

FROM THE PILOTHOUSE



Mystery Photo



I am pleased to see the repeat of our how to build a ship model series being rejuvenated. It should be a rewarding experience for our older members, as witnessed by the comments made at our last meeting. Many of our newer members have expressed their desire to learn more about the technicalities of ship modeling, and the repeat of shipbuilding topics will be valuable for that purpose. The past presenters will, I am sure be willing to encore their subjects, but I also hope that others will be willing to enter in. Bob Sanderson made a suggestion that should open the way for less expert or experienced members. He suggested that members could assume the role of discussion leaders, outlining the subjects and soliciting input of the various components from the membership present. I am looking forward to the presentations. Joe McCleary's presentation on ship modeling woods was an excellent start-off for the new series.

This article was omitted from the September logbook- Ed.

Liberty Days in the Age of Sail

For those permitted to go ashore, it was a fast paced adventure. Sailors in the Royal Navy in war times were sometimes not permitted to go ashore for fear that they would desert. Contemporary diaries and journals of the sailors in the days of sail suggest that sailors on shore leave had two tasks--to make up for past deprivations and to stockpile experiences to remember in the future. This probably holds true today for many sailors. What the sailors missed most at sea, of course, were women, unlimited alcohol, and fresh food. The order and extent in which these needs were fulfilled depended on the appetites of the men involved.

If it was the opposite sex they sought, they sometimes didn't have to go ashore. In some remote parts of the world native women would be rowed out to the ships, and they would have much to sell, including sexual favors. Who was allowed on board usually was controlled by the first officer, who would be in charge of the ship while in port. In the Napoleonic war period in British ports, often wives and sweethearts as well as prostitutes would be allowed to come out to the ships when the men were not permitted to go

(Continued on page 6)

Welcome to Mystery Photo, *Logbook* No. 183! Look at this photo! If Clarke keeps this up, he's going to make a liar out of me! I guess that dry dock pictures "aren't" very rare in his collection. But before I get to the current photograph, I'd like to revisit Mystery Photos No. 181 and No. 182, and compliment Bill on two outstanding mysteries.

When our newsletter editor, Tom Saunders, published the answer to MP #181, I assumed that the data recorded on the back of the print was incorrect and that my analysis was better. When Bill copies photographs at the National Archives and other places, he notes all markings and data on a ledger and then transfers the data onto each new print when he makes them. I merely thought that the data was incorrectly transposed or that the original was incorrectly identified years ago. But let me share the results from additional research I conducted over the last few days concerning the image's identification.

On the Naval Historical Center's web page is an image of *Aileen* taken during her conversion in 1898 to patrol boat duty for the Spanish American War. The image shows *Aileen* from the stern in dry-dock still in her civilian colors. The vessel is without a pilothouse and carries only the main mast sited after the stack—certainly an odd and unattractive appearance! Workers are seen laboring to install armor plating to her hull amidships. Another picture in John Alden's book *American Steel Navy*, Shows the gunboat *Viking* leaving the pier, or actually leaving her berth next to *Aileen*. In this photograph, workers are seen erecting a raised platform where the pilothouse formerly stood. I dismissed these images when I wrote the column for issue 181 because of the drastically altered appearance of the yacht. This led me to assume that the mystery vessel was another yacht.

Last Friday, I spent the day going through the file in the National Archives where Bill found the Mystery photo and in that file, I found another image of *Aileen* that clears up the mystery. This photograph, from Record Group .181-NYS, is a companion to the dry dock image I mentioned above. It shows *Aileen* from the forward port quarter. There is enough clear detail to prove the identity of MP 181 as *Aileen*. The pilothouse and foremast are gone, the armor plating is going on amidships, and the bowsprit is shortened. But the image offers a clear view of the taff rail and hause pipe hole and they match exactly with that seen in MP 181. Case closed!

