

From the Daily Press January 18, 1950

Missouri Stuck In Mud Near Buckroe

Attempts to free the USS Missouri, aground on the muddy bottom near Thimble Shoal, were abandoned by the Navy last night



The rescue operation to free the Navy's only active battleship will be resumed today after some 2,000,000 gallons of her fuel oil are removed, the Navy said.

The plight of the 45,000-ton Mighty Mo, the ship on which the Japanese surrender was signed, drew hundreds to the Buckroe Beach area, where the vessel was clearly visible. It also was easily seen from the Officers Beach Club at Fort Monroe.

The Big Mo went aground yesterday morning, several hundred yards northwest of Thimble Shoal. By early afternoon tugs had tried and failed to remove her and the Chemung, the fleet tanker, began to take off her fuel oil.

Navy spokesmen said then that high tide at about 8:45 last night would be awaited, but the time came and went and the tamed ship was still aground.

The battleship was in route to Guantanamo, Cuba, when she grounded out of the channel. The Navy said it had no explanation as to how the ship wandered that far astray. A board of investigation will be appointed, probably tomorrow.

When the Mighty Mo went aground, the sea and wind were moderate and visibility was good. Twice she resisted attempts by more than a dozen tugs to pull her free. But she remained fast in the mud a mile and a half east-north east of Old Point Comfort.

After two attempts to float the big battlewagon, the first shortly after she grounded and the second at last night's high tide, the Navy called off the operation until tomorrow. The Army Engineers dredge, Comber, will arrive early this morning to assist.

The unsuccessful final attempt to haul the battleship off the mud banks started at 7:15 P.M. and continued until 8:25 P.M.

Three big fleet tugs put steel cables aboard the Missouri's stern and 11 other tugs were lashed to the warship's

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**2022 Dues are now due.
See the Purser, Ryland Craze**

Mystery

Photo



Mystery Photo # 428: Ok ship model fans, let's play a round of what is it. The object of the game is to identify and name the object featured in the Mystery Photo. While correct answers are preferred, all answers will be accepted and commented on. Correct answers will be praised and the others will face some form of offense. So if you don't want to be offended, tough! If you want to be offended, that's tough too! The impetus behind this Mystery vessel is generated from all forms of offense, and I'm assuming the generators of the offenses are well and deserving of whatever praise they receive. I'm not here to judge. The offenders will face their own judge. In the meantime we have this vessel to identify, and I'm starting to feel a bit offended.

The object is visible from space. Finding it on Google maps would indicate that it is an extension of the hard, but a switch to the imagery view reveals a vessel on the water very near shore. The boxy appearance is simple but unique. Sci-fi fans could be tricked into thinking that it is connected to the BORG—hiding in plain sight. But that would be offensive to some. You might be tempted into believing that it is a transport of rocket parts for NASA or the private Space consortiums springing up everywhere, but that would be offensive to others. I find it interesting that the superstructure is made up of so many inset rectangles, sort of like old man Pike's farm house with its seven additions. You would think that slab sides and a common roofline would be a more economical, if not offensive, approach. For an object that has all the qualities of a warehouse, a modern factory, or a floating luxury hotel, looks are deceiving.

Only it was not very deceiving or offensive for the three who replied. "Well, at least the thing is more interesting to look at than a car carrier!" is how Rob Napier begins this month's commentary. I would add that it is also more interesting to look at than the run of the mill APL or barracks ship. As

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MEETING NOTICE
Date: March 12, 2022
Place: Mariners' Museum
Time: 1000 Hours
The meeting will be broadcast on Zoom.

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proof, I direct your attention to the slab sided APL -61 for comparative purposes. And if it's not either of these two things, perhaps it's "the photo [of] a prison barge moored in the East River in New York City", as Tom Ruggiero states in his come out roll for the Mystery Photo. The last reply comes from Tim Wood who may or may not have spent time in an APL. Since his reply consisted only of the vessel's name, I will withhold it for the moment.

