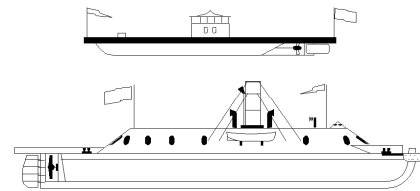


# Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

# Logbook



No. 188

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

FEBRUARY, 2002

## MINUTES



HRSMS Monthly Meeting  
January 11, 2002  
Host, Bob Comet

### Guests:

Rick Shonk, 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Scott Whalen, 2<sup>nd</sup>  
John Wylde, 3<sup>rd</sup>

The meeting was called to order at 2000 hours by the skipper. There were no corrections to the minutes as published. A Purser's report was given. The first order of business was to ask John Wylde if he wanted to join the HRSMS. The guests were asked to leave the room while the membership went thorough the ritual vote. The guests and our new member were asked to return and John was welcomed as a new member and immediately reminded that dues are payable.

**Old Business:** Len Wine restated the information he previously presented on the new shirts. It was decided that all shirts would be, navy blue.

**New Business:** The subject of the HRSMS Annual Banquet was put before the membership. The membership agreed that the Radisson would be a good venue for the event. Joe McCleary and Bill Clarke were asked by the Skipper to make arrangements with the hotel. (see the flier included in this issue). The process for the election of officers was initiated by the request for nominations. The current slate of officers has served one year and they are eligible to serve a second term. No other nominations were received. The election of officers will occur at the February meeting. Jack Bobbitt, John Cheevers and Joe McCleary were appointed to a committee to put forth nominations for the Founder's Award. They are to report at the next meeting.

**Show & Tell:** Bob Comet had old copies of *Wooden Boat Magazine*, free for the taking. Jack Bobbitt showed the progress on his latest project, with a detailed explanation of the process he used to fabricate the rails. Alan Frazer showed the progress on his Whale Boat. John Wylde showed his model of the *Wind* from the late 30s to the early 40s period.

The meeting was adjourned to a presentation on "Plank-on – Bulkhead" by Bob Comet.

## Mystery Photo



Welcome to Mystery Photo, *Logbook* No. 187, and to the New Year--2002! I owe a big thank you to Joe for contributing last month's column, you did a fine job. I also breathe a sigh of relief at not seeing another ship in dry-dock, perhaps it will be a New Year after all!

This month, the Mystery Photo painfully reminded me of two things: First the importance of really looking at the data in the photograph, and second that I have misplaced my book on British cruisers. I'll get to the first point later. Right now, I'd like to address the second point and make an appeal to the membership. That is--if anyone has or has seen my copy of Whitley's book on British Cruisers, please return it.

On to the current photograph--If you were to take a casual glance at the image, like I did, you might conclude, as Joe initially did, that this was a "British-built ship." If it's not a unit of the Royal Navy, then possibly she's one of the British built-for-export cruisers--like those bought by the United States for use during the Spanish American War. With that assumption, I concluded that this month's Mystery Photo would be an easy puzzle to solve. *Argh*, not so easy! This vessel wasn't a Royal Navy unit or the U.S. Navy cruisers *Albany* or *New Orleans*! After recovering from this initial set back, solving this mystery actually proved to be very easy. This point Dave Baker so casually reinforces by solving the mystery and e-mailing his response before I had even opened my copy of the newsletter (I assume we received ours on the same day. And I purposely don't read any responses until after I identify the vessel.) So after my glee turned to chagrin, it was back to the photograph to see what made solving the mystery so easy for Dave. This brings me to point number one: Look at the photograph! And there it is front and center on the stem of the cruiser's bow scroll, the perfect clue--a Chrysanthemum. Now that I knew what to look for, I turned my attention to this month's responses.

"The Mystery Ship for LOGBOOK # 187 is the Japanese protected cruiser *Takasago*," says Dave Baker laying claim to the top honors being the first to respond. Joe McCleary took a little longer to answer the call but cut right to the chase, also identifying the Mystery Ship as Imperial Japanese Navy ship (IJNS) *Takasago*. As he puts it, "The exact same photo can be found in *Japanese Naval Vessels Illustrated, 1869-1945, Vol. II*, by Shizo Fukui. Interestingly no other information can be gleaned from this book, as, except for the ship names, it is written entirely in Japanese!" (Joe, that's no excuse, I think I can supply a

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translator if you like. Joe also makes some vague reference, in his remarks, to receiving help from Bill while researching his answer at the Mariners' Museum Library. Something about "[Bill] offering 'helpful suggestions' designed to lead me astray." From Bill's recollection, naturally I received a very different story. Something to the tune of Joe being hopelessly lost!) Later, Bob Comet giving full credit to Hunt Lewis, a docent from the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, also submitted the correct identification calling her a typical Elswick cruiser (whatever that is) of the period." Bob can't claim credit for identifying the ship, because Hunt Lewis saw it and asked if he could make a try. The thing that Hunt used to spot the ship was the oddly shaped lookout station on the masts.