Following closely on the heels of a supposed misidentified photograph, Bill delivered a second superb

(Continued on page 2)



(Continued from page 1)

Mystery Photograph—one that really exemplifies the premise of the game. The rules of the game are simple: Clarke tries to stump us, we identify every vessel. Last month we didn't play by the rules. The score had been hugely in our favor until these last two entries. With no responses and little personal time for research, we failed to recognize either vessel for what they were. For MP 182, I made an assumption by concentrating on her appearance. This led to my supposition that she was another converted patrol yacht. While she was indeed built as a yacht, *Niagara*, and she did become a patrol vessel until after the conversion seen in the Mystery Photo. Her original naval service centered on her use as a submarine tender. For this purpose, she was converted in 1923 and became *Fulton* (AS-1). Because I stated that she was a yacht converted to serve as a patrol vessel, I would like to say that I was partially right with my analysis. But because I was more wrong than right, I don't feel I should claim any credit. I'll leave it at that. Kudos, Bill!

Now, let's turn our attention to the current image.

Our long distance correspondent, Rob Napier, was the only soul brave enough to play and he thinks that the image is of the "310-foot, 4,000-ton protected cruiser USS *San Francisco*." He explains it this way, "Well, John, it's like this: I've just been busy carving a half-hull model of USS Brooklyn (CA-3). I've wanted to do one of those turn-of-the-century, ram-bow hulls for years. I looked all around for the right one to pursue. There are a lot of stereo cards of Brooklyn because of her heroic (?) participation in the [Spanish American War.] Her extreme tumblehome was very seductive -- like a good pair of hips, you might say. Underwater, she was sleek enough, not like some of those stumpy, rotund battleships. McCleary procured the lines from the National Archives and they've been collecting dust in my shop for a few years. The lines are official -- whatever that means, produced by the navy, delicate, and most excellent to work from. Carved the model at 1:96 in maple. Included the armor belt. Got out all my Brooklyn stereo views to check things. Got out my copy of Alden's "American Steel Navy." All this had been sitting on my bench this last week when your new Mystery Photo arrived. So, I thought, what the hell, I'll give it a shot."

Looks to me like Rob shoots very well!

Rob explains his logic. "First, I quickly looked through the line profiles at the back of Alden to find a three-master with guns on the forecastle. I found *San Francisco*. Then I used the index to find photos of her. Comparing your MP image with the photo reproduced on page 28 reveals many similarities, even though your MP is nearly head-on, and, thus, conceals the profile of the vessel. Similarities include the two round, protected tops; two shielded 6-inch rifles on the forecastle; rectangular hawse pads; the searchlight on its raised platform appropriately in the eyes; the figurepiece's scrolling, porthole distribution, and more."

To identify the location, Rob relied on his experience and memory. "While the background of your MP is pretty fuzzy, it's proximity to the drydock and its visual texture resemble very closely the waterfront of Vallejo, California, the land across the water from the Mare Island Navy Yard.

MINUTES



HRSMS Monthly Meeting
9-14-01
Host: John Cheevers

The Meeting was called to order at 2003 hours. A moment of silence was observed to honor those that lost their lives on September 11th.

There were no corrections to the minutes as published.

A purser's report was given.

Old Business: Len Wine was not present, so discussion on new shirts was tabled.

New Business: Graham Horne read an insert for the next newsletter asking for volunteers to give presentations or lead discussions at the monthly meetings. John Cheevers read an e-mail from the NRG conference Committee, that alteration to planned activities may be necessary due to tightened security resulting from the terrorist attack.

Show & Tell: Bob Comet showed how he made mast hoops. A copy of *Ships n Scale* was shown by Ryland Craze. Bob Sanderson announced that he was moving to northern Virginia. John Cheevers showed his current project, a carved hull and a jig that allowed him to use a router to cut the sheer and camber of the deck.

The meeting was adjourned.

Details of the drydock structure also match those I found in another stereo view."

Good job! Rob. You nailed it! I don't think anyone will be sitting around this month waiting for the official verification from Tom. Score one more for our side.

John Cheevers

THE ANSWER

The answer to Mystery Photo 183
USS *San Francisco* C-5
Mare Island Navy Yard 1890's
NH 71077

2001 Nautical Research Guild Conference

Just this weekend, The Washington Ship Model Society hosted the 28th annual Nautical Research Guild Conference held at the Double Tree Hotel in Rockville, Maryland. From everything I saw or heard it was a resounding success. Counting Roger Cole and his wife, seven members from our group attended, two were presenters (Roger and Joe), and four brought their wives. Bill and I traveled together, arriving Friday evening after a fun day at the National Archives.

