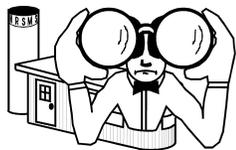


From The Bridge



Mystery Photo



As the year 2010 comes to an end, I want to wish every a joyous and happy holiday season. This is really a happy time of the year as everything takes on a festive look. It is nice to roam the malls and retail outlets all decorated in their holiday splendor. You can feel the festive spirit in the air. I know the kids are all looking forward to Christmas Day as you can see the excitement in their faces. I know my grandkids have prepared their list for Santa and have already baked Christmas cookies. I also hope that our members find something under the tree for themselves. Maybe it will be that favorite tool that you have been wanting or possibly a new ship model kit. I hope that this holiday season is the best ever for everyone.

Do not forget the auction that will be held at our December meeting. This is an opportunity for you to acquire many tools, building supplies, fittings, books and other items to outfit your shop. This auction should have something for everyone. Bidding will be done in \$ 1.00 increments, so bring lots of money. All sales are final and payment is due at the end of the auction. This is a fun time for everyone and it is real entertaining to see the bidding wars that break out. It is all in good fun and all of the proceeds benefit the Society.

Also, do not forget the meeting location has been changed for the auction. Please see the notification in this newsletter.

I want to thank Tony Clayton for giving the presentation on his Osberg Viking Ship at the last meeting. Tony's presentations are always entertaining and I think we all learned a lot about the Vikings.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the auction meeting and also do not forget to bring plenty of money and remember that the auction meeting is held at a different location. Let's have a big turnout. I wish everyone the best for this holiday season.

Ryland

Mystery Photo #293: For a short time there I thought that maybe this column had met its match. Finally, someone had submitted an image of a vessel so obscure that no one, and I mean no one, would identify her. The lack of responses seemed to confirm this theory, and that's the way it was until this author applied a little creative juice to the equation. As the singer Jimmy Buffet says in one of his songs (Fruitcakes), "there's a fine line between Saturday night and Sunday morning." On Saturday I had nothing, but by Sunday morning the process to identify this elusive steamer was in full swing.

Let's begin where we always need to begin—with the image. Here we see a nice portrait of a small steamer with no identifying flags or name boards. It's not a large vessel, rather standard in arrangement with a single stack and twin masts. The dark hull color and white superstructure is also not remarkable, but standard. The number of lifeboats suggests an employment in transporting passengers as well as a limited amount of cargo. Again, she is not remarkable and could be one of hundreds of steamers servicing either coast of the United States or Canada from, let's say, 1880 to 1930.

So how do you identify a vessel like this? By thinking out side the box, and being very lucky.

My initial assumption as to the identity of this vessel was that someone was trying to sneak a U. S. Lighthouse Service tender past us. I all but convinced myself that I could see the emblem of the Lighthouse Service—a lighthouse—affixed to the upper hull near the stem as was their standard practice. It'd there in the white band near the bow just aft of the black rectangle. "I have Peterson's book chronicling the Services' tenders from 1840 to 1939," I said to myself, "this will be easy." The full title of that book is: United States Lighthouse Service tenders 1840 – 1939. It's a damn fine reference for these vessels. Not only did it tell me that I was not looking at a lighthouse but that the after vertical part of the symbol was

(Continued on page 2)

HRMS MEETING & AUCTION

Saturday December 11, 2010

1400 Hours

2713 Magruder Blvd # H Hampton, VA

(See page 4 for directions)

(Continued from page 1)



really an anchor stock. Well, it wasn't that easy. While I didn't find the Mystery vessel in that book I did come away with a strong sense that this vessel served on the West Coast. It was a gut thing and I can't explain it as vessel's very similar to our Mystery plied both coasts. Nevertheless I pursued my instincts and pulled another book from the shelf written by Gordon Newell and Joe Williamson, Pacific Coastal Liners, for inspiration. As it turned out I didn't have to wait that long for my inspiration. On page 36 is a rather dark image of a steamer that bore a striking resemblance to the Mystery vessel. The picture is captioned "The wrecked steamship *Valencia*."

OK. If you looked closely at the Mystery Photo you might have noticed the pixilation in its reproduction. That pixilation means the image was electronically scanned either to enlarge it for use as the MP or it came from an Internet source and is not a large image. If the MP came from someone's private collection and was scanned for our use the chances of identification go way down; it would take a genuine stroke of luck to identify the vessel. But if it came from an Internet source the identification should be very easy as long as we know what to search for. Would our chances go way up? We have the identity of the similar vessel from Newell and Williamson to test our luck.

