



THEY SERVED WITH DISTINCTION

NEW YORK, NY, MAY 2005 – As veterans are making pilgrimages to the beaches of Normandy and Okinawa in observance of the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II, America can experience a bit of history right here in New York City on Circle Line Sightseeing Cruises at 42nd Street. Before they were completely rebuilt and converted for sightseeing, every Circle Line Sightseeing at 42nd Street vessel now docked at Pier 83 participated in World War II. This year Circle Line Sightseeing Yachts Inc. (the company's official name) is also celebrating a 60th Diamond Anniversary!

After the war, many Circle Line Sightseeing at 42nd Street vessels were converted from U.S. Naval vessels called "landing Craft, Infantry (Large)" or LCI(L). They were originally designed to transport battle-ready troops to enemy beaches for the invasion of Sicily and Italy. LCI(L)'s also participated in the D-Day invasion of Normandy and the landings on Okinawa.

The most distinguished war record belongs to the Circle Line X, originally the LCI(L)-758. The ship made five landings in the Philippines – at Leyte, Mindoro, Ormoc Bay, Lingayen Gulf and Mindanao – and is credited with shooting down two enemy planes during these assaults and assisting in destroying many others. LCI(L)-758 was the first ship to return to Corregidor (February, 1945) in the Philippines, which fell early in the War. In September, 1945 the ship weathers the typhoon of Okinawa made famous by "The Caine Mutiny." Within a month, LCI(L)-758 became part of the "Reform Yangtze Patrol" to liberate Shanghai, better known as the "Sand Pebbles" operation. During its two years of World War II service, the ship was awarded three battle stars.

Circle Line Sightseeing at 42nd Street XVI and XI – formerly the "Nike" and the "Calypso," respectively – were both Argo-class Coast Guard Cutters that patrolled the East Coast of the United States against enemy submarines. The official Coast Guard record has reports of both ships battling submarines and rescuing crew members of burning ships. The "Nike" was awarded one battle star for World War II service.

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Both LCI's and the Argo-class Coast Guard Cutters were vessels that were particularly suited for conversion in 1945 into sightseeing yachts. The Manhattan route required a boat that could comfortably accommodate 500 passengers, pass under the low bridges on the Harlem River ship canal, and navigate the 35-mile route in all tidal conditions, in three hours. The most significant alteration needed was replacing the center pilot house with a lower one closer to the bow, which gave the boats their distinctive "Circle Line Sightseeing at 42nd Street" look.

When Circle Line Sightseeing Yachts, Inc. was founded in 1945 it departed from Battery Park until 1955, when the cruise line moved uptown to Pier 83 at the foot of West 42nd Street at the Hudson River where it remains to this day. The pier is a two-deck concrete structure with parking spaces for 600 automobiles, company offices and loading berths, which were modernized in 1966. Today, there are eight Circle Line Sightseeing at 42nd Street vessels in operation; and each ship is approximately 165 feet long and holds approximately 500 to 600 passengers on each voyage.

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