

From The Bridge



As the year 2012 comes to an end, I want to wish everyone a joyous and happy holiday season. As a kid, it seemed that Christmas took forever to get here. But, the older I get, it seems the time between one Christmas and another gets shorter. I guess it is true that the older you get, the quicker time flies by.

A week before Thanksgiving, my two children, their families and all the grandparents met at Yankee Candle in Williamsburg to see Santa Claus. If you are not familiar with Yankee Candle, Santa is there year round. But this time of the year, the store is decked out in all of its holiday splendor and Santa moves out of his cottage in Yankee Candle Park and sets up shop in the main hall. All of my grandkids were excited to see Santa, except for my two month old grandson who slept the whole time. They had their lists of what they wanted for Christmas and Santa took his time with each one. In addition, they had their picture taken with Santa and I purchased a CD with forty-five pictures on it of all different combinations of grandkids.

I mentioned that Santa has a cottage in Yankee Candle Park. The store has a large Park inside that has little storefronts around the lake that is in the center of the Park. It is always nighttime in the Park and it is easy to see the stars in the sky. And there are snow flurries about every ten minutes year round. Who would have dreamed years ago that we would be shopping in a store that has a park and where it snows year round. If you have not been there, you should check it out.

Speaking of the year coming to a close, how is everyone doing with their New Year's resolutions that you made at the beginning of the year? I have not done well with mine as I had hoped to finish my Armed Virginia Sloop during the year. I will have to get an extension of this as it will not be finished, but I am happy to say that I am making progress to finish her. I hope everyone had better results with their resolutions.

I want to thank Tim Wood for his presentation and video on PT Boats at the last meeting. We all learned a lot about these boats and I think you will be seeing some PT Boat models under construction at future meetings.

I look forward to seeing everyone at Saturday's meeting. Please be sure to bring your current modeling project to the meeting to share your progress with the members.

Ryland

Mystery Photo



Mystery Photo #317: What is the probability that someone will identify this Mystery Photo? Is it worse than your chances of predicting the outcome of a coin toss? Better than your chances of winning the Lottery? Somewhere in between? Experts say that "Probability is the measure of how an event is likely to occur out of the number of possible outcomes. For example, you have a deck of cards. Picking a card from the deck would be your experiment. In this example, a deck of cards consist of 52 cards. Therefore, the number of possible outcomes is 52. An event represents one or more outcomes of an experiment. The event in this example would be like picking a club. There can be a number of events when dealing with a deck of cards such as picking an ace or picking a red suit, etc. However, you have to calculate the probability for each event. Since there are 13 cards that represent a club in a deck of cards, the likelihood of picking a club would be 13 out of 52 cards. So the probability in this event is 13/52. It can also be represented by a ratio of 1:4", or a 1 in 4 chance. If you like odds, the odds would be 3 to 1, or 13 chances to get it right and 39 chances to get it wrong. Confusing?

Using this logic, the probability of someone identifying our Mystery Photo would go like this: If you assume the vessel is a battleship from the US Navy, and you ignore all the pre-dreadnaughts, you would start with *USS Michigan* (BB-26) and end with *USS Wisconsin* (BB-64) or 38 examples. Wait you say, the number is less than 38 because #47 and #'s 49 to 54 were not completed. That reduces your total to 31. If you remove all battleships completed post Washington Treaty, your sample size drops to 21. If you wanted to look only at battleships with two twin turrets forward the number reduces to 13. If you only wanted to identify the class and you noticed that these ships were procured in batches of 2 (with the exception of the three in the Maryland class), the number reduces to 6 opportunities. But we aren't picking the class, we are pick-