Makng a Google image search for *S.S. Valencia* made me say Halleluiaah on Sunday morning! There at many



Photo #NH82635 Troops on the transport SS Valencia

web sites was our Mystery Photo all identifying the vessel as *S.S. Valencia*. But that's not the end of this story, it's the beginning.



Survivors on a life raft being rescued by the SS City of Topeka

Valencia was not the obscure trading vessel of my initial assessment. She did not quietly toil away until being scrapped at the end of a productive career—but she almost was. *Valencia* gained early fame in 1898 by playing a small part in the Spanish American War. "Leaving San Francisco, California, [on or about] 27 June 1898, with men of the First North Dakota Volunteer Regiment aboard. They were part of the Army's third expedition to take reinforcements to Manila." An image of her departure is captured in Naval History image 82635 and shows men on board and up into the rigging.

According to Newel and Williamson, *Valencia* and most of her passengers and crew met a violent end on the rocks off the coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia in 1906. According to an article on the tragedy from an Internet site: "The ship had encountered bad weather near Cape Mendocino, and after drifting off course, struck a reef and began taking on water. The crew quickly began lowering lifeboats holding the ship's 108 passengers into the water, but several of these capsized, and one simply

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)



Mystery Photo

disappeared. The *Valencia* eventually sank, and only 37 of the roughly 180 people on board survived.” One description of the sinking describes the gruesome scene: “Northbound from San Francisco to Puget Sound, she blundered onto the rocks off Vancouver Island and was forced broadside against a sheer cliff too high to scale. While would-be rescue craft kept a helpless deathwatch offshore, the *Valencia*’s passengers lashed themselves in the rigging as the breakers quickly smashed the old iron hull to fragments.” The investigation into the sinking found “that she was equipped with tule-filled lifejackets, which were inexpensive, but had one undesirable feature...they wouldn’t float.”

“Thanks to its dramatic end, the *Valencia* eventually became the source of numerous ghost ship stories. Sailors would often claim they could see the specter of the steamer drifting near the reef in Pachena Point, and to this day the ship is the source of frequent wild theories and ghost ship sightings. In a bizarre twist, 27 years after the sinking of the *Valencia*, one of its life rafts was found floating peacefully in nearby Barkley Sound. The “ghost raft” was said to be in remarkable condition, and even still had most of its original coat of paint.”

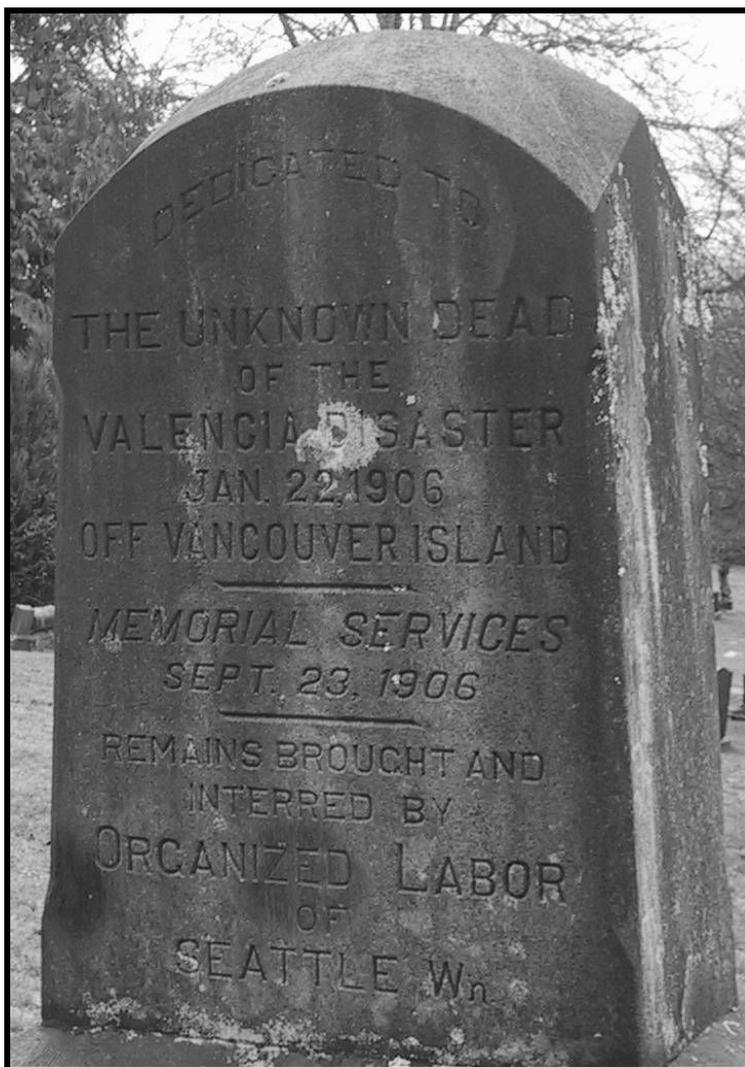
One outcome from her loss was some reforms regarding lifeboats and ship safety. It is a huge irony that the sinking of this small steamer and attendant heavy loss of life was a precursor to a much larger sea-tragedy that would happen a short six years later. Perhaps the reforms or enforcement thereof was not strong enough.

