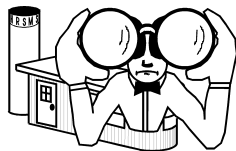


## From The Bridge



I hope that by the time you receive this Logbook, spring will have arrived for good. Mother Nature had given us an early spring, but then everything turned cold and dark. I think that we got spoiled by several weeks of warm weather. With it being cold and damp outside, I turned to my partially completed Armed Virginia Sloop and started reading over the practicum. The next thing I knew, I had picked up a wooden dowel and started tapering it for the mast. One thing led to another and I realized I was back building a model. This really felt good as I was making sawdust again. Just the feel and smell of the wood made me realize how much I have missed ship modeling over the last ten months.

The construction of the mast was a task that I have been putting off for a long time. I do not know why I stumbled at this task, but it was not that difficult to do. When building a ship model, many modelers have said to treat each component like a small model in itself. There is a lot of truth in this saying. Just do not let a component slow you down. Keep moving forward and before you know it, your ship model will be nearing completion.

On March 19, the Hampton Road Ship Model Society held its annual banquet at the Riverwalk Restaurant in Yorktown. We had 40 guests registered and had a fine evening of food, drink and fellowship. Tom Saunders once again did an excellent job of planning this event. The location and the Restaurant's staff made this an enjoyable and memorable evening out.

We had two presentations that highlighted the evening. The first was the unveiling of a metal photo mounted on a walnut plaque of Bob Comet that will be displayed in the Ship Modeling Booth at the Mariners Museum. Tim Wood took the photo and it shows Bob working on a ship model, just as we all remember him. The second presentation was the 2011 Founders Award that was presented to Tony Clayton. It was a real pleasure as we watched Tony add his name to the list of Founders Award receiptant's on the HRSMS Ship's Bell.

I also want to thank Tony for his presentation of "The Final Voyage of the Ticonderoga" given at the last meeting. It was very interesting and we all enjoyed it.

I look forward to seeing everyone this Saturday.  
Ryland

## Mystery Photo



Mystery Photo #297: "This is an easy one that even I can get." says Dean Sword, via email, who proceeded to identify each vessel in the photo. Another player, who always calls but never commits had, this to say: I believe his exact quote, and appropriately in the form of a question, was "What kind of Mystery is this? How can the Mystery Photo be difficult if you leave the numbers on?" "Indeed!" I replied. Then I told him that maybe identifying the vessels was not the Mystery. He said, "That's no mystery, how are we supposed to know that?" I reminded him of a prior Mystery Photo revealing the Horton Sphere and that's the last I heard from him on the subject. Shortly after his irate phone call he left for Jolly 'Ole England to get his lime on. Well, sometimes the mystery is identifying the vessel and sometimes the mystery is something the photograph tells us.

In addition to Dean's reply and the monthly phone in, we received a reply from the frozen—and still frozen he claims—north authored by Roger Cole also identifying the four vessels. Two additional replies arrived bringing the total to five. They were from John Wyld and Tim Wood, and not only did they identify each vessel, in the same Sword/Cole fashion, but they proceeded to add the crucial nugget of information that solves what Tim calls "a very fitting Mystery Photo." We'll get to that nugget in a minute.

First, let's identify the vessels; a group that John and Roger say comes from Mine Division 82. All of this month's replies list the vessel names from left to right as seen in the photograph or, as Tim says, "...by importance!" They are...

### **Avenge (MSO423)**

#### ***Aggressive Class Ocean Minesweeper:***

Laid down 1 August 1951 by Luders Marine Construction Co., Stamford, Connecticut

Launched 15 March 1953

Commissioned **USS Avenge (AM-423)**, 13 May 1954

*(Continued on page 2)*

## MEETING NOTICE

**Date:** Saturday April 9, 2011

**Place:** Mariners' Museum

**Time:** 1000 Hours

(Continued from page 1)



Mystery Photo

Reclassified as a *Ocean Minesweeper, MSO-423*, 14 January 1955

Heavily damaged by fire of unknown origin at Bethlehem Steel Corp., Fort McHenry Shipyard, Baltimore, Maryland on 7 September 1969

Decommissioned 31 January 1970

Struck from the Naval Register 1 February 1970

Sold for scrap 6 October 1969 to Steve B. Clemons of Miami Shores, FL for \$2,789.

