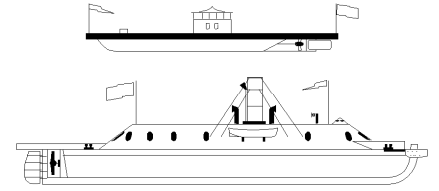


Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

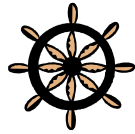
Logbook



No. 144

JUNE, 1998

FROM THE PILOTHOUSE PILOTHOUSE



Once Again, a few words from the First Mate:

Alan is off taking his afternoon nap and has left the word processor unguarded, so I thought that I would slip a few words into the Log Book while he is sleeping. While the cat's asleep I get to play with the mouse.

As most of you are aware, the HRSMS will be the sponsor for the Nautical Research Guild (NRG) conference in the year 2000. The conference will actually take place at the end of October to coincide with the close-out of the ship model competition and display at the Mariner's Museum. So there is actually almost two years and six months between now and then. This time will slip away very quickly. I thought I might throw out a few thoughts for everyone to chew on over the next several meetings.

Since I am a member of the board of directors of the NRG and also the conference coordinator for the guild, I have attended more than a few conferences, including some, such as the Western Ship Model Conference, and the colloquiums up at the Naval Academy, which are not sponsored by the NRG. The one thing above all others that really seems to make or break a conference is the quality of the speakers at the technical session on Saturday. Although it can vary, there are generally six speakers. Some conferences also feature a speaker at the banquet on Saturday night. Since a fairly lengthy period is consumed after our banquet in handing out the prizes for the model competition, an after-dinner speaker is probably not in order for us.

I do not think that it is too early in the game for us to start thinking about assembling a stable of really "knock-your-socks-off" speakers for our conference. Most really good speakers like to have a long lead time to put together a quality presentation. The longer we can give them, the better they will do for us. I think that we should also consider offering to pick up most expenses (travel, hotel, etc.) for out-of-town speakers, so that we will have no trouble attracting the best. I have also noticed that the best received speakers I have observed of late are those who dwell most heavily on the practical "hands on" aspects of modeling rather than just pure research. I think that this is due to the fact that almost all building techniques can apply to a broad range of modelers than a particular, and possibly narrow, research subject.

This brings me to the bottom line: As you people are attending various conferences, symposiums and colloquiums over the next two years, if you happen to come across a ynamite speaker, note down the speaker's name, subject area and address (do not rely on your memory) and pass that information along to Bill Clarke. Now get out there and start beating the bushes. Whoops, Alan is starting to wake up. Got to hit the "save" button and get out of here.

To Build A Ship Model



Wood was our subject at last months meeting, with an emphasis on natural finish. Our speaker was Joe Mclearv and as usual with Joe's presentations the subject was covered most thoroughly. Commercial sources for obtaining wood were listed, samples were shown, followed by a discussion of their characteristics. We were also introduced to a work entitled, "Worlds Woods in Color" by William Lincoln, obtainable from:

Linden Publishing
3845 N. Blackstone Avenue
Fresno, CA 93726-9882

This is a good book and as the name implies the reader will appreciate the many illustrations to full color that accompanies an in depth text.

Later, a fine model of a plank on frame hull was brought to our attention. The builders intent was to simulate the woods used to full size construction.

What follows, raises some important questions, some of which may be answered and others that may require further attention and debate both from and beyond our membership.

In competition this model was judged to be bland and the builder graciously accepted such a decision. Yet in support of this purist approach, could we not respond by stating that a full sized wooden vessel prior to painting would also look bland? Could a case then be made advocating the models accuracy and a faithful representation of the original, therefore deserving of extra merit?

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What of other approaches that could be considered? Could they be grouped under the heading of decorative art or good taste? What is good taste? Is it that which society agrees is pleasing? Or is it something one acquires through training? Are there accepted standards when choosing woods? If they exist where will we find them?

Questions, questions, all of them interesting, intriguing. Do we visit museums and learn from them? Certainly! Should we then duplicate such works or is there room for innovation? Although these approaches may lead to an aesthetically pleasing model accuracy takes second place to artistic license

Who then is to be the judge of that?

