

Wilmington Former Fireboat Found in Baltimore

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We've gotten pretty good at identifying former firehouse buildings around the country. And old rolling stock is pretty easy to spot, on any day of the week. But recognizing former *fireboats*? Now we're talking idiot savant. What are the odds that a Baltimore-wandering blogger would stumble upon an old boat from Wilmington?

Below is the tug T. B. McClintic, which was built in 1932 in Bath, MA, for the US Public Health Service. It was named after the doctor credited with the cure for Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, and served the health department from 1932 to 1958. Among the tug's duties during its life was transporting doctors to ships for treating sick seamen. Click to enlarge:



In 1963, the city of Wilmington bought the thing for \$300. They installed three diesel engines, as well as firefighting equipment. The craft was christened Atlantic IV, and its first duty was washing down the decks of the USS North Carolina prior to its dedication ceremony. More notably, it pumped water into the battleship's hold for a month, to help sink and thus protect the thing. Click to enlarge:



Star-News/Chris Nelson photo

The Atlantic IV-- steel hull, 64 feet long, 85 tons, 2500 GPM-- was retired in 1986, and subsequently sold. In recent years, it was restored its original state as a public health tug. Read about the restoration and the boats history in this [Star-News article from 2008](#).

How the heck did Yours Truly recognize the thing? Easy. Earlier this month, he researched and [created a page about Wilmington fireboats](#). And while wandering this particular Baltimore marina-- drawn to same due to two giant ships also docked there-- he saw the tug, and immediately recognized the name. Although on his web page, he cites the name T. B. McLintick. Memo to self: correct spelling.

The Atlantic IV is in Canada in St Andrews NB. Some pics at <http://www.tugmclintic.com>

Steve - 02/15/15 - 20:59

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