**Specifications:**

Displacement 630 t.(lt), 755 t.(fl)

Length 172'

Beam 35'

Draft 10'

Speed 14 kts.

Complement 80

Armament: One 40mm gun mount and two .50 cal. machine guns

Propulsion: Four Packard ID1700 diesel engines, two shafts, two controllable pitch propellers.

**Fidelity (MSO433)**

**Aggressive Class Minesweeper:**

Laid down 15 December 1952 by Higgins Inc., New Orleans, LA

Launched, 21 August 1953

Commissioned *USS Fidelity (AM-443)*, 19 January 1955, LCDR Creighton D. Lilly, USN in command

Reclassified as an *Ocean Minesweeper, MSO-443*, 7 February 1955

Decommissioned, 19 May 1989

Struck from the Navy Register 16 June 1989

Sold for scrap 10 September 1990 to Wyns Hoggs for \$13,775.

**Specifications:**

Displacement 775 t.

Length 172'

Beam 35'

Draft 12'

Speed 14 kts.

Complement 78

Armament: As built, one 40mm gun mount and two .50 cal. machine guns - Final configuration, bow gun replaced by one twin 20mm gun mount

Propulsion: Four Packard ID1700 diesel engines, replaced by four Waukasha Motors Co. diesels, two shafts, controllable pitch propellers.

**Exultant (MSO441)**

**Aggressive Class Minesweeper:**

Laid down, 22 May 1952 at Higgins Inc., New Orleans, LA

Launched, 6 June 1953

Commissioned *USS Exultant (AM-441)*, 31 March 1954

Reclassified as an *Ocean Minesweeper, MSO-441*, 7 February

## 2011 DUES ARE NOW DUE

1955

Decommissioned 30 June 1993 and laid up at Naval Inactive Ship Maintenance Facility Portsmouth, VA

Struck from the Navy Register 9 March 1994

Sold for scrap 4 December 2000 to Baltimore Marine Industries, Baltimore, MD.

**Specifications:**

Displacement 775 t.

Length 172'

Beam 35'

Draft 12'

Speed 14 kts.

Complement 78

Armament: As built, one 40mm gun mount and two .50 cal. machine guns, final configuration, bow gun replaced by one twin 20mm gun mount, two .50 cal. machine guns remain

Propulsion: Four Packard ID1700 diesel engines, replaced by four Waukesha Motors Co. diesels, controllable pitch propellers, two shafts.

**Fearless (MSO442)**

**Aggressive Class Minesweeper:**

Laid down, 23 July 1952 by Higgins Corp., New Orleans, LA

Launched, 17 July 1953

Commissioned *USS Fearless (AM-442)*, 22 September 1954

Reclassified as an *Ocean Minesweeper, MSO-442*, 7 February 1955

Decommissioned, 23 October 1990

Struck from the Navy Register 28 October 1990 and laid up in the Reserve Fleet

Sold for scrap 4 December 1992 to Seawitch Salvage of Baltimore, MD for \$6,000.

**Specifications:**

Displacement 775 t.

Length 172'

Beam 35'

Draft 12'

Speed 14 kts.

Complement 78

Armament: One 40mm gun mount and two .50 cal. machine guns - 20mm replaced by one twin 20mm gun mount

(Continued on page 4)

## NAUTICAL TERM

**No Man's Land** The area in the waist of a ship that is vulnerable to shipping seas in rough weather and is often cluttered with gear and stores. The name seems to speak for itself.

