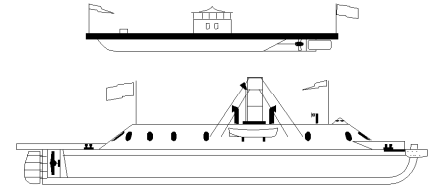


Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

Logbook



No. 154

<http://members.xoom.com/HRMS/> APRIL, 1999

FROM THE PILOTHOUSE



1. The Nature of a Society

“Society: 1. A group of human beings distinguished from other groups by mutual interests.... 3. Companionship; company.” (American Heritage Dictionary)

One of the pleasures—and a mutual interest!—in this little society, HRSMS, as well as in the greater one, is eating! We appreciate the efforts of our hosts, and I think there are no members who decline to partake of refreshment. But for whatever reasons, whether too-small homes or too-costly groceries, it has become harder to line up willing hosts to provide and arrange this part of our program. After a rather long silence at the March meeting, two members and a guest volunteered to provide for the vacant April and July meetings. We thank them, and others who have carried on our hospitality for years, but there are still vacancies for November and next January and February.

Should we rethink this aspect of our “Society” to eliminate the refreshments that stoke the social period? Perhaps the treasury should support the food budget? At what level? How about a fixed meeting place? At what cost? Comments are welcome.

2. Tolerances?

(Observations recalled by recent traffic on the Seaways’ List)

While working in New Jersey some 25 years ago, I knew a tool-and-die maker who wanted badly to be a shipmodeler, but he was, paradoxically, too hung up on precision. To begin with, he did not understand how we could work from drawings that had no dimensional lines giving precise measurements to at least two decimal places. Simply put, his professional training and experience stood in his way; he could not work crudely enough to qualify as a shipmodeler!

He could not accept that we measure dimensions from lines of visible thickness printed on paper, using a ruler graduated no finer than 1/32 of an inch (maybe only 1/16) plus eyeballing in between, and transfer them with a pencil that may not have a needle point, and still claim to be building accurate scale models! I don’t recall that he mentioned our possible astigmatism! Look at all the error factors in this simple task:

1) no given dimensions beyond, perhaps, overall length, breadth, and beam, and no certainty as to where those dimensions were taken); 2) the crude thickness of both the printed lines and our pencils; 3) possible distortion in printing or from changes of paper size due to unstable humidity; 4) inherent flaws in our non-micrometric measuring tools.

Since the same question comes up again, perhaps my responses to him are relevant, even though he was unable to accept them. To begin with, in many cases, especially on older and/or smaller vessels, the originals were not built from measured drawings, but from contracts (perhaps even from verbal agreements and a handshake, as in “Build me a vessel of so many tonnes.”) and the shipwrights’ knowledge. With measurements based perhaps on the length of the King’s arm, not even the owners, designers, or builders knew or really cared what the precise dimensions may have been. When dimensions began to be recorded and registered, we don’t know how accurate they were, but I can demonstrate errors in modern documentation and registers. We cannot replicate dimensions to greater precision than their original records, or generally accepted practices documented elsewhere. My friend seemed incapable of believing any of this. Or that the original, fully dimensioned drawings for *Santa Maria* and *Mayflower* were/are not in indexed archival files somewhere, but that’s another story!

Then, even as a craftsman, he could not believe that most of us, even if we had “exact” dimensions of a large wooden or steel object, could not work *in wood* to tolerances of hundredths, or even thousandths of an inch. The medium, and most of our tools, simply do not support such precision, and a coat of paint or varnish would alter it anyway.

I have no suggestions as to what our tolerance goals should be. More important, let’s be realistic. Unless we are building for the Navy, or towing-tank models, nobody is likely to take precision measurements of our models to find out that we are a few scale inches—or even feet—off. Let’s do the best we can, to our own or a client’s satisfaction, with decent tools and measuring devices. What’s the difference if other modelers have other standards? Most important, in my opinion, is the *appearance* of accuracy in line and form. Nothing so quickly spoils the “look” of a model (the “compelling impression of an actual vessel,” if you will) as a sheer curve or other hull line that is not sweet, smooth, and true. Whether carving from a solid block or building plank on frame, every minute spent on this aspect is worthwhile. Get

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

rid of humps, hollows, or flats where there should be clean curves. Even competition judges will have neither the templates, the access, nor the time to check accuracy of lines, but their eyes are sharp enough to detect irregularities. Unless you are modeling an atmospheric old-timer, from photos that show her to have been hogged and with sprung masts, such defects have no place in a model.