Compiling Dave, Joe, and Bob's data, we learn that the Japanese armored cruiser *Takasago* was designed by British Naval Constructor Philip Watts and was laid down by the Armstrong-Mitchell Company's Low Walker yard on speculation and sold to Japan during July, 1897 prior to completion. The keel was laid on 2 April, 1896, and the ship was launched on 18 May, 1897 and ran trials on 6 April, 1898." Designated as a 2nd class cruiser *Takasago* was 388-ft. overall by 46-ft. beam and 17-ft maximum draft and carried a very thin armoring of 4 1/2-in. to 3 1/2-in. plate on the sloped portion amidships, with the crown being 1 3/4-in. The conning tower beneath the pilothouse had only 4-in. armor--all Harvey steel. Armament was two 8-in.45-caliber guns (one on forecandle, one aft), 10 4.7-in. quickfire, 10 12-pounder quickfire, and 6 2.5-pounder quickfire, along with one bow and four broadside 18-in. torpedo tubes. The single eight inch gun mounted high on both the fore'sle and poop caused it to suffer from instability and she was prone to roll heavily in any kind of sea. The propulsion plant was composed of two Humphries Tennant vertical triple-expansion engines producing 10,000 indicated horsepower (ihp) at normal draft and 15,750 ihp at forced draft. She was designed to make 20.5 knots on normal draft and 22.5 on forced draft but actually achieved 22.22 knots on normal and only 22.9 on forced. There were four double-ended and four single-ended boilers. Normal fuel stowage was 350 tons of coal, but that could be increased to 1,028 in an emergency." Her complement was 425 officers and men. (The actual numbers supplied by the three players differ very slightly and I chose to use most of Dave's numbers in this response as he answered the mystery first. This is the difficult reality of using first, second, and even third hand information when determining the characteristics of a vessel. In this case the differences were small.)

I also compiled everyone's remarks regarding *Takasago's* career in a single paragraph. *Takasago* did not have a long career. She primarily served in the blockading squadron off Port Arthur (which, according to Joe, only a few people know is named after Dave baker) during the Russo-Japanese War. However, she participated in the Battle of the Yellow Sea on 10 August 1904 during that conflict. While on patrol, she hit a mine on the night of 12 December 1904 while steaming between Port Arthur and Chefoo and sank the next day. Only 3 officers and 158 enlisted of her crew of around

405 survived. *Takasago* was the last major Imperial Japanese Navy ship loss of the war.

These additional comments and facts help determine the location of the ship in the photograph and provide interesting anecdotal data for the ship. According to Dave, "The ship in the background beyond *Takasago's* bow appears to be the IJN's first armored cruiser, *Chiyoda*, a 2,400-ton vessel completed by John Brown at Clydebank during December, 1890. No guesses on exactly when and where the photo was taken, but as *Takasago* was delivered in the standard Victorian black hull and light upperworks, I'd guess that the mystery view was taken during the war itself and that the background is somewhere in the vicinity of Port Arthur. As an even wilder guess, I'd say this is probably a U.S. Naval Intelligence photo taken by the USN attaché to Japan, then-commander McCully." (*I don't think the commander is related to Captain McCleary ed.*) Joe adds, "It was at that point that I noticed that the bow scroll contained a chrysanthemum and the light came on (not to mention the stern sculled sampan near the starboard accommodation ladder.) The unusual line running down the starboard side, starting at the hawse pipe, is not a flaw in the photo but is actually an identification feature used within the IJN at this time. In *Takasago's* case it was red." Bob and Hunt Lewis agree that "the mystery photo was probably taken in Japan's home waters (I guess Yokosuka) because the background looks like it and there is what appears to be a sampan lying off to the side, and there is another man of war lying in the background to the right."

