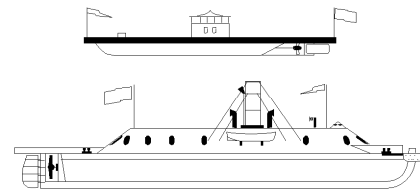


# Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

# Logbook



No. 239

WWW.HRSMS.ORG

MAY, 2006

## MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society  
Monthly Meeting

April 14, 2006  
Host, Mark Heilenday  
Guest, Henry Clapp, 3rd meeting

The Skipper, Dave Baker, called the meeting to order at 2000 hours. The first order of business was to welcome Henry Clapp to his third meeting. After indicating that he would like to join, he was asked to leave the room while the ritual was performed. Henry was welcomed as a new member. He minutes were approved as published. A Purser's report was given. The Skipper thanked Greg Harrington for getting on the telephone and an alerting the members to the error in the meeting directions.

**Old Business:** Dave stated that we still need a volunteer to be Historian. Jack Bobbitt indicated that he had the HRSMS banner and that the society never owned a tent. There was some discussion about our group setting up demonstrations at some location to generate interest in model building. Charles Landrum gave some insight to his experience with IPMS demonstrations. There was conversation about the Jamestown 400th anniversary.

**New Business:** There was no new business.

**Show & Tell:** Dave Baker showed a book on the swan class sloop By David Antscherl. Ryland Craze talked about the *HM Cutter Sherborne* group-build of a kit by Caldercraft. Bob Comet his current sloop project.

The meeting was adjourned to a presentation, "Sail Making", by Bob Comet.

## Nautical Terms

**Pinky** An old type of New England fishing schooner which had a sharp stern and narrow, long center, and usually heavily raked masts. (XVII) The term may be from the Dutch *pinche*, meaning narrow.

Submitted By: Tim Wood

## Mystery Photo



Mystery Photo #238: It's been some time since we had the kind of feedback that last month's image generated. It seems that the image was mis-captioned. Whether the mistake is actually part of the markings on the print or something the image supplier did is not clear. Maybe he'll step forward and clear up the matter. So that you all know exactly who to fuss at, here is how it works: Bill (or another club member) supplies images for the column, Tom selects one from the pile and prints it in the newsletter, I receive all of your excellent replies and craft them into an interesting, readable, and highly entertaining column, and Tom follows the next month with what ever caption or notes he finds on the print in a section called 'The Answer.' Bill, looks like you might got some 'splaining to do...

There is a certain bridge that crosses the Willamette River in Portland, Oregon that forms part of the backdrop of many a ship's portrait—Clarke, you are not alone in using a bridge to get that "high angle" shot. Apparently, someone on the southwest side or the bridge operator was fond of ships and photographed them at every opportunity. Either way, it was an excellent spot for a photo-op; there were opportunities a plenty—Portland, located about 50 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean, just happens to be a deep water port. Anyway, this month's featured Mystery just happens to present one of those vessels, but in a far different place. Identify the vessel and you will find other nice images on the Internet, including several from the bridge.

Also, if you were clever and solved this month's mystery, you no doubt opened the door to a sad story of how a State, a Government, and a Community came to lose a prized possession. Those of you who already know what ship this is should also know the story. Charles Landrum undoubtedly does: "Sadly it is IX-22 (ex-USS Oregon) in use as an ammunition barge, likely the 1944 time frame taken in transit to Guam. Her scrapping was and is a great shame." This was all he had to say.

Following closely on Charles' heels came three more responses. One from Bill Fox, always the champion of anything built at Newport News, made a good guess with this: "I believe that it is *USS Kearsarge*, BB 5, on her way to becoming a crane ship, AB 1, in 1921. Of course, she was also NN Hull 18." Not a bad guess and one that shows some thought and some knowledge of the history of US Naval pre-

(Continued on page 2)

dreadnought battleships.

The third response came from Rob Napier who was undecided as to the vessel's identity but whom, nevertheless, offered valuable information gleaned from the image like this nugget: "The hull looks white, but the white might just be sunlight highlighting normal gray."

