

FROM THE PILOTHOUSE



“Down to the Seas Again”

Ten days of pleasant weather greeted the eighteen travelers who made the Nautical Research Guild's second British pilgrimage, this time to Northern England and Scotland. From gritty but picturesque cities like Liverpool and Glasgow to breathtaking (both figuratively and, for some, literally) Edinburgh to the scenic delights of the Lake District, the Forth, the Scottish moors, and Yorkshire, we kept busy, ate well, and found much of nautical interest as well as a goodly ration of, in the words of late Guild member Jim Moore, “ABC”—“Another bloody castle (or cathedral).” Durham and York also had interesting indoor public markets, while Thirsk (James Heriot's home) featured a busy outdoor one. Nautical sites of particular charm were the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port (a historic but still active canal terminal) and the Steamboat Museum at Windermere, including rides in a most appealing wooden steam launch on that lovely lake. Across from the hotel at Ambleside, Rob Napier was, I believe, the only NRG groupie to venture a row on Windermere in a neat and traditional wooden skiff or wherry.

Spectacular collections of ship and boat models, including hundreds of British builders' models, were found in the huge Merseyside (locally pronounced “Mairzieside”) Maritime Museum at the Albert Dock (site also of the Beatles' Museum) in Liverpool, the spectacular and diverse Museum of Transport in Glasgow, and Newcastle Discovery, which also features Charles Parsons' restored *Turbinia* and a wonderful panoramic model of the Tyne and its cities, shipyards and other industries, as well as the magnificent builder's model of the 1907 *Mauretania*. We toured the RRS *Discovery* (Scott's polar ship) and HMS *Unicorn* in Dundee, and HMS *Trincomalee* in West Hartlepool. The two frigates each claim to be “the oldest British warship afloat.” Their dates make *Trincomalee* (1817) the winner by two years, but *Unicorn*'s claim is momentarily safe on a technicality: *Trincomalee* is in drydock for heavy hull repairs and restoration—we had a good hard-hat tour. We also viewed the Royal Yacht *Britannia* at Leith from Edinburgh's Carleton Hill, a couple of miles away; closer access could not be arranged.

In the “actual ship” department, West Hartlepool's small museum was also well done, with the restored 1934 paddle steamer *Wingfield Castle* in addition to some nice models. The town also produces hardy young women, scores of them very lightly clad enroute to a lively disco on a decidedly chilly evening; must be the still-active fishermen stock!

This coachload of Yankees stunned a “Model Shop” proprietor in Kirkcaldy and spent a delightful hour or two, including a pub supper, with an active radio-control group in Edinburgh. In my first hands-on r-c experience, I was introduced to Jamie Lamb's lively twin-screw tug with independent controls; got pretty good at chasing ducks and avoiding other models, but its ballast (the batteries) rolled on hard turns until I learned to shift same back by an opposite turn! Other moving personal experiences were my second visit to the massive, 108-year-old Forth Bridge (the rail cantilever), the majesty of York Minster, with magnificent music heard from practically inside the great organ, and the mere sight of road signs to Lockerbie.

—Alan Frazer

FROM THE WEBMASTER

The club's web site is looking pretty good, if I do say so myself. Well, it does happen to be just myself saying it. I haven't had too many opinions one way or the other. To be precise, just two, Tom Saunders' and Len Wine's (Len, by the way, sends news that he is returning to the Hampton Roads area and is looking forward to rejoining the club). I didn't expect my mailbox to overflow, mind you, but it leads me to wonder if some of you are still wondering what is the benefit to the club and its members, so I will say a few words about that and renew my request for member comments and contributions.

- KEY POINT -

Your comments and contributions will be what makes the site both useful and interesting, for the benefit of our members and those who log in from far away. The way I see it, there are five

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(somewhat) distinct benefits to your help in developing a good web site. This site will be a useful tool for our own research. The amount of information available on the web is already staggering and it grows every day. Oh, don't worry, there will always be a need to do it the old fashioned way, but the web can be a powerful tool. But it can be difficult, even for the initiated (I can help those who are intimidated by these fickle, insidious machines). There are two problems: finding what you want and getting back to it. Our web page can serve as a central repository of web-based knowledge. We've started a list of links to other sites of interest and if we all share what we've found, we'll all be able to find the answers to our questions more easily. Other sites have done the same thing, but we will have control over this site and I can organize it and tailor it to best suit your needs. Others can share in it of course, which gets me to the next point.

