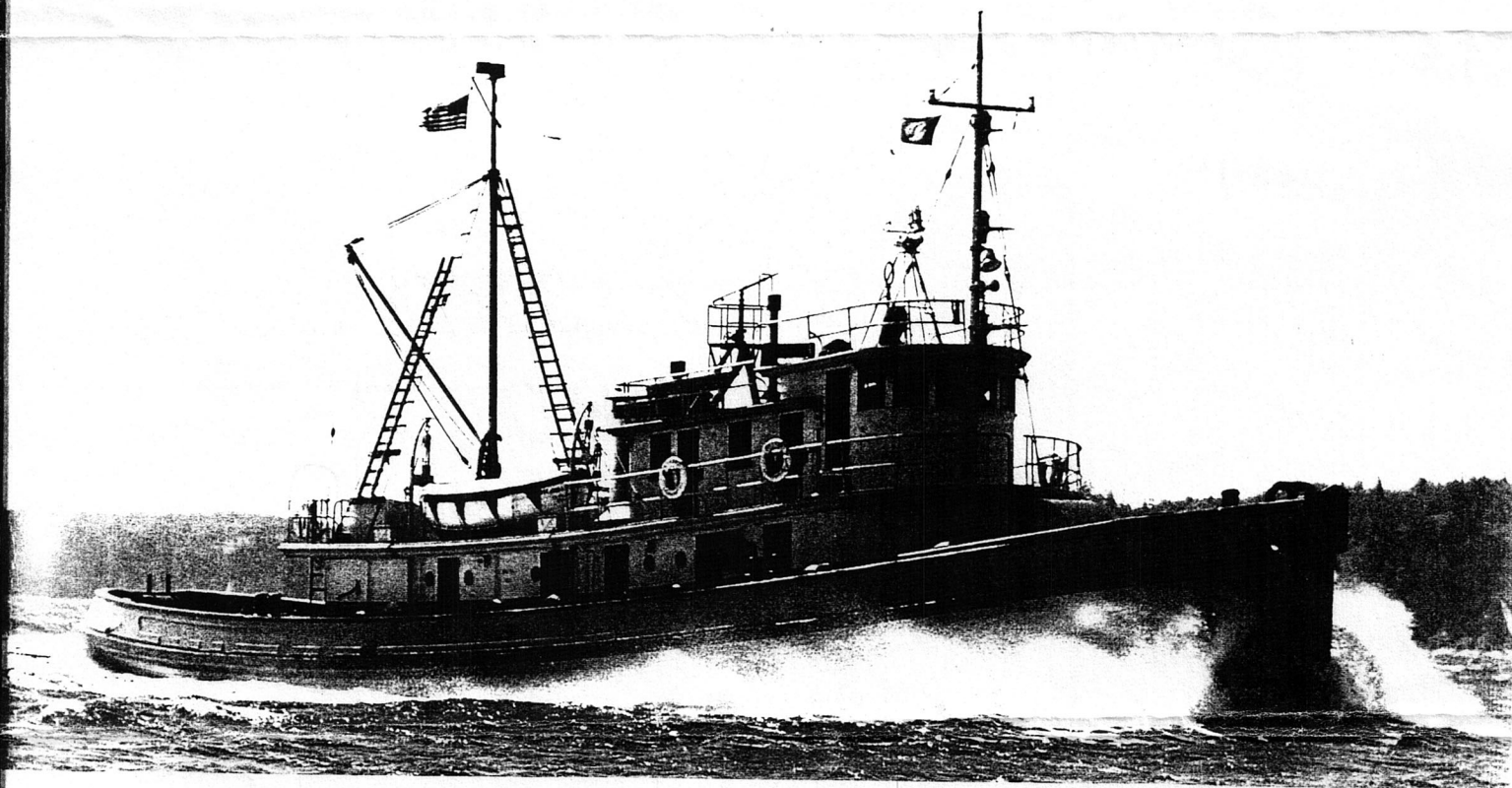


# ***THE FORGOTTEN FLEET OF SIXTY-ONE***



***HISTORY OF THE MIKIMIKI CLASS  
TUGBOATS OF WORLD WAR TWO***

**BY JOHN BENTHIEN**

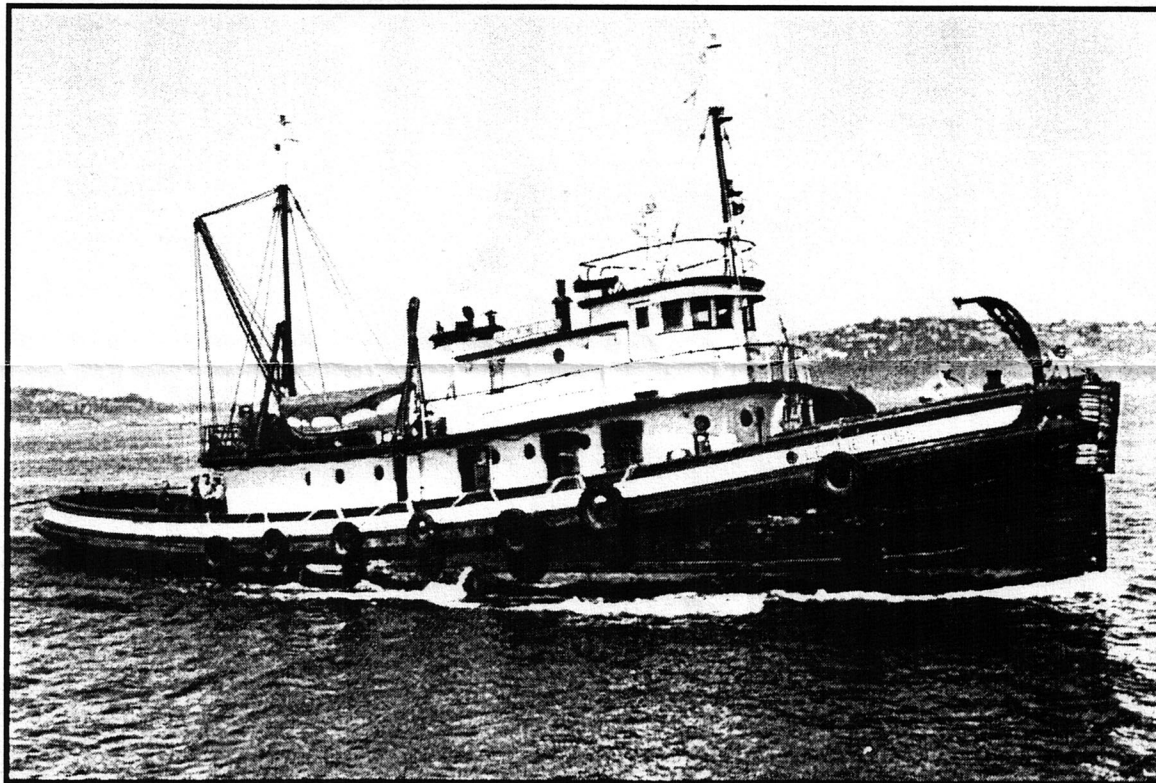
LT 495

*JOHN MICHAEL*  
*LESLIE FOSS*  
*ENCHANTER*  
*POLAR NAVIGATOR*  
*WESTERN SEA ONE*  
*ENCHANTRESS*

Minneford Yacht Yard  
City Island, New York

Baltimore Towing Company  
Kotzebue Oil Sales Inc.  
Foss Tug and Barge  
Mr. Martin  
Capt. Jug Nolze  
Sinkey Family  
Unknown owners

Photograph from the Michael Skalley Collection



The tug *Leslie Foss* with tow line out, somewhere on the Puget Sound.

Photograph from the Larry Barber Collection



The tug *John Michael* moored near the Albina Shipyards, Willamette River @ 1950.

Nothing is known of this East Coast tug's military service other than her construction was completed during November of 1944. First owned in 1948 by Baltimore Towing Company of Baltimore, Maryland, who named her the *John Michael* and used her on the East Coast until 1950, she was sold to Kotzebue Oil Sales Inc. of Alaska for \$150,000. She was used in the Bering Sea and the Arctic region. She also did general towing from the Puget Sound to Alaska. Kotzebue Oil Company ran into financial trouble and the tug was placed under arrest by the U. S. Marshall when she returned to Lake Union. Following claims and counter-claims in Federal Court, she was finally put up for sale.