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MEETING NOTICE

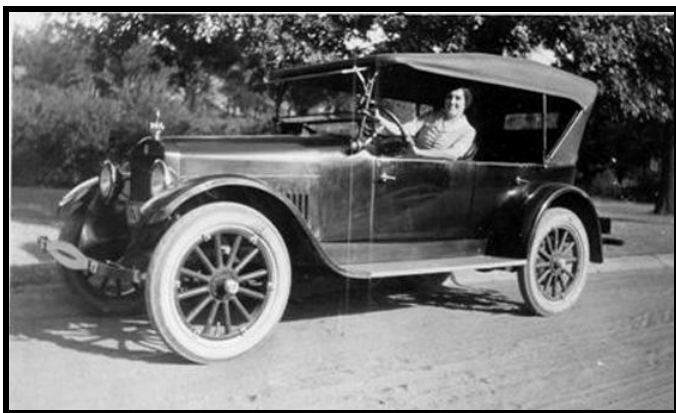
Date: Saturday December 8, 2012

Place: Mariners' Museum

Time: 1000 Hours

ing the actual ship. So the probability in this event is 1/13. It can also be represented by a ratio of 1:13; a bit worse than picking the correct suit of cards from the deck. Your chances to win are 1 in 13. and the odds would be 12 to 1 you would pick the correct ship.

But you can help your odds. Narrowing the field before you study the vessel's prominent features greatly increases your chance of choosing wisely and identifying the ship. But Mystery Photo asks for more than just mere identification, we want to know time and place as well. The more clever of you, or maybe just the older folks, can narrow the time line by studying the cars on the pier and the dress of the characters. Others may help themselves in identifying the location by studying the buildings and the skyline on the far shore. Knowing the when and where of a photograph can really help your odds and offer new and different possibilities when searching your library or on-line resources.



The vessel itself offers some amazing clues: 1) the aforementioned forward turret arrangement. 2) the twin cage masts surrounding two stacks. 3) the raised forecastle deck and associated break in the deck amidships.) the oddly shaped bridge deck with the protruding center window. 4) The disused case-mate gun enclosures port and starboard at the deck edge for-



ward. 5) And, this is a stretch, the single identification letter featured on the bow of all the ship's boats.

Using clues 1, 2, and 3 you could almost instantly increase your odds by reducing your list of battleship choices from the original 13 possibilities to one class or two ships. You can exclude the four *Michigan* and *Delaware* ships due to design differences. You can also exclude the four *Wyoming* and *New York* class ships because they were flush decked. And you can exclude the three *Maryland* class ships due to turret design and foredeck arrangement. That leaves the two *Florida* class battleships as our most likely candidates. Now your probability is 1/2 or 50-50. Not bad odds, you got your chances back to a coin flip.

But which of the two battleships do we have, *Florida* or *Utah*? Let's see what the replies say. Two replies this month, one each from Charles Landrum and Dave Baker. They are unanimous in voting *USS Utah* as our Mystery Vessel. Charles was somewhat abbreviated in his reply. "The Mystery Ship is USS UTAH in the early 1920s. The identifying features are: the narrow pilot house with the single window forward; the ventilation ducts on the front facing of the pilot house; the shape of the 01 level deckhouse forward." (Did they even use '01-level' back then?) Throwing a dart at the timeline he goes on the add, "The Pilot house was altered in the late 1920s making it closer to her sister – USS Florida." Dave amplifies this with: "UTAH, in the mid-1920s could be distinguished from her sister, U.S.S. FLORIDA (BB 30), by having only one window at the forward end of pilothouse, while the face of FLORIDA's pilothouse was broader and had more windows.." He goes on to assert that "This month's mystery ship is the U.S.S. UTAH (BB 31), and the photo appears to have been taken at Boston Navy Yard, possibly on or soon after her arrival there on 31 October of 1925 to begin a major modernization." As for location, Charles offers this: "I am unsure of the location. It could be the Brooklyn Navy Yard on the East River."

Regarding Dave's where and when: if you look at the middle car in the image you can see that it is a touring car with canvas roof, canvas side pieces, and wooden spoked wheels. I don't know what kind of car it is but a Google search of '1925 automobiles' produced images of two likely examples, a 1924 Studebaker and a 1925 Flint B-40 touring car. The 1924 model has wooden spoked wheels. Dave's timeline fits the evidence, the feathers on Charles' dart fit the evidence. If I check Dave's mention of "Boston Navy Yard" geographically with other images I have of the place, I would agree with his statement of location. Charles assertion that the image is the East River, incidentally my first guess, didn't hold up as the Manhattan skyline opposite the Navy Yard is different from what we see in the MP.

