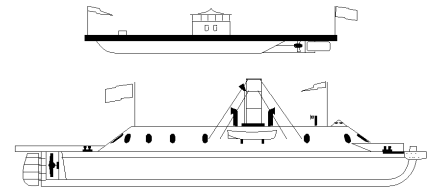


Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

Logbook



No. 278

WWW.HRSMS.ORG

AUGUST, 2009

From The Bridge



Self Fulfilling Prophecy

The other day it occurred to me that I would have a lot more room in my shop if I got rid of some of the stuff in there—well, duh! Twenty years ago, I thought I had more room than I would ever need. Not today. So I looked around and saw that I could do without the papier-mâché Santa's boot and maybe the blow up parrot and the Wile-E-Coyote finger puppet (don't ask); and then, of course, there's the odd TV or two that no longer work in the digital age, a few lamps, and various other bits of dunnage. But, removing those treasures didn't seem to clean my closet. Then I spotted a whole mess of unfinished ship model projects lying about, dutifully collecting their share of dust, and it hit me. If I were to just finish a model or two, I would have all the room in the world to start a few more.

What a novel idea.

We go through our modeling lives with grand plans; I hear it from many of you. But life has a way of derailing those plans from time to time, priorities can change and distractions will happen. Embrace them; but despite the changes, try to stay on point and aimed at your goal. You need time for fun; you need personal time; and sometimes that fun means completing a ship model or two. It's always sad when it doesn't happen for someone and we find ourselves sorting through another pile of material for the next auction. You can only hope that they had fun somewhere along the way.

I think one of my current detours is ending and I should have some serious sawdust flying shortly. In a few months I expect to have all the room I'll ever need in that cavernous shop.

Know anyone who needs a good TV?

John

Mystery Photo



Mystery Photo #277: The Mystery Photo provider was the first to call. Seems he was a might miffed that the editor failed to remove the hull number from the current mystery. "I wouldn't worry," I said, "I doubt it will make much difference when it comes to identifying this tired looking vessel." And indeed it didn't. The only responses came from our most knowledgeable source, Dave Baker, and from a man living north of the border who had to get it right! Additional information is quoted from an on-line web site. Funny thing about the caller, sometimes he gets real touchy over little things like when we fail to identify the mint mark on discarded rivets and such...

This ship is not a large one, that's easy to see. And her hull shape marks her as a good sea boat. Somewhere along the way she had her bulwark plating extended aft from about the point of her twin kingposts to just aft of her stack. The seam, a riveted joint most likely, where the new plating meets the existing bulwark railing gives the change away. Look real hard and you can see an abrupt and slightly unfair shape change to the hull in this area.

The open bridge seems a bit odd. It's almost as if there once was an enclosed wooden one that has been stripped away. The gun tub sited just forward of the main mast is defi-

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NAUTICAL TERM

Isogonic Lines on a chart are the lines of equal magnetic variation. The term comes from Greek isogon, meaning equal angle.

Submitted By: Tim Wood

NOTICE

The Hampton Roads Ship Model Society's September meeting will be held in conjunction with the annual picnic on Saturday September 19, 2009

nately a war relic that links the vessel to past naval duty; the mast spoils what once was a superb trainable arc of fire. If the tub wasn't present I would be tempted to think this vessel was always a fishing trawler.



Mystery Photo

My first impression of this Mystery vessel recalls to mind the old Virginia Pilot boat, aptly named *Virginia*, but unflatteringly called “the watermelon” by some. She served as the last moored station vessel anchored off of Fort Story, Virginia, and was used to ferry harbor pilots to and from vessels placed under their control. The size, the shape, and the livery all strongly match the old cutter. This Mystery vessel is not, however, that old pilot boat. Ask Bill Clarke to tell you why she was called “the watermelon.”

It's Lucky for everyone that Dave and the Canadian didn't share my first impression; two responses, two correct identifications. Accompanying Dave's reply is one from our honorary member who—if you haven't already guessed—is Roger Cole. Both men were clever enough to identify the Mystery vessel as *Sackville*. Dave identifies the Mystery as the “Canadian Forces ship SACKVILLE, in a photo dated 1969 after her conversion to oceanographic research ship,” while Roger says this: “CNAV *Sackville* in use as an Oceanographic Research ship while still listed under the Royal Canadian Navy.”