Submitted by: Tim Wood

# MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society  
Monthly Meeting  
March 12, 2011  
Mariners' Museum  
Guest: Jim Beale, 1<sup>st</sup> meeting

The meeting was called to order by the Skipper, Ryland Craze at 1007 hours. There were no guests present. The Clerk acknowledged several typographical errors in the names of recent guests. No further correction to the minutes was noted. Eric Harfst gave the Purser's report, detailing expenses for the new shirts and the status of banquet reservations. Other financial matters were discussed and will be reviewed at a later date based on a determination by our Purser. Greg Harrington mentioned that he still has several prints for sale on consignment. It was decided that Greg would return the prints to the artist. Guest, Jim Beale introduced himself and gave some details on his background and interests. Greg Harrington gave the webmasters report. Greg detailed information on his plans to incorporate a database of materials (books, plans, etc) held by the members. He also talked about plans to add a memorial section to the website to showcase the work of members who

are no longer with us.

**Old Business:** The Skipper reminded everyone of the visit by author, Ted Behne and his talk scheduled for 1300 hours at the museum. Ryland distributed information on Tappan Adney, the subject of Mr. Behne's presentation. The next item of business discussed was the banquet. Tom Saunders asked Eric Harfst to send him an email on Sunday evening with the final count of reservations, so the restaurant could be notified. Tim Wood showed the picture of Bob Comet to be used on our plaque for the model builder's stand. A motion was made, seconded and passed to authorize funds for John Cheevers to procure the plaque. The Shipper collected ballots for the Founders Award.

**New Business:** Eric Harfst noted that the bylaws allow for an audit of the books. The Skipper said he would conduct the audit. There was discussion about taking an inventory of Bob Comet's effects in the model builder's stand. The Skipper noted that there are several vacancies in the model builder's stand and if there would be interested in filling those openings. Greg Harrington talked some changes he wanted to make to the web site and wanted to know if any members had an issue with their picture and some roster data being accessible by the general public. No one voiced a concern. Greg made the suggestion that we procure a digital photo frame to show pictures of our work at the model builder's stand. A motion was made, seconded and passed to pursue Greg's sugges-

tion. After discussion Ron Lewis said that he would broach the subject with the Museum. Eric Harfst asked about moving the meeting time back to 1400 hours. After discussion it was decided to revisit this issue at the end of summer to see if the change is warranted.

**Show & Tell:** Bill Altice said the he has various sized dowel rods to give away. . John Homotidus asked for a current phone number for Polyfab Plastics. Tim Wood provided him with that number. Ron Lewis talked about the Minicraft kit of the Titanic and bemoaned several deficiencies. Bill Altice talked about his current project, an Italeri 1/35 Elco 80 ft. PT Boat.

The meeting was adjourned to the video, "Final Voyage of the Ticonderoga", presented by Tony Clayton.



**USS Avenue in the Mediterranean Sea**

(Continued from page 2)

Propulsion: Four Packard ID1700 diesel engines, replaced by four Waukasha Motors Co. diesels, two shafts, two controllable pitch propellers.



Mystery Photo

In the photograph we see four nearly identical vessels; the three on the right are identical while the left most vessel has several important differences in detail. From the specifications we see that *Avenge*, #423, has a complement 2 greater than the rest, was built in a different shipyard, and according to the specs drew 2 less feet of draft. According to the visual evidence in the Mystery photo, *Avenge* has a taller mast as well. All four have awnings set which suggests anchorage in a hotter climate. The presence of a far shore would indicate anchorage in a river or small bay or inlet. Unit #441 has an officer in dress whites on the foredeck. #441 also is the only vessel issuing smoke from the stack. While not so visible, no one mentioned a fifth vessel tied up to the pier just aft of *Avenge*. It's a sunny day and the water is dead calm.

Roger provides a bit more information about these minesweepers: "Comprising the Aggressive Class of ships they were designated Mine Sweeper Ocean and originally consisted of 74\* ships all of which were built to standard wooden construction. They were all fitted with non-magnetic