I may not get universal agreement on this one, but I've always thought that a very important part of any hobby is sharing - demonstrating one's interest in the hobby and sharing skills and know-how. Our yet-to-be started page of how-to hints will be a benefit to our web visitors and our own members. So I'm asking you once again, if you have a method, jig/fixture, "trick" etc. which you would like to share, let me know about it and I'll get it posted for all to enjoy. This will be of particular help to those new at the craft, like myself. Not surprisingly, this brings up another benefit. I'm sure you all would like to see the art of ship model building grow and flourish, and if you haven't noticed, I'll tell you something - the average age of our members is "just a little" above my own individual age. Now in most respects, that's fine. After all, such persons, with all their years of experience, have more to offer other members. But eventually it would be good to find new members, including some younger ones, on which to bestow those years of modeling wisdom and to perpetuate the club's existence. Our site will serve as an excellent means for locals and people moving in from out of town to locate and contact our club. There are lists of local clubs and organizations and their activities on the web. Perhaps someone is looking for a hobby, but isn't sure what. They do a web query and see our club listed, and think "Hey! That sounds fantastic!" (who wouldn't?). Or maybe someone looks at the City of Hampton's site for something to do on a Saturday afternoon and sees that the club is having an exhibition (or hosting a conference) and they think "That sounds interesting! I think I'll go check it out!" (again, who wouldn't?). And while they're all excited, they can go to our site to find out more!

Communication with other modelers is another benefit. Many other clubs have web sites and the web is an excellent means to find out what others are doing (get some ideas), and for others to find out about our activities. This also ties in with the research angle I've already approached. I've seen modeling and research questions posted for anyone to answer. We might answer others' questions and get some answers in return.

Last but not least, we will have a forum to showcase our work. Rarely have I met a modeler who didn't want to show of his/her pride and joy after struggling for months/years to complete it.

Need I say more?

OK - so go visit the site. The address is:

<http://members.xoom.com/HRSMS>

Tell me what you think. Send me an address to post (web or regular address). Send in photos. Send in how-to tips (note: I can scan in sketches where appropriate). Most of all, have fun!

I'm still working on getting more links to our site from other places on the web. It's slow going, but eventually we'll start getting hits from all over. I'll get us there. Until then, some word-of-mouth won't hurt. Tell your friends about it, and they'll tell two friends, and they'll tell two friends ...

See you soon!

Greg Harrington

Mystery Photo



Welcome to the fourteenth installment of "Mystery Photo," the column where Bill Clarke asks, "what (war)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 either his images or those submitted at-large. Let's all mine these photographs for their useful information, discover the story inside each photograph, and learn to use them as primary reference sources. By knowing how to interpret a photograph, you will greatly improve your ability to outfit and present ship models correctly. I will collect all responses, add my remarks, and present the compilation in the next newsletter. Help solve the mystery!

With this installment of Mystery Photo, *Logbook* No. 147, Bill really tests the bounds of our nautical knowledge. He is not asking us to identify a ship per-se but an unusual fixture or fitting attached to the hull of a medium sized vessel. With no visible marking or notes to provide clues, this image will be a tuff to identify. This object is either experimental, temporary, or so rare that unless someone comes forth and really nails the identification, I'm afraid we will only have our good guesses. After thirteen tries, Bill may finally stump us. *(Bill knows the answer to this month's riddle, it's located under the text box on the photograph. He assures me he will enjoy watching us squirm. Let's not give him the satisfaction!)*

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Since I had nothing concrete to go on, I asked Bill to broach this subject at the last Hampton Roads Ship Model Society meeting in the hope of eliciting as many good clues as possible. I felt that an open forum rather than letters or phone calls would put us (me) on the right trail--and fill this column. All manner of ideas was discussed and I'm sure some of them were in the ball park--Joe McCleary's suggestion that it was a speed brake from an F-14 not withstanding.

Let's begin by concentrating on what we can see in the photograph. We have a ship, possibly in dry dock, fitted with a large barn door like structure, the purpose of which is unknown. Three men mill about in the lower left corner, one, holding the barn door, appears to pose for the photographer. Could he be the engineer or designer of this fitting? These three men dressed in suits and wear bowlers are obviously not waterfront personnel. A portion of one of the ship's bilge keels is visible but it is impossible to determine whether the bow is to the left or right. Two cables, their bitter ends eye-spliced and attached to a pin on the door, disappear through the largest of three openings in the hull. Notice that the door has rolled plate at the top and bottom, but that the door proper is made from plate and channel and is not smooth on the outside. What looks like a fairing or end cap is to the right of the door, apparently aligning with the door when in the closed position. Though difficult to see, there is an equal amount of fairing structure attached to the hull directly behind the door. Do we have enough to go on?