The folks from the Washington group, especially Vince and Cathy McCullough and Harry and Juanita Ohanian, deserve a great big pat-on-the-back for organizing such a varied and interesting list of tours receptions and the like. All their hard work, planning, and execution was evident in how well things flowed. Those of us in the HRSMS, who have been there, know how hard it is to do this in normal times, so we are especially keen on how well WSMS persevered and pulled all their plans together in these trying times. It was pleasing to me to see such good attendance. Those who came were treated to seven well-prepared presenters with excellent technical talks. I think about half were either stand-by or replacement speakers. I didn't participate in any of the tours but I heard nothing but good comments from those who went.

The talks were loosely organized around a theme that took the listener through the emotional reasons why he or she practices his craft to detailed explanations of some of the secrets of good modeling. Woven through the talks ran the historical thread and ethnographic ties that bind us together

and us to our hobby. Rob Napier began the technical sessions with a well thought out talk on why he considers ship models to be "hyper-representational, multi-media sculpture." This was followed by Paul Fontenoy who spoke about Blackbeard the pirate and his ship *Queen Anne's Revenge*. Our own Joe McCleary was last up for the morning and he gave a moving and factual talk on the slave trade and detailed his model of *Dos Amigos*. Following lunch, Roger Cole led off with modeling tips and details of the English cutter *Alert*. John Broadwater was next and delivered an update on events concerning artifact recovery from the wreck of *Monitor*. After that Ms. Paula Johnson from the Smithsonian Institution spoke on efforts to document Chesapeake Bay and Northwestern United States indigenous small craft. And last but not least, Don Preul wrapped up the technical sessions by demonstrating his method of creating shell plating on models of steel-hulled vessels. All good stuff! After the banquet, Tom Freeman, the White House Artist in Residence, spoke about his new work depicting USS *Constitution* at Gaeta, Italy, where she received Pope Pius as her guest. This marked the first time a Pope visited United States territory.

What a good weekend it was! The WSMS steering committee and volunteers, once again, deserve a huge round of applause for a great conference. It was great to see old friends again and to make new ones. I did see one very curious thing: Bill Clarke was spotted buying wood from The Lumberyard (?). And lastly, I can only hope Friday's soiree through the Brazilian "House of Beef" doesn't carry any lasting effects for Joe or Bill.

John Cheevers

Special Collections in the
Library of Congress

Clipper ship St. David.
CREATED/PUBLISHED
[1905?]

NOTES

Detroit Publishing Co. no.
021868.

Gift; State Historical Society of
Colorado; 1949.

MEDIUM

1 negative : glass ; 8 x 10 in.