Thoughts from this point on could lead in all directions so let me suggest just one avenue in an attempt at rationalization. One direction that was mentioned earlier would to visualize a prospective model as a piece of decorative art. Where would the finished work reside? In ones home? Which room? What tone has been established within that room?

Such considerations could influence size, type of finish and the era of the proposed model along with innovative methods of presentation.

Thanks Joe for giving us a great talk. You certainly held my attention and set my mind a thinkin.

How about you dear reader?

Graham Home.

Mystery Photo



Welcome to the tenth installment of “Mystery Photo,” the column where Bill Clarke asks, “what Ship Is It?” What can you tell him about the photograph? Can you identify the ship (s) or the scene? Can you date it for him as well? Bill invites you to participate in identifying these images, helping him to complete his archives. If you wish, you may also contribute your own mystery photograph. Play along, and learn to use photographs as primary reference sources. By knowing what to look for and understanding how to interpret what you see, you will greatly improve your ability to present your model in the correct way. I will collect all responses, add my own remarks, and present the compilation to the readership in the next newsletter. Help solve the mystery!

With the tenth Mystery Photo, *Logbook* No. 143, Bill takes us

in a different direction and gives us, what he calls “a tuffy.” After a little prodding from your scribe, Bill has thoughtfully moved away from the pre-dreadnought era. This image is from another time, and shows us a rather unusual small craft. Bill assured me that this photograph would get the best of us; ...we’ll see! When pressed for advanced information, he allows that either he doesn’t know or isn’t willing to tell what this is in the image. Let’s see if we can identify this vessel and not let Bill stump us. Also, let me congratulate Tom for the much improved copy quality.

This image shows a small craft or warship of some sort resting in a cradle that sits on a marine railway of some small shipyard. The hull has a flush deck, hard chines, and spray strakes. There is a small cockpit just aft of amidships (note the two port lights in the front and the single port light on the side and how the cockpit sides roll into the top). The port running light is fixed to the cockpit side just aft the port light. At the bow we can see a closed towing chock and a large deck cleat just behind it on the centerline. Smaller cleats line the deck edge and are spaced equally. At the deck edge is a rather substantial rub rail. A row of signal flags supported by a very light mast adorns the craft. An identification number C-25465 is stenciled on the side of the craft. Two workmen, in heavy coveralls, are doing something on the after deck. In the background we see the usual shipyard clutter. And, finally, the most unusual feature of this craft, the two bow doors with relatively large hinge arms.

What can we say about this boat and its features in order to identify it? Admittedly there is not much to describe in this photograph, but the image serves well to illustrate the method or supporting a small craft. Could we say from its appearance that it dates from the middle Thirties to the late Forties? Could we venture a guess that it has Italian or maybe Japanese origins? Would that make it a captured war prize? Could we stretch the imagination and say that its style resembles that of the Barnegat Sneak Box? Could we really stretch the imagination and say that the entire boat with the unusual bow shape resembles or gives the impression of a shark? Does anyone think it is a torpedo boat? Was it built in the United States for the US Navy?

Let’s use the clues above to answer these questions. My first impression was that I was looking at a captured W.W.II Japanese torpedo or suicide boat and that it was being examined by experts from the US Navy. But, the row of flags puzzled me. Certainly the US Navy wouldn’t decorate a war prize. It had to be something else. I was fairly certain the photograph was taken in the United States in the middle Forties, probably 1945, but how would I prove it. The bow doors said torpedo boat and nothing else, but this wasn’t a weapon made famous in combat like the PT boat. The idea of it resembling the Barnegat Sneak Box intrigued me, however, so I read about the sneak box or gunning skiff in *American Small Sailing Craft* by Howard I. Chappell.

To paraphrase Chappell: The design of the sneak box made it

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inherently stealthy so as to hide the craft from its intended prey. The idea originated from the design of the “sink box,” which was anchored in position and ballasted until the deck was nearly awash, then covered with marsh grass or reeds, thus becoming a floating duck blind. A high coaming kept the craft from swamping. The sneak box, on the other hand, was a propelled skiff that could “sneak up” on the birds and be used to shoot from.

