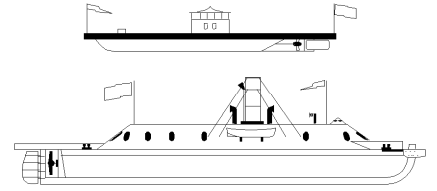


Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

Logbook



No. 163

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

January, 2000

FROM THE PILOTHOUSE



Proposed Bylaw Amendments (Part 2)

The proposed amendments of HRSMS Bylaws as described here last time (Article V, Section 3, to apply three-year term limitations *only* to the Skipper and the Mate, and Section 1-A to clarify that the “Librarian” portion of the Historian-Librarian office, and the office of Editor, are *both* appointed by the Skipper) were moved, seconded, and passed without opposition on first reading at the December meeting. They will be brought up again for “second reading”—A required step in our amendment process—at the January 14 meeting, and if passed again will become effective immediately. The exact language of the proposed revisions is as follows (added language is underlined):

(Article V, Section 3) Term of office shall be one year, and the Skipper and the Mate shall serve no more than three consecutive terms in each or either of those offices.

(Article V, Section 1-A) The Skipper, who shall have general supervision over the Society and its functions, preside over meetings, call special meetings as needed, appoint the Historian-Librarian and the Editor, and appoint committees as needed.

The intent and the net effect of the proposed changes is to allow any officers *other than the Skipper and the Mate* to serve successive additional terms, beyond three, in their respective elected or appointive offices for as long as they are willing to do so and members or skippers are willing to re-elect or re-appoint them. There will still be no barriers (and never have been) against any member, including those constrained by term limits, serving immediately in *another* office.

I believe all members of the current bridge favor second approval of the proposed changes, but that of course does not commit those potentially effected (Purser, Clerk, Editor, and Historian-Librarian) to continue with their current duties. So, again, I urge every member to think of new and willing candidates, as well as those possibly becoming newly eligible, for nomination at the January meeting. And if you want to



nominate the “newly eligible,” there’s no reason not to ask privately whether he or they would agree to serve again. “Willing” remains the key word.

Skipper’s Removal

Jane and I have moved to our new home in Running Man, as announced last month, and all systems seem to be “go.” But we are far from settled in, and many needed objects (especially tools and papers) do not come readily to hand when needed. We look forward to seeing you here on either February 11 or March 10, 2000; Aside from state of readiness, Jane has a conflict with the February date, so we may be looking to change it.

—Alan D. Frazer

Presentation at the January
meeting will be
John Cheevers on the topic of
Ship Plans

Mystery Photo



Well, well, well! It seems that Mystery Photo, Logbook No. 162, presents more of a mystery to Bill than to this tireless scribe and my merry band of talented researchers. Can you say Stumped? Bill can! He presents this photograph with much fanfare and ballyhoo because neither he nor the owner of the negative knows what it was. He thinks he has us this time.

The challenge, then, is for us to identify the vessel knowing that Bill can't refute our findings.

Whoever printed this photograph sure knew how to frame a vessel. What a terrific photograph: close-up, clear, well-balanced, full of detail. What can we learn from it? What are the vessel's distinguishing features that will aid in identification?

I'm going to start by describing the general features and characteristics of the design. We have a smallish yacht-like vessel, probably no more than 1000 tons. The hull is rather full with a spoon shaped bow and counter stern. Her designer gave her a beautiful sweeping sheer: one of those eye sweet sheer lines that are we no longer see outside of traditional boat building. Her raised bulwarks stop at either end of the deckhouse, no doubt intended to quickly shed large amounts of water. This combination of hull features suggests a vessel that is expected to maintain station in a seaway much like a lightship or pilot boat would do. The large number of port lights suggests accommodations for a large crew; indeed, many sailors or crewmen are visible on deck. And, as Bob Comet says, "What about the boats with the funny looking cabins on them?" Do they suggest work in colder climates? There is a clear lack of markings to suggest a military vessel. We can clearly see, however, a star and a single chevron on the stack, does anyone recognize this? How about the antiquated anchor handing davit on the fore deck, does it help to date the vessel? The big, die-pole wire antenna--the reason for the twin masts--and lack of radar on either mast indicate a time frame before WW II. Judging from the shape of the pilothouse and the suggestion of paneling in the bulkheads, I would guess the superstructure is made from wood. If this vessel is in government service, can we safely say that she is painted in the standard government livery of white hull, buff superstructure, and black mast band?

