



From The Bridge



New Year

Winter is here and most of us have settled in for the long haul. Use this hibernation to get real acquainted, or get reacquainted, with your work shop, your tools, and your model. We have a good three month run where outside influences should not interrupt model building, research, reading, or writing. Use the time wisely and don't forget to bring your work and appropriate anecdotes to upcoming meetings.

January brings with it the responsibility to nominate officers for the upcoming fiscal year. The offices of Skipper, First Mate, Purser, and Clerk are open for nomination. All current seated officers can be re-nominated—the Skipper and First Mate are up for their third and final year of eligibility. If you like the slate, feel free to re-nominate the current bridge. If not, find someone, who is willing to serve, who you feel is capable of running a particular office and place their name in nomination when called upon to do so. This is your Society and you should be represented to suit your taste and needs.

As you know, the webmaster has worked very hard to make our website work for you. I encourage each of you to try and use the features he develops. While the free side of the site is excellent and enjoys a wide viewing audience, we need to make the member's side the place to go. Get your user name and password straightened out and use the site.

Kudos to Dave Baker for replying to the 'missing clue' challenge in the last Skipper's column. He identified that mysterious vessel as "a nice shot of Sir Donald Campbell's ill-fated jet-powered hydroplane."

Campbell was killed on January 4, 1967, when *Bluebird K7* flipped and disintegrated at a speed in excess of 300 mph on Coniston Water in England. The crash is often attributed to Campbell not waiting to refuel after doing a first run of 297 mph making for a lighter boat; not waiting for the waves caused by his wash to subside; and possibly a cut-out of the jet engine.

The wreckage of his craft and the body of Campbell were not recovered until May 28, 2001. Campbell's body was laid to rest in Coniston cemetery.

John

Mystery Photo



Mystery Photo #270: This month's offering shows a crisp, clear image of a warship in very restricted water. The ship is steaming on her aft plant only at about high noon at a location near the equator—you can tell this by the almost vertical shadow cast by the starboard ship's boat and the aft lower casemate gun. Judging from her livery and masting it should be easy to narrow the time frame to the interwar years, most likely the late 1930s. The US ensign is visible several feet below the main mast yard. The class or type is familiar to me; is it familiar to you?

We know who supplied the image; it's printed right there in the upper left corner of the page. We also know from the November program that Tim was a Navy photographer in a former life. But was that life so long ago that he took this image? The answer might just depend on the age of the warship, not the age of the submitter. Bill Clarke knows that the stern quarter image is my favorite because it allows a look into the vessel. Images taken from the front, while the most prevalent, keep us from seeing a lot of detail. Well done, Tim.

Anyone know what ship this is?

We have two responses this month, one from Dave Baker and one from Rob Napier, and they have a mutual understanding that the vessel is a unit of the United States Navy Omaha-class light cruiser. "The new Mystery Ship is obviously an OMAHA-class light cruiser..." claims Dave. Rob did a bit of vacillating before settling on his identification: "I thought she was European, but then saw the barely visible Stars and Stripes. Then I thought she was European temporarily under the Stars and Stripes for some reason only the truly obsessive ship spotters would figure out. Then I thought that because the two pairs of funnels were not the same that maybe this was a trick picture and there was another really small vessel with really huge funnels behind the principal vessel in the Mystery Photo. Then I thought, what the heck, I'd just start with US cruisers in M.J. Whitely's Cruisers of World War Two, An International Encyclopedia. First ship in the US

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MEETING NOTICE

Date: Saturday January 10, 2009

Place: Mariners' Museum

Time: 1400 Hours

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Mystery Photo

section -- USS Omaha and her class.” There were ten vessels built to this design.

The Design was outdated for its time and reflects the United States Navy’s concept of operations for scout cruisers. The ship is designed with what is best termed as two armored citadels—one at each end of the vessel. From these citadels, the cruisers were supposed to concentrate fire against a fleeing enemy or a chasing enemy; nice in theory, bad application in practice. On the limited displacement of 7,000 tons, and a hull with narrow beam ends, it was nearly impossible to keep all of these gun positions stable

on the catapults are Curtiss SOC-1 Seagulls, a type that began entering service in November 1935.” He also mentions that “the photo has to have been taken around 1939-40, given the .50-cal. mgs in the tub atop the fire control station atop the foremast.”