Another vital ingredient is consistency, especially in things related to the size and capabilities of typical human bodies. Sizes of doors, for example, although those on "working" ships or boats may be smaller and have higher sills than those on passenger vessels. Steps, ladders, and ratline spacing relate to what an adult can climb, but again may be more widely spaced on a cargo ship or tug than on a liner. Ratlines spaced at half-inch intervals on a model whose ladder steps are at one-quarter-inch clearly indicate a problem, and both are painfully wrong if the scale is stated to be 1:96!

Regardless of tolerances, it goes almost without saying that joinery, symmetry, alignment and uniformity of identical parts, and finish should be impeccable. Each modeler, of course, will have his own definition of that, too. So look at the windows and stanchions in the stern of Longridge's model of HMS Victory (*Anatomy of Nelson's Ships*, Plate 37) for a great example and inspiration.

I think that's about all the answer this question needs, so I'll leave it at that.

—Alan Frazer

TO BUILD A SHIP MODEL



At our March Meeting we had a good attendance that saw the re commencement of our lecture series. Jack Bobbitt was once again our featured speaker and he addressed the subject of, "The Finishing and Painting of Ship Models"

The various topics that were covered included natural wood finishes and in this regard Danish Oil with the brand name "Watco" along with a shellac named "Bulls Eye" were two products that came highly recommended. In addition to shellac being used as a finish, it was also stated that it could

be used as a sealer that dries quickly between each sanding.

Danish Oil requires two or three coats being applied without any need for sanding.

For models that are to be painted, acrylics should not be considered because with aging the hues deteriorate. We were advised that certain colors obtainable from Constantines had superior qualities in every respect? however a clear lacquer should be applied to avoid smearing.

Constantines
Woodworkers Catalog
2050 Eastchester Rd.
Bronx, N.Y. 10461.

Spray painting techniques were also on the agenda and this included the qualities to be found in the best types of masking tape, single and double action spray guns and the optimum pressures to be applied as well as the thinning of paints. Finally, the importance and method of cleaning this type of equipment was stressed.

This was an excellent presentation that held everyone's interest, generating a flurry of questions long after the talk had ended. From all the members attending, Thank you Jack!

Our speaker for April will be Joe McCleary and he will address the subject of "Soldering and Brazing"

In addition to the above, future talks will be given on Pewter Casting, Resin Casting, Making Figures, Marine Art, Sailmaking, Rope Making, Wood Choices, Etching and Machining, and Building Models over a Mold.

If anyone would like to see any subject added to this list, please contact me at the monthly meetings or call me at, 804-749-4719.

Graham Home.

NAME TAGS

Several new members have been inquiring about the HRSMS name tags. They are available for \$5.50 + tax. Please contact the Clerk if you would like to have one.

BANQUET NOTICE

The menu and reservation form for the HRSMS Annual Banquet will be sent to members and recent guests in a special mailing.

Mystery Photo



Welcome to Mystery Photo. This month, there were three responses that clearly identified the vessel in question as a destroyer. Bob Krumpen, using *Jane's Fighting Ships, 1919*, got the ball rolling by narrowing the field to two United States Navy destroyers, either *USS Hopkins* (DD-6) or *USS Hull* (DD-7) built in 1902. Then Bob Comet and Joe McCleary responded and identified the mystery vessel as *USS Hopkins* (DD-6). They both identified our mystery photograph as the same photograph appearing on page 362 of the *Dictionary of American Navy fighting Ships (DANFS)*. This gave me a tremendous relief as I half expected someone to respond, identifying the ship as *Titanic* -- from the movie. If they had, I would recommend they face Captain's Mast! I shudder to think of what the punishment might be.

This month's column, *Logbook* No. 153, provides perhaps the best reproduction yet! It is good enough that clear identifying marks can be seen. Did this make the identification easier? Yes, it does. According to Joe McCleary: "the dent in the bow and the second stripe on #2 funnel clinch the ID." They match perfectly with the photo in *DANFS*. I was intrigued with the fact that rivet indentations on the turtle-back and shell plating strakes could be seen.

What does the photograph reveal? We see a long, low, relatively small vessel lying at anchor. She is, in effect, flush decked with a turtle-back forecastle extending aft to the ship's conning station. There are four funnels arranged in groups of two. The second stripe on the second funnel identifies the division or flotilla she is assigned to. A canvas awning extends from the back of the bridge deck to just short of the fantail, obscuring most of the main deck detail. A few sailors line the deck edge; they seem to be studying the photographer with some intent. A single thin mast rises from the bridge area. A 3-inch gun sits in an open mount just forward of the open bridge. The canvas dodger is a weak substitute for a proper bulwark, especially when you envision green water rolling up that turtle-back forecastle. Notice the rubbing strake along the hull and the anchor handling gear.