Rob cites proof that Tom is right when he says that "You can see it most anytime you fly into La Guardia in New York tied up on the mainland side of the East River near the New Fulton Fish Market." Tom and his wife saw it from a lesser distance when they "were on a cruise operated by The Na-

tional Lighthouse Museum in summer of 2019 when we saw this barge." Makes you wonder if they were dreaming the three hot's and a cot that this extended stay would offer? Rob alludes to the permanently fleeting nature of the craft that he describes as "a "temporary" floating 870-inmate prison that's been in use since 1992 and probably isn't going away anytime soon." And if you need another geographical marker, Tom places the "The Boat" as it has come to be nicknamed, "near Rikers Island in Queens, NY."

While Tom didn't recall the barge's name, both Rob and Tim are sure that "The Boat" is "the Vernon C. Bain Correctional Center." And it's a floating jail which harkens back to the heydays of the Royal Navy when they maintained old, worn-out vessels as prison hulks. The facility was designed to house something like 800 to 875 inmates (I guess it depends on bookings, or your reference material) for the New York City Department of Corrections. The facility was "proudly" built for \$161 million at Avondale Shipyard in Louisiana in 1992. It was designed with the intent "to reduce overcrowding in the island's land-bound buildings for a lower price." In theory it can "handle

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APL 61 one of the Navy's non self-propelled barracks ships.



A group of eight gang members destroyed property on Rikers Island

THE ANSWER

Mystery photo 428
Vernon C. Bain Correctional Center,
East River, New York City
Taken on August 24, 2012



Inmates perform original compositions following classical music workshop, part of cultural effort in New York City jails

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the following members for their awards at the Richmond International Plastic Model Society's Old Dominion Open.

Maritime based (wood construction)
1st Ryland Craze, Medway Longboat 1742
2nd Stewart Winn, US Ketch "Intrepid" 1804

Surface, engine powered 1/350 & larger
3rd Martin Gromovsky, USS England

Submarines
2nd Martin Gromovsky, Type VII U-Boat

What's Happening at The Museum March 2022

March is, generally, a big month for us; our annual auction, celebratory dinner, Founders' Award announcement, installation of officers for the coming year, wow! Lots of STUFF! This year, not so much. We seem to be on the downside of Covid's grip on our get-togethers but it's still there...and you know the worth of an ounce of prevention. So, as much as we miss our extra gatherings, we're still a very viable Society with a steadily growing membership and, with our option meetings (live vs. virtual), we're getting attention from some pretty solid modelers. But all is not lost, mates! You may not have this in your history calendar but the Museum has, for many years, offered great programs on the "Battle of Hampton Roads" weekend! And this year marks the 160th anniversary of that would-famous and historically significant event we call "The Clash of Ironclads"! The commemoration kicks off this Wednesday, March 9, at 12 p.m. (ET) when the Museum partners with NOAA and the NC Office of State Archaeology for a free virtual lecture. John V. Quarstein, director emeritus of the USS *Monitor* Center, will dive into the 160-year-old question, "Who Won the Battle of Hampton Roads?" as part of the Submerged NC Webinar Series.

On Saturday, March 12, stay after the meeting with your family for an action-packed day of fun from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and discover fascinating stories from the Museum team. But Wait! There's more!

This year also marks the twentieth anniversary of the retrieval of *Monitor's* 2-gun turret from the briny deep! And, connected to that, it's the 50th anniversary of the very first of NOAA's national marine sanctuaries, The Monitor National Marine Sanctuary. Rest assured, there will be plenty of discussions, lectures, speakers from every conceivable Civil War, Naval, and historical corner of our world throughout the year.

AND April marks the 50th birthday of the Council of American Maritime Museums. The Annual Conference will be held in the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in April. TMM will dominate a full day of the conference. If you're not a member and need info, let me know.