For a complete telling of the loss of *Valencia*—a must read, I might add—follow the image of the gravestone that appears in your Google image search of the vessel. It’s well worth the read.

Some of the particulars of *Valencia* are as follows: “Built in 1882 by William Cramp and Sons, she was a 1,598 ton vessel, 252 feet in length.” The iron-hulled vessel was also 34 foot wide, and drew 19 foot of draft. She was Cramp hull number 228, and was built for owners Boulton, Bliss, and Dallett. In the catalog [Shipbuilding at Cramp and Sons. A History and Guide to the Collections of Willain Cramp & Sons Ship and Engine Building Company](#), it is noted that “she was sold for service on the Pacific Coast in 1889.” In fact the company that operated her at the time of her loss was named The Pacific Coast Steamship Company.

For the model maker, The Independence Seaport Museum, Philadelphia, PA holds 23 plans of *Valencia* in their collection of Cramp memorabilia.

John Cheevers



S. S. Valencia Shipwreck Monument

There were only 37 survivors; two officers, 23 crewmen, and 12 passengers. All of the women and children perished. The found unknown are buried here in Mt. Pleasant.

MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society
Monthly Meeting
Mariners' Museum
November 13, 2010
Guest: Stewart Winn, 3rd meeting

The meeting was called to order by the Skipper, Ryland Craze at 1408 Hours. The Skipper recognized our guest Stewart Winn and noted it was his third meeting. Stewart indicated that he would join the society and was asked to leave the room while the vote was taken, Stewart returned as the newest member of the Hampton Roads Ship Model Society. There were no additions or corrections to the minutes as published. Eric Harfst gave the Purser's report. The Skipper praised the work that Greg Harrington had done in converting the web site to its new format.

Old Business: The Skipper said that he had been in working with Lands' End regarding new shirts for the society. He showed an example our embroidered logo along with examples of two types of material (pima cotton and mesh). After discussion a motion was made and passed for shirts purchased through the club to be navy blue with white stitching for the logo. A motion was made and passed that the club would pay shipping costs and sales tax on the next group order. The skipper circulated an order sheet so members could indicate size and style desired. The order will be placed within the next two months. It was noted that members could order shirts, sweaters or jackets directly from lands' End with the logo in any color or style desired. The Skipper stated that speaker Ted Behne's visit to the museum was postponed until March. There was discussion on the topic of changing the meeting time. Bob Comet stated implications from the Museum's viewpoint. A motion was made and passed to change the meeting time to 1000 hours beginning with the January 2011 meeting.

New Business: Ron Lewis gave details of the "Wreathing of the Lions" ceremony to be held on November 28th. Dave Baker said that Norman Polmar would speak at the museum on December 7th. He is the author of the book Project Azorian, The CIA and the Raising of the K-129. The Skipper reminded everyone of the auction to be held at the December meeting. The location will be at Greg Harrington's workplace at the intersection of Magruder Blvd. and Butler Farm Rd. in Hampton. Bob Comet said that Karen Tagg had some periodicals she wished to donate to the club. Bill Clarke said that he would contact her.

