

FROM THE PILOTHOUSE



Inspirations

Many years ago, Howard Chapelle wrote a short article, "The Ship Model That Should Not Be Built" (*Nautical Research Journal*, vol. 3, pp. 29-30; reprinted in *Ship Modelers' Shop Notes*, p. 1). A rare example of negative inspiration, if you will. But things occasionally come up that will – or should – make our minds and fingers itch to get to work. One such occasion, this week, was *Seaways' Ships in Scale's* first installment of Stephen Canright's series on the Pacific Coast lumber schooner *C.A. Thayer* of 1895. The photographs show a handsome and historic three-master that just begs to be modeled, and a detail from her inboard profile says the information is clearly available to support the effort.

Recalling that just ten years ago I was prowling her decks and hold in San Francisco, I was also reminded that I have the issue of The National Maritime Museum Association's journal, *Sea Letter* (Summer 1995), that was devoted entirely to this schooner, her history, and her museum career. Here the full text of Canright's "Born of the Lumber Trade" context article, now in *Seaways*, first appeared, together with his companion article on her current problems, possible preservation approaches, and the effort, since begun, to restore and preserve her for her second century. Spread across two pages is that superb inboard profile, and elsewhere is her midship section, both by Don Birkholz, Sr. Produced from a survey of the ship, they are so detailed that they include not only framing and planking detail, massive hanging knees, capstan, donkey engine, and potbellied stoves in fo'c's'le and cabin, but such minutia as steering-gear details, salt pocket stringers, hatch dogs, and staysail boom tabernacle.

To close with a plug, a set of 1:96-scale *Thayer* plans, including deck views, lines, sections, and profiles, is available for just \$16 plus \$10 per package for shipping (package may include multiple sets or other plans) from the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park's Maritime Store, 2905 Hyde Street Pier, San Francisco CA 94109.

—Alan Frazer

See Pilothouse Pg. 3

To Build A Ship Model



Our guest speaker for our series of talks was Joe McCleary. His subject was devoted to techniques applied in the building of fiber glass reinforced hulls.

The audience for this presentation was treated to a thorough step by step procedure, augmented with detailed color slides. Joe's delivery in conjunction with the graphics made for a readily understood and interesting session.

Although fiberglass is a heavy material it is also very strong therefore a lightweight hull can be produced provided the hull's thickness remains thin walled throughout. Depending upon a hull's shape, some interior reinforcement may be required in such areas as the transom or at the bow. Interior bracing will be necessary. Even with these additions the hull will retain ample buoyancy for a radio controlled model.

When finishing a master hull shape take the time to ensure a smooth exterior, check for minute flaws such as protrusions and recesses. A long flexible strip of wood in contact with the exterior surface of the hull can be used as a guide to highlight such areas. Fill or remove as necessary.

Amongst the many points covered in the building process particular attention was given to parting agents; silicone grease, spray wax and vinyl alcohol were all recommended. In addition, when preparing for a mold to be made from the master, fasten a piece of mylar to the surface of the baseboard before mounting the master to it. Mylar is inert and this property eliminates the possibility of an unwanted bond between the mold and the baseboard.

Proof of the complete process of molding was demonstrated with a fine model of a steam pinnace. This depicts a type of Craft carried on board battleships such as *H.M.S. Nelson* and *Rodney*.

This particular model was awarded a silver medal at the National Model Engineering Exhibition held in London. Proof indeed of excellence.

See To Build Pg. 3

MINUTES



Members: 14 present

Guests: Tony Roberts of the United Kingdom

Additions or Corrections: None reported, however, the skipper submitted a marked copy of the newsletter that was positively dripping in red ink. This was passed to the editors.

Old Business: The Skipper asked the purser and the Newsletter staff to include a notice in the newsletter that dues are due.

DUES ARE DUE !!!

Pay up or the flogging may begin in the next issue!

Thanks to Ken Knittle for organizing the tour of Norfolk Naval Shipyard. A thank-you card was circulated to those who went on the tour to thank the Captain Krum for the tour. A flyer announcing the NRG Conference to be held in Boston at the end of October was circulated. If you plan to attend, get your reservation in early; Motel space is limited at the special room rate. Call there direct and mention the NRG Conference. Don't call the 800 number.

Jack Bobbitt mentioned that the Watermen's Museum is out as a possible central meeting site, Reason? No security.