Ron Lewis

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inmates from medium- to maximum-security in 16 dormitories and 100 cells." Actual number may vary, so much for the luxury hotel theory. "For recreation, there is a full-size gym with basketball court, weight lifting rooms, and an outdoor recreation facility on the roof. There are three worship chapels, a modern medical facility, and a library open to inmate use." Pity the guys in the APLs

AMERICAN NAVAL HISTORY THE CIVIL WAR 1862

April 6: Battle of Shiloh. Confederate forces surprise Grant's army at Shiloh, Tennessee and threaten to push it into the Tennessee River. Fire from the gunboats Lexington and Tyler is instrumental in stemming the Confederate advance.

April 18: Beginning of the Battle for New Orleans. Union mortar boats under Commander Porter begins to bombard Fort Jackson, on the Mississippi River below New Orleans.

April 24: The Battle of New Orleans. Flag Officer Farragut leads his fleet of 17 vessels, all wooden, plus Porters mortar schooners upstream between the Confederate fortifications. The movement begins at 2:00am. Not a single one of Farragut's ships is disabled by the forts fire. Up river, a fierce, confused action is fought with Commander Mitchell's Confederate flotilla, consisting of the thin-skinned ironclad ram Manassas, the Louisiana State gunboats General Quitman and Governor Moore and six River Defense gunboats mounting 1 or 2 guns apiece. The screw sloop Varuna is rammed and sunk by the Governor Moore and the Stonewall Jackson but she is the only Union ship lost. The Confederate forces are annihilated. The total number of Union casualties for the operation of April 18-26 is 39 men killed and 171 wounded.

April 25: The city of New Orleans surrenders to Farragut. The unfinished ironclad Mississippi, the most powerful vessel ever put under construction in the Confederate States is destroyed to prevent her capture.

April 28: The defenders of Forts Jackson and St. Philip, isolated by the capture of New Orleans, surrender to Farragut's fleet. The unfinished ironclad Louisiana is destroyed to prevent her capture, as are the CSS Defiance and McRae.

End of part 3 of 1862 of the Civil War.

Bob Moritz

who haven't offended anyone and don't get these perks.

"Currently the only barge in use, the Vernon C. Bain Center is the third prison barge that the New York Department of Corrections has used. In its history, the prison has served traditional inmates, juvenile inmates and is currently used as a holding and temporary processing center. The added security of the prison being on water has prevented at least four attempted escapes. The barge is named in memorial for warden Vernon C. Bain, who died in an automobile accident. In 2014, the prison barge was named the world's largest prison barge in operation by the Guinness World Records." You can read more about its use on Wikipedia.

As barges go, it looks huge. Rob offers these dimensions: "The barge it's floating on is 625 feet long and 125 feet broad." That does make it huge. And since the 47,326-ton barge is on the water, it was initially subject to Coast Guard regulations meaning that it had to have "a captain and three maritime

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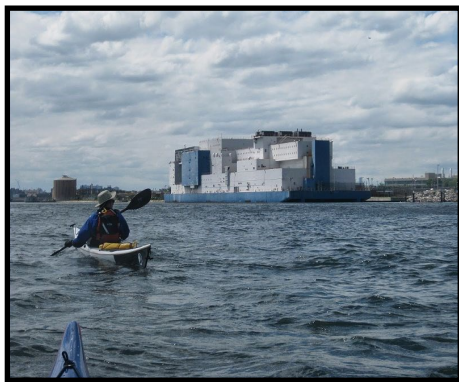


crews” who had “to learn the vessel operations, including the electrical and firefighting systems.” According to John Klumpp the barges first captain, after ten years of operation in 2002 “the Coast Guard, after years of monitoring the prison barge, finally accepted the reality that that it was, de facto, a jail and not a boat.”