For corroboration I checked DANFS. Their entry for *USS Utah* mentions how "*Utah*...entered the Boston Navy Yard

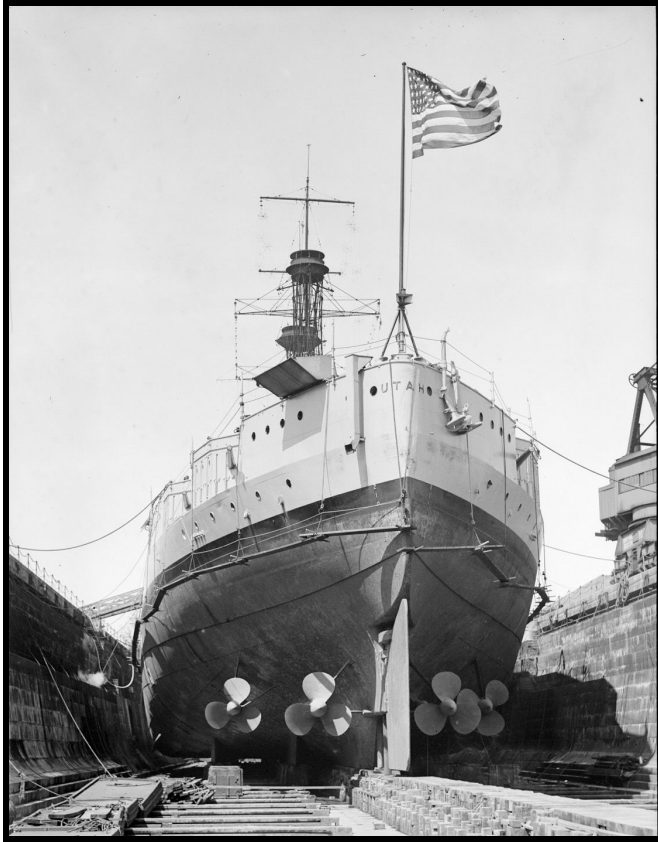
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Mystery Photo

and was decommissioned on 31 October 1925 for modernization. During that period of alterations and repairs, the ship's "cage" mainmast was replaced by a lighter pole mast; she was fitted to burn oil in-



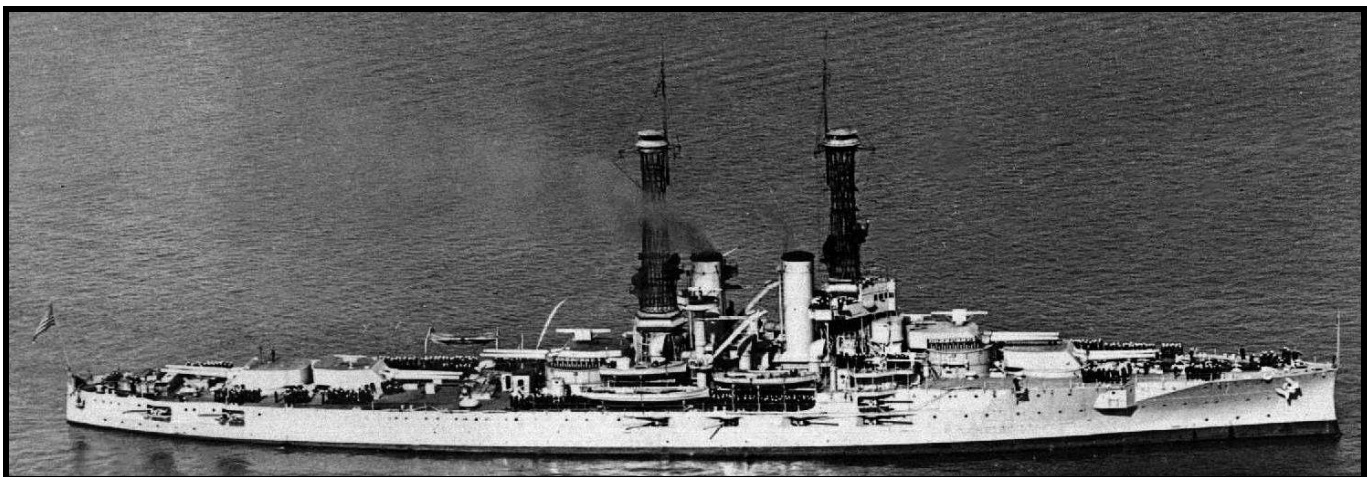
stead of coal as fuel; and her armament was modified to reflect the increased concern over anti-aircraft defense. ...*Utah* was placed back in commission on 1 December 1925." This entry certainly places her in Boston at the time we suspect this image was made. We also know from study that the change in fuel resulted in the loss of one of her two stacks. We can see from the image that the vessel still carries two stacks and two

