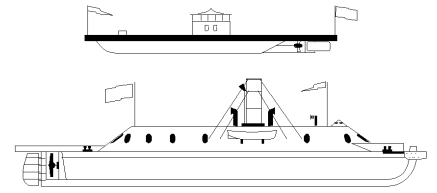


# Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

# Logbook



No. 304

WWW.HRSMS.ORG

October, 2011

## From The Bridge



In a prior issue of the Logbook, I started a discussion on ship model kit manufacturers. This month, I want to discuss the Amati line of kits. Amati is an Italian company that has been in business for over 120 years. They have an extensive line of wooden ship model kits and fittings. I have been following on the internet the development of several Amati kits by Chris Watton, the lead kit designer of Amati. Prior to working for Amati, Chris designed ship model kits for Caldercraft.

New kits designed by Chris are the HMS Vanguard, HMS Fly, HMS Pegasus and the Russian Brig Mercury. I have seen each of these kits and must say they are top quality. The kits were designed using the latest technology available. The wood package is expertly milled with no ragged edges. A lot of the parts are laser cut and there is a wealth of fittings and photo etched accessories included. For the kits that have copper hulls, the copper plates are some of the best that I have seen. Each of the kits includes a well written set of instructions in English and a detailed set of plans.

The HMS Vanguard is a very large ship. It is 46" long and 35" high. The HMS Fly and HMS Pegasus are both Swan Class ships. They are very similar in appearance with the Fly having a painted hull and the Pegasus having a coppered hull. All of these kits are 1/64 scale.

In addition to their kits, Amati offers a complete line of fittings and tools specific to ship modeling. A search on the internet finds several on-line hobby shops that sell Amati products here in the United States and overseas.

I want to thank Bill Dangler for organizing our picnic last month. It was a nice way to end the summer. Also, a thank you goes out to the members and their spouses who brought dishes to share. We had a variety of food to sample and no one went away hungry.

I look forward to seeing everyone this Saturday. Please bring your current ship modeling project to the meeting to share your progress with the membership.

Ryland

## MEETING NOTICE

**Date:** Saturday October 8, 2010

**Place:** Mariners' Museum

**Time:** 1000 Hours

## Mystery Photo



Mystery Photo #303: When songwriters Joe Young and Sam M. Lewis penned the song "How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm (After They've Seen Patee?)", a tune set to music by Walter Donaldson, they committed to words and music the very real issue of how to cope with all the returning farm boys who left a very insular world tending the good earth to fight in France during the Great War. The song, published in 1918, was hugely popular and its thread has remained in the American musical library for nearly a century. (I bet the melody is rattling around in your mind as you read this.) The theory is, then, that once you've had a taste of city life—especially one as rich in culture as Paris—you wouldn't be comfortable returning to an agrarian lifestyle. This sounds like another take on "letting the Genie out of the bottle" to me. Changing demographics is a continuous event, but a war can greatly accelerate the process.

The American public, after the Great War, had an unusual problem to be sure, but the United States Military organization prior to its involvement in that conflict had a problem of a different sort. And that problem, for the Navy at least, was how to get all those same farm boys and city slickers to leave good ole terra firma and set out for a life at sea. The huge demand for ships intended to support getting those soldiers and their equipment to Europe generated an equally large demand for men to man their decks. One of the answers to this puzzle is found in this month's Mystery Photo.

The Mystery Photo certainly highlights a ship or at least an evocation of a ship that is, judging by the abundance of large buildings surrounding it, sitting smack dab in the middle of a major metropolis. The style of the vessel and the manner of dress worn by the populous suggests a time limited to the first quarter of the last century (1900-1925.) Also the style of the vessel suggests "United States Navy", a point we can argue over later if necessary. In the foreground can be seen two stairways disappearing into the surrounding sidewalk—one just to the left of center at the bottom of the image and the other on the right margin at the same level. The placard with the word "subway" on the left stairway helps with their identification. If you look very carefully you can spot the local news-stand boy in the lower left and a postman near the subway entrance on the right. Quite a few men, and at least one woman, mill about the park like setting or have stationed

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(Continued from page 1)



Mystery Photo

themselves in somewhat regular intervals along the fence that separates the walkway from the lawn while a large crowd has gathered near the stern of the ship. The focus of most seems to be there.

