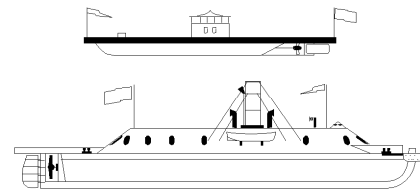


# Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

# Logbook



No. 167

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

MAY, 2000

## MINUTES



4-14-00

Langley Research Center

Guest: Gene Andes, first meeting

The meeting was called to order by the Skipper at 2000 hours. A salute was given to Bill Clarke for arranging the Annual Banquet.

The Minutes were approved as published

Old Business: Jack Bobbitt reports that the plans for the reception for the NRG Conference are done and the notebooks are on order. Bill Clarke said that the banquet menu was a trial balloon for the conference in October.

New Business: Joe McCleary said that while the models in the competition are on display, the Mariners' Museum wants to display tools and jigs used in model building. Any member (Graham) who has material for display through October, please contact Joe. Bob Comet and Joe McCleary volunteer at the museum building models and the museum is look for additional people to ply the craft on the weekend and answer questions asked by the museum visitors. For their participation, Joe said the volunteers would be awarded a handsome NRG shop apron. There was polite discussion among the members about the direction the Mariners' Museum is taking.

Show & Tell: Frank Mastini showed a book, in Italian, on the *Amerigo Vespucci* with plans. He has done a translation of the plans. John Cheevers showed plans of the collier *Lebanon*, built by the Cramp Shipyard in the 1890's. Jack Bobbitt showed a launch notice for his Baltimore Brig Latimer. David Tagg gave us the pleasure of seeing his paper models of the *San Francisco* and *Indianapolis*, at 1/250 scale. Gene Andes showed his models of the frigate *Raliegh*, from Harold Hann's plans and the sloop *Vandalia*, built from plans obtained from the National Archives.

The Business meeting was adjourned and a presentation, Naval Gunnery Part II, The Civil War to the Present, was given by Bob Comet.

Clerk



## Mystery Photo



Welcome to Mystery Photo, Logbook No. 166. This month's photograph is a real treat, an outfitter's delight! Who wouldn't want to decorate their model with this kind of detail? If this picture doesn't whet someone's appetite, none will. Heck, I think I'll stop writing and go out to the shop and make some sawdust, or brass filings, or pencil shavings! I really enjoy these good, clean close-up photos that reveal the hidden detail --the nuts and bolts of a vessel.

Since I can't slink off to the shop now--my mission here is see if we identified the vessel or the scene--I'd better get on with the program. What can we say about the information contained in this photograph that could aid our investigation? Should we remark on the twin rifles--one under each bridge wing? How about the water cooled machine gun atop the pilothouse, or the single cowl ventilator, or the massive

*(Continued on page 2)*

**ANNUAL HRSMS MEMBERSHIP  
FEES ARE NOW DUE**

(Continued from page 1)

windlass and neatly fluted chain pipes? Does the sailor in the foreground with the "Dixie cup" hat provide a clue to the vessel's identity? Does his uniform help narrow the time window? What do you think he is doing?

How often do you see an arrangement where the bridge is set so far forward. And when have you seen one that was built so low? Notice the single pole mast with those wide, wide stays. Makes you think either the mast is not all that tall or the vessel is fairly wide. Why was it constructed that way? Look at the amount of camber built into the deckhouse and the absence of camber in the searchlight/signaling lamp platforms! Down on the deck-I think its safe to call it a forecastle-we see wood decking and a low breakwater. Would it be fun to model that decking? Everything is so neat, clean and orderly. Somewhere there is a ship to match to this photo! Do any of these things point anyone to the proper identification?

They should!

I get the impression that we are dealing with a fairly large ship. Furthermore, we know this is a naval vessel but probably not a warship. That must make her an auxiliary of some sort. Marc Heilenday suggested that she might be a collier like Proteus or Orion. My first guess was the converted tanker Patoka. A long distance player even suggested that this might be a harbor defense vessel and his description of the sailor in the foreground probably brings back vivid and quite possibly bad memories. None of these guesses proved right, but the suggestion that she may be a collier was awful close. So, where are my steel navy experts?

To solve this mystery, the first question I asked myself was "why is the bridge constructed so low, and why is it placed so far forward?" This unusual arrangement must have been the result of a modification or special purpose design. It just didn't seem to fit the standard profile for ship design and appearance. Was there a fixed obstacle like a low bridge she had to sail under, a-la the Rhine River barges? Identifying a ship with this bridge along with the twin single 5-inch mounts, one tucked under the leading edge of each bridge wing, proved slightly more difficult than I expected. I had to gather all the usual suspects and sort them out to find this ship. If it weren't for my memory suddenly engaging, there would be no column. The low bridge proved to be the clue and that realization drove me to find the correct ship.