Bringing up the rear, if you call a two day window for receiving and cataloging all of the e-mail responses a long train, was Dave Baker with his usual information rich response. "The ship under tow in the April Mystery Ship contest photo is the battleship OREGON (BB-3) in her post 1942 guise as IX-22. That's the easy part." And that's how he says it, agreeing with Charles as to the ship's identity.

Who is right? So I don't drag this out as I usually do, Charles and Dave are. The image is of the former pre-dreadnaught battleship *USS Oregon* in service as the US Navy ammunition barge *IX-22*. Since *IX-22* is the proper identification of the vessel, only those who said that are correct. But how did a former battleship come to serve in such an ignominious fashion? Therein lays the real story of this mystery photo.

By the end of World War One, advances in all areas of naval warfare technology had made the first generation of steel warships, including this battleship, hopelessly obsolete. As usually happens with obsolete warships they were pulled from service and "mothballed." They languished for several years in the back waters of naval yards; the League Island Naval yard in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania being one such site. There they sat awaiting their fate, perhaps to be expended as a target ship or simply to be scrapped. As a result of the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922, they were permanently demilitarized; the way was now clear to dispose of these vessels.

However, several of the pre-dreadnaught battleships were spared. The aforementioned *USS Kearsarge* became a floating crane and *USS Illinois* was converted into the barracks ship *USS Prairie State*. *USS Olympia*, the flagship of the hero of Manila Bay, Commodore George Dewey, was saved becoming *IX-31* in 1931. But not *Oregon*! She, like many of her sisters, was scheduled to be expended as a target until fate stepped in.

Because of her epic, front page making, 13,675 nautical mile, two month voyage from the Pacific to Caribbean waters in support of the US Navy in the Spanish American War and for the superb warfighting skill she demonstrated against the Spanish fleet, the old battleship had developed a celebrity status of sorts and had earned the nickname "Bulldog of the Navy." With *Oregon* being something of an icon the people of the state of Oregon petitioned the Navy Department to preserve her. Because of its historic status, the ship was declared a "naval relic," and in June 1925 the old veteran was placed into a moorage near the previously mentioned Broadway Bridge on the east bank of the Willamette River in Portland, Oregon.

The next portion of this story is taken from the Oregon Historical Quarterly Vol. 106, No. 1, spring 2005. Titled [A Chronicle of the Battleship Oregon](#) by Ken Lomax, it is perhaps a most fitting tribute to the great battleship:

"For the next sixteen years, the *Oregon* served as a

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war memorial and museum and was a popular meeting place for social groups, veterans, school tours, and scout troops. During 1941, over a hundred thousand persons signed the ship's guest book. In 1938, the *Oregon* was moved to a more sheltered moorage at a basin near the southwest end of the Hawthorne Bridge, the site of a proposed Battleship Oregon Marine Park. Eventually, the park was dedicated and a few improvements were made. There were also plans to surround the ship with concrete to make the berth permanent, but funds were not available to proceed with the entire project.

In fact, the *USS Oregon* was only on loan to the state. The Navy had retained ownership, and after the start of World War II, Oregon Governor Charles Sprague naively offered to return the ship to active service. The navy quickly declined, but the stage was set for its demise. Although the navy denied that there were plans for scrapping the *Oregon*, the War Production Board had decided to claim the ship for the war effort. In the end, President Franklin D. Roosevelt personally settled the matter, turning the *Oregon* over to the board for scrap metal.

The Battleship Oregon Commission and the ship's Veterans of Foreign Wars post lodged formal protests with the navy, but to no effect. Despite the mounting fervor of wartime metal drives, the scrapping of the ship did not go unquestioned. Expressing "the proper spirit of patriotic resignation," Marjorie W. Hennessey of Hillsboro wrote to the editor of the Oregonian: If we in future years must contemplate a yawning vacancy where now the grand old *Oregon* lies in her carefully prepared moorage basin, let us be extremely sure that we can say "It had to go, so we gritted our teeth and gave it" rather than "The *Oregon* went for nothing and need not have gone at all." The *Oregon* was put up for sale on November 2, 1942. Through a closed bidding process, it was sold for thirty-five thousand dollars.