Could this craft have borrowed the sneak box design and adapted it to shoot torpedoes at the enemy after sneaking-up on them? I found the answer in Friedman’s *US Small Combatants an Illustrated Design History* on page’s 99-101. Friedman states: During W.W.I the United States became intrigued with the notion of using motor boats to deliver a torpedo attack to the enemy. There were two competing theories on how to apply this idea. A British proposal to build coastal motor boats (CMB) relied on very high speed to surprise the enemy and deliver an attack, while an Italian effort relied on stealth to deliver the attack. Various proposals were submitted by American designers. The American equivalent of the stealthy boat came from a Mr. W. Shearer. His one-man torpedo boat was built and tested in 1918. It was only 27-foot long, with a 10-foot beam, and under the best condition could make only 9 knots. Its forward part was submerged, the torpedo being carried in a floodable well from which it could swim out. The boat’s performance was found to be sufficiently impressive that construction of the type was recommended for Great Britain.

Friedman goes on to say: Shearer’s ideas were revived two decades later when the PT’s seemed to have abandoned their origins of small size and stealth. In January 1942, the General Board of the Navy suggested that several miniature semisubmersible torpedo boats be built for immediate trial and development. Someone clearly remembered Shearer and his tiny torpedo boat. In February 1942, BuShips recommended ordering examples of Shearer’s new design. And on 27 May 1942, a contract was placed for two 45-foot semisubmersible torpedo boats, C 25464 and 25465. They were built at City Island, New York, under subcontract to Shearer. Delivered to New York Navy Yard on 1 July 1943, they were stored there until their sale in April 1945.

With the above history in mind and noting the presence of the flags, perhaps this photograph was taken to record the launching of C 25465. Designed to carry two torpedoes, this craft borrowed heavily from the sneak box style. The resulting shark-like design of the bow was the result of making arrangement for the two torpedo doors. A photograph, on page 99, of Friedman’s *U.S. Small Combatants* shows the details of the torpedo bay. Access to the bay was provided by three large hatches with two-piece doors hinged at the side. The two torpedoes rode on wooden rails (cheap, low-tech). Access to the engine bay aft the cockpit was made the same way. Friedman makes no mention of any trials, testing, or operational history and no information is provided about any

activity after their sale (presumably for commercial or private use, not for scrap).

Again, no members ventured a guess as to the identity of this vessel or the location of the photograph. Come-on fellows, don’t make me do this alone every month!

Notes on previous column:

1.) Last issue, *Logbook* No. 142, Bill Peach pointed out that I made mention of the Navy Ensign flying “at its usual place on the Jackstaff.” That was in error. The correct statement should read, “The Jack was at its usual place on the jackstaff.”

2.) Alan Frazer correctly pointed out that the Navy Ensign was not flying from the top of the main mast. I made my mistake by relying on what I saw in the companion photograph from Alden’s book *The American Steel Navy*, pp.-72.

John Cheevers

CONGRATULATIONS

During the Sixth Annual Mid-Atlantic Maritime Festival, Rob Napier presented a NRG special award for “Best Model of an Open Boat” to **Graham Horne** for his scratch built Delaware Ducker Skiff. Congratulations to Graham.