And it being a facility surrounded by water, I guess like Alcatraz, added little deterrence to jail break attempts. “The first time a prisoner tried to escape from the Bain was in 1993,



when a 38-year-old prisoner was able to escape while he was supposed to be cleaning ice from the parking lot in front of the boat. The guard who was responsible for the inmate was suspended without pay due to the incident.” I am offended by the irony. But, “Prior to 2002, an inmate tried to escape from the prison’s recreation area by climbing the 30-foot fence equipped with razor wire. The guards’ uniform boots prevented them from climbing the fence in pursuit, so they threw basketballs at the inmate to stop his escape, but he was able to successfully climb over it. He dove into the East River, where he was promptly picked up and returned by a police watercraft that was



Several persons in kayaks are looking to see how they can join the party aboard the barge.

dispatched to the scene.” While there are a few more recorded escape attempts available on Wikipedia, no story has yet to emerge about an inmate being made to walk the plank or being keel hauled.

Political shifts and budget concerns have threatened to close the facility since its inception. Going forward, It’s not

clear from reading the teabags whether the facility will continue or not. It is clear that people continue to offend and be offended. Whether society wants to deal with the offenses through detaining the lawbreakers by welcoming them aboard “The Boat” or try something else is in flux at the moment. As far as I’m concerned, as interesting as this subject is, I have no desire to model this model of incarceration. If it closes, maybe NASA will want it.

John Cheevers

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sides. At a signal, all the tugs turned up their engines simultaneously and worked them up to full speed ahead. The Mighty Mo did not budge an inch.

The Missouri was beginning her first cruise under a new skipper, Captain W. D. Brown.

Captain R. B. McCoy, a civilian pilot employed by the Navy, had un-berthed the Missouri but had left her before she went aground.

The main ship channel the Missouri was traversing is 40 feet deep. The ship is 887 feet long and 108 feet abeam. Her present complement is 71 officers and 1,400 men.

Early in the afternoon, the Missouri had to turn off her auxiliary engines because her suction pumps and condensers had become fouled by mud. The submarine rescue ship Kttiwake was ordered alongside to provide the battleship with electric power.

Meanwhile, Coast Guard picket vessels patrolled the area warning all shipping to stay clear.

Near the spot where the Missouri went aground, the Navy had planned to blow up a mine with 3,000 pounds of TNT today, but had postponed the blast because of unfavorable weather. The explosion was planned as a sort of graduation exercise for naval personnel attending the Army Mine School at nearby Fort Monroe.

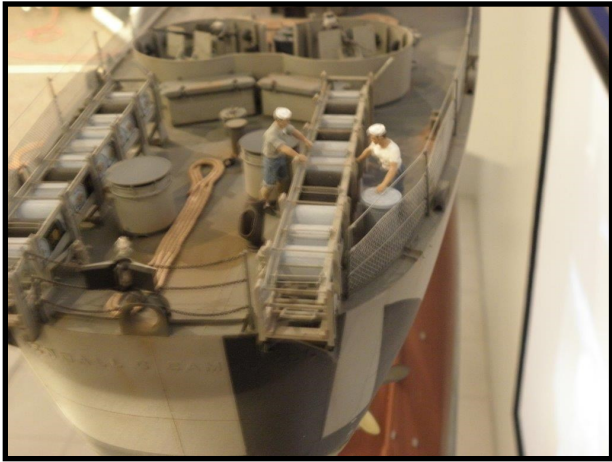
An unofficial but informed source said the Missouri may have run aground as a result of following orders to pass over an experimental recording device which, he said, was installed last Friday on the bottom of Chesapeake Bay about 50 yards to the left of the main ship channel. Purpose of the device, this source explained, is to record the presence of ships.

He said two buoys were placed above the device to mark its position and that all naval vessels entering and leaving Hampton Roads had been ordered to pass between the two buoys to test the device. He said that after the Missouri passed between these marker buoys she should have turned to starboard, or to the right, but that judging by the position at which she grounded she did not make the turn properly.

He added that the recording device is classified, which means the Navy will permit no information concerning it to be published.