The *Oregon* was towed down the Columbia River to Kalama, Washington, where the superstructure was stripped and bronze, brass, and copper were reclaimed from the rest of the vessel. Valuable machinery was also apparently sold off around this time. As it turned out, the need for scrap metal from the ship was hardly critical, and Portland newspapers reported that piles of scrap from the *Oregon* never left the area. It was not until 1945 that nine hundred tons of steel from the ship's armor was finally sent to Seattle to be melted down. Public remorse over the fate of the ship grew, and former governor Sprague proclaimed that he was grieved at the lack of use and waste in reconverting the battleship.

The Navy, embarrassed by public criticism of the project, reclaimed the hulk and reinstated it as Miscellaneous Vessel (*IX-22*). The empty, armored hull of the *Oregon* became a huge munitions barge, and, loaded with fourteen thousand tons of dynamite and other explosives; it was towed to Port Merizo, Guam, in July 1944. After the cargo was unloaded, the ship lay rusting in Guam until November 1948, when a typhoon hit the island. The *Oregon* was torn from its moorings and struck out to sea, unmanned. It was presumed that the ship had sunk, but on December 8, a Navy aircraft spotted the hulk happily bobbing on the waves nearly five

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hundred miles southeast of Guam. An oceangoing tug returned the ship to harbor. The *Oregon* again languished in Guam while proposals to save it came to naught. In March 1956, the hulk was sold for \$208,000 to Massey Supply Company, then resold to the Iwai Sanggo Company, which towed the hull to a scrap yard in Kawasaki, Japan, where it was broken up.”

Charles, Rob, and Dave all state that the image shows our mystery vessel under tow. Where they differ is on the where, when and why. Charles, as previously stated, thinks the image shows the barge in 1944 en-route to Guam. Rob thinks the stripped down hulk is being towed to sea for scuttling. And Dave has multiple theories; 1) one as she was towed from “the scrap yard at Kalima, Washington, to be employed as a storage barge by the Navy”; 2) as “she was towed across the Pacific to Guam with a load of dynamite and other ammunition aboard”; 3) as she was towed in 1948, “after she broke her moorings at Apra Harbor, Guam during a typhoon, and drifted out to sea some 500 n.m. before being relocated on 8 December”; or 4) [as she was] “towed to Kawasaki, Japan, for scrapping.”

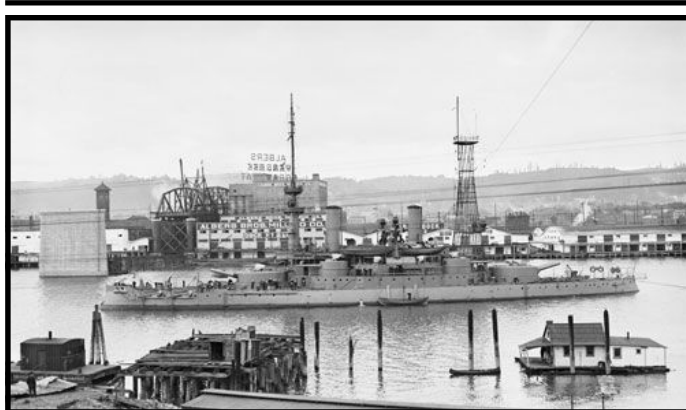
Dave does stick his neck out with about the best guess were going to have for this image: “My guess is that this shot was taken during the tow from Kalima to Navy

custody, since she appears still to have her white hull (repainted from gray when she was loaned to the state of Oregon as an exhibit in June 1925) and there seems to be quite a bit of scaffolding on deck. (I believe the scaffold or A-braces are really makeshift kingposts used as attachment points for unshipping the pallets of dynamite and ammunition --JFC) Only the forward barrette has been covered, so it doesn't appear that she was being towed any great distance where heavy weather might have been encountered.”

There you have it; no matter how you look at it, a towed is a towed.

