

# She Led Three Lives: *Queens-Excambion-Texas Clipper*

## USS *Queens* (1944 - 1946)



At least 230 attack transports (APA) — the backbone of an amphibious war — sailed during the Second World War. By 2007, only five were in existence. One of the five, the only one in the Windsor class, was *USS Queens* (APA 103).

On September 12, 1944, *Queens* (named after a borough/county in New York) was launched; on December 16, commissioned — both at Sparrows Point shipyards near Baltimore. *Queens* cruised at 16.5 knots and carried two 5-inch cannons, 2 twin 40mm. guns; 2 twin 20mm. guns; and 18 single-mount 20 mm. guns. The ship was never to fire her guns in battle.

Under the command of USNR Captain John J. Mockrish, *Queens* carried 47 officers and 512 enlisted men on its maiden voyage through the Panama Canal to Pearl Harbor. In March 1945, the ship landed supplies and reinforcements at Iwo Jima and carried wounded marines to hospital facilities in Guam. One marine died on board.

*Queens* trained for an invasion of Japan that would never occur. On September 22, 1945, *Queens* took occupation troops into Sasebo, Japan, about 30 miles north of Nagasaki, site of an atomic-bomb explosion 44 days earlier.

As part of Operation Magic Carpet, *Queens* returned more than 3400 homebound troops and passengers stateside. On June 10, 1946, the ship, under USNR Commander Cyril B. Hamblett, was decommissioned in Norfolk, Virginia, and laid up in the nearby James River for a year. *Queens* was awarded the American Campaign, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign, the Navy Occupation Service, and the World War II Victory ribbons.