On April 9, 1951, Foss bid on the *John Michael* at the Federal Court House in Seattle, and purchased her for the sum of \$76,000.00. Foss renamed her the *Leslie Foss*. She was the fifth of the Miki class tugboats purchased by Foss. Her first six years were on the Alaska run with a schedule of six months-on, six months-off. During the off-season, she did odd towing jobs in the Sound. Then she was shifted to the coast run where she towed for one and a half years and then was once again

placed on the Alaska run. This lasted until 1968, when she was laid up in Tacoma with her Foss towing days over. On 6 June 1969, Foss sold her to Mr. Martin of Gig Harbor who renamed her the *Enchanter*.


She was then sold to Capt. Jug Nolze, who renamed her *Polar Navigator* and used her for towing on the Puget Sound.

During 1977, the Sinkey family of Olympia purchased the *Polar Navigator* and lived on her until 1979, when they sold her. The new owner's identity is unknown, but she was renamed *Western Sea One*. Later on, she was registered in San Francisco as the *Enchantress*, Mr. Don Lengel of Seattle is the owner.

Known Skippers: Capt. S. M. Thurston, Capt. Dale Gudgel, Capt. Jay Jacobson, Capt. Bill Rosenquist, Capt. Ed Lee, Capt. Ray Quinn, Capt. Clyde Smith, Capt. George Ducich, Capt. Ray Thurston, Capt. Andy Hansen, Capt. Ray Hough

Status: She is moored at the Ballard Oil Dock, Ballard Washington in bad shape and currently for sale for \$25,000 asking price. Ballard Oil is the owner's agent..

TED - THE DATE OF PUBLICATION  
OF THIS BOOK IS 1998, SO PERHAPS  
THIS BOAT IS STILL AROUND SEATTLE.



P.S. MINNEFORD IS THE YARD THAT BUILT THE  
FAMOUS S & S. YAWL DORADE IN 1930.