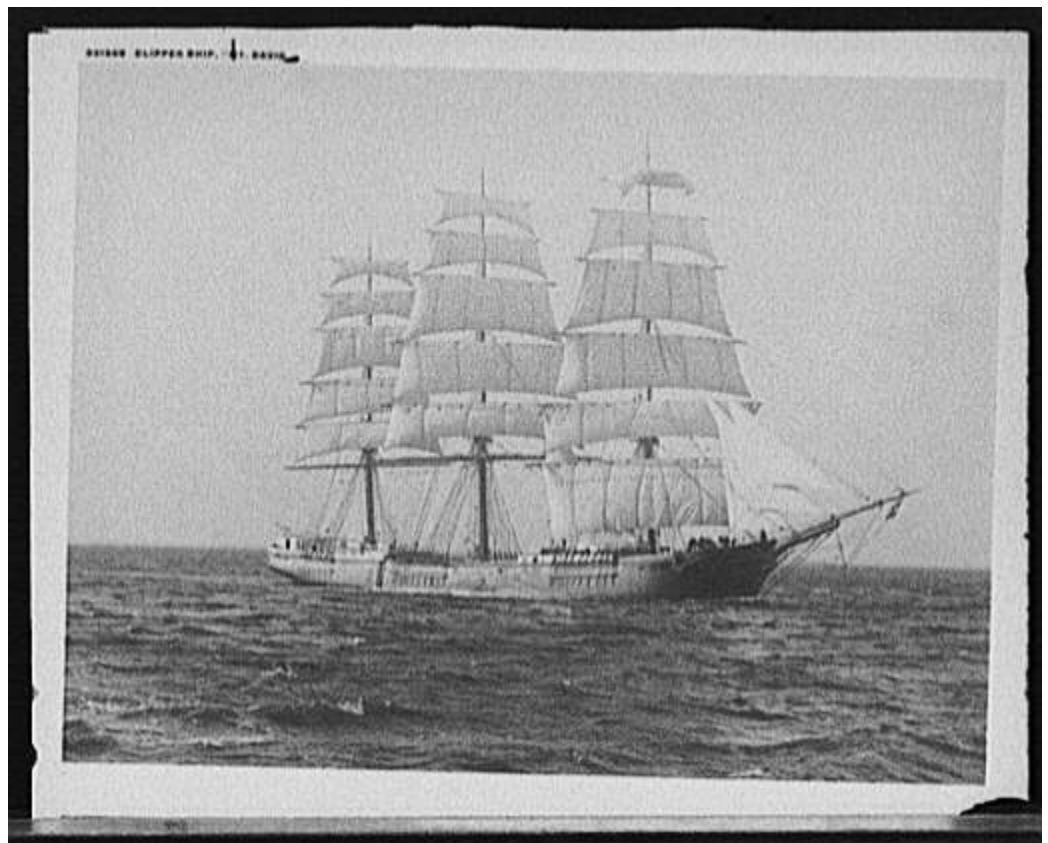
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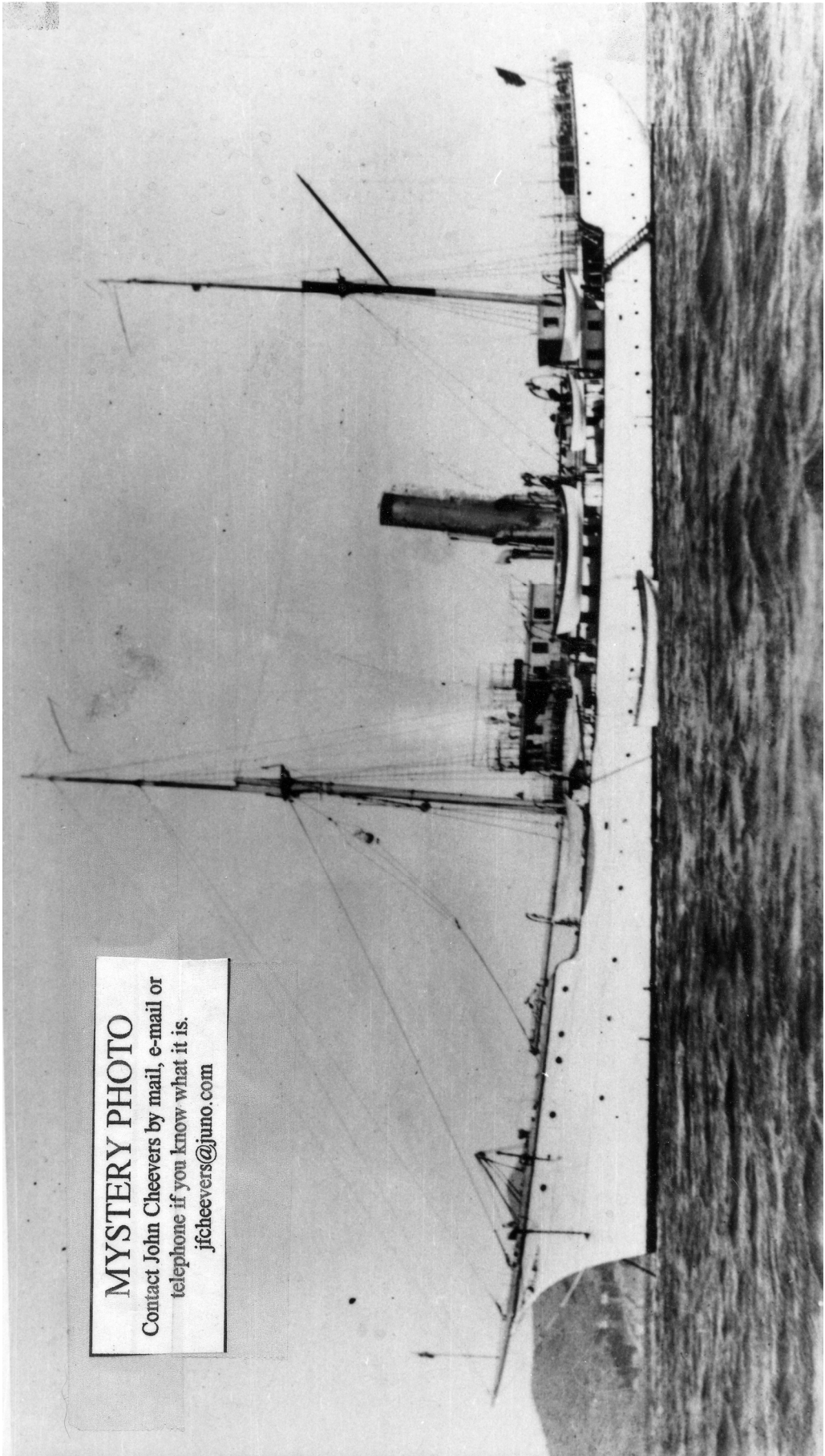
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MYSTERY PHOTO
Contact John Cheevers by mail, e-mail or
telephone if you know what it is.
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Original Content Not Available