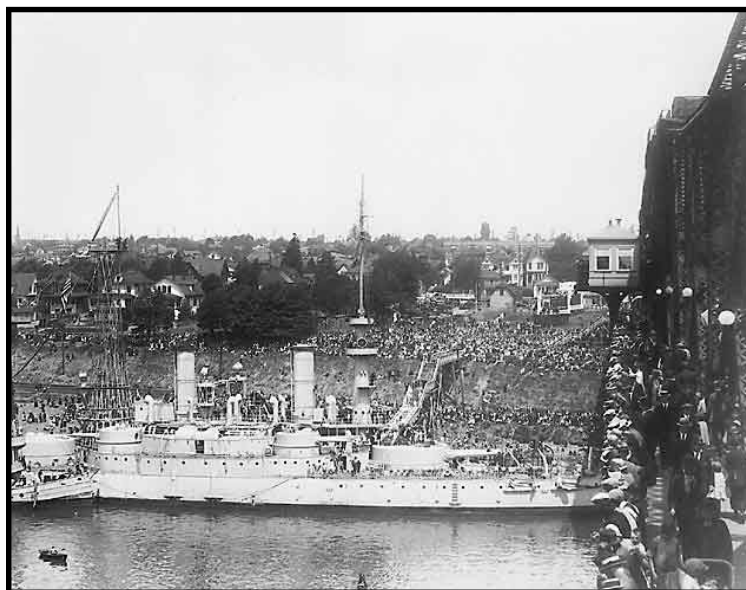
Several pieces of *Oregon* remain, the largest of which are on display not far from where she was a berthed as a memorial. According to Ken Lomax the “most prominent is the mast, which graces the Battleship Oregon Memorial at Tom McCall Waterfront Park in Portland. The ship's stacks can be found farther down the Willamette shore, near the Broadway Bridge at Liberty Ship Park.”

John Cheevers



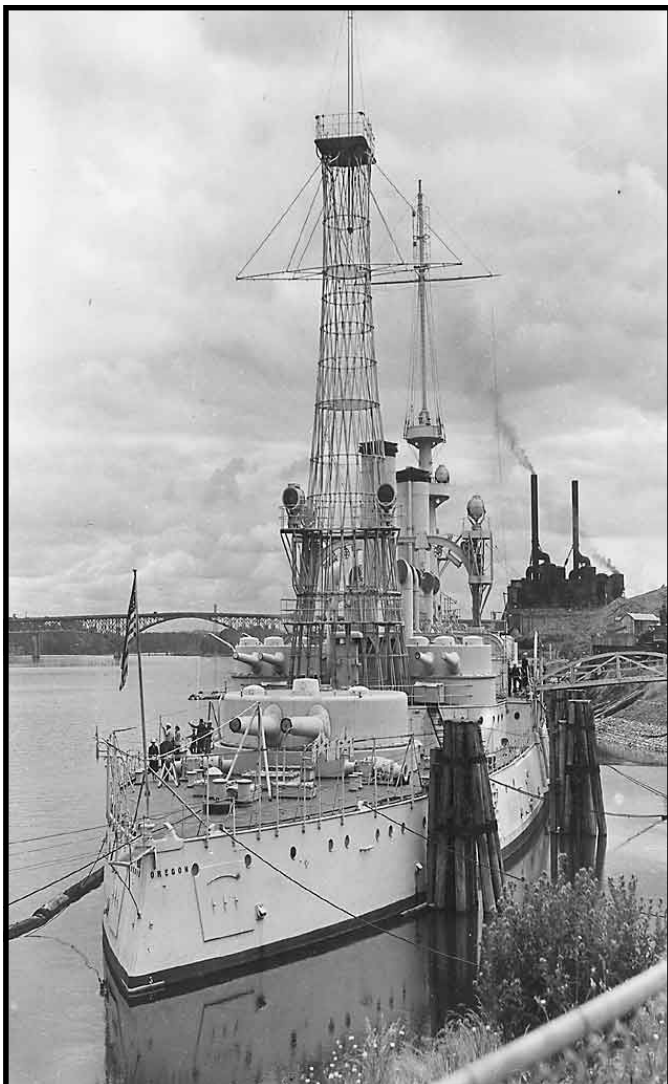
Battleship Passing Broadway Bridge Pillars. The Broadway Bridge was built in 1913. Historicphotoarchive. Neg - 9902-H01 (00242)