Bill Clarke read the clerk's response to Gene Larson's request that HRSMS contribute to the NRG home page. The newsletter, in somewhat abbreviated form, will begin to appear on the Internet sometime in the next few issues.

Joe McCleary brought photos and brochures from the southern city of Savannah and the Savannah Ships of the Sea Museum. The photos were of a large collection of ship models by William Hitchcock. He appears to be a prolific modelmaker and good too! Joe also mentioned that *Constitution* was out of dry dock and will make its historic sail soon, and that the Captain will retire two weeks after that, whether the ship survives the sail or not.

New Business: Skip Watson noted that The Mariners Museum Library did not possess a copy of the Nautical Research Journal Index of Volumes 1-40. The Skipper said that he would make the inquires to see if the museum would purchase one. (Remember: HRSMS has a copy in it's library. Contact Charles Reynolds if you need to use it.)

The skipper passed a flyer highlighting the upcoming Western Ship Model Conference to be held in Long Beach California, March 26-29, 1998. Contact Lloyd Warner for information. Several copies of the newsletter of the Scale Ship Modelers Association of North America and their Regatta Handbook were passed. They are looking to broaden their membership.

Show and Tell: Alan Frazer had a poster, for the taking, advertising a model contest of *Vasa* for the Vasa Ship Museum. He also brought for review the Steamboat Store Catalogue from Steamboat Masters and Assoc. Inc., and the Micro Mark Summer Sale Catalog (Great bargains in that one.)

Bob Comet described his visit to the Arsenal Naval Museum in Venice, Italy. Four floors of good stuff and one of the best he's ever seen!

Graham Horne commented on his participation in the Fifth Annual Mid-Atlantic Maritime Festival in Easton, Md. (Sounds like a good time was had by all.)

John Cheevers had flyers on Emco-Maier's new metal lathes, the Compact 8E and the Unimat 4 (the search goes on!)

Tony Roberts of the UK (no, he is not willing to take Clarke with him, when he leaves.) talked a bit about ship modeling in Britain and the differences between modeling here in the US and across the pond. It seems that the ratio there is 90% RC and 10% static and just the opposite here. He had flyers on an outfit called "Hand Made Flags Limited", maker of scale silk flags. Very nice! Hand Made Flags Limited, 64 Copse Avenue, West Wickham, Kent BR4 9NR. Ph. 0181 776 1942

Bill Clarke produced an album of laser-copied 8"x 10" black-and-white on-board photos of WWII destroyers that are as good as the original prints. He also brought plans of *Isaac Sweets* that looked like copies of the original builder's arrangement drawings along with plans of the ship as modified by the British. Are those hull lifts still behind the seat of your truck, Bill?

Jack Bobbitt showed parts of the stern wheel of the river boat he is building, with cast hubs from Alumalite.

Joe McCleary "brung" the hull of the *Pawnee* in rough form. It will be sliced like baloney to produce the frame patterns for laying out the actual frame shapes on the final frame blanks. He says that the rest of the construction is a la Harold Hahn. If he is true to his word, this is probably the last time anyone will see it intact. Has it gone through the bandsaw yet?

Program: To Build A Ship Model

This month the topic was molded or glassed hulls, given by Joe McCleary. Using slides of his model of a Royal Navy picket boat from *Rodney*, Joe took us through the process of carving a hull plug, making the master mold, and laying up a glass fiber hull using polyester resin.

Submitted by John Cheevers (silent partner)

To Build From Pg. 1

Joe's notes on molding techniques are reproduced in this issue of our newsletter, they offer sound information and also illustrate once again the efforts made by our speaker for the benefit of the membership, therefore on behalf of us all, Thank you Joe.

As a postscript I would like to pose a question Considering that the Nelson and Rodney were both post World War One, does it not seem rather archaic that both ships would carry steam pinnaces aboard?

Graham Horne

The speaker for July will be Graham Horne.
The subject will be, Sharpening chisels and knife blades.