While Rob’s Google search proved fruitless and he settled with saying “the Mystery Photo shows a vessel of the *Omaha*-class of light cruisers”, Dave found the identical image at the often mentioned NavSource web site which credits the undated and uncaptioned image as *USS Milwaukee* and contribution of the photo to Tom Kerman. Dave is positive that the image was made in the Panama Canal. So confident in fact that he states: “The new Mystery Ship is obviously an OMAHA-class light cruiser steaming eastward (i.e., from Atlantic to Pacific, if you check the map) [and a great trivia question] in the Panama Canal.” He elaborates further: “The location is the Panama Canal, with the ship seen heading toward the Pacific Ocean. The rather spotty history of the ship in DANFS would seem to indicate that the photo probably was taken after April 1938, when she returned from a Far East deployment and returned to operations in the Caribbean region The “Milwaukee Deep” north of Puerto Rico, at 30,246 feet depth, is the deepest depth found in the Atlantic Ocean and was discovered by the cruiser on 14 February 1939.” Rob, on the other hand, is less specific: “She is shown, I believe, in transit of the Panama Canal.”



USS Cincinnati from www.nicaliving.com/image

and dry. These vessels were initially fitted with 12, 6-inch guns—six at each end. The Mystery vessel still has all 12 guns, an important fact noted by Dave and Rob.

Both replies note how five ships of the class, *Raleigh*, *Detroit*, *Richmond*, *Marblehead*, and *Cincinnati* had their after, lower casemates removed by the mid 1930s leaving *Omaha*, *Milwaukee*, *Concord*, *Trenton*, or *Memphis* as our Mystery choices.

The class was “authorized for construction by Congress in 1916,” according to Dave, and completed in the early 1920s. They initially carried very tall masts supporting the early radio communications of the time. By the 1930s the masts were reduced in height and complexity and seaplanes were fitted for reconnaissance. To help narrow the time frame for our image Dave notes that “the ship's configuration is that which she wore from about 1935 to 1941, while the aircraft

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The image was also available at another site, janeresture.com. What makes this site interesting is that it captions the image thus: “The cruiser *USS Milwaukee* at Pago Pago, Samoa, 1938.” While I don’t doubt that *Milwaukee* visited Pago

Pago in 1938, this is not the image that documents that visit. A close comparison of the geographic features of Pago Pago harbor and the Panama Canal give the nod to Panama as the source of the image. I offer an image of *Milwaukee*’s sister, *Cincinnati*, transiting the Panama Canal for comparison.

What I find interesting about the image supplied by Tim Wood and those found on-line is that both on-line copies are cropped. Tim’s image shows more background so it would be interesting to know more about the source of his image.

For a look at some history and the classes design characteristics Dave provides this fairly concise review of *Milwaukee* and her sisters:

“MILWAUKEE and her sisters saw little combat in World War II, aside from MARBLEHEAD's heroic escape

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Mystery Photo

from the Japanese fleet in the East Indies in 1942, and the participation of one of her sisters in the Battle of the Kommandorski Islands. They were mostly assigned to escort duties in such low-risk areas as the South Atlantic and Eastern Pacific, primarily because their gun fire control capabilities were limited, their damage control capabilities inadequate, their armor protection nearly non-existent, and their anti-aircraft armament outdated. Thus, the MILWAUKEE operated mostly in the South Atlantic until being assigned to escort a convoy to Murmansk late in March 1944; on arrival in the Kola Inlet on 20 April 1944, she was transferred to the Soviet Navy as the MURMANSK and operated in Soviet service until 16 March 1949, when she was returned (in truly disgraceful condition) to U.S. control and was sold on 10 December of that year at Philadelphia for scrapping. She was therefore the longest-lived of the class, the others of which had all survived WW II only to be stricken and scrapped in 1946-47.