Hopkins appears to be built for speed but, according to Friedman in *U.S. Destroyers an Illustrated History*, while that was the designers' intent it may not have been so, in reality. In 1900 destroyer design was new; the US Navy had no prototype. The active fleet was built around a philosophy of coastal defense and cruiser warfare not command of the sea through the operations of a battle fleet. The Bureau of Construction and Repair, seeking to control destroyer design produced an arrangement emphasizing strength and seakeeping. Their design featured a raised flat-decked forecastle and bilge keels. These features resulted in added

weight but would result in higher sustained speeds in a seaway. Nine of the first sixteen destroyers were built to the navy design while the remaining was built to private designs.

Shipbuilders had the option of providing their own designs and three yards did. Noting that the contract specifications were loosely worded except for the provision to maintain contract trial speed in a calm sea, the seven ships built to private designs all adopted the European style turtle-back forecastle. You can imagine that with coal-fired boilers and reciprocating engines these small hulls would have severe range limitations when running at speed. The space remaining for coal bunkering would be severely limited. The pressure to build strong light hulls and the absence of established, firm design criteria forced many designers to adopt unique ways to save weight.

Joe McCleary mentions another aspect in recognizing this type of vessel that we will explore. These are Joe's words and thoughts, he claims no false modesty and never any quarter. I present them, here, for your shock or enjoyment: "Recognition of destroyers is almost too easy for submariners. We are so used to seeing them beam-on, at close range, and in the cross hairs, just before those inevitable words are uttered: MATCH BEARINGS AND SHOOT!" Imagine, as we near the new millennium, the United States Navy, in almost one-hundred years, has built or ordered just three shy of one-thousand numbered destroyers. The class, which ushered in the century, is far removed from *USS Hayler* (DD-997) in design as well as mission. The first sixteen ships designated as destroyers were small, averaging 450-tons they were only marginally larger than the vessel they were intended to fight - the Torpedo Boat. *Hayler*, at 7800-tons, may well be the last non-missile armed destroyer ever built.

In trying to date the photograph, I found the same photograph also published in Silverstones's *U.S. Warships of World War I*, page 109. There it is credited as *USS Hopkins* of the *Bainbridge* class, in 1908.

Bill, you seem to be selecting a lot of published photographs lately. Is there a method to your madness? Wait! Don't answer that.

Kudos, Joe, Bob, and Bob.

Till next time...