Show & Tell: Dave Baker showed a card model of a WWII Russian T301 Minesweeper. Gene Berger showed several

submarine models. Bill Dangler circulated tool catalogs from Rockler and Highland Woodworking. Ron Lewis talked about the book "Unsinkable": The Full Story of the Titanic. Charles Landrum showed a 1:350 scale model of the *USS Livermore* from Dragon Models Limited. Ryland Craze showed Joe Heyman photos of the Museum's models. Henry Clapp showed his Model Expo *Phantom*. Bob Comet showed a copy of Historic Ship Models, by Wolfram zu Monfeld and highly recommended it as a reference. Bob also showed the progress on his *Niagara*.

The meeting was adjourned to a presentation on Viking Ships by Tony Clayton

Meeting Directions

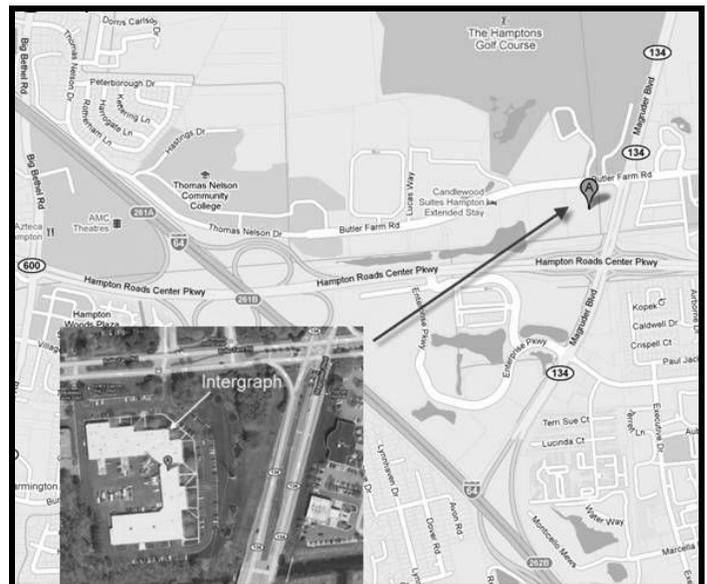
The December meeting will be held at
Intergraph Process Power & Marine
2713 Magruder Blvd # H
Hampton, VA 23666-1572