Online Ship Lists from the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes at Kingston are now available. The Wallace List, a Record of Canadian Shipping 1786 to 1920 (sailing vessels); the Mills List being Canadian steam vessels 1816 to 1935 and Canadian Registered ships for the Great Lakes and some St. Lawrence River Ports are online at Queen's University at Kingston - over 13,000 records. <http://ils.unc.edu/maritime/wallace.html>

The Pennsylvania From the National Archives

Pilothouse From Pg. 1

P.S. — Apropos our discussion of planking patterns at a recent meeting, Canright states that *Thayer's* planking was from four to eight inches in thickness and lengths up to one hundred feet or more! That, in a vessel under 160 feet between perpendiculars, would preclude much of a repeating pattern of plank butts, of which modelers are so fond.

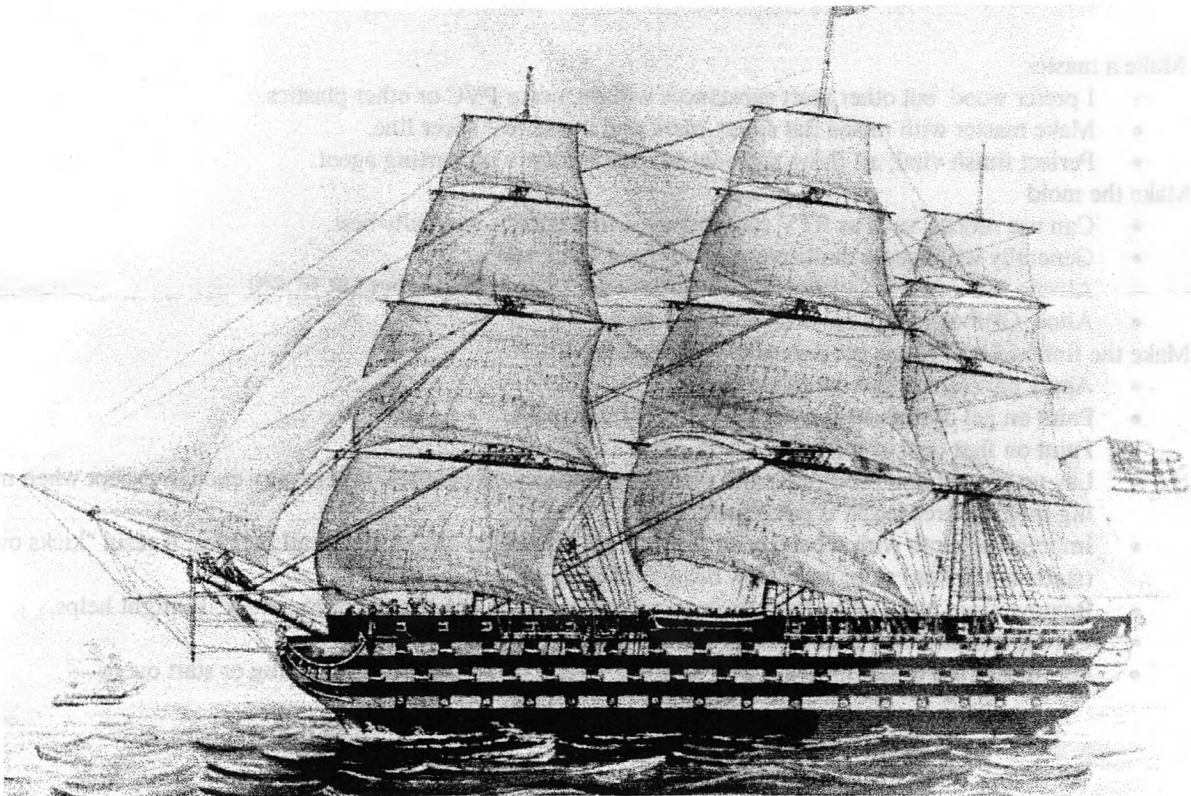
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Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
First Saturday each month, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
(Microfilm research only)
Closed weekends and Federal holidays.



BUILDING FIBER GLASS REINFORCED PLASTIC HULLS (GRP)

DON'T DO IT!

ADVANTAGES: Can make multiple hulls; very strong; provides very hollow hull which is great for RC; excellent self adhesion; commonly available materials at boating stores.

DISADVANTAGES: Heavy; very flexible hull unless properly braced; complex, smelly and messy process (master, mold, finished hull) not cheap.