With the vessel identified and the location tentative, I think a few words about *Takasago's* builder and the shipbuilding climate at that time is in order. The shipbuilding firm of Armstrong-Mitchell Company supplied standard or stock warships to many foreign and third-rate navies. The British Naval Constructor Philip Watts and his staff executed most of these designs. It is not my debate the strategic value or consequences of this arrangement; it looks suspiciously similar to past and current practices followed by the United States. Never the less, Warships were supplied to client states such as Brazil, Chile, and Japan with the United States benefiting from a last hour purchase of two cruisers contracted to Brazil. Included in this total were a large number of armored or protected cruisers that were very-near sister ships to *Takasago*. On their merits, these were generally good ships with some designs surpassing those supplied to the Royal Navy.

Therein lies another rub that made identification difficult for us at first. Joe says he was fortunate in his hunt that only one ship of this type was built, making the problem easier. Neither Dave, Bob, nor Hunt Lewis made reference to sister ships. Then Joe complicates his own story by adding, "In truth, *Takasago* did have two sisters, Kasagi and Chitose, but they were built by William Cramp of Philadelphia and Union Iron Works of San Francisco respectively, and had definite appearance differences which ruled them out." According to Conway's, these two vessels should be termed

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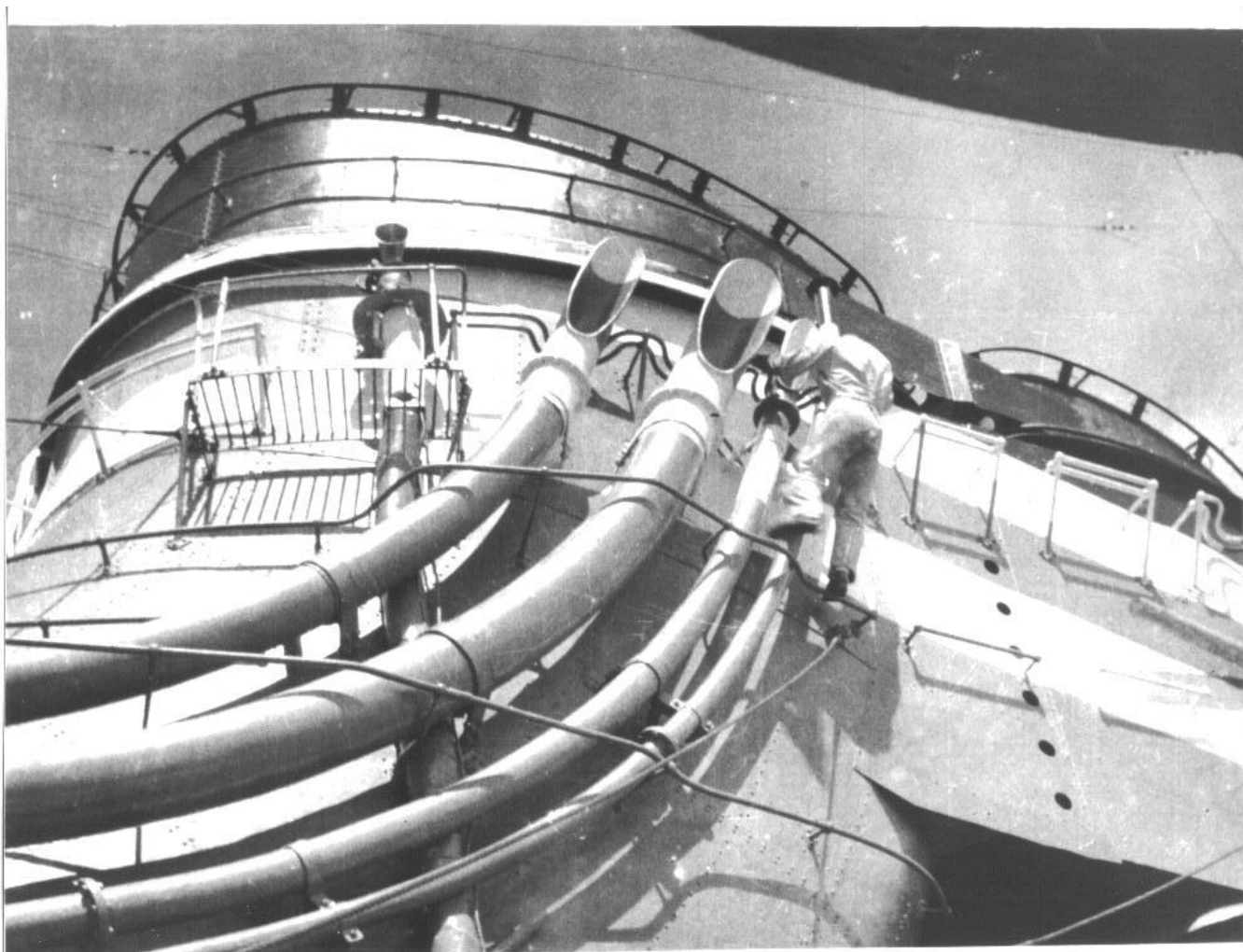
near-sisters, as they were larger by about 600 tons. By further delving into Conway's, I was driven to a different conclusion. Though it is not mentioned in the Conway's, Japanese listing for Takasago, a listing in the Chilean section, on page 413, for the protected cruiser *Chacabuco* built by Armstrong, states she was a stock ship purchased in 1902 and was identical to the Japanese *Takasago*. All of her particulars match those listed for *Takasago* except for light armament and torpedo tubes. The small photo that accompanies the listing shows *Chacabuco* in the standard British Victorian livery.