Searching through Paul Silverstone's U.S. Warships of World War I, in the section devoted to naval auxiliaries, I found a photo of Cyclops (AC-4) and she carried her bridge well forward, located just at the after end of forecastle deck. On that forecastle deck was a single, large windlass that served port and starboard anchors. Unfortunately, or fortunately, our vessel wasn't Cyclops since nothing else forward matched our mystery photo and her disappearance in 1918 provides its own mystery. It's her sister ship that we are interested in. Cyclops sister is none other than Jupiter (AC-3). For those of

you who still don't know, Jupiter became Langley (CV-1), upon her re-commissioning as Aircraft Carrier number 1 on March 20, 1922. For this discussion, I'll use the particulars that apply to her "carrier" days. While Jupiter was a relatively large vessel for her time, Langley was rapidly being outclassed in size by new construction. According to DANFS, She displaced 11,500 tons, was 542-feet in length, 65-feet at the beam, and drew 18-feet 11-inches of water. Her speed was outrageous at 15-knots (remember her collier origins.) Her compliment was 468 officers and men, and she carried 4, 5-inch rifles and 55 aircraft.

As part of Jupiter's conversion to an aircraft carrier, her original three deck high bridge was replaced by a shorter two deck high affair that was topped by the forward end of the flight deck. Voila! Things were starting to fit together. But this explanation doesn't explain her appearance in our photo. The answer to that was easy to find, now. In 1937, Langley again completed a conversion when the forward 200-feet of her flight deck was removed and her classification changed to (AV-3). This made her a seaplane tender/aircraft transport. The performance of then modern day aircraft had exceeded her capabilities.

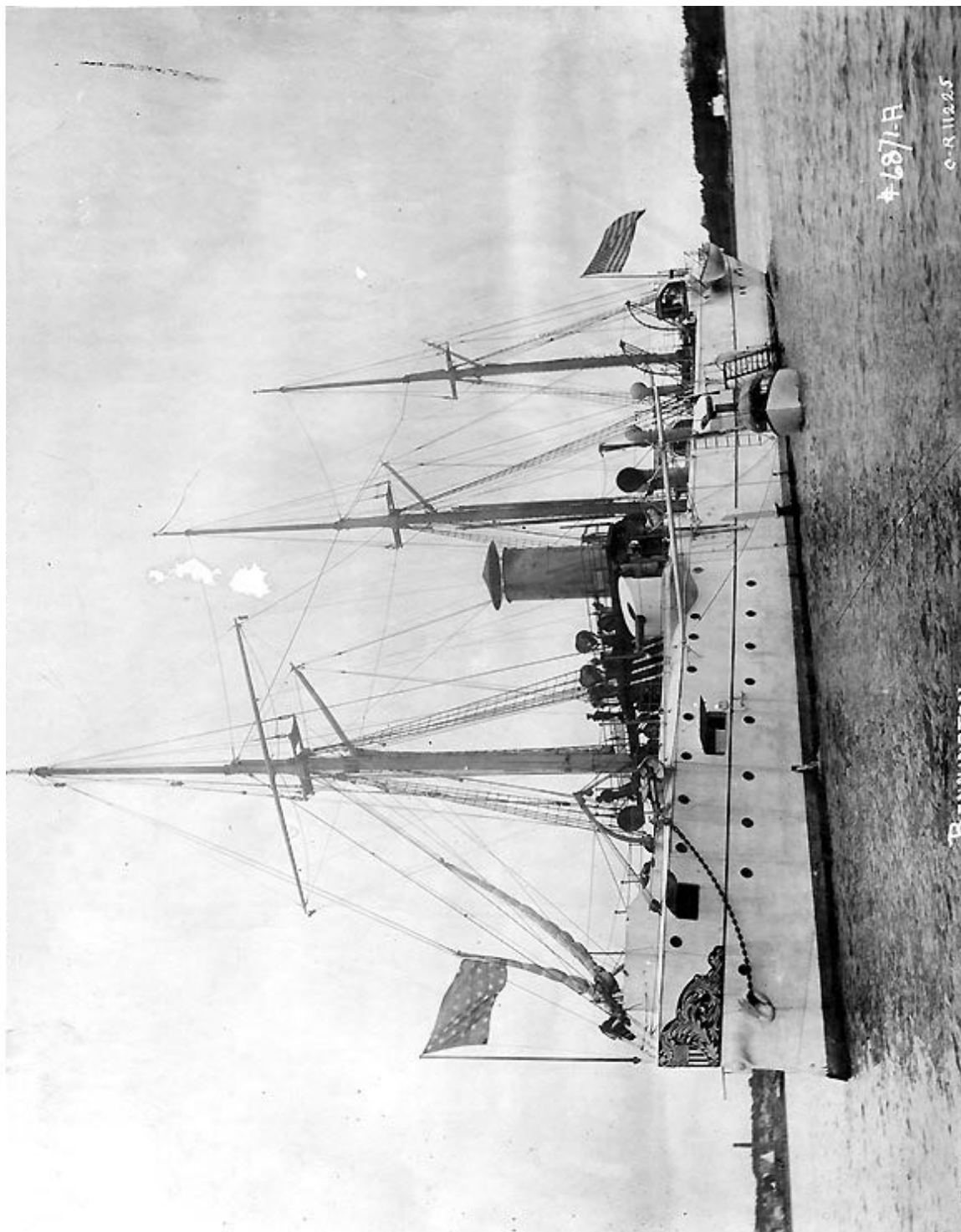
America's entry into World War II added the final chapter to her varied career. This is taken from DANFS: "Early in the morning 27 February, [1942], Langley rendezvoused with her antisubmarine screen, destroyers Whipple (DD-217) and Edsall (DD-219). At 1140 nine twin-engine enemy bomber attacked her. The first and second Japanese strikes were unsuccessful; but during the third Langley took five hits. Aircraft topside burst into flames, steering was impaired, and the ship took a 10-degree list to port. Unable to negotiate the narrow mouth of Tjilatjap Harbor, Langley went dead in the water as inrushing water flooded her main motors. At 1332 the order to abandon ship was passed. The escorting destroyers fired nine 4-inch shells and two torpedoes into the old tender to insure her sinking. She went down about 75-miles south of Tjilatjap with a loss of 16."