The vessel itself is rather unique. At first glance it very closely resembles a US Navy battleship. We see a ram bow ending with flare in the hull at the upper deck, two very oddly constructed superposed main armament turrets forward, a row of case-mated secondary rifles sited in openings just below on main deck, an armored conning tower with an engine room telegraph fixed atop, several rows of port lights, a single stack, ship's boats, and two towering cage masts, fairly standard navy stuff. An odd feature for this vessel is the two large rectangular openings sited amidships at ground level, the forward most seems to have a sailor sweeping up—you can see the broom in his hands.

The evocation does not seem to be finished, but it's very nearly finished. Several large stacks of lumber sit in the street at the bottom of the image. Looking at the upper deck again, you can see several stacked sawhorses near the #2 turret and a workman bending over addressing something on another sawhorse. I say work"man" as all of the other bodies on the vessel are in uniform. I would venture to say that the remaining work has come down to a final punch list of items. If the crowd was at the bow and bunting was present, I would suggest that the image captured the commissioning of the structure. As it is, we can only speculate what the crowd is for and that suggests this image is a random opportunity having been made by a passing photographer hoping to sell it to a newspaper or wire service.

If it wasn't for the superposed main armament, the style of this monument is almost spot on for the *Illinois*-class of pre-dreadnaughts built in the late 1890's. With the superposed turrets, it would be more accurate to identify this vessel with the later *Michigan*-class dreadnaught. This is significant as it can shift the beginning of the date range of the image from 1900 to say 1910 to coincide with the appearance of the "all big gun" battleship in the US Navy. Narrowing the date range further to the period of the "teens" is significant and suggests why this evocation was constructed and ultimately provides a clue to identifying the very unique and apropos name of this structure.

Rob Napier and Charles Landrum replied this month and offer excellent opinions about the image. Rob begins with his splinter in cheek remarks that focus on why we are here: "Of course, being relatively clever, I could tell right away it was a huge model battleship." Departing from scale functionality, he directs us to "Look at that superimposed No. 2 turret. Like THAT would really work. And then there are those interesting square openings in the side. Maybe they're to facili-

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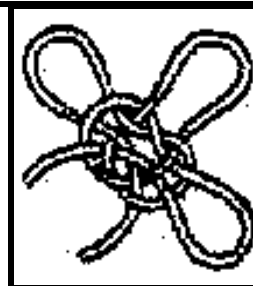
New York, 1917. "Landship *Recruit* on Union Square." The U.S.S. *Recruit*, a wooden battleship erected by the Navy, served as a World War I recruiting station at Union Square from 1917 to 1920, when it "set sail" for Coney Island. This is the first in a series of photographs depicting life around and aboard the landlocked boat. 5x7 glass negative, George Grantham Bain Collection.

## NAUTICAL TERM

**Jury rig**—An emergency arrangement of sails, etc., usually put together in self-defense during a period of temporary insanity.

Submitted By: Tim Wood

Jury Mast Knot



(Continued from page 2)



Mystery Photo

tate coalers in far-away places." If coaling was only that simple...truth be told, if this evocation had any form of heating to ward off the cold of a big-city winter, I bet the coal did arrive through these embrasures.

The "where piece" of the equation was a bit easier for the players to define. Rob "[j]ust guessed about those stalwart buildings in the background. Looked like New York City... So I Googled "Huge Model Battleship in New York". Charles I suppose is a bit more clairvoyant. He says, "I recently learned of the existence of this "ship. It is *USS Recruit*, a dreadnought replica built in 1917 in Union Square, Manhattan, NYC as a recruiting tool for the war effort." You can only wonder if the revelation happened as he drove along Shore Drive in Virginia Beach. And, much like Charles' use of the term tool to describe the evocation, Rob, for all his hard work, never actually named the vessel in his reply preferring to use what may be the more accurate phrase "Huge advertising facsimile of Battleship at [a] park in New York City,"

Imagine that, a facsimile battleship and certain inferior brands of picante sauce both coming from the same place!