The MILWAUKEE was laid down on 13 December 1918 by the Seattle Construction and Dry Dock Co. (which became Todd Dry Dock & Construction while she was under construction), launched on 24 March 1921, and commissioned on 20 June 1923, the protracted construction time being a product of the draw down in defense funding when WW I ended. The design displacement was 7,100 tons, and the ships were 555-ft. 6-in. long (550 on the waterline) x 55-ft. 4 1/2-in. in beam. Their dozen 265 p.s.l. Yarrow boilers provided steam to four sets of steam turbines that produced a total of over 93,000 shaft horsepower; a typical trial speed was CONCORD's 34.92 kts. Although their armor was limited to a 3-in.-thick belt some 19-ft. deep amidships, 1.5 in. on the main deck, and 1.25-in. to their small conning towers. the ships had a very good range, achieving some 7,000 nautical miles at 15 knots and even 8,460 at 10 kts in 1945 (up to 1,986 tons of fuel oil could be carried). By 1945, their displacements had risen to 9,700 tons with the addition of radars, additional anti-aircraft guns, and more personnel and stores; maximum speeds fell to about 32 kts."

As *Murmansk*, *Milwaukee* operated with the Soviet Navy for a time. What you may not know is that the Soviets replaced this cruiser with another also named *Murmansk*. This ship met a rather ignominious end, one documented here. So when Dave says that the vessel was returned in "truly disgraceful condition", count your blessings.

John Cheevers

THE ANSWER

The answer to Mystery Photo 270:
 From the photo caption
 USS Milwaukee
 Pago Pago, 1938

Set your course by the stars,
 not by the lights of every passing ship.

Omar N. Bradley

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGE

Current

ARTICLE VII — MEETINGS

Section 1- Regular meetings shall normally be held on the second Friday of each month, but any meeting may be changed by consensus of the elected officers. Notice of the new date shall be mailed to members at least seven days prior to the original date or the revised date, whichever comes first.

PROPOSED

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First reading occurred at the December meeting. The second reading and vote will occur at the January meeting

MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society
 Monthly Meeting
 December 13, 2008
 Mariners' Museum

Guests: Bob Moritz
 John Homatidus, 1st mtg.

The Skipper, John Cheevers, called the meeting to order at 1408 hours. There were no corrections to the minutes. Eric Harfst gave the Purser's report. The members were reminded that dues are payable in March. The Webmaster was not in attendance.

Old Business: The proposed change to the bylaws had it's first reading. The second reading and vote will occur at the January meeting. The proposed change is needed to move the meeting day to the second Saturday of the month. The annual banquet was discussed. It was noted that the Rivers Inn had not renewed it's lease and would not be available as a venue. Dave Baker said he would investigate The Riverwalk Restaurant in Yorktown and report his finds at the next meeting. The Skipper reminded everyone to be thinking of nominations for

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the Founders' Award. Nominations will be taken at the January meeting. Bill Clarke said that the Brass Shop was closing. The Skipper said he was looking for a new supply of bells for the Founders' Award plaque. Dave Baker quipped, "We could award the No bell prize".

Bob Comet has produced a list of those who agreed to give a presentation during the year. He asked the presenters give him their concurrence to the schedule. He also asked for those on the list to inform Tom Saunders of the topic of their presentation. The Skipper reminded the members that nominations for the officers of the society will take place at the January meeting, with elections taking place in February.

New Business: Bill Clarke asked if the Mariners' Museum

Library was open. There was some discussion. Alas, the question was not answered. The Skipper said he received a package from Gene Larson with a disk with photos of past joint activities with the Washington Ship Model Society.