A NOTE TO THE MEMBERS

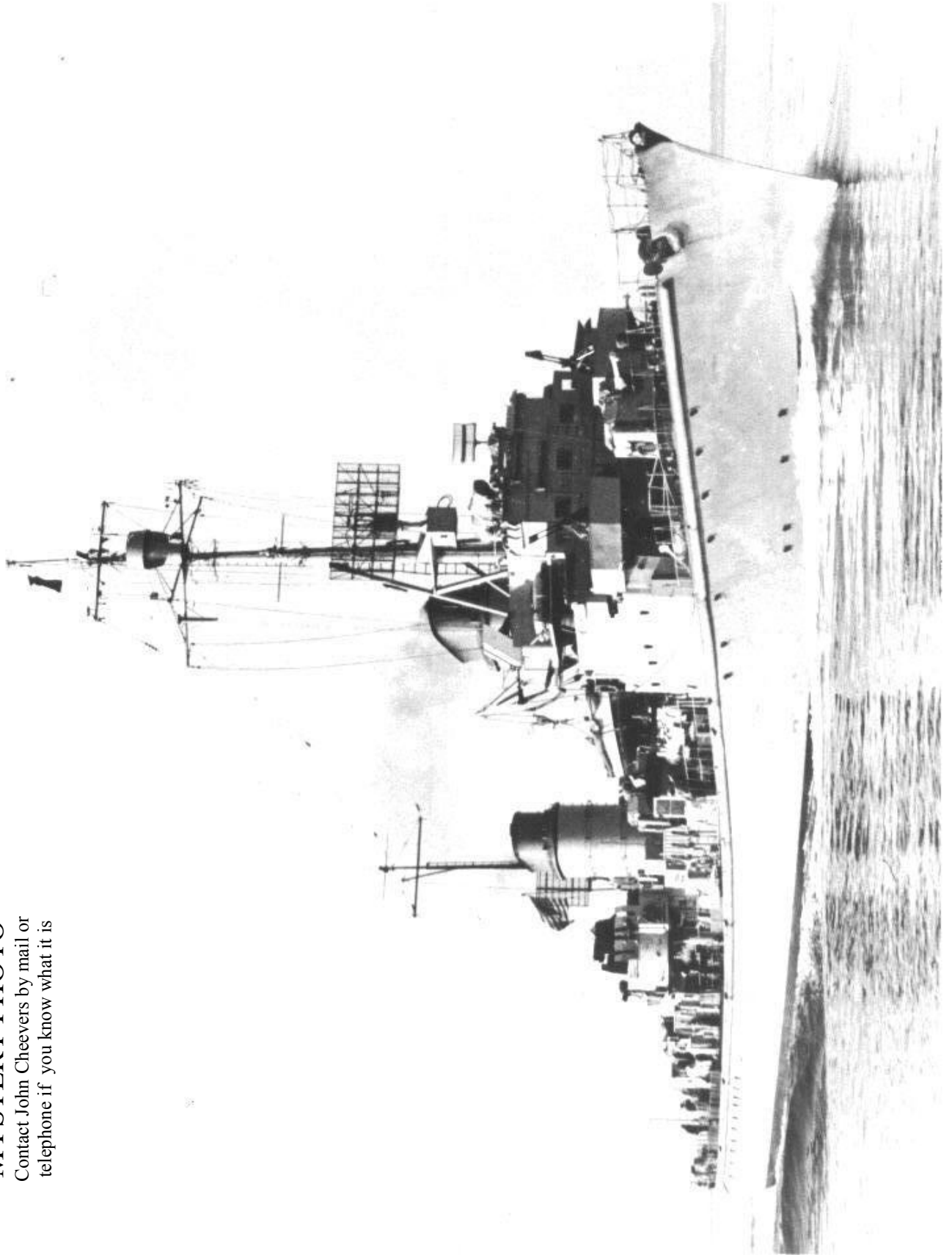
I need to inform those members who attended the annual dinner at the James River Country Club that we face a \$200.00 short fall between what was paid in and what we were billed by the club. This shortage is due to the bar bill. Tom Saunders paid me the extra that he owed but so far everyone else seems to have forgotten. The club charged us for 67 drinks over and above the wine, beer and soda. Jeanne and I feel this number is in error and it has been discussed with the club manager but to no avail.

Those of you who had more than the one drink included in the meal price but have forgotten to pay for these please send me a check for what you owe. I hope that we can reduce that short fall. Many thanks.

Jack Bobbitt

MYSTERY PHOTO

Contact John Cheevers by mail or telephone if you know what it is



MINUTES



The meeting was called to order at 2009 hours.
11 crew were present
2 guests: Richard Moore, M. C. Shakshober

The minutes were approved as published.

A treasurer's report was given. The 1998 dues have been paid by 13 members.

This was Mr. Moore's fourth meeting and he was invited to join the society. Non-members left the room and after the usual debate, a vote was taken and he was voted into the society.

It was announced that Ulrich Guenther would host the October meeting.

The Skipper thanked the first mate for presiding over the April meeting.

There was no old business.