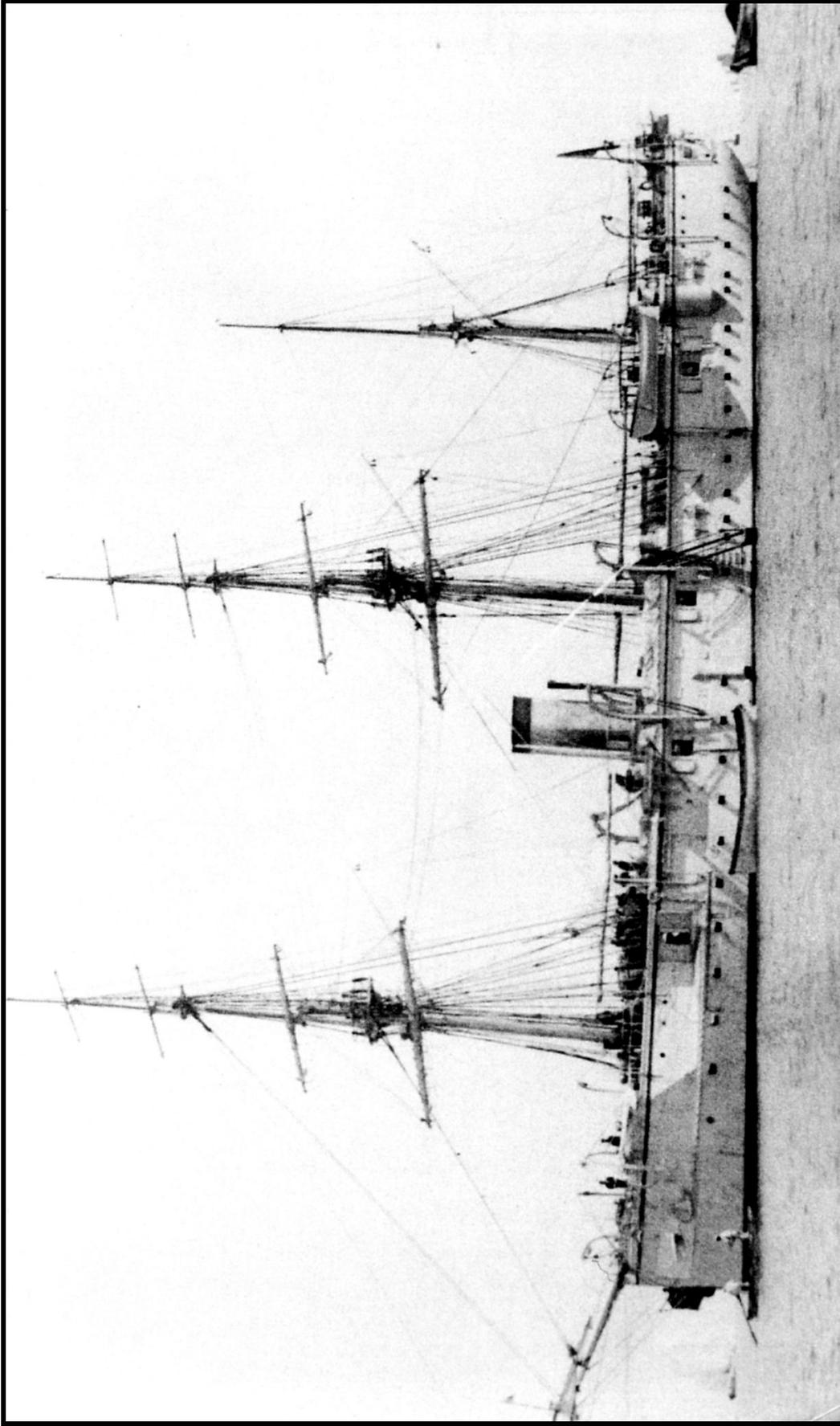
From Norfolk

Turn left to merge onto I-64 W
Take exit 262B to merge onto VA-134 N/Magruder Blvd toward Nasa/Poquoson
Turn left at Butler Farm Rd
Turn left 52 ft

From Points West

Take I-64 E toward Norfolk/VA Beach
Take exit 261B for Hampton Rds Center Pkwy E
Merge onto Hampton Roads Center Pkwy
Take the VA-134/Magruder Blvd ramp
Turn left at Magruder Blvd
Turn left at Butler Farm Rd
Turn left 52 ft





Mystery Photo

Contact John Cheevers by mail, e-mail or telephone if you know what it is. jfcheevers@verizon.net

NOTABLE EVENTS

DECEMBER

- 11 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Auction Butler Farm Rd.

JANUARY

- 8 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Nomination of officers
Presentation: Building the Niagara Part 3, Bob Comet

FEBRUARY

- 12 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Election of officers

MARCH

- 12 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation: Moving the Ticonderoga, Tony Clayton

APRIL

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation: Santa Maria, Crabtree Version, Ron Lewis

MAY

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation:

JUNE

- 11 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

JULY

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation:

AUGUST

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation: U.s. Navy Steam Torpedo Boats
1895 - 1920, Dave Baker

SEPTEMBER

- 10 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting
19 Talk Like a Pirate Day

OCTOBER

- 8 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

<p>WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL</p>



Skipper: Ryland Craze (804) 739-8804
Mate: Tim Wood (757) 934-1450
Purser: Eric Harfst (757) 221-8181
Clerk: Tom Saunders (757) 850-0580
Historian: Bill Dangler (757) 245-4142
Editors: John Cheevers (757) 591-8955
Bill Clarke (757) 868-6809
Tom Saunders (757) 850-0580
Webmaster: Greg Harrington (757) 930-4615
Chaplain: Alan Frazer (757) 867-7666

NAUTICAL TERM

Splice the Main Brace — Until recently the British Navy's custom of issuing grog to all hands, to celebrate an important event of accomplishment. The origin of the phrase is not known, and many guesses have been made. One I like is that when H.M.S. Victory was in dock and teaming with shoreside workers, some officers decided to go to the wardroom for a drink and chose to disguise their intent. Ergo the term was their code.

Submitted by: Tim Wood

HRSMS SHIRTS

The Skipper is no taking orders for HRSMS shirts. He will be placing the order in the next several weeks. The price will vary from \$26 to \$36 depending on the material and style selected. The HRSMS will pay shipping cost and sales tax. See the Skipper at the meeting .

AUCTION

There are currently over 125 lots consisting of tools, books and kits. Clean out the trunk of the car and bring your checkbook to the December meeting.

HRSMS NAME TAGS

**Pin Back \$5.25
Magnetic Back \$7.25**

**If you need a name tag contact Ryland Craze
E-Mail CKart55@aol.com**

or

See him at a meeting