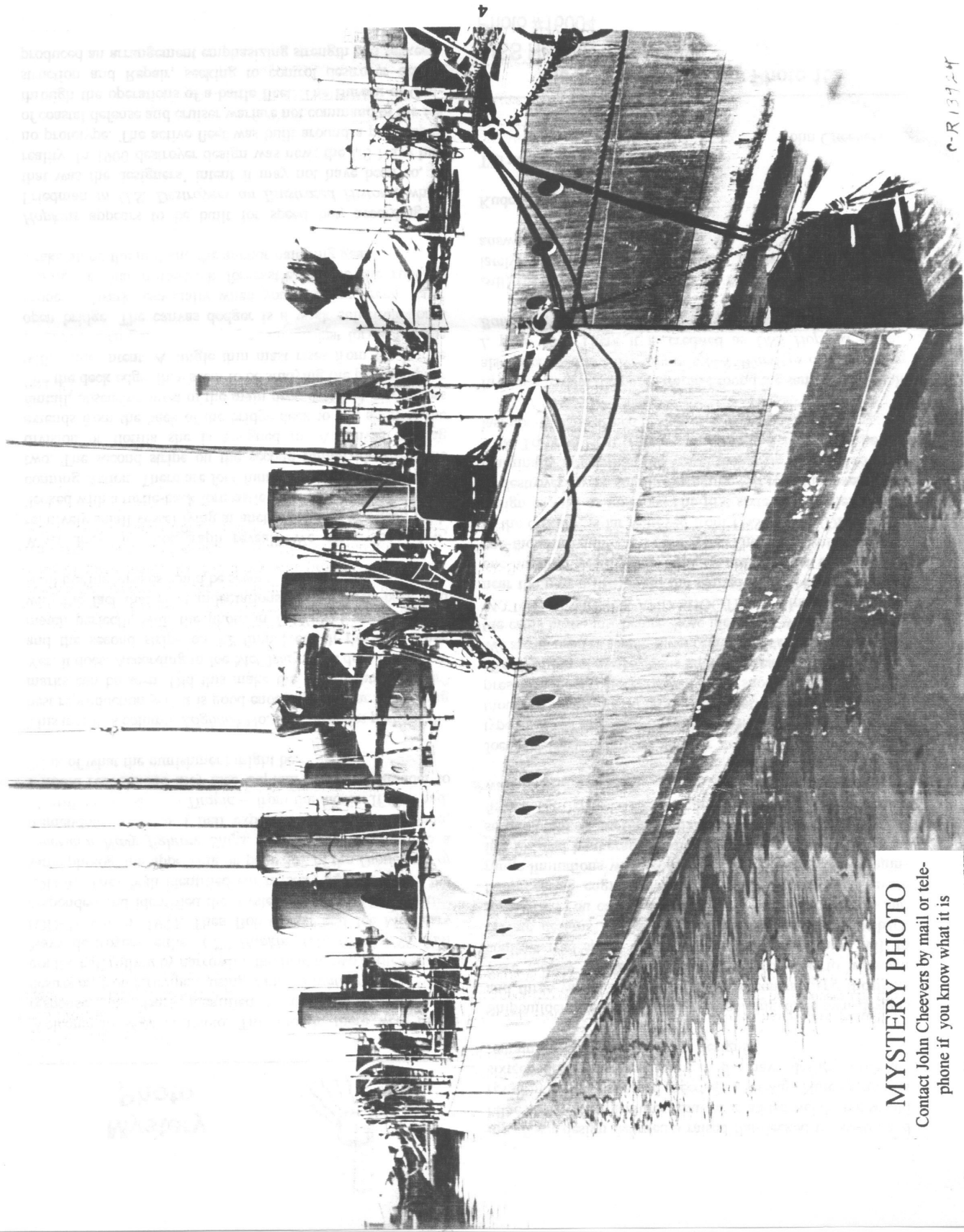
John Cheevers

The Answer to Mystery Photo 153

USS Hopkins DD-6, 1908

Photo #16004

C-R 13744



MYSTERY PHOTO

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

MINUTES



3-12-99

Newport News, Virginia

Crew Present: 21

Guests: Bob Diaz , 2nd meeting
Stan Mayer, 1st meeting
Jay Soulé: 1st meeting

The meeting was called to order by the Skipper at 2001 hours.

A Treasurer's report was given.

Corrections & Observations: Graham Horne noted that his area code was 804. Harvey Williams wanted it known that the Southside Bunch and not him alone hosted the March meeting. A broadside was fired at the cartographer for another "lousy" map.

Old Business: Joe McCleary reported that bob Sanderson is doing well after his recent surgery and should be at the April meeting. There was some discussion of the NRG Conference to be held in San Diego. A road race that was to be held in the area of the conference has been moved as not to cause a traffic problem. The HRSMS Annual Banquet will be held at the Radisson Hotel on May 1, 1999. Drinks at 6:30, dinner at 7:30. Rooms at the Radisson will be available for \$89.00 per night. There will be a choice of three items. Joe McCleary will provide the details. There was a question of weather nominations for the Founder's Award would be taken from the floor. Joe suggested that names be submitted in private to John Cheevers. A ballot would be included in the April newsletter.

Several members said that they had items for an auction. Joe suggested the AARP hosted meeting in August would be an appropriate venue for the event. Graham Horne was asked if he would coordinate the auction. He replied in the affirmative (details to be published at a later date).

As we were still looking to fill up the meeting schedule, Bob Diaz offered to host the July meeting at VIMS. Len wine , Bob Comet and Henry Schekulin offered to host the April meeting and Alan offered his church meeting hall as a location.

Graham Horne said that he would like to have input from the membership on topics that they would like to have covered by the programs presented at the meetings. Joe suggested that we publish in the Logbook, a schedule of topics to be covered.

Bill Clarke asked Joe if the NRG - Mariners Museum Symposium was at capacity. Joe replied that the museum was taking names for a waiting list of 10, there are to be 75 attendance.

New Business: Skip Watson showed an article on saving the *SS Williamsburg*, the 243 foot presidential yacht built in 1931. He asked if we would like the author, Mr. Trond Conradi, to speak at one of our meetings. Skip was asked to set up the presentation.

Graham Horne talked about a canal barge that was found in Maymont Park in Richmond.

The meeting was adjourned at 2050 hours.

Show and Tell: Bob Diaz showed a set of plans for the *Emma Berry* that he scanned and sized.