What is a *Sackville*, you ask? Dave and Roger define

her as a *Flower*-class corvette, “one of the 64 original *Flowers* ordered in 1940 for Canadian service” according to Dave, and “one of only four *Flower* Class corvettes built on the Canadian East Coast.” according to Roger. Roger continues: “All of the other Canadian corvettes were either built on the Canadian West Coast or, for the most part, inland on either the Great Lakes or in shipyards on the St. Lawrence. In total there were 269 corvettes built world-wide, with Canadian yards building 122 of them, including those built for the U.S. N. as *Temptress* Class Gunboats.”

Compiling some other “Dave and Roger” comments we see that “On May 15, 1941 PV2, as she was initially identified during building, was launched” and she was “Commissioned on 30 December 1941 at St. John, New Brunswick.” Dave adds that “After World War II, the ship was decommissioned on 8 April 1946.” Roger's reply differs in that he marks the date as “May 17th 1946 [when] she was again placed on the reserve list.” it's what he says about the end of her war-time service that intrigues this author. Roger continues: “In essence, as seen here, she is still in the same configuration as she was when she was placed in reserve, minus her weaponry.”

History records that *Sackville* is the last surviving *Flower* Class corvette “and her survival is more the result of good fortune, rather than good planning.” Various sources

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HAMPTON ROADS SHIP MODEL SOCIETY ANNUAL PICNIC

WHERE: Newport News City Park, Shelter #11. Enter off Jefferson Ave, just north of Fort Eustis Boulevard. Our picnic site is in a tree-sheltered area with rest rooms nearby, a lakeside view, tables, benches and barbecue grills.

WHEN: Saturday, September 19, 2009, 1130 am to 1630 pm. The Picnic Area is covered so the event will be held rain or shine.

EVENT COORDINATOR: Bill Dangler, Tel: (757) 245-4142

Contact Bill Dangler or e-mail Tom Saunders (t.e.saunders@worldnet.att.net) as soon as practicable, but not later than Sunday, September 13 to indicate how many will be in your party, and what you would like to bring to help feed the hungry crowd.

HRMS will supply hot dogs, hamburgers, buns, and sodas. The range of other items that need to be brought:

Ice, Appetizers, Salads, Side dishes such as: Beans, Desserts
Condiments (ketchup, Mustard, Relish, Pickles)
Toppings (sliced tomatoes, onions, and lettuce)
Etc.

Note: This is a Municipal Park, and no alcoholic beverages of any kind are permitted.

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Mystery Photo

and ship lists have recorded the amazing shipbuilding output of the Allied powers in the years from 1940 through 1945. The volume was so great that in the latter war years older vessels, ineffective de-

By late 1943 “the RCN had no intention of modernizing the remaining short fo’c’sle corvettes. They had enough of the newer long fo’c’sle corvettes and frigates coming into service that the older corvettes were just going to have routine maintenance done to them. Eventually, in the interest of crew

morale, it was decided to upgrade the older corvettes as well, and consequently *Sackville* went to Galveston Texas for her long awaited modernization. Arriving there on 28 February 1944, she had her fo’c’sle extended (a point noted by Dave); a new open bridge fitted; hedgehog added; the mast was moved to a position abaft the bridge; the two 16' dinghies were replaced with a single 27' whaler; new electronics were fitted and numerous other details attended to.” *Sackville* returned to Halifax on 15 May 1944. She made one

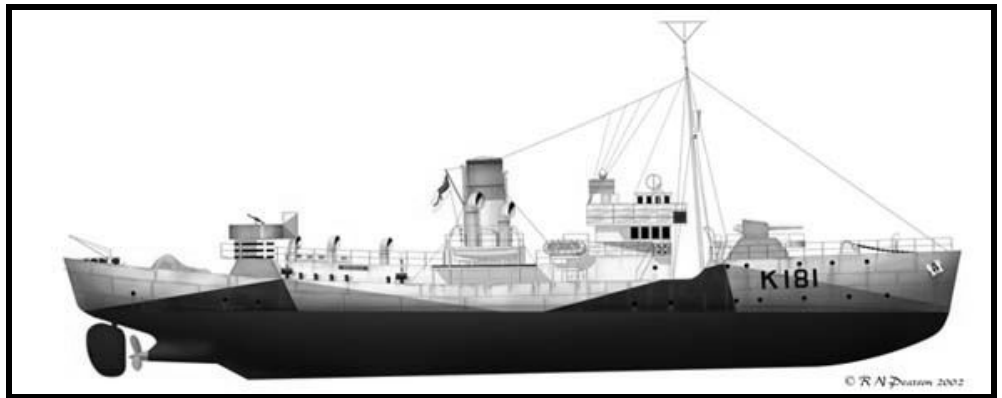


Photo provided by Dave Baker taken during August 2007

signs, and defective new-builds could be pulled from the active lists and disposed of. *Sackville* very nearly suffered that fate.