The general consensus from the Society's discussion was that this is a speed brake of some sort, but we could not be agreed to its use and purpose. For a time the idea that this is an auxiliary rudder was entertained but not widely supported. One of the chief problems with the speed brake idea was getting the visual evidence to agree with the hypothesis. How on earth would it work with three holes in the hull? Make that six if you assume another speed brake on the other side. What was the method of actuation? The cables could reel it in, but how was it deployed, and what held it in place in the open position? Why was it not finished on the back side and why were the channels open on the outer face? Its method of construction and the bolted arrangement against the hull made the fitting look temporary. We seemed to raise more questions than we answered and, all the while, Clarke sat in the corner and just smiled.

On a whim, while at the Nautical Research Guild Conference, I showed the photograph to Art Herrick from Westmoreland, New Hampshire and told him of our plight. He suggested that the ship was not in dry dock but on a building way. He agreed with the brake theory. What he did not agree with was the idea that this was a speed brake but suggested, instead, that this was a launching brake. Suddenly all the clues began to fit into perspective. What if the ship was launched into a narrow river and the intent was to slow the vessel as fast as possible? Suppose the builder was experimenting and intended to

replace the heavy drag chains with this door? Perhaps there was not enough room or time for tugs to catch the vessel after launch. Then, if these doors were on spring loaded hinges set to open on command, the ship would arrest its own momentum after clearing the launch way. After launch The cables were used to close the doors permitting dry docking and removal of the device. Do we now have an answer to this mystery

Just before I put this column to bed, Bill Altice called and said that he had solved the mystery. He allowed that he was going to write the results of his research and mail them to me. But, at press time, the package had not yet arrived. I will include it in the next installment.

With that said, I eagerly await the next Mystery Photo.

John Cheevers

Atlas Metal Sales was founded in 1975 as an aluminum ingot distributor and has steadily grown to a specialty metals warehouse distributing aluminum, brass, bronze, copper, lead, nickel, pewter, tin and zinc in various forms.

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E-MAIL ADDRESS

Would the members who have e-mail please send a note to the clerk (t.e.saunders@worldnet.att.net) so their address can be included in the next HRSMS roster.

Thank You

MINUTES



The meeting was called to order at 2010 hours.

A treasurer's report was given.

Old Business:

Bill Clarke had a contract from the Radisson Hotel for the year 2000 NRG Conference. Details of the contract were discussed and one omission was noted. The omission being, the meeting room for the NRG directors. Bill said that he would get the item corrected and proceed to commit the HRSMS to the Radisson. The next matter on the floor was speakers for the convention. Several ideas were bantered about with no resolution.

New Business:

It is a sad state of affairs when the only thing that could be put under the heading of new business was Bill Clarke's crowing

about stumping John Cheevers with the Mystery Photo.

Show & Tell:

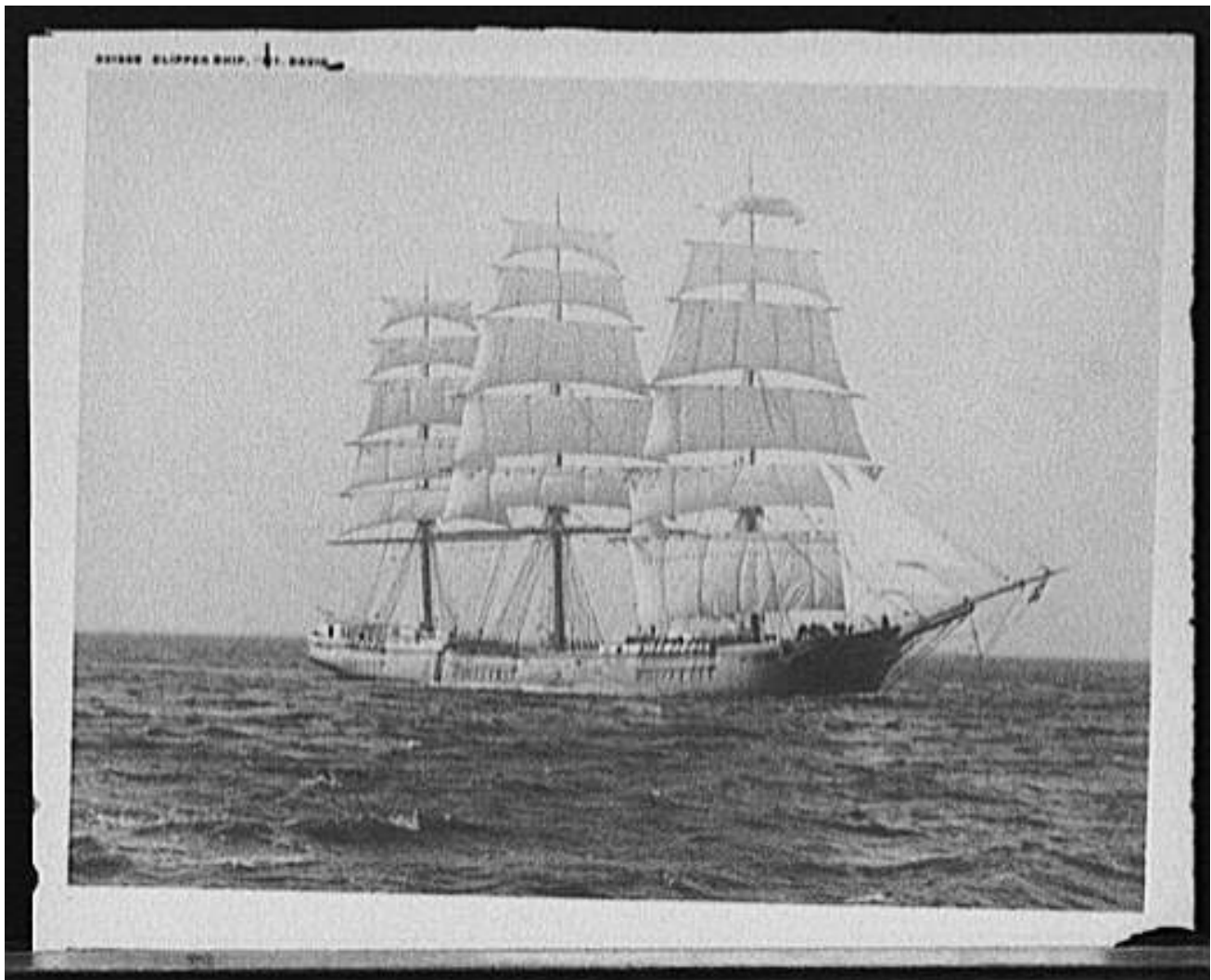
Dean Sword showed several books from the Dover Press.
Dover Publications Inc.
31 East 2nd Street
Mineola, NY 11501

Jack Bobbitt showed the progress of his model of the *Wild Goose*.

Joe McCleary related that he likes to build the base for his models out of the same wood as the actual hull. He then began to orate on his journey to Topsail Beach, North Carolina to procure a piece of live oak for an upcoming project.

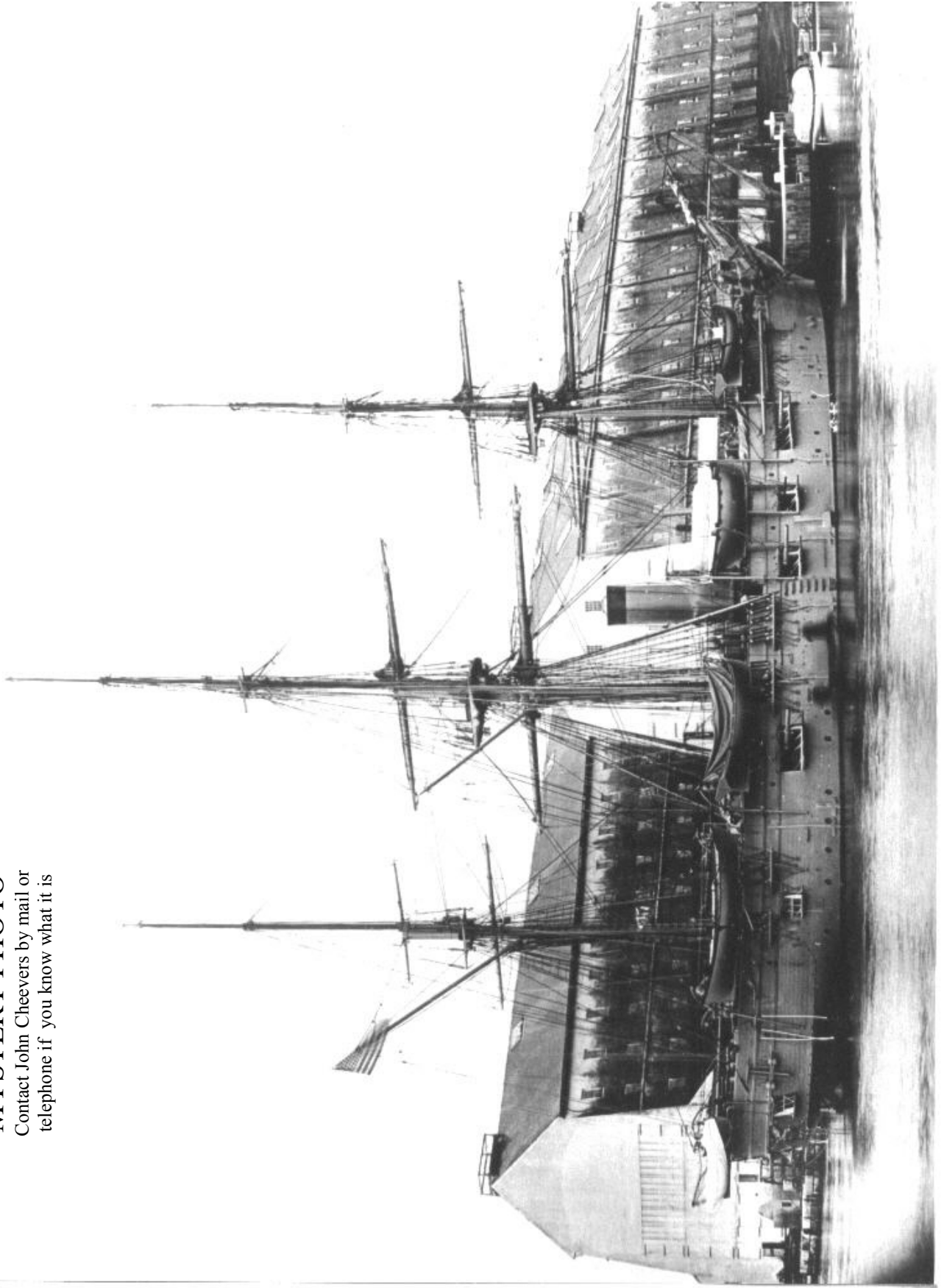
With no reason for the membership to stay formally assembled, the meeting was adjourned