Joe Ficklen's gunboat Philadelphia



Gene Berger's Kendall C. Campbell



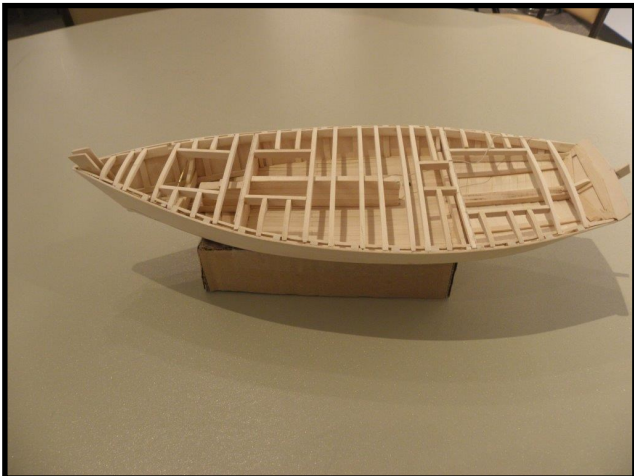
Pat Derby's Skipjack



Butch Watkins' Metunga



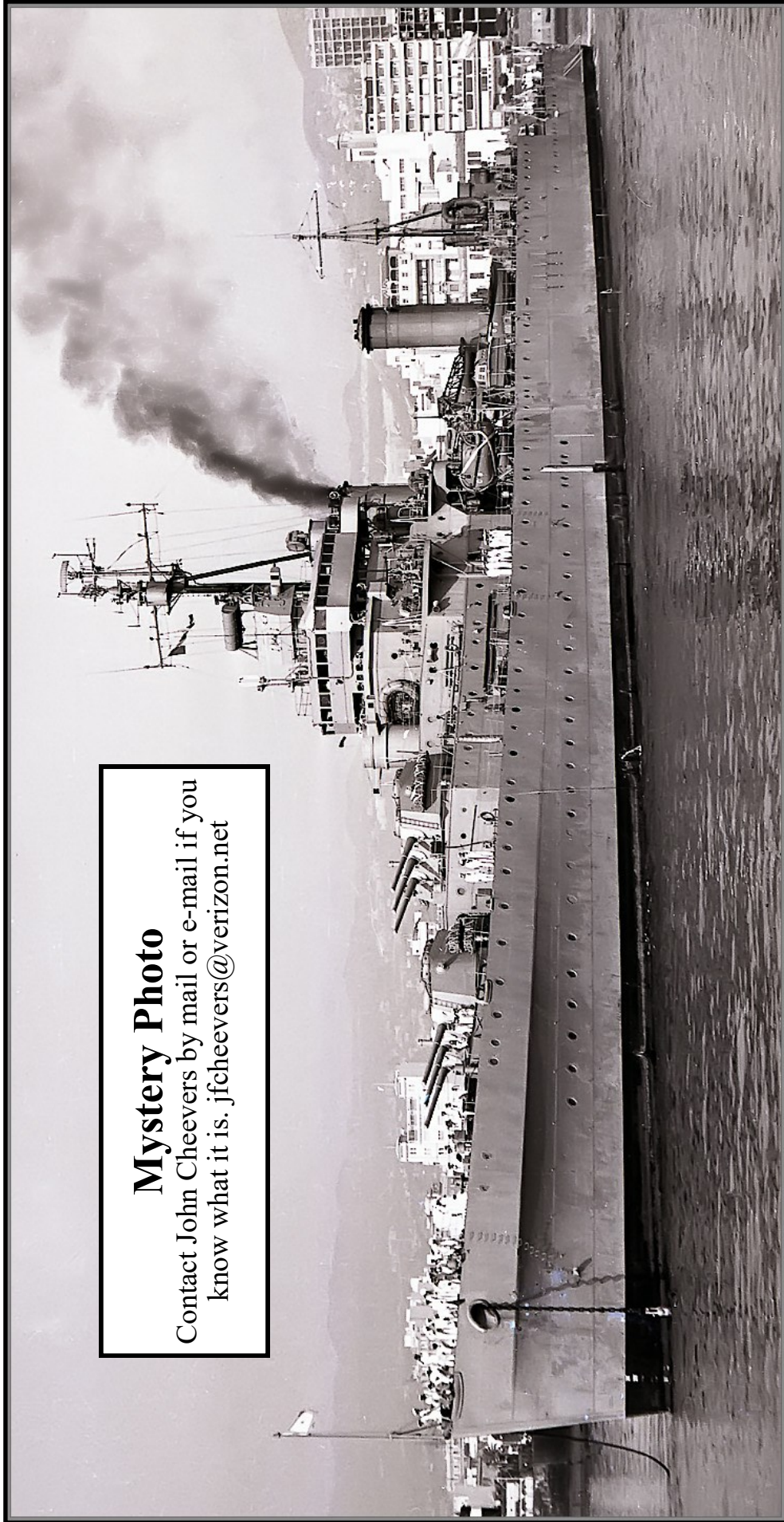
Bruce Brown's yacht America



Hank Ghittino's Willie Bennett

Mystery Photo

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



NOTABLE EVENTS

MINUTES



MARCH

- 12 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation: "Making Lines from Offsets", John Cheevers

APRIL

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation: "The Great Tea Clippers and their Legacy"
Ron Lewis
- 30 Northeast Ship Model Conference, New London, Ct.

MAY

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

JUNE

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

JULY

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

AUGUST

- 6 Modelcon, Philadelphia, Pa.

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly meeting:

SEPTEMBER

- 10 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting

- 19 Talk Like a Pirate Day
Presentation: TBA

OCTOBER

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

- 13 US Navy birthday

NOVEMBER

- 12 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation: TBA

DECEMBER

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

JANUARY

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Nomination of officers

FEBRUARY

- 11 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Election of officers
Presentation: TBD

Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

Monthly Meeting
February 12, 2022
Mariners' Museum

Guests: None

The meeting was called to order by Mate, Gene Berger at 104 hours. There was no correction to the minutes as published. Ryland Craze gave the Purser's report, detailing expenditures for IT equipment.