more escort patrol but at “the conclusion of this trip she was in Londonderry for a routine boiler cleaning which in the end

From the time of her commissioning until May of 1942, *Sackville* experienced numerous power plant problems. Not getting these “teething issues” resolved caused the Admiralty to sack her first Commanding officer by March. Her new Commander took her to sea in May but by January 13, 1943 she was in “Liverpool, Nova Scotia to begin 20 weeks of refitting. The main thrust of the work entailed rebuilding all her machinery.” She returned to active duty in April and by “the autumn of 1943 she was attached to EG C-2 (Escort Group – Canadian – 2)” and was “escorting convoys between Britain and Canada. But “by December she was starting to experience more and more frequent engine problems and she was once again due for refit and modernization.”



was to prove her salvation.” According to Roger, “She was placed on the reserve list due to a problem with one of her two boilers (firetube boilers with three combustion chambers). The problem was finally diagnosed as being attributable to a manufacturing de-

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MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society Monthly Meeting
July 11, 2009
Mariners' Museum

Guests: None

The meeting was called to order by the Skipper, John Cheevers at 14:10 hours. There were no corrections to the minutes as published. Eric Harfst gave the Purser's report, detailing the results of the auction and the current status of the treasury. Eric said that Wachovia Bank asked to change our account number to a new format. The proper paperwork was signed to make this transition. Greg Harrington gave the Webmaster's report. Greg noted a request to help finish a ship model for an apprentice class project at Norfolk Naval Shipyard and asked if anyone would like to assist.

Old Business: Bob Comet asked about stickers to put on the HRSMS brochures with corrections pertaining to the meeting times. Tom Saunders said that he needed a brochure so he could design the sticker. Bob said that he would unlock the Taco Stand after the meeting so one could be procured. There was some discussion about open days at the model builders' stand. There was some lively banter about who got what deals at the auction. The picnic was the next item on the agenda. The Logbook editor was asked to change the September meeting date to the 19th. There was some discussion about the menu and weather we wanted the Society to furnish the entire menu. It was decided that the Society would furnish the meats and sodas. Tim Wood will procure the hot dogs, hamburgers and buns. Ron Lewis will procure the bar-b-que and buns.. There will be a signup sheet at the next meeting for other items needed.

New Business: Eric Harfst broached the issue of a donation to the Mariners' Museum. After discussion a motion was made and passed to donate five hundred dollars to the Mariners' Museum Library. Ron Lewis said that the Bronze Door Society is sponsoring a behind the -the-scene tour of the Monitor preservation on July 28, after the museum is closed to the public.

Show & Tell: Bob Comet talked about a dinner cruise on the liberty ship *SS John W. Brown*. Bob also talked about the Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation, its mission and sponsored events. Greg Harrington presented several tools for sale. Bob Moritz showed a resin model of the *Alexander Hamilton* and asked for advice on pinning the parts.

The meeting was adjourned to a presentation "Wooden Racing Shells", by George Livingston.

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fect when the plates of the number two combustion chamber failed along the riveted seams. In fact the plates had been countersunk too deeply. Being placed on the reserve list at this stage of the war normally meant a trip to the breaker's yard with many ships being towed back up the St. Lawrence to Hamilton, Ontario for scrapping. Due to the fact that *Sackville* had recently been modernized in Galveston Texas and was otherwise in excellent condition, she escaped that fate."



Mystery Photo

This most fortunate trip to Galveston is one of the key events that helped to preserve *Sackville*. A second fortunate event had a lot to do with timing: It was late 1944 and at this stage of the war escorts "were a dime a dozen and one 'damaged' escort wasn't going to alter the balance, and she may have been scrapped then and there" if it wasn't for her just completed modernization. Roger continues her history: "*Sackville* was Initially assigned to the officer training establishment on August 29, 1944, however just a month later she was changed to the role of a maintenance vessel for the indicator loops in the entrances to major Canadian harbours, in essence becoming a harbour defense ship. Her defective forward boiler was removed and used to house a cable tank. She was also fitted to carry a steadying sail to help keep her head into the wind during cable-laying or lifting operations." There she remained active until her May 17, 1946 deactivation.