Both replies direct the intrepid Internet user to sites dedicated to revealing the Mystery behind this interesting image. Rob points out one that contains ancient film footage; "http://www.criticalpast.com/video/65675040046\_Victory-Bond-Drive\_Advertising-model-of-battleship\_Navy-recruiting," directs you to "Scroll down...to 'Huge Model of Battleship is featured in Navy recruiting and... [find] a sweet little 36-second silent vid of that thing.'" I did, it was interesting. Charles for his effort suggests these worthwhile sites: "I found images of it on [www.shorpy.com](http://www.shorpy.com). Wikipedia has an entry on the vessel: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS\\_Recruit\\_%281917%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Recruit_%281917%29) . Included is a link to a Popular Science article from 1917. Here is another web page with more pics - <http://www.howtobearonaut.com/2011/08/the-landship-recruit-1917/> ."

So why was it so important to build a landlocked battleship replica in 1917? And why was it so important to build it in the middle of Union Square in New York City? Charles already answered part of the first question but Rob adds that it "is used in...Victory bond drives." Charles then adds that it was "[n]ot a bad place to undergo training" which, indeed, was another use for the facility.

If you go to the "Popular Science article from 1917" you can read the complete article on *USS Recruit* attributed to writer Alan Petrusis of which the bulk is supplied below:



Another shot of the sailors and mascots aboard the U.S.S. *Recruit*, a mock battleship moored in Union Square as a Naval recruiting station. New York, 1917. "Aboard the *Recruit*." Our first glimpse of life on the "landship" U.S.S. *Recruit*, a wooden destroyer set up in Union Square as a Navy recruiting station. For our marooned sailors there was a phonograph, dancing and a pet goat. 5x7 glass negative, George Grantham Bain Collection.

Sometimes generating Patriotic fervor and war fever is difficult in this Republic. The Great War, as it was known for 20 years or so after the 1918 armistice, had been in full swing since 1914. America for its part struggled mightily to stay out of the conflict and it was not until 1917 that certain strategic/political events changed public opinion. Faced with having to fight a war "over there," the United States Navy was expanding greatly. Efforts to man these vessels with fresh recruits sadly did not follow suit. In the New York district for example the quota for recruitment was set at 2000 but only 900 had enlisted when the "United States declared war on Germany in April of 1917." Something had to be done.

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## 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](mailto:CKart55@aol.com)**

**or**

**See him at a meeting**

New York City Mayor John Purroy Michel “had an idea to turn this bad showing around, and he set up his Mayor’s Committee on National Defense to finance it. They would build a new recruiting station, but not like one that anyone had ever seen before.” Out of this effort, in August 1917, “the US Navy commis-



Mystery Photo



sea, reduced the anxiety of many visitors about joining the Navy. By the end of The Great War 25,600 new recruits had been signed up here. It was a great success that Mayor Michel would never live to see. Running on a pro-war platform in 1917, he lost his contentious re-election bid and went on to join the Army Air Corp to prepare for fighting in France.

While out on a training exercise in Louisiana he accidentally fell out of his plane at 500 feet and met his end.”

Our Mystery Photo reveals *USS Recruit* near the time of her commissioning. Later images show a much more complete vessel complete with awning stanchions and framework, working 1-pounder guns, and various training devices. Other images highlight some of the formal functions and work details while some show leisure activities, mascots and pets. One that I find very interesting shows a recruit (?) stripped to his skivvies being weighed on what looks like a scale used to determine shipping weight. Finally a Mystery to rival that Of *USS Cyclops*: If you remember *Cyclops*, a navy collier and the only sister ship to *USS Jupiter (USS Langley, CV-1)*, was lost with all hands while on a voyage that took her through the Bermuda Triangle.