Show & Tell: John Cheevers showed a copy of the new book Warship 2008. Bob Comet showed progress on the hull of the *USS Niagara*. David Tagg showed a paper model in 1:100 scale. He talked about additions and substitutions he made to the kit. Ryland Craze showed progress on his Model Shipways - Armed Virginia Sloop. Ryland also showed the several magazines and tool catalogs. Tim Wood showed progress on a model based on the *Bluenose II* kit. Bob Moritz showed his Cottage Industries kit of the *Alexander Hamilton*. John Wyld showed and talked about the book, Agents of Innovation by John H. Keuhn. Dave Baker showed a Japanese book on ship models crafted in gold and silver.

The meeting was adjourned to a presentation, "Opportunity for Ship Modeling" by Dave Baker.

M.C. Armstrong Boat launching,
Darling wharf 1926
Christopher E. Cheyne Photograph Collection





Mystery Photo

Contact John Cheevers by mail, e-mail or telephone if you know what it is.
jfcheevers@verizon.net

NOTABLE EVENTS

DECEMBER

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation by Dave Baker

JANUARY

- 10 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Nomination of officers
Presentation, John Cheevers
- 16-18 Cabin Fever Expo 2009; York, Pa.

FEBRUARY

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Election of officers
Presentation, Tony Clayton, "H.M.S. Bounty's Launch,
1789"
- 28 IPMS Model Show and Contest, Richmond, Va.

MARCH

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, Bob Comet

APRIL

- 11 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, Heinz Schiller

MAY

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, Greg Harrington

JUNE

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, Graham Horne

JULY

- 11 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, George Livingston

AUGUST

- 8 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation Charles Landrum

SEPTEMBER

- 12 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, Dave Baker
- 19 Talk Like a Pirate Day

**WATCH, QUARTER
AND
STATION BILL**



Skipper: John Cheevers (757) 591-8955
Mate: Ryland Craze (804) 739-8804
Purser: Eric Harfst (757) 221-8181
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
Webmaster: Greg Harrington (757) 930-4615
Chaplain: Alan Frazer

LIGHTSHIP PORTSMOUTH

Lightship Portsmouth (LV-101) was built in 1915 by Pusey & Jones. It first served as the Charles in the Chesapeake Bay outside of Cape Charles, VA from 1916 until 1924. After that assignment LV-101 served just over a year as the relief ship for other lightships in its district. It was then moved to Overfalls, DE, where it was station from 1926 to 1951 as the Overfalls. In 1939 when the United States Lighthouse Service was absorbed into the United States Coast Guard it became WAL 524, but still kept a station name on its hull. During World War II the vessel was not armed, however many other lightships were. In 1951 LV-101/WAL 524 was reassigned to Stonehorse Shoal, MA, where it served until decommissioned in 1963. The lightship then sat in harbor at Portland, Maine, until its fate had been decided. On September 3, 1964 LV-101 was donated to the City of Portsmouth, Virginia, and became a part of Naval Shipyard Museum. The vessel was dry docked at the London Pier in Portsmouth. Today LV-101 is named Portsmouth, although it was never stationed there it has taken on the city's name. In 1989, the Lightship was designated a National Historic Landmark and can still be visited today. It is \$3 to go into the hull of the vessel and on the same ticket visit the Naval Shipyard Museum a block down the road.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE NAVAL OFFICER

"It is by no means enough that an officer of the navy should be a capable mariner. He must be that, of course, but also a great deal more. He should be as well a gentleman of liberal education, refined manners, punctilious courtesy, and the nicest sense of personal honor.

He should be the soul of tact, patience, justice, firmness, and charity. no meritorious act of a subordinate should escape his attention or be left to pass without its reward, even if the reward is only a word of approval. Conversely, he should not be blind to a single fault in any subordinate, though, at the same time, he should be quick and unflinching to distinguish error from malice, thoughtlessness from incompetency, and well meant shortcoming from heedless or stupid blunder."

Based on Letters to the Naval Committee
By John Paul Jones 14 September 1775

The Mariners' Museum Library will open on the campus of Christopher Newport University within the Paul and Rosemary Tribble Library on January 6th.

Parking is available in Lot I directly across the street from the Tribble Library. Parking permits can be obtained from The Mariners' Museum Library upon your arrival.