TYPES OF RESINS:

- **EPOXY:** Same as the glue; expensive (x4); takes long to cure; kicks over fairly slowly; not too bad a smell; not recommended.
- **POLYESTER:** Mixed with an initiator; BAD smell; cheaper; kicks over in about 15 to 20 minutes (goes quickly); most commonly used; thinned and cleaned up with acetone.
- **VINYLESTERS:** Exotic, not readily available; forget it.
- **GEL COAT:** Pigment impregnated resin; always the outside layer (mold and hull); provides fine finish and water barrier; sandable; can be colored but not recommended for modeling; can provide fine surface detail such as plating; buy the best.

TYPES OF FIBERS:

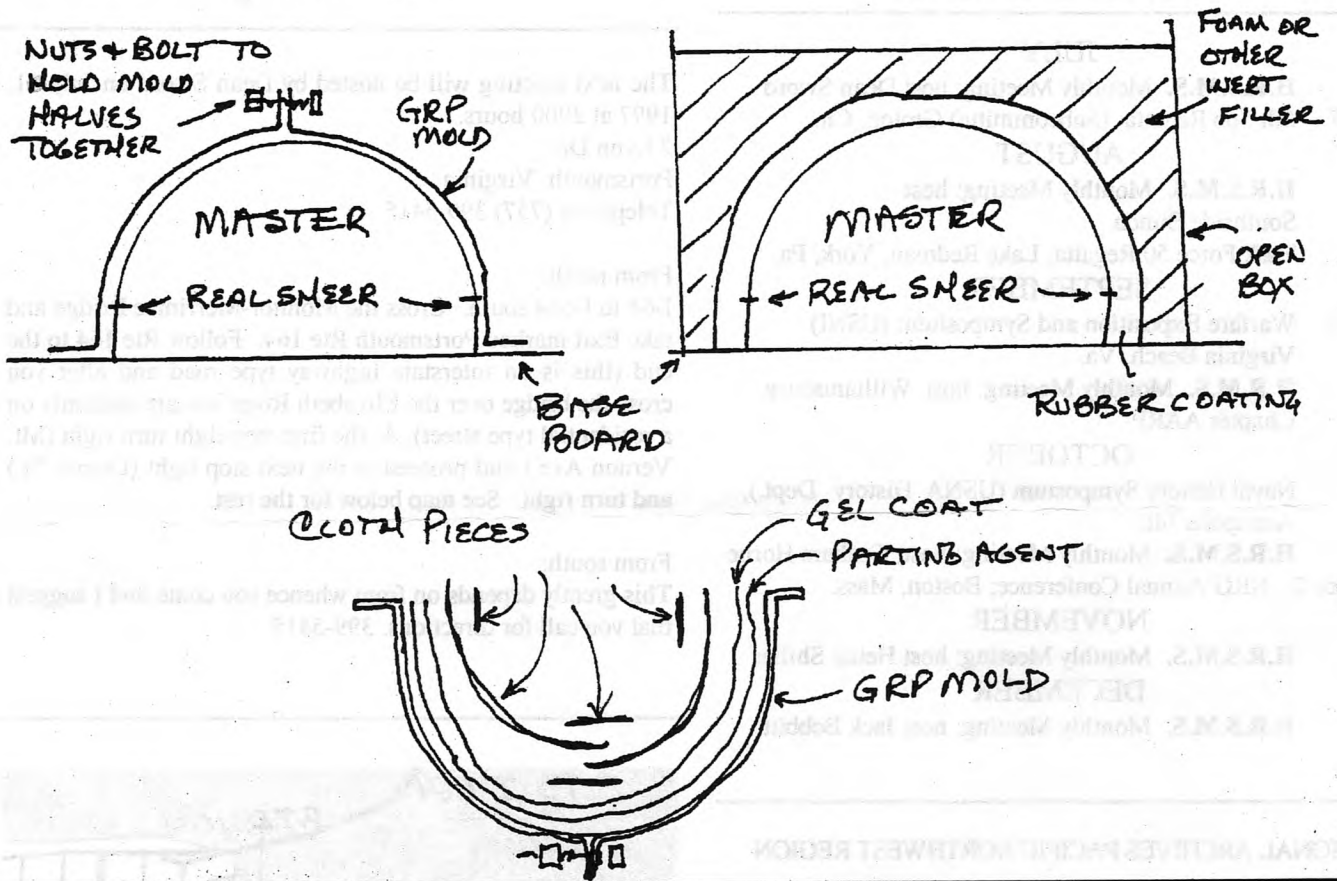
- **GLASS FIBERS**
 - **Chop and chopped mat:** looks like fiber glass felt; comes apart while working unless resin is sprayed - not recommended for modeling.
 - **Woven roving:** very heavy woven cloth (24 oz.) used for full sized boats; not recommended for modeling.
 - **Cloth (3/4 oz.):** comes in 2-, 4-, and 6-inch-wide tape plus 44-inch-wide cloth; purchase in pre-packs or by the yard; best for modeling.
- **OTHER FIBERS:** Kevlar, Dacron, carbon; virtually any fiber or cloth will work, but all have drawbacks.