Dave mentions that she was "reactivated on 4 August 1950 for use as a stationary depot ship for reserve fleet vessels, she was operationally employed in 1953 to conduct a hydrographic survey of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and later for survey work off Baffin Island. The configuration seen in the photo was completed in 1968." This item is noted by Roger as well, who adds: "While there had been some work done by Canadian scientists researching the way Asdic (Sonar) beams were deflected by changes in the water layers, especially where fresh water and salt meet as is found in the St. Lawrence allowing U-boats to hide, *Sackville* was assigned to this duty as a research ship. On August 6, 1953 she began her 30-year career as an Oceanographic Research ship. Initially the cable tank space was converted to scientific labs even though outwardly she still carried the readily identifiable *Flower* Class configuration, although with her armament removed, at that time her pennant number was 532; sometime shortly before this photo was taken it was changed to 113 when she was classified as being the Canadian Navy Auxiliary Vessel (CNAV) *Sackville* which is the way she appears in the photo." After the Mystery photo image was made, Roger notes how

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THE ANSWER

The answer to Mystery Photo 277:
From the photo caption, Photo # 80G-677075
H.M.C.S. *Sackville* (as AN-113)
July 1956

Mystery Photo

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



NOTABLE EVENTS

AUGUST

- 8 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, Tim Wood

SEPTEMBER

- 19 **HRSMS** Meeting - Picnic, Talk Like a Pirate Day

OCTOBER

- 6-11 NRG Conference, Buffalo, NY
10 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, Ryland Craze

NOVEMBER

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, John Cheevers

DECEMBER

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

JANUARY

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Nomination of officers
Presentation, Bob Comet

FEBRUARY

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Election of officers

MARCH

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

APRIL

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

MAY

- 8 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

JUNE

- 12 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting:

JULY

- 10 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

**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

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her appearance changed yet again: "In 1968 her naval-style open bridge was replaced with a two-deck, fully enclosed bridge. Later the engine room casing along with the guntub was replaced with a fully enclosed laboratory. She no longer looked like a corvette, despite the fact that she still bore the unmistakable lines."



Mystery Photo

These comments close the loop on our Mystery image, but that's not the end of *Sackville's* story. Dave and Roger agree that Sackville operated in this capacity until retirement in 1982 where "her 380-foot [paying off] pennant trailed a full ship's length astern of her during her final sail-past." Dave adds that she was operated "on behalf of the Bedford Institute of Oceanography by the Canadian Dept. of National Defence (i.e., the "navy")."

The final fortunate event allowing Sackville to reach her unique position was provided through a fortuitous act of Mother Nature. "By the 1970s interest was beginning to arise in preserving a Flower Class corvette for future generations. Towards this end various groups in Canada began to search for a suitable subject to purchase for such a role. They eventually settled upon the former HMCS *Louisburg II* which had been sold to the Dominican Republic following WWII. However she was damaged beyond repair in Hurricane David in 1979. This left one *Flower—HMCS Sackville*."

Dave continues the description by adding that in 1982 she "was transferred to the Canadian Naval Corvette Trust and restored to her 1944 appearance." Roger agrees but adds: "Supported by the Royal Canadian Navy where necessary, Halifax Industries Ltd. undertook most of the necessary demolition and reconstruction work at cost. The conversion meant the removal of hundreds of tons of steel plate used to build the enclosed bridge and laboratory. Replacement WWII weaponry was found in a few places in Canada with the two-pounder pom-pom in the aft guntub being donated by the Irish Navy." Both men state that "On May 4, 1985, *Sackville* was formally dedicated as the Canadian Naval Memorial."

Roger finishes his remarks with this: "Since that time she has served...under the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust of which I am a trustee; that entitles me to contribute to her upkeep and a few privileges such as lunch in her wardroom when we are in Halifax, 1600 miles east of here. Lunch itself is inexpensive; getting there and back for lunch from Toronto is not."

And he concludes his remarks by noting a few sources: "...dates, etc. verified in Marc Millner's HMCS Sackville - 1941-1985, and many other sources in my files, including my four-part series on the Flower Class Corvettes and Temptress Class Gunboats published in the journal." The Journal series is a good read, check it out.

John Cheevers

"A lot of people ask me if I were shipwrecked, and could only have one book, what would it be? I always say 'How to Build a Boat'"

Stephen Wright