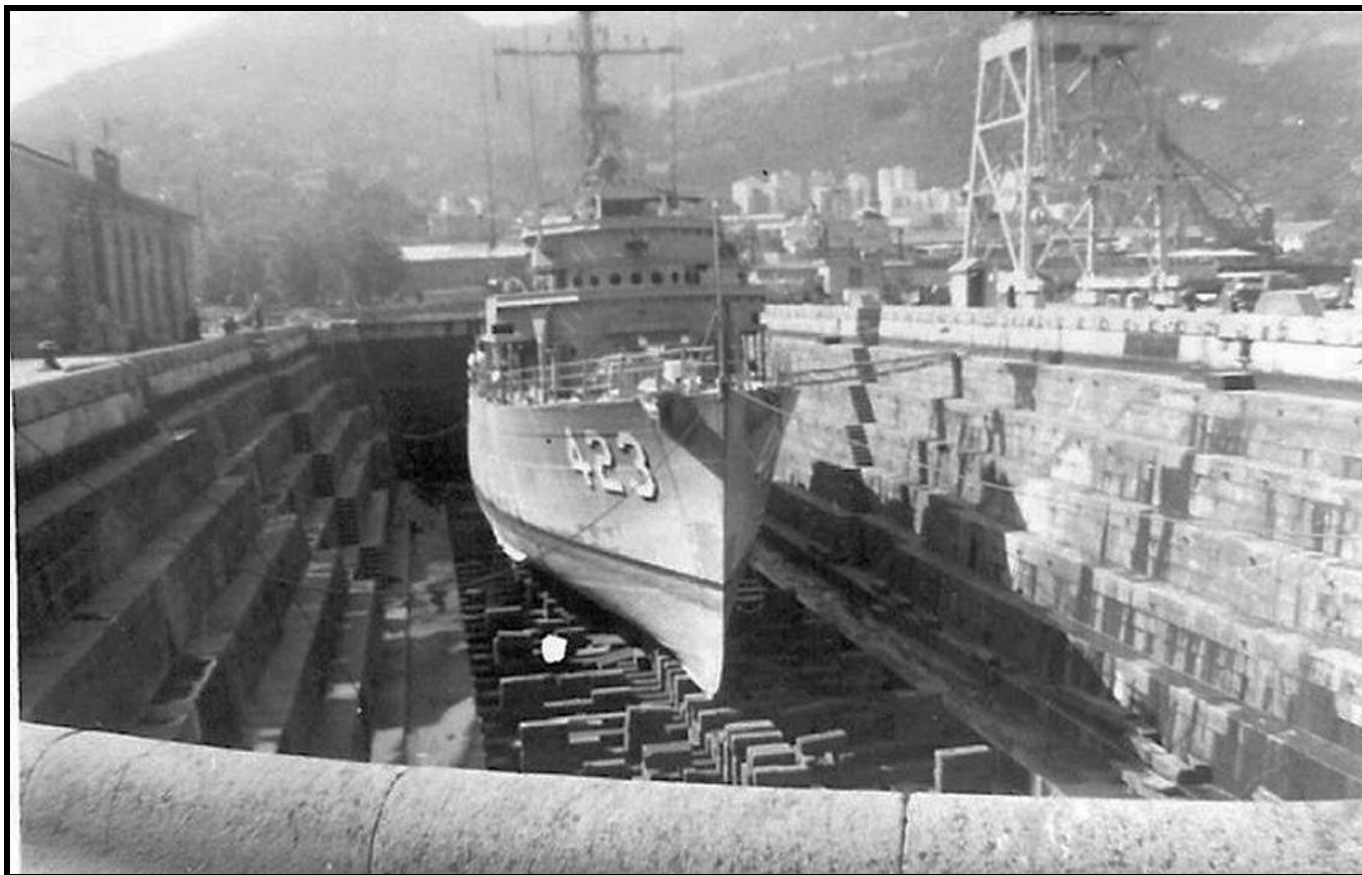
fastenings such as bronze and non-magnetic stainless steel.

USS *Avenge* was built by Luders Marine Construction, Stamford, Conn. USS *Exultant*, USS *Fearless* and USS *Fidelity* were all built by Higgins Inc. New Orleans, Louisiana. All ships were fitted with UQS-1 mine-locating sonar and were capable of sweeping for moored, bottom contact or acoustic mines."