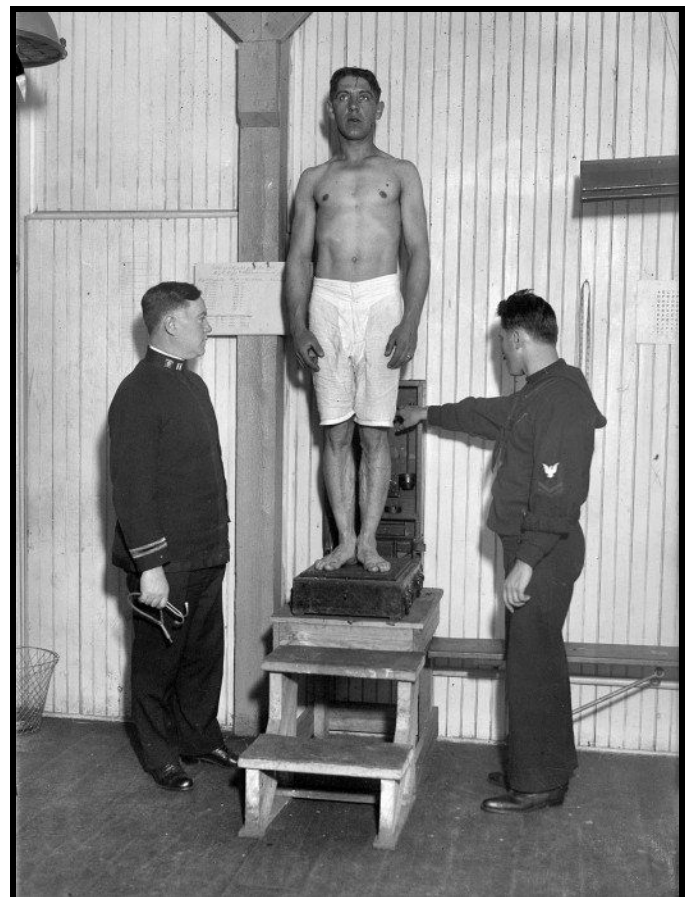
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sioned a land-based dreadnought battleship as a recruiting and training center.” According to navy records, the “200 foot long battleship with a 40 foot beam [was] modeled after the *U.S.S. Maine*.” It was “designed by Donn Barber and Jules Guerin who were both architects that had naval training and theatrical experience. This was to be no cheap reproduction but a fully rigged ship.”

“The presence of this massive structure in such a small public park cannot be underestimated. Crowds would be drawn to the *Neversail* as it was nicknamed, leading to hundreds of thousands of visits. By the end of summer its uniqueness made it the focus of much social activity in the city, and it began playing host to important city receptions, boxing matches, Vaudeville acts, Red Cross drives, and dances for socialites under a night sky illuminated by its powerful searchlights.”

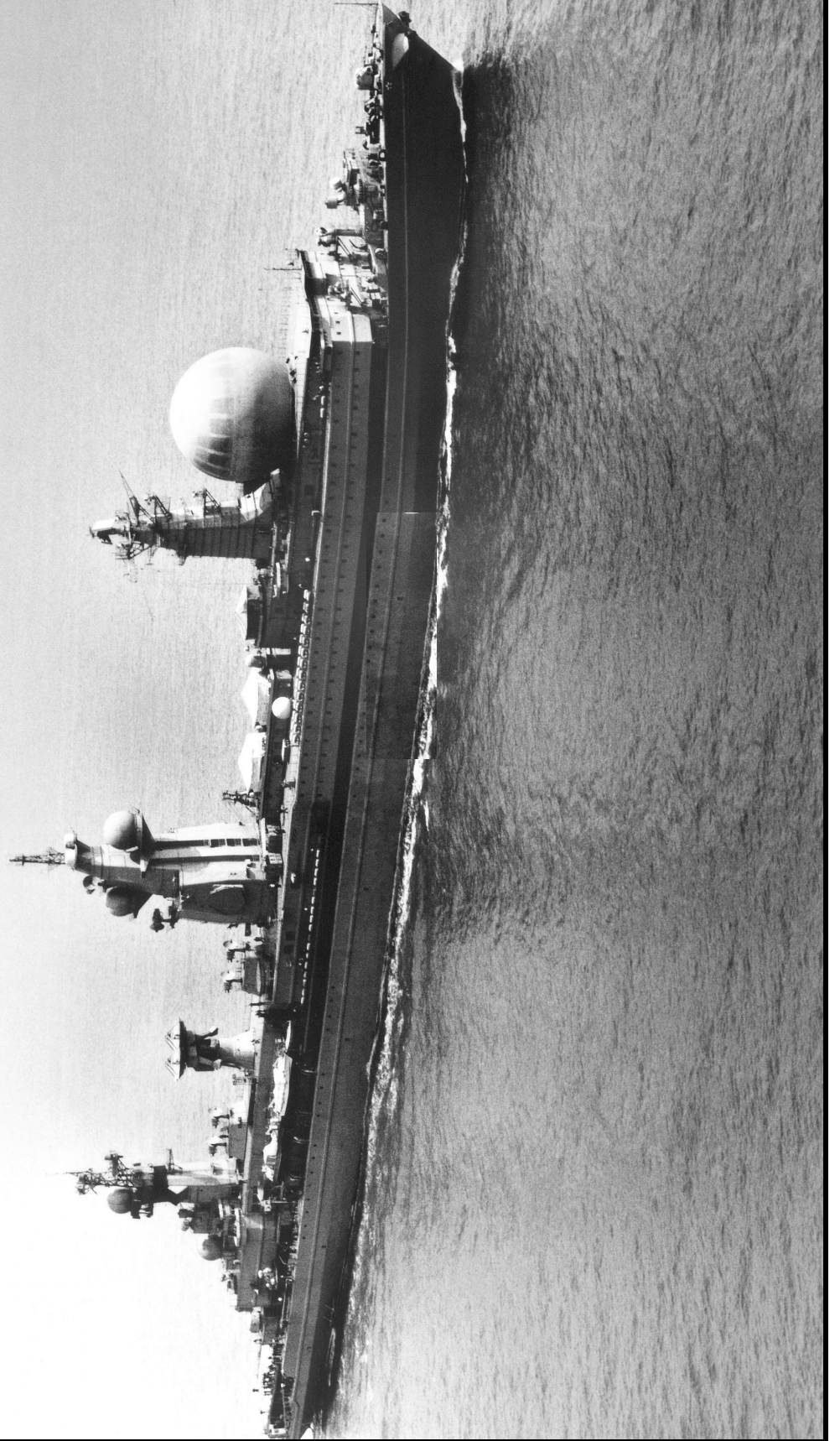
“The *U.S.S. Recruit* was an officially commissioned landship in the U.S. Navy, and it was manned by a crew of naval cadets under Captain C.F. Pierce. The crew’s numbers would vary between 39 and 80 over time but they all lived aboard ship and they carried out the same normal training activities that would be required on any other vessel. Fully manned facilities for lectures and examinations were located on the lower decks. The Woman’s Reserve Camouflage Corp would also pull duty here, replacing the vessel’s original solid battleship grey with abstract *dazzle* patterns designed by Everett L. Warner.”