Clipper ship St. David, Library of Congress American Memories Collection



MYSTERY PHOTO

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



NOTABLE EVENTS

- OCTOBER
9 H.R.S.M.S. Monthly Meeting: host Graham Horne
- 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: host Bill Clarke
- JUNE
11 H.R.S.M.S. Monthly Meeting:
- JULY
9 H.R.S.M.S. Monthly Meeting:
- AUGUST
13 H.R.S.M.S. Monthly Meeting: host Williamsburg
AARP (Hinrichs, McCleary, Sanderson)
- SEPTEMBER
10 H.R.S.M.S. Monthly Meeting: host Dean Sword
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Thanks

The members would like to thank Dean Sword for hosting the September meeting.

WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL

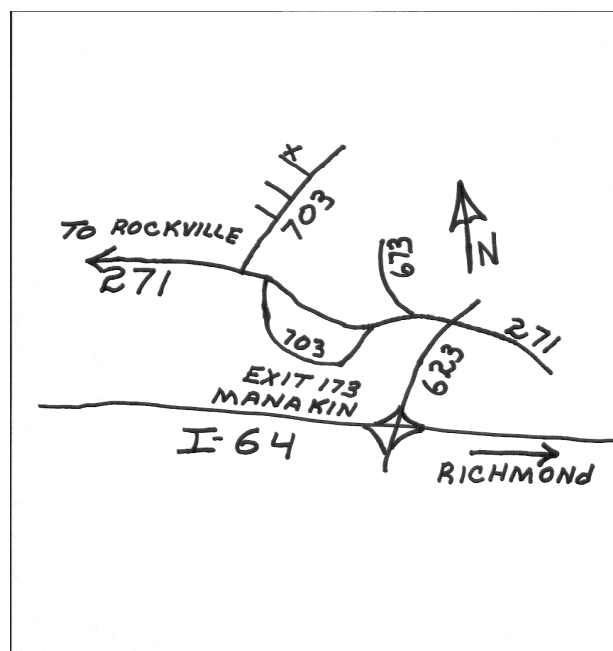


Skipper:	Alan Frazer	(757) 865-7300
1 st Mate:	Joe McCleary	(757) 253-1802
Purser:	Bob Comet	(757) 934-1279
Clerk:	Tom Saunders	(757) 850-0580
Historian:	Jim McCurdy	(757) 482-2846
Editors:	John Cheevers	(757) 591-8955
	Bill Clarke	(757) 868-6809
	Tom Saunders	(757)-850-0580

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be hosted by Graham Horne on October 9, 1998 at 2000 hours. The meeting will be held at 12188 Loblolly Lane, Rockville Va. Please call if you will be attending (804) 749-4719.

Take I-64 west past Richmond to the Manakin exit. Proceed north on Rte.623 to Rte. 271. Turn left on Rte. 271 to Rte. 703. Turn right on Rte. 703 to Loblolly Lane. Loblolly Lane is on the left.



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)