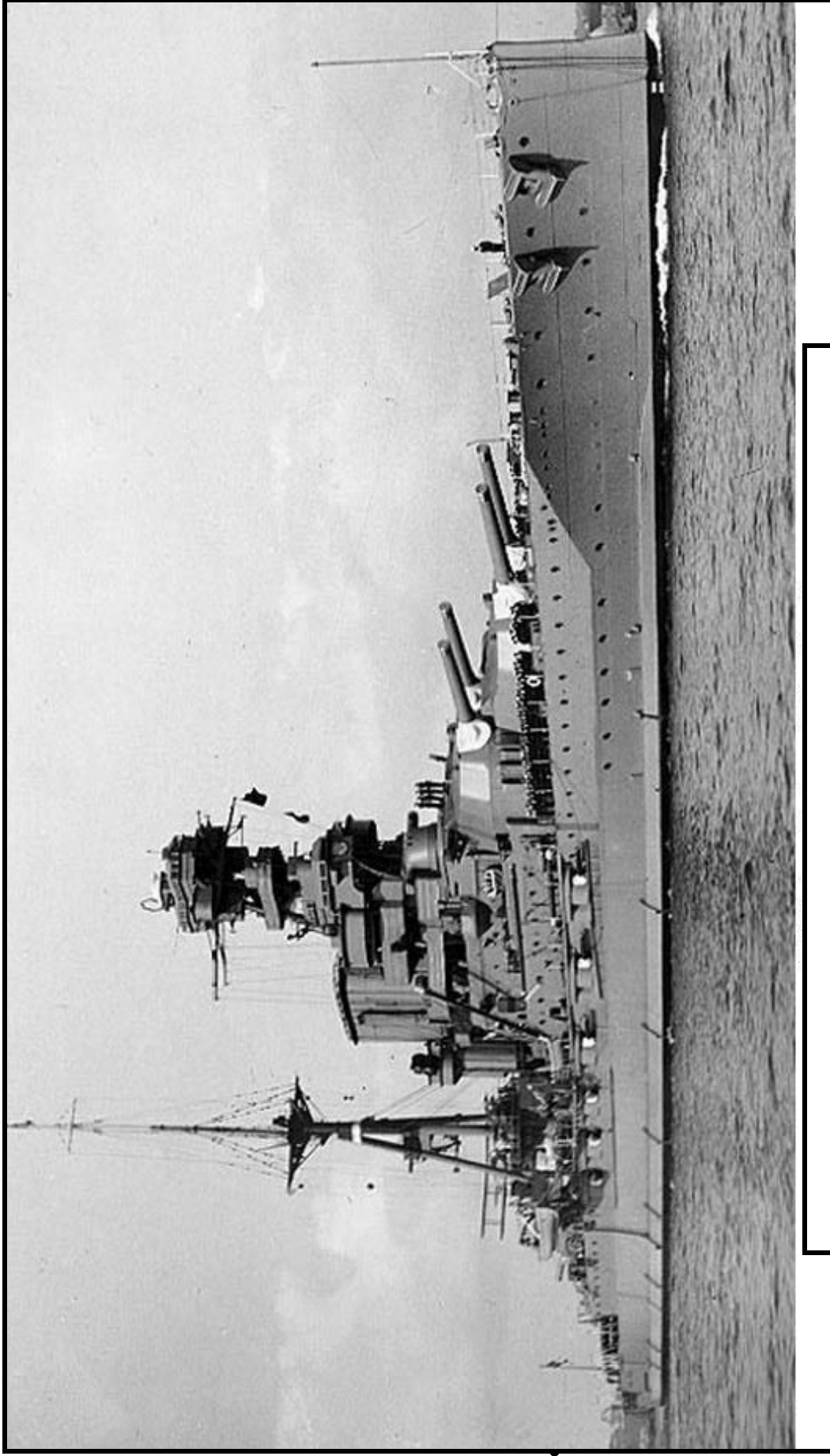
It is interesting to note that two of the replies mention a failure to find the exact photo on the Internet, but they did find one that was very similar. An official undated US Navy Photo credited to Leroy D. "Mo" Mahoney it depicts "Mine division 82 prior to departure for a Mediterranean Deployment when they were accompanied by the former ex-MSO 516, at that time transferred to Belgium and renamed M-909 F. Bovesse." Could this be the elusive 5<sup>th</sup> vessel in the photograph?