For this Mystery Photo, there were four principal sources cited by the respondents. Dave used a new-to-this-column reference: "Source for the identification and most of the data is Peter Brooks: *Warships For Export; Armstrong Warships, 1867-1927*, World Ship Society, 1999." He offers to make it available at Friday's meeting, if you plan to be there. Joe primarily used different volumes of Jane's Fighting ships, and the aforementioned *Japanese Naval Vessels Illustrated, 1869-1945, Vol. II*, by Shizo Fukui. Bob, Hunt Lewis, and this editor used *Conway's All The World's*

*Fighting Ships, 1860-1905*.

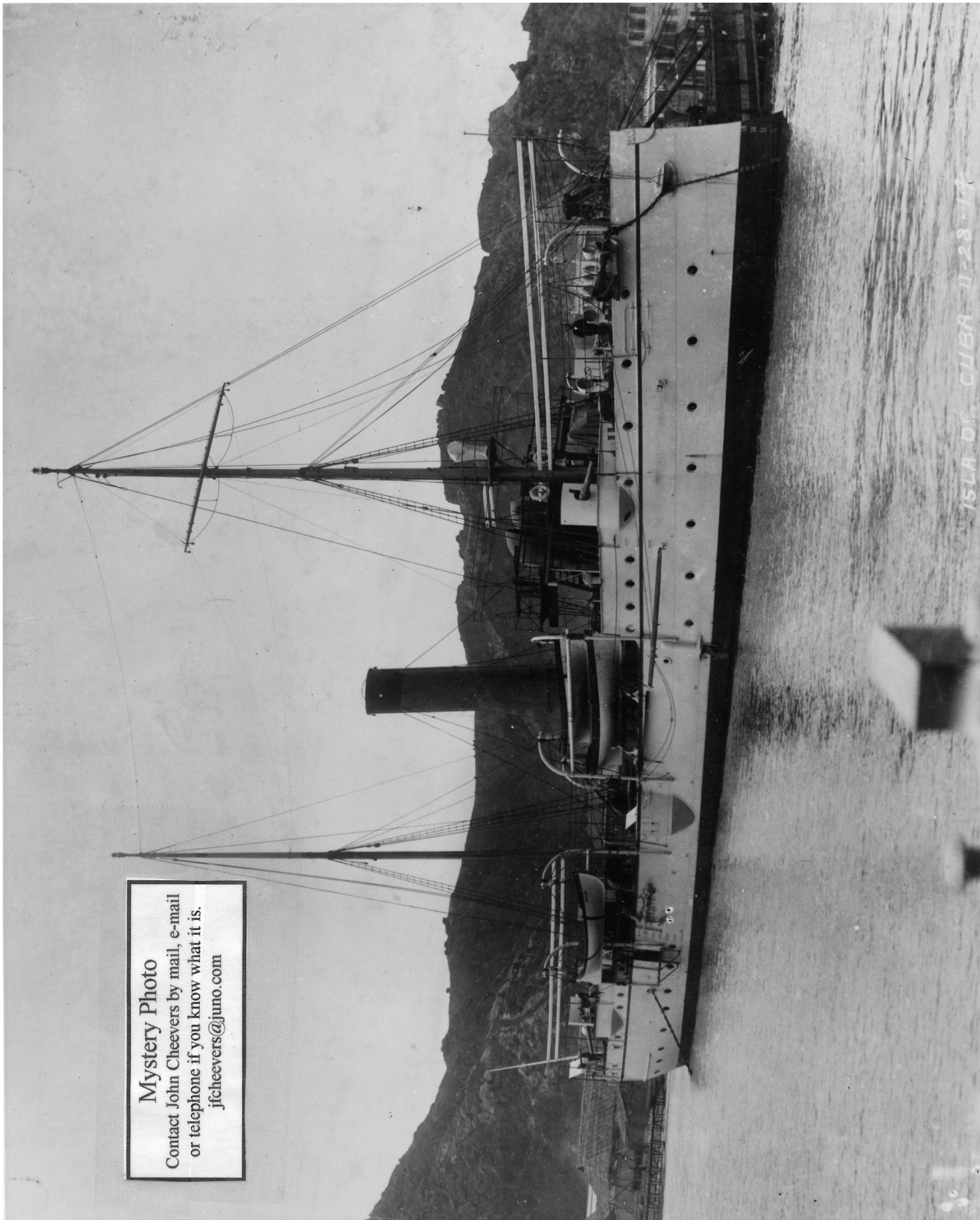
Finally, one last call to arms: Joe says, "It is very appropriate that Bill chose to use a Japanese ship for this month's photo, because when most people first meet Bill they actually think that he is speaking Japanese, rather than his own unique form of Poquoson English. Bill also expressed the thought that Takasago was a particularly beautiful ship and that he might see if he could use some of his contacts to get a set of plans AND BUILD A MODEL! Anyone want to open a betting pool?"