“The ability to observe life aboard an actual ship, especially without the pitching and rolling experienced out at



## **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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### OCTOBER

- 8 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation: The Mediterranean, 1913 to 1943,  
Graham Horne

### NOVEMBER

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation: NRG Conference in San Francisco,  
Ryland Craze

### DECEMBER

- 10 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation: Modeling in Plastic, Charles Landrum

### JANUARY

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Nomination of officers, Presentation: The New England  
Maritime Museum, Ron Lewis

- 14-15 Cabin Fever Expo, York, Pa.

### FEBRUARY

- 11 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Election of officers  
Presentation: Drawing Ship Lines, John Cheevers

- 25 IPMS Old Dominion Open, Richmond, Va.

### MARCH

- 10 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation: Building the Oseberg Viking Ship model,  
John Cheevers

### APRIL

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

### MAY

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

### JUNE

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

### JULY

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

### AUGUST

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

### SEPTEMBER

- 8 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting,

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"Bad cooking is responsible for more trouble at sea than all other things put together". -- Thomas Fleming Day

"One of the best temporary cures for pride and affection is seasickness". -- Henry Wheeler Show

## MINUTES



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Hampton Roads Ship Model Society  
Monthly Meeting  
September 10, 2011  
Newport News Park

The Skipper, Ryland Craze called the meeting to order. After brief remarks welcoming everyone to the picnic, a motion was made, seconded and passed to defer all business to the October meeting. The meeting was adjourned.

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*(Continued from page 4)*



Mystery Photo

The records say that she was lost March 3, 1918 with all hands—in fact she disappeared and was never heard from again. And her wreck has never been found. *USS Recruit*, following her successful cruise at Union Square was dismantled with the intention to move her to another location and continue on as a recruitment center. "On March 16th 1920 the *U.S.S. Recruit* was carefully disassembled for its planned relocation at Luna Park on Brooklyn's Coney Island." For some reason, as Charles says, "it was never reassembled after removal from Union Square." "This is the point where most narratives end, but what really happened to this landship remains a mystery..."

John Cheevers

### THE ANSWER

Mystery Photo 303  
USS Recruit  
New York City  
Thanks to Dave Baker for suggesting the photo

### WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL



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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