New Business:

Joe McCleary had a copy of the Niagara League News that described the test firing of guns that were cast for the ship. He said

that a video of this event may be available soon.

Graham Horne's Saint Lawrence Skiff was shown in Seaways Ships in Scale. Graham said this was due to his winning a door prize at the NRG conference.

Show & Tell:

Alan Frazer said that the tall ship *Endevor* was in Norfolk and commented that it was a well done reconstruction. Alan also had a copy of the Guide Book to the Mariners Museum.

Richard Moore asked about what was the best method to show plating on a 1/16 inch/foot model of the *Cape Cory*. The response to his question was to apply copper paint and use the "rub & buff" method to finish it.

Graham Horne talked about his trip to the UK and said that if one were taking a trip there, it may behoove them to fly into Manchester instead of London.

John Cheevers showed photo etched parts for his 39' Mariner.

Program:

Joe McCleary gave a presentation on "Woods for Model Building".

The meeting was adjourned.

A Maritime Album: 100 Photographs and Their Stories

The Mariners' Museum in association with Yale University Press, 1997.

245 pages, 100 black-and-white photographs, softcover.

ISBN 0-917376-48-x

\$24.95

Photographs from The Mariners' collection selected by John Szarkowski, the most eminent photographic historian of our time. The inspired pairing of Szarkowski's eye with photoreproductions by MacArthur Fellow (and Yale Art School Dean) Richard Benson, who also wrote the accompanying essays, has resulted in a literary treasure.

THE BARD BROTHERS: PAINTING AMERICA UNDER STEAM AND SAIL

The Mariners' Museum in collaboration with Anthony J. Peluso, Jr.

Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, in association with The Mariners' Museum. 1997.

175 pages, more than 120 color illustrations, 30 black-and-white pencil drawings, plus period engravings and photographs, cloth.

ISBN 0-8109-1240-6

\$35.00

A beautiful book on the lives and work of John and James Bard, the greatest chroniclers of the steamboat era. Working for owners, captains, boatbuilders-anyone who would commission a ship's portrait-the Bards turned out thousands of stunning paintings in the folk art tradition, works that have long been treasured by museums, collectors, and steamboat fanciers

From the Mariners Museum Homepage

NOTABLE EVENTS

JUNE

12 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host Bill Clarke
 26-28 "Wooden Boat Show", St. Michaels Md.

JULY

10 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host David Tagg

AUGUST

14 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host Williamsburg
 AARP

SEPTEMBER

11 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host Dean Sword
 24-27 NRG Conference, Morristown NJ

OCTOBER

9 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host Bob Comet

NOVEMBER

13 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host Heinz Schiller

DECEMBER

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

JANUARY

8 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

FEBRUARY

12 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

MARCH

12 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

APRIL

9 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

MAY

14 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

Thanks

The members would like to thank Southside Bunch for their hospitality in hosting the May meeting.

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:	Jim McCurdy	(757) 482-2846
Editors:	John Cheevers	(757) 591-8955
	Bill Clarke	(757) 868-6809
	Tom Saunders	(757)-850-0580

Next Meeting

The June meeting of the H.R.S.M.S. will be on June 12th, hosted by Joe Ann and Bill Clarke at 190 Odd Road, Poquoson. This will be the annual Strawberry Shortcake Bash. For directions / information call 838-6809.

From Richmond:

Take I 64 East, Turn left on VICTORY BLVD (HWY 171) heading east for 5.5 miles, Turn right on ODD RD heading South

From Norfolk:

Take I64 West, Turn right on MAGRUDER BLVD (HWY 134, HAMPTON HWY) heading north for 3.2 miles, Turn right on SEMPLE FARM RD heading east for 0.1 miles, Bear right on ARMISTEAD AV heading east, Hard left on WYTHE CREEK RD (HWY 172) heading north for 2.1 miles, Turn right on LITTLE FLORIDA RD (HWY 171) heading east for 0.5 miles, Turn right on ODD RD heading south



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:

Thomas E. Saunders
 11 Eldorado Ct.
 Hampton, Va. 23669
 E-mail: t.e.saunders@worldnet.att.net
 FAX (prior arrangements required)