So why would we run an image of four minesweepers with their serial numbers boldly emblazoned for all to see? Tim knew the answer when he listed the vessel's names "by importance." But John Wyld said it best: "The vessels are not the remarkable reason for the selection of this group of lowly craft for the Mystery Photo. Despite my researching brilliance, I have to admit I stumbled across what I realize is the reason for the selection of this photo." To wit he adds: "...

(Continued on page 6)



USS *Avenge* Dry docked at La Spezia, Italy



## **Mystery Photo**

Contact John Cheevers by mail, e-mail or telephone if you know what it is.  
[jfcheevers@verizon.net](mailto:jfcheevers@verizon.net)

## NOTABLE EVENTS

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### APRIL

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation: Santa Maria, Crabtree Version, Ron Lewis

### MAY

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation: Charles W. Morgan, George Livingston

### JUNE

- 11 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation: Airbrushing, Charles Landrum

### JULY

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation: Crabtree Collection Tour, Ron Lewis

### AUGUST

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation: U.s. Navy Steam Torpedo Boats  
1895 - 1920, Dave Baker

### SEPTEMBER

- 10 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting, Picnic, NN Park  
19 Talk Like a Pirate Day

### OCTOBER

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

### NOVEMBER

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

### DECEMBER

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

### JANUARY

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Nomination of officers

### FEBRUARY

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

**WATCH, QUARTER  
AND  
STATION BILL**



Skipper: Ryland Craze (804) 739-8804  
Mate: Tim Wood (757) 934-1450  
Purser: Eric Harfst (757) 221-8181  
Clerk: Tom Saunders (757) 850-0580  
Historian: Bill Dangler (757) 245-4142  
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 (757) 867-7666

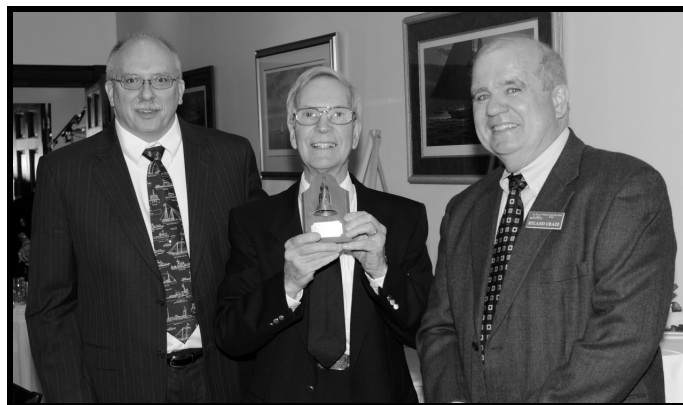
the Commanding Officer for USS AVENGE, MSO 423, for the period '58 - 60' (no specific dates listed) as one LCDR R. E. Comet, USN. Fair winds and following seas; Bob. We miss you."

A complete history of *Avenge* is available through the on-line DANFS.

This image belongs to Karen Comet and is used with her permission. I saw it when I visited her after Bob's passing to check on the health of his last model the brig *Niagara*. She was kind enough to make a copy for submission to the Mystery Photo. Sometimes after the monthly meetings wound down Bob would tell a story or two about his time in the service. One in particular that I remember was his account of dry docking the ship at La Spezia, Italy to repair propeller damage. I won't retell it here for fear of not giving the anecdote the justice it deserves. Perhaps someone who remembers the details more clearly than I do will offer it to the group.

John Cheevers

\* One reference indicates that there were a total of 58 ships,



**L-R John Cheevers,  
Founders Award Winner Tony Clayton,  
Skipper Ryland Craze**

## HRSMS NAME TAGS

**Pin Back \$5.25  
Magnetic Back \$7.25**

**If you need a name tag contact Ryland Craze  
E-Mail CKart55@aol.com**

**or**

**See him at a meeting**