PROCESS:

- **Make a master**
 - I prefer wood, but other inert substances will do, never PVC or other plastics.
 - Make master with raised flat sheer; mark and incise real sheer line.
 - Perfect finish vital; all flaws reproduced; coat master with parting agent.
- **Make the mold**
 - Can use rubber, such as RTV (expensive); I find GRP is generally best.
 - Generally will need a multi-piece mold if not using rubber.
 - Always use a parting agent when you want two parts to dome apart OR ELSE!
 - Allow GRP or rubber mold to cure for a week.
- **Make the finished hull (same process as making mold)**
 - Apply parting agent to mold surface.
 - Paint on gel coat and allow to "set up" until it is tacky.
 - Paint on first coat of resin.
 - Lay up pre-cut and pre-fitted cloth pieces (one layer with overlaps is generally enough except when making mold where weight is not a factor).
 - Impregnate cloth with second coat of resin (use sparingly) and work out all bubbles; if resin "kicks over" (starts to thicken) stop, make new batch and carry on.
 - Remove from mold when hard (over night) and allow to cure for about one week; sunlight helps.
 - Cut off excess sheer; fix mistakes; mark water line.
 - Put in bath tub to test for leaks and compute weight budget (continue building or start over)

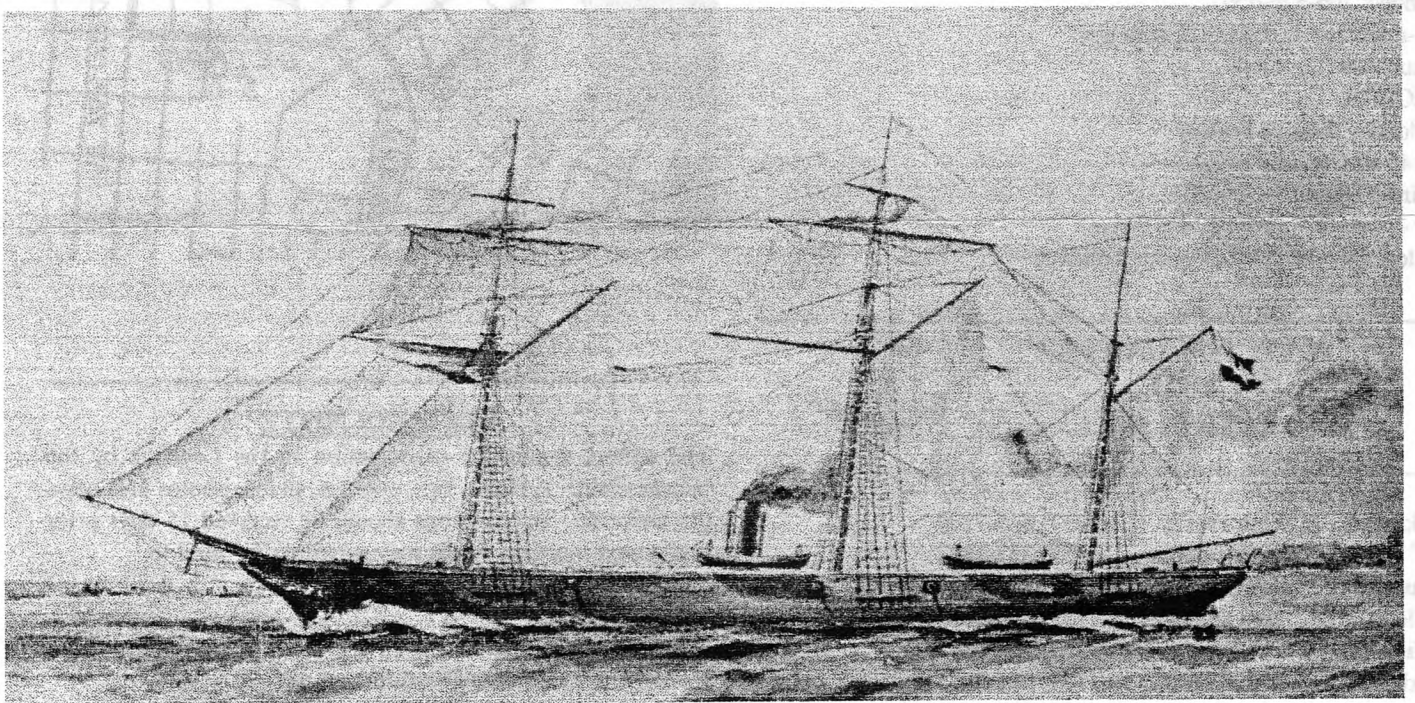
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CSS Alabama

