats, and junks carrying out their mission aggressively, small craft attempting to supply the Viet Cong ashore were thought to have only a 10 percent chance of slipping through the interdiction forces, while the larger steel-hulled trawlers, which were more easily detected by radar, were given no chance at all. So Market Time was achieving some success - but only where its vessels were operating."

On 29 October 1965, Admiral Roland ordered nine additional 82-footers be prepared for service. A month later, all were en route.

The 82-footers and their men having proved their ability, it was quite natural that the Navy should turn to the Coast Guard again when its few Market Time DERs required relief. Five (5) 311-footers fell under Navy's operational control as Coast Guard Squadron 3.

"Coast Guard vessels clearly made a significant contribution to the success of Operation Market Time, which, according to the senior American officer in Vietnam, forced the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces to rely on the tortuous lb Chi Minh trail for most of their supplies, to the detriment of their military operations. By the time the last of the 82-footers had been turned over to South Vietnam and Squadron 3 had been disbanded, the Coast Guard claimed credit for the destruction of almost 2,000 vessels while killing or wounding 1,827 Viet Cong and North Vietnamese.

"Seven (7) Coast Guardsmen were killed and fifty-three (53) wounded in Vietnam.

"The contribution of the Coast Guard support forces to the American war in Vietnam was probably as important as that of its combat forces.

"The Coast Guard's part in the Vietnam war ended gradually, with the 'Vietnamization' of some units and activities and the withdrawal of others. The twenty-six (26) 82-footers were transferred to South Vietnam, the last two in mid-August 1970, while Squadron 3 was dis-established early in 1972. Coast Guardsmen stationed ashore--those of the merchant marine detail and the port security detachment, the helicopter pilots, and the loran station crews--departed, and the post of senior Coast Guard officer, Vietnam, established in 1970 to coordinate the service's activities ashore and to serve as liaison with the Vietnamese government and the other armed forces, was discontinued on 11 February 1973.

"Whatever the final verdict of history on the American involvement in Vietnam, the Coast Guard had obviously justified its status as one of the nation's armed forces. To be sure, relatively few of its officers and men went to Vietnam--not many more than 1,000 at the most were there at any given time. Some 8,000 Coast Guardsmen served in Southeast Asia during the war; nonetheless, their performance of varied duties, often under difficult conditions, demonstrated their service's versatility. Most of those duties, of course, were among the Coast Guard's many missions; even Market Time was primarily an anti-smuggling operation. Not least, the celerity with which Admiral Roland and his successor responded to the requests of the larger services for assistance indicated that SEMPER PAR-TUS was no empty boast."

END

Prepared by Rollins Coakley, Y.lc. (253-343), USCG. Crew member of U.S.S. SAVAGE (DE 386) from 31 October 1943 to 10 November 1944.

Acknowledged are contributions of: Capt. John M. Waters, John F. Savage, Joseph Frascino, William H. Fraser, Charles H. Crowe, and Carl B. Martz.

From: "GUARDIANS OF THE SEA" "HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD 1915 TO THE PRESENT" by Robert Erwin Johnson, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, Copyright 1987.

"The importance of helicopters was increasing. Six HO4s were borrowed from the Navy to maintain the Coast Guard's rotary-wing aircraft strength at thirty-seven (37). Two years earlier, four Sikorsky S-62s had been ordered for evaluation.

"Modifying this aircraft, the first gas turbine-powered helicopter certified for commercial use in the United States, to Coast Guard specifications took longer than expected, but the four were delivered in 1963, by which time their designation had been changed to the HH-52A.

'Superior to the service's earlier helicopters in almost every regard, this was an amphibian, with a boat hull that enabled it to alight on the water.

"Captain John M. Waters, Jr., a veteran seaplane and helicopter pilot, explained its superiority over the fixed-wing aircraft: 'The amphibious helicopter can land in seas that would be impossible for a seaplane. The forward speed at touchdown is zero, and the pilot can control the helicopter on the water by varying the lift of his rotor. If the seas are rough, he keeps most of the weight of the hull on the rotar blades, and the hull rides lightly over the swells.'

"A month after the first HH-52A had been delivered, Waters, then a commander, demonstrated its worth by rescuing a man who had fallen overboard from a naval vessel just off Newport, Rhode Island. Semi-conscious and near death in the icy water, the sailor could not be hoisted into the helicopter in the usual fashion, so Commander Water eased the HH-52A down alongside him and then joined the hoist operator to drag him into the aircraft. This and a number of other rescues in the next several months led to the procurement of forty-six (46) of these helicopters within two years; ultimately ninety-nine (99) HH-52As were purchased by the coast Guard, which was the only service to use them. Years later, Admiral Roland stated that 'the helicopter was never accepted by aviation in the Coast Guard until I became commandant.' The admiral claimed no credit for its acceptance; that seems to have been due in large part to the HH-52A, also called the Sea Guard."

END