Crowds greet the USS Oregon in Portland, Oregon, in June 1925 as the ship takes up its new role as a war memorial and museum. This photograph shows the ship's first moorage on the Willamette River at the northeast end of the Broadway Bridge. OHS neg., OrHi 91697





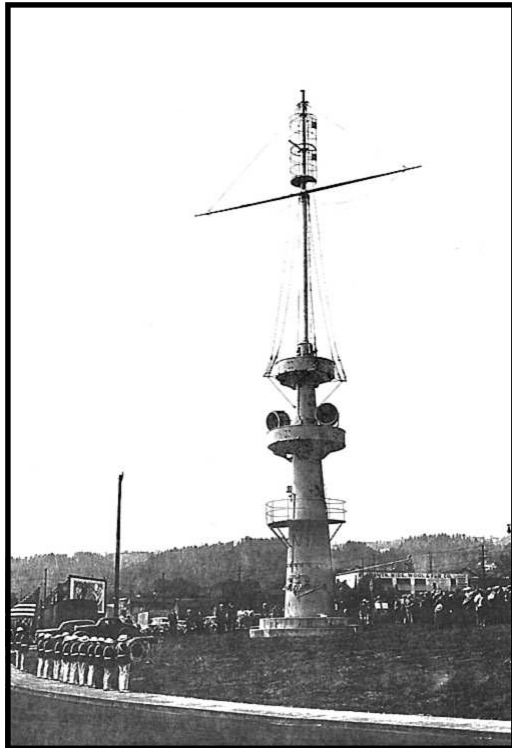
The empty hull of the USS *Oregon*, classified as Miscellaneous Vessel (IX-22), lay at anchor in a Guam harbor in 1948 after being towed to Guam in July 1944 with a load of high explosives. OHS neg., OrHi 12494



The funnels of the *Oregon* are currently at Liberty Ship Park, near the Broadway Bridge in Portland, Oregon. The other portion of the ship that can be found in Portland today is the mast, which is a short distance along the river in Tom McCall Waterfront Park.

Courtesy Ken Lomax, photographer

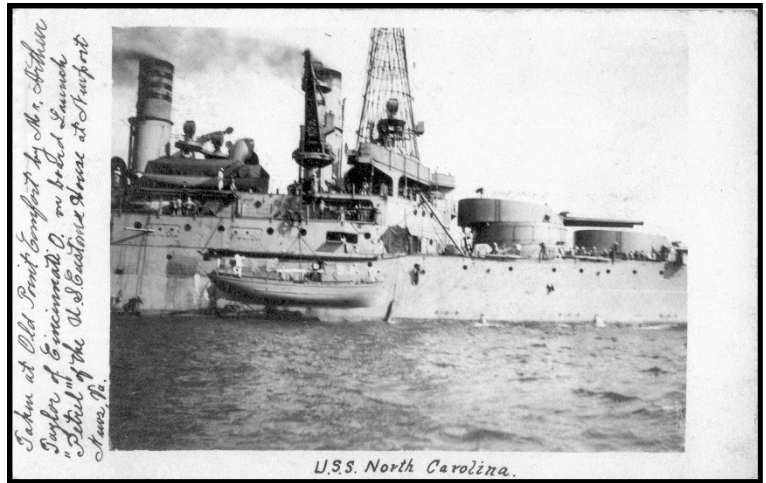
At the time this photograph was taken on December 1, 1942, the Battleship *Oregon* was moored near the southwest end of the Hawthorne Bridge in Portland. OHS neg., OrHi 12105