John Cheevers



**The original content  
for this page is not  
available**

**Mystery Photo**  
Contact John Cheevers by mail, e-mail  
or telephone if you know what it is.  
[jfcheevers@jumo.com](mailto:jfcheevers@jumo.com)



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## NOTABLE EVENTS

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### FEBRUARY

- 8 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Dave Baker  
Presentation: Research, Photos and Plans,  
Joe McCleary & Bill Clarke

### 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: Host, Dean Sword

### MAY

- 10 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Bill Clarke

### JUNE

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

### JULY

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

### AUGUST

- 3 2002 Model Ship Regatta, Philadelphia, Pa.

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

### SEPTEMBER

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

### OCTOBER

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

### NOVEMBER

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

### DECEMBER

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

### JANUARY

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

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## Thanks

The members would like to thank Bob Comet and his wife, Karen for hosting the January meeting.

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## WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL



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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

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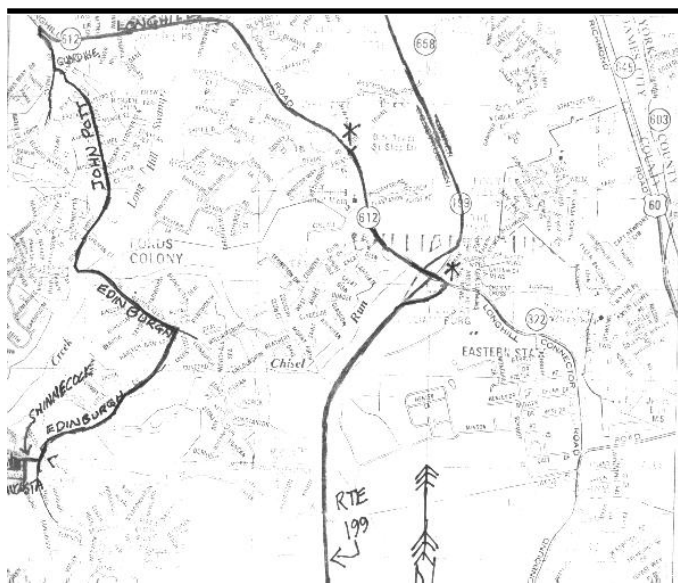
## Next Meeting

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Date: February 8, 2002  
Place: 100 Agusta, Williamsburg, Va.  
Time: 2000 Hours  
Host: Dave Baker

From East: Take Rte 64 west to Rte 199 exit. Continue on Rte 199 west about 8 miles to Longhill road (Rte 612 exit). Go West on Longhill, past light at Old Town, a total of about 2.5 miles. Turn left into Ford's Colony Drive. Make first left to Guardhouse on John Pott (guards will let you in, honest). Continue on John Pott for 1 mile to intersection with Edinburgh and Edinburgh (second right). Go 1 mile to Shinnecock (fourth right turn, well lit). Turn right on Shinnecock and go about 200ft. to first left, Agusta. House is first on the right, 2 story white colonial with lots of lights on.

From West: Take Rte 64 east to 199 exit. Turn right (east) on rte 199 and go about 4 miles to Longhill Road. Turn right on Longhill and follow directions as above.



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## Notice

Due to a computer failure, e-mail submissions are not available for this issue.

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## The Answer

The answer to Mystery Photo Number 187:  
IJS Takasago (1897)  
Photo No. NH74391