Well, I am happy to report that we were able to identify this vessel and fill a blank in Bill's archives. This Mystery Photograph was especially difficult to identify. The vessel is not listed in any of the standard Navy or Coast Guard reference lists such as Jane's Fighting Ships or Combat Fleets. I didn't find a listing in any of the more specific references produced by Robert Scheinna or Paul Silverstone until after the ship was identified. Read on and see how this riddle was

solved. The credit this month goes to Bob Comet who beat me to the punch by identifying the vessel first. He played the same hunch I had by reasoning that this was a vessel in some form of government service; though not with the Navy or any of the agencies that were combined to form the Coast Guard. That didn't leave many official organizations that funded and operated vessels. One such organization, an agency of the Department of Commerce, called the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey (C&GS), established in 1807, fielded a small but respectable fleet of research vessels. Their mission was to map the Rivers and seas surrounding our territory, produce navigational charts, and erect aids to navigation. This organization is now part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Bob Comet got the ball rolling by looking for something on survey ships while at the Hampton Roads Naval Museum Library. There he found a book titled Oceanographic Ships, Fore and Aft, by Steward Nelson. In it, he found a photograph of an attractive little ship that was a match for our vessel in the Mystery Photograph. Her official name was USC & GSS Surveyor. Bob says, "Surveyor was built in 1917 and was a veteran of WWI and WWII. In WWI she was decorated for depth charging and sinking the German Submarine U-39, who in turn had earlier sunk the SS Lusitania. Although not listed in the dictionary of American fighting Ships, she was apparently used by the Navy as a patrol/escort ship." We have our ship! Now, can we date and place the photograph, and provide more of Surveyor's history?

Bob opened the door for some enlightening research. I began by searching U.S. Warships of World War I, by Paul Silverstone, for a listing of Surveyor. Beginning on page 179, are lists of vessels acquired from "other" Government Departments. Under Coast & Geodetic Surveys, I found Surveyor, built in 1917 and displacing 1143 tons. **I n t e r e s t i n g l y**, **C o m e t** notes the vessel as being sold in 1950, while Silverstone lists her as sold in 1958. (Another mystery?) From there I made a trip to cyberspace and used one of the many web search engines to look for sites containing the words "Coast and Geodetic Survey." What I found was a real treasure. The web search returned several listings containing one or all of the search words. One listing, though, was the jewel I was looking for. It was a link to the official government sight maintained by NOAA. That sight contains an historical photograph file where I made an additional search, using "surveyor" and "ship" as my key words. There the search engine returned a listing that printed to 56 pages in length. Oh boy, was I excited! From that list, mixed among scores of photographs of other vessels and events, I found eleven prints of Surveyor. Most of the photographs were dated so I could make a chronological record of her history and alterations.

According to the official record, Surveyor was built and placed into service in 1917 and sold from service in 1956 (I could not find a listing of her builder.) I don't know why Bob

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Comet and Paul Silverstone have conflicting out-of-service dates. To help date and place our photograph I relied on several pieces of information: the lookout barrel on the fore mast, the shape of the funny looking cabins on the small boats, and her operational area while in C&GS care.

Our Mystery Photograph shows Surveyor without the lookout barrel on the fore mast. My dated photographs run from 1920 to 1955, with one good wartime picture. The barrel is present in the photographs from 1920 to 1935, is absent in the 1938 and 1939 views, and appears again in slightly modified form in the wartime photo dated October 2, 1944. She carries radar on the fore mast in her 1944 and subsequent photos. This gives us a window from 1935 to 1938. It would be safe to assume that this is a good time frame. But, can it be corroborated by the small boats' funny looking cabins? The appearance of these cabins matches those in my dated photos from 1925 through 1939. The wartime picture shows Surveyor carrying stronger, heavier boats with rounded cabins. It looks like the best we can do is narrow the window to 3-years. As for location, C&GS operated Surveyor primarily off the West Coast in Alaskan waters. Her home base was the C&GS base in Lake Union, near Seattle, Washington. Two of the photographs taken from NOAA's historical record, numbers theb0405 and theb0410, both dated 1925, show Surveyor in a channel very similar to the one in our Mystery Photograph. The photo captions give the location as
S e a t t l e , W a s h i n g t o n .

John Cheevers

Addendum: What follows arrived too late to include in the column. I include it here as an example of the pitfalls that await those who rely on secondary sources.

John,

The information in the caption under the photo of SURVEYOR was not correct. The Lusitania was sunk by U20, not U39. Furthermore Surveyor sank neither the U20 or U39. U20 ran aground on the West Coast of Jutland and was abandoned on Nov 3 1916. SURVEYOR wasn't built until 1917. U39 was likewise sunk in 1916 by a British Destroyer. The foregoing was brought to my attention by Hunt Lewis, a docent at the HRNM, with data provided by the Naval Institute Press book U-boat Offensive 1914-1945, in the HRNM library.