The ship's mast preserved in 1941

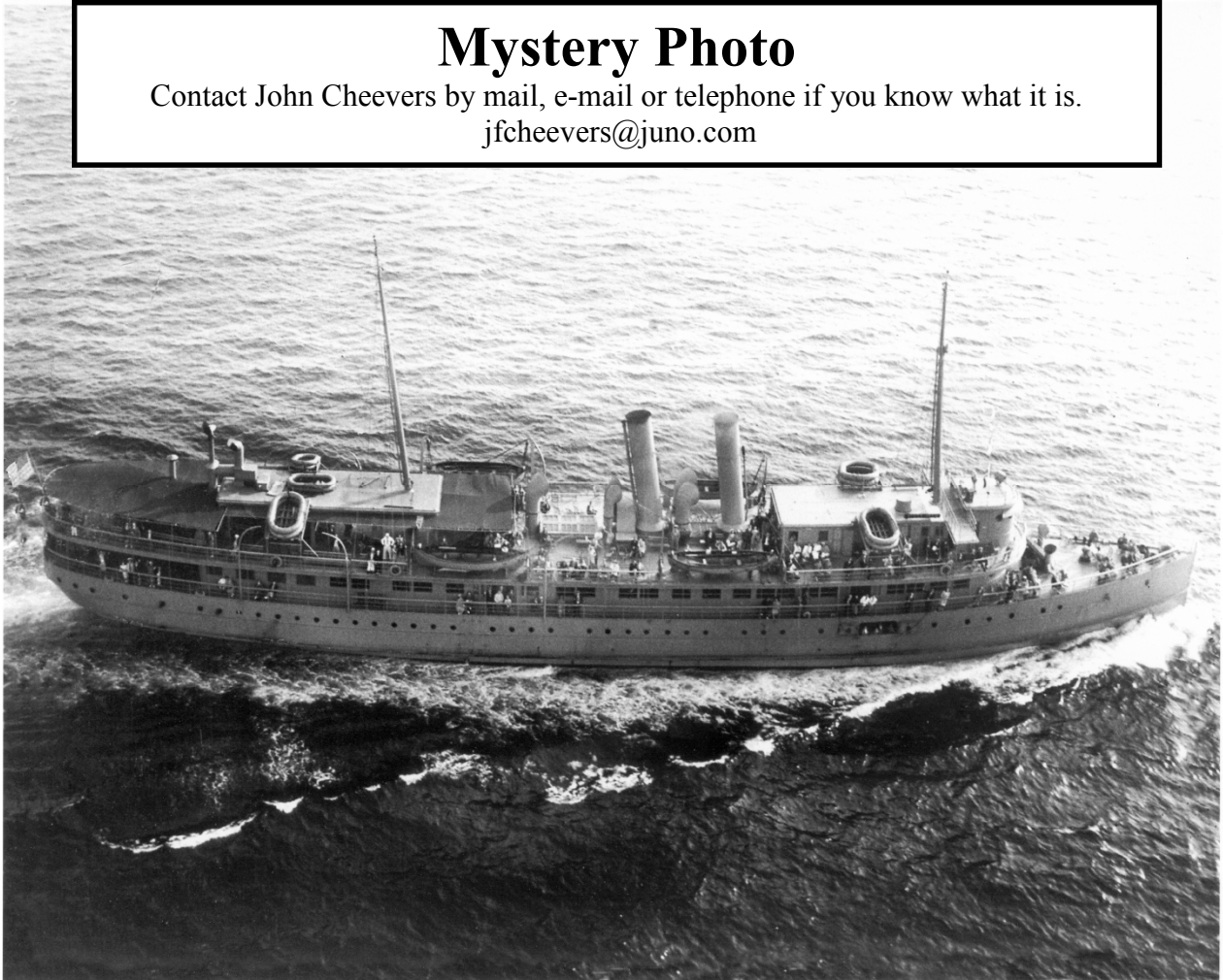
## THE ANSWER

From The back of Mystery Photo 238  
RG-80G-Z4016 U.S.S Oregon (IX-22) 18 May 1944



Mystery Photo 237 uncropped.