Old Business: Tim Wood talked about the form to order shirts and hats with the HRSMS logo. The form can be found on the HRSMS web site under the "members" tab. The Clerk was directed to cast a single vote for the unopposed slate of officers. For 2022 the officers are Greg Harrington, Skipper; Gene Berger, Mate; Ryland Craze, Purser and Tom Saunders, Clerk. Ryland Craze gave a description of the IPMS Old Dominion Open show for those not familiar with the event. Ron Lewis talked about the Lego model of the Titanic that is being built at the museum. He said that when the model is being worked on, that it would be in the gallery next to the model builders' stand, Tom Ruggiero talked about the Northeast Ship Model Conference to be held on April 30th in New London Ct. Details of the conference can be found on the Philadelphia Ship Model Society's web site.

New Business: None

Show & Tell: Pat Derby Showed his Chesapeake Bay Skipjack from a kit by Midwest. Joe Ficklen showed his 1:24 gunboat Philadelphia from a model Shipways kit. Bruce Brown showed his sailing yacht, America and a rechargeable tool kit from MicroMark. Butch Watkins showed his finished half model of the oyster dredge Metunga. Hank Ghittino showed the progress on his Willie Bennett. Gene Berger showed his completed destroyer escort Kendall C. Campbell.

The meeting was adjourned to a presentation "Creating a Compelling Impression", by John Cheevers.

**WATCH, QUARTER
AND
STATION BILL**



Skipper: Greg Harrington (757) 218-5368
Mate: Gene Berger (757) 850-4407
Purser: Ryland Craze (804) 739-8804
Clerk: Tom Saunders (757) 850-0580
Historian: Tim Wood (757) 481-6018
Editors: John Cheevers (757) 591-8955
Tom Saunders (757) 850-0580
Webmaster: Greg Harrington (757) 218-5368
Photographer: Marty Gromovsky

Nautical Term

Moonraker The highest sail on a square-rigger's mast, in the days of the clipper ships.

Tim Wood

Thanks to Ron Lewis
for the meeting photos.