Stewart Nelson must have been listening to someone spin Sea Tales when he wrote the caption under the photo. Old Salts sometimes make up some interesting tales about the exploits of their ships that they served in many moons ago. Aside from this, the Mystery Photo subject is the Surveyor and she indeed was armed and served in the U.S. Navy in 1917-1919. I looked again in the Dictionary of American Fighting Ships and found it after missing it the first time. There is no mention of her sinking any submarines. Too bad, it made a nice story.

Bob Comet

1999 HRSMS Year End Auction

The December meeting is traditionally our time to give thanks to good friendships, good health, and good modeling. We usually gather and reflect on another good year of modeling, tell tall tales, and discuss plans for the New Year. This year seventeen brave and hearty souls--eighteen, if you count one proxy bidder--took part in a much anticipated "Clean out your shop and sell it all" club auction. All I can say is, if you weren't there you missed a heck of a lot of fun! The event promised to be entertaining when the auctioneer assured that each successful bidder would receive a "bonus" item from a mysterious Box #4, until the box was empty. With Joe McCleary manning the box, everyone was a little skittish. Bill Clarke, our brave, capable, and railroaded-into-the-job auctioneer, got the event underway after a short business meeting. He focused everyone's attention by stating his ground rules and a promise to give no quarter. He guaranteed that it would be fast and quite possibly brutal, with the nappers either missing out on potential bargains or earning them by proxy.

With the stage set, the first two items--half complete kits of the schooner America and Cutty Sark--failed to make the minimum bid. Bill saw the challenge before him and quickly switched to more lucrative offerings; that brought out the first of Tom Saunders' many, many 2-dollar bids. Gradually the group warmed to the task and the bidding started to flow. I think many potential bidders waited until they were sure mystery box #4 didn't contain lethal or incriminating gear (actually they waited until the "Playboy" sunglasses, circa the 1970's, were given out)! To the successful bidders went: books (too many to list), plans (CG-47 and an English Hoy), 1/2-hulls, a Model Shipways kit of the tug Taurus, power tools, hand tools, drafting tools and supplies, sharpening stones and machines, an electrical circuit tester, and lots of miscellaneous "stuff." Successful bids ranged from the minimum of one-dollar to a high of 13-dollars for a set of drafting pens. A proxy bid of \$1.00 each took the third lot offered: 3-dozen Ships in Scale magazines.

You could really see what this group was hungry for! Fourteen of the seventeen members present made successful bids. Not only were the other three not successful bidders, they failed to bid on anything at all. In a tribute to Pavlov, someone, I don't remember who, mentioned that they thought the three were electrically connected to significant-others in

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another room. Hum, I wonder...

The event moved along quickly, or so it seemed until I noticed that an hour and a half had passed. Jack asked the auctioneer to pick up the pace so that we could finish in time to sample Jean's excellent buffet. I'm not sure that in the heat of the battle he was successful. Finally, answering the cry that everything must go, Heinz placed one last minimum bid of one-dollar and received the much fought over incomplete schooner America bringing the auction to a close.

The tally quickly revealed we raised a grand total of \$245.00. We owe Bill a debt of gratitude for his fine and entertaining performance. I hope the call goes out to do this again next year. Who knows how much of this stuff we'll see again! I don't think anyone left disappointed, and there were no fist fights afterward out in the street.

John Cheevers

A Keel Hauling

I can't help but notice that from time to time that the Logbook looks as if the editors have had a third mug of rum, due to creative spellings and the odd characters strewn through the text. On a few occasions there must have been an ill wind blowing because the mighty ship USPS was a little late in arriving at my home port with the "much anticipated" edition of the HRSMS Logbook.

Cabin Boy

The editors would like the readers of the Logbook to know that the contributors are not responsible for the slips of the quill that appear in our little compendium. It is a combination of an illiterate scanner and the wee hours of the morning. The Logbook has been running a little later than we would like. We would like to have the Logbook in your hands a week before the meeting. Most of the time, all the submissions are not in hand until the weekend before the meeting. We will try to lean on the contributors so we will have a little more time to compile and review the material and still have the Logbook to the readers in a timely manner.

The Editors

MINUTES



HRSMS Meeting
December 10, 1999
Host, Jack Bobbitt

Guest: Frank Mastini, 1st meeting
The Meeting was called to order by the skipper at 2010 hours. He welcomed guest, Frank Mastiti, a model builder from Virginia Beach. Bob Comet gave a pursers report.

