

Tug Tales #21 July 9, 2014

The Olson Design 320 45' Tugboats

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The Design 320 45' "Equity" *Wartugs*

From 1943 into the late 1950's this 45' tugboat known as Design 320 was made by various contractors for the US Army as "ST" tugboats and for the US Navy as well as the "YTL". Many feel the original design came from the Equitable Equipment Company, Inc of New Orleans as one of their "Equity Standards". The boats were all steel and had divided watertight lower sections. Some of these were "ST's" *but only those made for the US Army*. Many were made for the civilian market as well over the years!

At this length, the tug still could be placed on a railcar making its transportation much easier. The wheelhouse also is bolted on instead of welded for truck transport. Several of these still exist and are still working. Quite a few of these went to the Pacific Theater in WW2 in 1944; it appears from the records many were produced in 1943 and not turned over for Army transportation use until late in 1944. Very early examples were underpowered with a

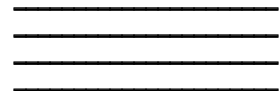
150 HP engine. Later versions of the boat was usually powered with a 400 HP diesel while the last boats often have twin screw setups with a combined total of about 700HP.

Large numbers of these boats have no historic records whatsoever other than a delivery date to the US Army in WW2. The earliest Design 320 on the ST Army record was ST 171, which was delivered to the US Army in June of 1943. It was made by Reliable Welding Works of Olympia, Washington.

At least seven of these were made at the Olson Corporation on the shores of Lake Beresford beginning in 1946. At least one went to China (probably Taiwan) via the United Nations Relief & Recovery Agency. Actually begun in 1943 and not related to the “UN” commonly known, the UNRRA changed its name in 1947. It also is possible that a wartime batch were made in 1943 as a series of seven hull numbers at the earlier American Manufactory Corporation at Lake Beresford are not yet identified as to which type of boats were produced, but they probably were not sold to the US Army. *Research continues!*



Here's a photo courtesy Harley Strickland showing an Olson-made Design 320 45' tug: UNRRA-China-35 from 1946





The tug "Abaco", ST 2141. She's ex Army Corps of Engineers, design 320 for the US Army. She's 45' and turns out around 400 HP (with a lot of smoke!). She's homeported in Clayton, NY and is available for service throughout the Great Lakes, St Lawrence Seaway and the NY State Barge Canal. She is owned by DeWitt Withington, a St Lawrence Seaway Pilot.



Tug 8th Sea

The 8th Sea is a former U.S. Army ST, design 320, and a real crowd pleaser. Capt. Bill Curry, a character as closely associated with the the Tugboat Roundup as John Glen is with spaceship driving, has restored her lovingly and worked her for many years on Lake Champlain. However, increasingly stringent regulations in the State of Vermont relative to pollution, safe boating, and basic decency have led Capt. Curry to Waterford, and the greater eastern gateway area. While the 8th Sea has become a common sight along the Waterford waterfront, there is certainly nothing common about Captain Curry, the sight of whom sometimes inspires local residents to close shutters and lock the doors. Seriously, Waterford is as enamored of Capt. Curry as he of Waterford, and the 8th Sea, occasionally accompanied by an odd-shaped mystery steam tug which shall go unnamed, is the flagship of Waterford's social hour. The magnificent and mighty 8th Sea, 45' overall, works part time in the [NYS Marine Highway](#) fleet.



1954 45' x 12.5' x 6' Steel Ex Army Tug - ST Model
• **Powered by 400 hp Buda Diesel engine**

- 7 KW Kubota generator
- Electronics: VHF radio, radar
- Accommodations: 1 bunk, small galley
- **Truckable – has a bolt on wheelhouse**
- Located on southern shore of Lake Ontario
- Price \$89,250 USD

Please contact us for further information sms@scrutonmarine.com
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MODEL PHOTOS



Model



Model