cagemasts. We also can see that the vessel is very light, drawing at least 4 less feet of draft than her normal operating weight allows. Certainly a strong tell tale for a vessel about to enter dry dock for significant modifications.

I would say that what we see so far is evident enough to declare the vessel in the photo to be the battleship *USS Utah* at the location suggested and at the time stated. Everyone but them folks from Missouri would agree and call it a day. But then Dave made one last comment that shows we really weren't finished in our research. "Never seen this excellent photo before and couldn't find it on the Internet. Congrats to whoever found it!" Hmm...It's not often where images turn up that Dave has not seen in his many years of ship study. My sixth sense was screaming at me that this was an Editor supplied image and therefore available for study on the Internet. And my experience with Editor supplied images meant that you have to get real creative in how you search. Furthermore, I was determined to identify the vessel in my own way before I read the replies...like I always do. The image had to be on the Internet, There was a way to find it. I just had to find the way.

Due Diligence: One of the on-line photo sharing sites is called Flickr and its provided (powered, whatever) by Yahoo. During my Google search of *USS Utah* I, like Dave, never found the MP image directly, but I came across an interesting image showing *Utah* in dry dock. I liked the image and decided to study it closer. When I opened the thumbnail to the site holding the image, I noticed that it went to Flickr and that the image was credited to the Boston Public Library. I also noticed that Flickr offered 5 other preview images of *Utah* and that a note in the upper left corner of the window that stated "Boston Public Library has 67,791 photos that you might enjoy! Check them out!" The words "Check them out" were bolded and in a different font and color--a clear sign of a hyperlink. The hyperlink opened in a new window and the page was titled "Boston Public Library's photostream." This page offered shortcuts to various photo collections, none of which readily stood out but there was a search box in the upper right hand

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Mystery Photo

corner of the window and a way to reduce the sample 67,791 images to the handfull or so that I thought would relate our battleship. I typed in *USS Utah* and a selection box open below the search box asking me to select "search everyone's uploads" or "search Boston Public Library's photostream." I chose the latter, hit the enter key, and was rewarded with 22 images of *Utah*, one of which is our Mystery Photo. HooRah!



USS Utah 1911 September 12

The extensive credits for the image are:

File name: 08_06_005165

Title: USS Utah

Creator/Contributor: Jones, Leslie, 1886-1967 (photographer)

Date created: 1925

Physical description: 1 negative : glass, black & white ; 4 x 5 in.

Genre: Glass negatives

Subjects: Warships

Notes: Title and date from information provided by Leslie Jones or the Boston Public Library on the negative or negative sleeve.

Collection: Leslie Jones Collection

Location: Boston Public Library, Print Department

Rights: Copyright © Leslie Jones.

Preferred credit: Courtesy of the Boston Public Library, Les-

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THE ANSWER

Mystery Photo 317

USS Utah BB-31

MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society
Monthly Meeting
November 10, 2012
Mariners' Museum

The meeting was called to order by the Skipper Ryland Craze at 1010 hours. No Guests were present. There was no correction to the minutes needed. Eric Harfst gave the Purser's report, noting membership currently stands a 48. Greg Harrington talked about our web site. Greg said that when he tries to upload photos the roster page that they are displayed as "odd characters". His comment elicited several chuckles from the room. Greg is investigating this issue.