The Minutes were approved as published.

Old Business: Jack Bobbitt showed several styles of pad holders for consideration as booty for the 2000 NRG conference. There was the first reading of proposed amendments to the HRSMS Bylaws pertaining to consecutive terms of office for the officers (see From The Pilot House.) Len Wine reported that he had taken possession of the HRSMS archives from the former historian, Jim McCurdy.

New Business: None

Show and Tell: Joe McCleary showed catalog from Small Parts Inc. and Blue Ridge Tools. Jack Bobbitt had several catalogs for perusal. Bob Comet passed around pictures of a steam yacht inquiring if anyone could identify it for him. Bill Peach said the he had a HO gauge model railroad for sale. Frank Mastini said that A. J. fisher's machinery for making jackstays (eyebolts) is broken and he had some for 16 cents each, and stanchions for 1/16 scale at 5 cents each. John Cheevers showed a computer-generated picture of a hull.

The meeting was adjourned.

The HRSMS Auction was held following the meeting.

NOTICE

It is sad to report the passing of John L. Shedd the founder and co-owner of Model Shipways Inc. He was a member and supporter of the Nautical Research Guild for close to 50 years. The ship modeling community has lost a close friend.

MYSTERY PHOTO

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



NOTABLE EVENTS

JANUARY

14 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Watson, Soulé

FEBRUARY

11 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Alan Frazer

MARCH

10 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Southside Bunch

APRIL

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

MAY

12 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Bill Clarke

JUNE

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

JULY

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

AUGUST

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

SEPTEMBER

8 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Willabsburg
AARP

OCTOBER

13 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Graham Home
27-29 NRG Conference

NOVEMBER

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

DECEMBER

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

Thanks

The members would like to thank Jack Bobbitt and his wife Jeanne for hosting the December meeting.

FROM THE DICTIONARY OF PHRASE AND FABLE BY E. COBHAM BREWER

Pacific Ocean (*The*). So called by Magellan, because he enjoyed calm weather and a placid sea when he sailed across it. All the more striking after the stormy and tempestuous passage of the adjoining straits.

Atlantic Ocean An ocean, so called from the Atlas mountains.

Next Meeting

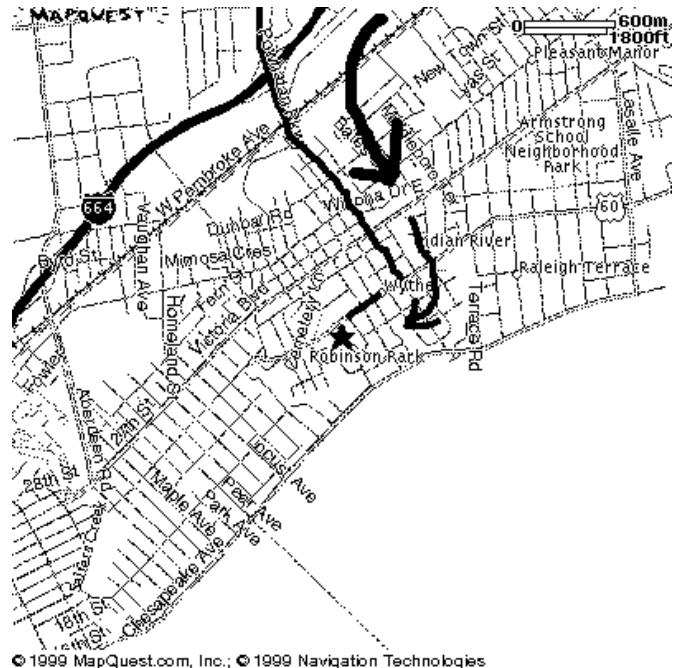
The next meeting will be held on Friday, January 14 at the Wythe Presbyterian Church, 151 Robinson Rd. (corner of Robinson Road and Kecoughtan Road) Hampton, Virginia. The meeting will start at 2000 Hours.

From Richmond:

Take I-64 East to Hampton, Take the I-664 SOUTH exit, Merge onto I-664 S, Take the POWHATAN PKWY exit, Turn LEFT onto POWHATAN PKWY(1.1 mi), Turn RIGHT onto US-60/KECOUGHTAN RD(.3 mi), Turn LEFT onto ROBINSON RD.(.1 mi)

From Norfolk:

Take I-64 West to Hampton, Take the I-664 SOUTH exit, Merge onto I-664 S, And follow directions as above.



WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL



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