Well, that about wraps up this mystery. The photograph was made sometime between 1937 and 1941. During that time she made deployments to locations along both coasts. Clarke will have to give us the correct time and place. As for me I'm off to the shop!

John Cheevers

## The Picture

The Mystery Photo in the last issue is of the *USS Langley*, photograph number LY201621, taken 4/7/37.



H-16874

6-8-11225

BAINBRIDGE

---

## NOTABLE EVENTS

---

### MAY

- 12 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Bill Clarke  
 19-21 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Mid-Atlantic Maritime Arts Festival:  
 Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

### JUNE

- 9 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Dean Sword

### JULY

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

### AUGUST

- 11 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Bob Comet

### SEPTEMBER

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

### OCTOBER

- 13 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Graham Horne  
 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

### JANUARY

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

### FEBRUARY

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

### MARCH

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

### APRIL

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

## Help Needed

Mr. Rob Kutz needs someone to repair a ship model that was built by a family member around the turn of the century. The rigging and masts were removed at the deck level to facilitate storage in the 1930s. If any one is interested, please contact the Clerk. He has pictures of the model and can put you in contact with Mr. Kutz.

---

## WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL



Skipper:	Bob Comet	(757) 934-1279
1 <sup>st</sup> Mate:	Len Wine	(757) 566-8597
Purser:	John Cheevers	(757) 591-8955
Clerk:	Tom Saunders	(757) 850-0580
Historian:	Len Wine	(757) 566-8597
Editors:	John Cheevers	(757) 591-8955
	Bill Clarke	(757) 868-6809
	Tom Saunders	(757)-850-0580

---

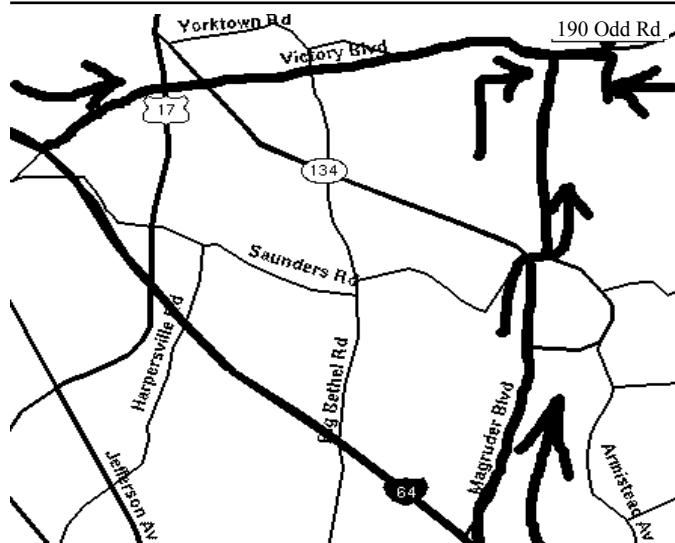
## Next Meeting

---

The June meeting of the H.R.S.M.S. will be on May 12, hosted by Joe Ann and Bill Clarke at 190 Odd Road, Poquoson. This will be the annual Strawberry Shortcake Bash. For directions / information call 868-6809.

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




---

## CITY BIRD



Clarke

The swallows return the Mission San Juan Capistrano and due to recent rains, the City Birds of Poquoson are back.