Old Business: The Skipper reminded everyone of the auction to be held on March 9th at Norge Hall In Norge, Va. Greg Harrington said that he would compile a spreadsheet of items to be auctioned if the members would send him lists of donated items. The Skipper asked that members give Greg their lists as early as possible so he will have time to develop the spreadsheet. The Skipper made note of the Nautical Research Guild book sale. Ron Lewis talked about the Delta-ville Maritime Museum and their need for support due to the fire they experienced. There was discussion about the International Plastic Model Society's Old Dominion Open to be held on February 23rd in Richmond. A motion was made and passed to sponsor awards for the Best Maritime Award and two wooden ship model categories. The cost of the sponsorship will be 90 dollars. The Skipper said that Lands End was having sale on shirts and to contact him if anyone wanted to order an HRSMS shirt. Ron Lewis noted that Charles Landrum had completed work on the damaged *Maersk Virginia* ship model. Charles said the model was damaged in shipment gave details the necessary repairs and showed pictures of the model.

New Business: Tim Wood talked about his visit with Bill Clarke who is recovering from an injury suffered during a fall

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Nautical Term

The Lucky Bag

The so-called Lucky Bag was really a huge locker in which articles lost aboard ship were deposited. Once a month these articles were produced and handed back to their respective owners. But there was a catch to it...each lucky recipient of a lost article was then given three strokes from the cat-o'-nine tails to teach him not to lose anything again.

Submitted by, Tim Wood

Mystery Photo

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



N-5300-6-17

NOTABLE EVENTS

DECEMBER

- 8 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Video "Central America", Henry Clapp

JANUARY

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

FEBRUARY

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Election of officers
23 **IPMS** Old Dominion Open, Richmond, Va.

MARCH

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Norge Community Center
Auction

APRIL

- 12-14 Cabin Fever Expo York, Pa.
13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

MAY

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

JUNE

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

JULY

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

AUGUST

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

SEPTEMBER

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting

- 19 Talk Like a Pirate Day

OCTOBER

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

NOVEMBER

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

**WATCH, QUARTER
AND
STATION BILL**



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Bill Clarke (757) 868-6809
Tom Saunders (757) 850-0580
Webmaster: Greg Harrington (757) 930-4615
Chaplain: Alan Frazer (757) 867-7666

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at his home. Ron Lewis talked about meeting John Tilley at the Mariners' Museum and having an interesting conversation with him. Ron also asked for information on the 4 masted sailing ship *Para*. Tim Wood asked if we wanted to have a banquet. After discussion it was decided to see if the Riverwalk Restaurant was available for March 23rd as first choice or the 16th as second choice. Tom Saunders said that he would contact the restaurant. Ryland talked about the Model Ship World web site and said that if we wanted to do a group build that Chuck Passaro would give the HRSMS a page on his web site. After some discussion the consensus was that this may be a good idea at a later date.

Show & Tell: Ryland Craze showed the new NRG calendar with photos from the NRG Photographic Ship Model Competition, and a several books he procured from the NRG library sale. Greg Harrington showed several books that he procured in England from used bookshops. Several of them were on the subject of England's inland waterways. Gene Berger showed the counter rotating drive train for a miniature Japanese submarine. Sean Maloon was looking for information on how to design frames for a wooden warship, particularly their moulded dimensions. Tim Wood showed the progress on his PT Boat. Tony Clayton had several magazines to give away. Charles Landrum showed plastic cases he procured from Ollie's and a model of the CSS Atlanta.

The meeting was adjourned to a video on PT Boats supplied by Tim Wood.

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Mystery Photo

lie Jones Collection.

Charles and Dave were spot on with their identification. They proved the probability and beat the odds. The image was found among 21 other very fine examples of old glass plate, large format images, I urge you to check them out and 337 other very fine images of navy yard activity by keying in "Charlestown Navy Yard" in the search box and following the same path used to find *Utah*, you won't be disappointed.

You can go to the reference of your choice to see *Utah's* defining characteristics.

Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanzaa

The Grinch

PS. After the column was written, an additional response arrived. This one from Tim Wood. His odds were 12 to 1 against as he wrote: "Here is my stab at this month's mystery photo! USS Florida (BB-30)."