From the National Archives



NOTABLE EVENTS

JULY

- 11 • **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host Dean Sword
25-27 6th Sub Regatta; (Subcommittee) Groton, Cn.

AUGUST

- 8 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host
Southside Bunch
17 Task Force 50 Regatta; Lake Redman, York, Pa.

SEPTEMBER

- 11-13 Warfare Exposition and Symposium; (USNI)
Virginia Beach, Va.
12 **H.R.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host Williamsburg
Chapter AARP

OCTOBER

- 2-4 Naval History Symposium (USNA History Dept.),
Annapolis Md.
10 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Graham Horne
31-Nov 2 NRG Annual Conference; Boston, Mass.

NOVEMBER

- 14 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host Heinz Shiller

DECEMBER

- 12 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host Jack Bobbitt

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WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL



Skipper:	Alan Frazer	(757) 865-7300
1 st Mate:	Joe McCleary	(757) 253-1802
Purser:	Bob Comet	(757) 934-1279
Clerk:	Tom Saunders	(757) 850-0580
Historian:	Chuck Reynolds	(757) 548-0844
Editors:	John Cheevers	(757) 591-8955
	Bill Clarke	(757) 868-6809
	Tom Saunders	(757)-850-0580

Next Meeting

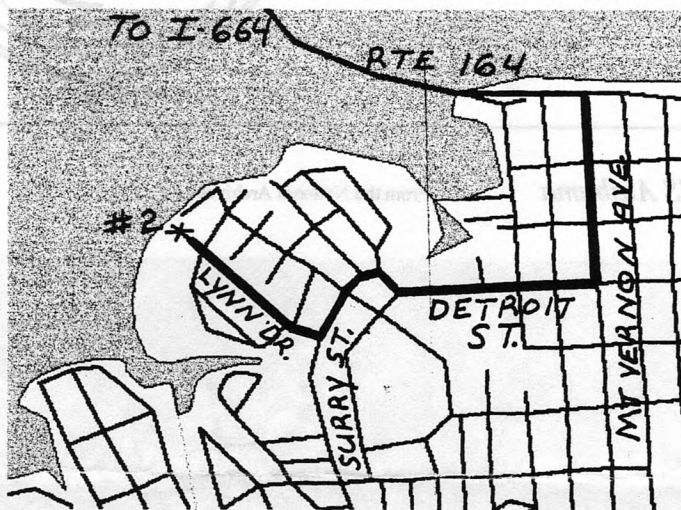
The next meeting will be hosted by Dean Sword on July 11, 1997 at 2000 hours.
2 Lynn Dr.
Portsmouth, Virginia
Telephone (757) 399-5415

From north:

I-64 to I-664 south. Cross the Monitor-Merrimac Bridge and take Exit marked Portsmouth Rte 164. Follow Rte 164 to the end (this is an interstate highway type road and after you cross the bridge over the Elizabeth River you are suddenly on a residential type street). At the first stop light turn right (Mt. Vernon Ave.) and proceed to the next stop light (Detroit St.) and turn right. See map below for the rest.

From south:

This greatly depends on from whence you come and I suggest that you call for directions. 399-5415



EDITORS NOTE

The editors encourage participation in the Logbook by the membership. Articles, tips, sources, plans, photos and news are welcome. Submissions should be received 15 days prior to the next meeting. Items may submitted by mail to:
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11 Eldorado Ct.
Hampton, Va. 23669
E-mail: t.e.saunders@worldnet.att.net
FAX (prior arrangements required)