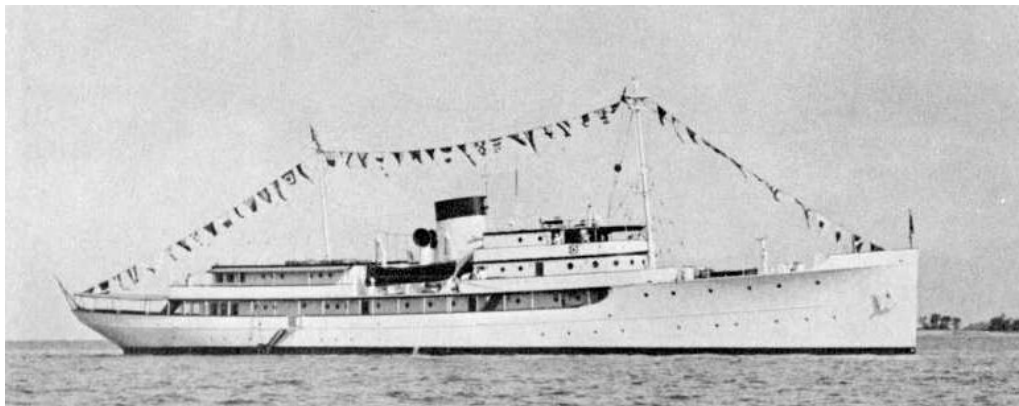
Jack Soulé asked if there is a model with a good set of instructions. Bob Comet suggested the Whale Boat from Model Shipways.

Jack Soulé asked if his model of the *Bluenose* should have a Coke bottle shape. The resounding reply was no. Comet's comment, "the parts (laser cut) could be perfectly accurate but wrong".

Jack Bobbitt gave a presentation on "Painting and Finishing".

Clerk

PRESIDENTIAL YACHT USS WILLIAMSBURG



NOTABLE EVENTS

APRIL

- 9 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:
23-25 Nautical Research Guild and Mariners' Museum
Model Building Symposium

MAY

- 1 HRSMS Annual Banquet, Radisson Hotel, Hampton
14 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host Bill Clarke
14-15 CBMM- 7th Annual Mid-Atlantic Maritime Arts
Festival

JUNE

- 11 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: David Tagg
25-27 CBMM- 8th Annual WoodenBoat Show

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

OCTOBER

- 9 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Ulrich Guenther

NOVEMBER

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

DECEMBER

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

JANUARY

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

FEBRUARY

- 11 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

MARCH

- 10 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:
-

Thanks

The members would like to thank Greg Harrington and his wife Mary for hosting March 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) 482-5426
Editors:	John Cheevers	(757) 591-8955
	Bill Clarke	(757) 868-6809
	Tom Saunders	(757)-850-0580

Next Meeting

Date and Time: Friday, January 9, 2000 Hours

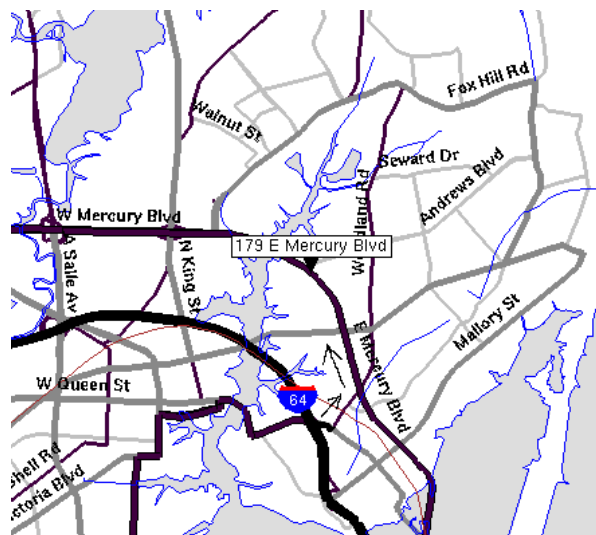
Location: Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 179 East Mercury Blvd., Hampton. Parish Hall open by 1930 Hrs., phone after that time, 723-8144.

Hosts: Alan Frazer (865-7300) and Tom Saunders (850-0580). Please call either one by Wednesday to let them know you are coming.

Directions:

From Newport News and West, or from I-664, take I-64 East to Exit 267-A, Settlers Landing Road/Hampton University. Left at light, going under 64, where Settlers Landing becomes Woodland Road. (*) Stay in left lane, about 4/10 mile; turn left at light, Rt. 258 (East Mercury Blvd.). Continue about one mile to brick church on right, just past Woods Orchard, which is opposite Southerland Drive. Parish Hall entrance in right wing.

From Norfolk, I-64 West through Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel to Exit 267-B, Woodland Road (2nd Hampton exit). Right at light, bottom of ramp, and follow directions from (*) above.



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)