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



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## NOTABLE EVENTS

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### MAY

- 12 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Bill Clarke  
Presentation "Chesapeake Bay Sailing Craft", Bill Fox  
20-21 Maritime Model Expo, CBMM

### JUNE

- 9 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Alan Frazer  
Presentation " Steam Ship Photos", Alan Frazer

### JULY

- 14 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, John Wyld  
Presentation "Restoring a Clipper Ship Model", Brad Granum

### AUGUST

- 11 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Dean Sword

### SEPTEMBER

- 8 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Tim Wood  
30 HRSMS Picnic, Newport News Park

### OCTOBER

- 13 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: Host, Greg Harrington  
21-22 IPMS Region 2 Convention, Virginia Beach, Va.

### 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: Host, Bob Comet  
Nomination of Officers

### FEBRUARY

- 9 **H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:  
Election of Officers

### MARCH

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

### APRIL

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

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<p><b>WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL</b></p>
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Skipper: Dave Baker (757) 565-7991  
Mate: John Cheevers (757) 591-8955  
Purser: Eric Harfst (757) 221-8181  
Clerk: Tom Saunders (757) 850-0580  
Historian: Vacant  
Editors: John Cheevers (757) 591-8955  
Bill Clarke (757) 868-6809  
Tom Saunders (757) 850-0580  
Webmaster: Greg Harrington (757) 930-4615

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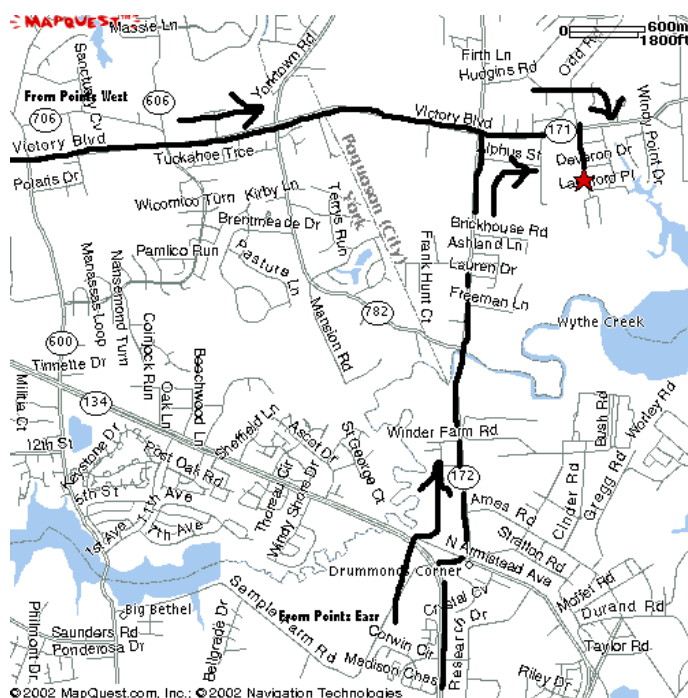
## Next Meeting

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Date: May 12, 2006  
Place: 190 Odd Rd Poquoson, VA 23662-2035  
Time: 2000 Hours  
Host: Bill Clarke

From Points West:  
Take I-64 E. 65.88 miles : Take the VICTORY BLVD EAST  
exit- exit number 256B- towards POQUOSON. 0.30 miles :  
Merge onto VICTORY BLVD. 5.02 miles : VICTORY  
BLVD becomes VA-171/LITTLE FLORIDA RD. 0.49  
miles : Turn RIGHT onto ODD RD. . 0.25 miles

From Points East:  
Take I-64 W. : Take the VA-134 N/MAGRUDER BLVD exit  
- exit number 262B- towards NASA/POQUOSON. 0.25  
miles: Merge onto VA-134 N/MAGRUDER BLVD. 2.92  
miles: Turn RIGHT onto SEMPLE FARM RD. 0.14 miles:  
Turn SLIGHT RIGHT onto N ARMISTEAD AVE. 0.02  
miles: Turn LEFT onto VA-172/WYTHE CREEK RD. 2.10  
miles: Turn RIGHT onto VA-171/LITTLE FLORIDA RD.  
0.49 miles: Turn RIGHT onto ODD RD. 0.25 miles



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## Thanks

The members would like to thank Mark Heilenday for hosting the April meeting.