NOTABLE EVENTS

OCTOBER

12 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Graham Horne

NOVEMBER

9 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Heinz Schiller

DECEMBER

14 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Jack Bobbitt

JANUARY

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

FEBRUARY

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

MARCH

8 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Southside Bunch

APRIL

5-7 Western Ship Model Conference, Long Beach, Ca.

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

MAY

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

JUNE

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

JULY

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

AUGUST

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

SEPTEMBER

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

Next Meeting

Date: October 12, 2001

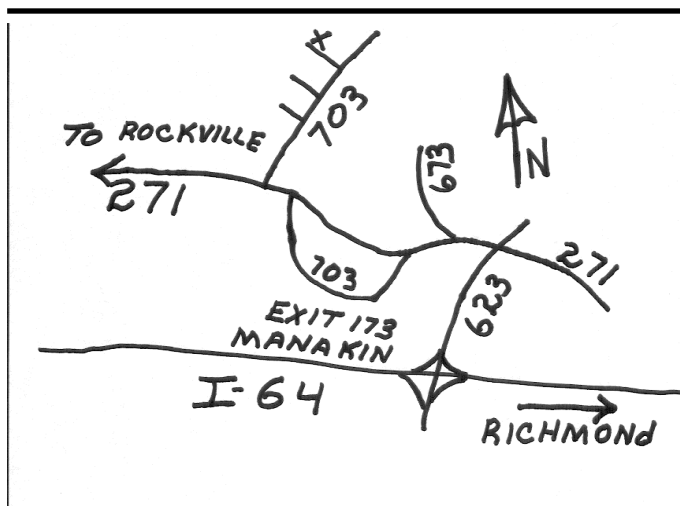
Time: 2000 Hours

Place: 2188 Loblolly Lane, Rockville Va.

Host: Graham Horne

The next meeting will be hosted by Graham Horne on October 13, 2001 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.



(Continued from page 1)

ashore. They were often allowed to remain aboard for extended periods until the ship was prepared for getting underway once more.

It was not the intention of every seaman to spend all his days in port in a libidinous frolic. Many passed their time ashore getting exercise or rambling the countryside on foot or by horse. Some visited the local markets to buy fresh fruit and vegetables and souvenirs. Some would take excursions to local points of interest, whereas others would visit gambling rooms, and still others would go to reading rooms. Although it runs counter to the their popular reputation, a large number of seamen actually attended church during port visits. Some seamen could not bear the thought of going back to their ships and would desert. Ship captains would sometimes offer rewards for returned deserters. Those who remained behind after their ships left often had a hard time of it, becoming beachcombers and living a beggar's existence.

After a period of shore leave, there was often a need for recuperation. Some suffered from injuries in brawls ashore, and some suffered either from alcohol withdrawal or from venereal diseases. For others, the stay ashore was enough that they were content to be back aboard.

Bob Comet

Thanks

The members would like to thank John Cheevers and his wife, Ellen for hosting the September meeting.

WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL



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