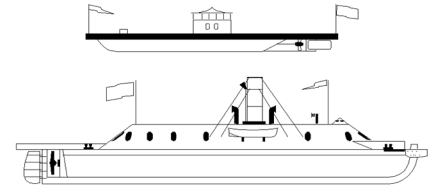


Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

Logbook!



No. 342

WWW.HRSMS.ORG

December, 2014

From The Bridge



Mystery Photo



This month I'm going deviate from my normal "From the Bridge," instead I would like to pass along a Fox News Colum on Pearl Harbor. As a nation may we never forget!

Pearl Harbor Survivors reunite in Hawaii to mark 73rd anniversary of attack.

More than a dozen Pearl Harbor survivors, each more than 90 years old, gathered in Hawaii this week to share stories as they marked the 73rd anniversary of the Japanese attack that killed 2,400 sailors, Marines and soldiers.

The gathering has been called the last meeting for the USS Arizona Reunion Association – comprised of the remaining nine survivors of the USS Arizona, a battleship that sank in the Dec. 7, 1941, attack.

But Louis Conter isn't ready to talk about the end.

"I don't think this is going to be our last. ... We've still got time to go," said Conter, 93, of Grass Valley, Calif. "We'll be back out here no matter whether the rest of the crowd can make it or not."

"I feel very proud of them and I think they're like a national treasure and when they say that they were the Greatest Generation, I have to fully endorse that," Col. Robert Brooks, whose father, Eddie Brooks, was a Pearl Harbor survivor, told KHON2.

Donald Stratton, 92, of Colorado Springs, Colo., was one of the few survivors of a gun director in the forward part of the ship. More than 65 percent of his body was burned. Stratton was hospitalized for more than year and then was medically discharged from the Navy.

He re-enlisted a year later. "The good Lord saved just a few of us," he said.

During a private event Sunday, the men will toast their shipmates, drinking from replicas of champagne glasses from the Arizona. They will share a bottle of sparkling wine that was a gift to the survivors association from President Gerald Ford's visit to Spain in 1975.

The men arrived at the Pearl Harbor visitor center on Tuesday to military salutes, music from the U.S. Navy Pacific Fleet Band and photos from tourists. At the news conference, they reminisced about memories of the attack.

"I learned something about faith," said John Anderson, 97, of Roswell, N.M., recalling that he had just gone to church services and was heading to breakfast when someone said they saw the planes coming. He became teary-eyed as he discussed his twin brother dying in the attack.

(Continued on page 8)

Mystery Photo #341: Now this is my idea of a tall ship! Imagine, actual tall masts! Masts driven high into the sky to support 1920's vintage dipole radio antenna so the ship could send and receive its primitive communications. And those masts supported by a forest of stays and guys should make any rigger happy. The ship is standard in appearance, but the bridge...the ugly bridge! What of it? I've seen some good looking superstructure, from a naval architect's perspective, but only her designer could call this box appealing. It's so unattractive, it sort of calls to mind the joke about the ugly dog, shaving, and learning to walk backwards. In addition, as we get to the end of this essay, you'll understand why I say this image captures a scene that is the nautical equivalent of the "Green Mile"; in this case, dead men walking—twice." Crikey, there he goes again!

Let's see what the critical eye has to see. Obviously we have a tanker, or "oiler" to you deck apes. The vessel presents the classic three island arrangement for the type. Since the navy owns this one, in addition to all the tanker stuff, you also get two guns mounted to the forecandle deck, two more you can't see aft on the fantail, and a pair in a smaller caliber mounted amidships on raised platforms—the starboard one is visible pointing to the heavens. The extra port lights forward, and double row aft, attest to a larger than civilian sized crew. The same could be said about the compliment of ship's boats, especially the large barge nested forward of the bridge structure. Alongside each mast, stowed vertically, are the replenishment booms for the fueling at sea feature. Two very obvious searchlight platforms are visible, one atop the bridge and one atop the after structure. The stack seems to be sited more forward than usual on the after deck house, and it comes complete with upper deck extensions fitted to each side the engine casing. But it's the bridge face about which I say the vessel has styling, or lack of style, issues. It's just that the ship has the bridge face of a dog—the architect must have been absent the day they taught bridge windows. Bridge windows are like the eyes of a woman, they offer a view to the soul of the vessel. This ship doesn't have any, just a crappy row of ports. If it was just the oddly-placed stack, all would probably be OK.

(Continued on page 2)

MEETING NOTICE

Date: Saturday December 13, 2014

Place: Mariners' Museum

Time: 1000 Hours

(Continued from page 1)



Mystery Photo

The ship is presented by the photographer under an odd sky. In the B&W print, the sky almost looks like it was touched up a bit. I understand that was done from time to time to enhance the salability of the print. Was it done here? The vessel is leaving port and appears to be at or very near the mouth of the channel. Her speed is dead slow, her smoke is negligible, and her wake is almost nonexistent. In the lower left corner you can see some land and the legend “photo wells” which establishes the starboard shore. Behind the vessel you can see the port shore dominated by a big rock or rock pile, with evidence of a breakwater extending to the right, and a lattice structure with cranes in the distance. Two small boats are entering the channel on the proper side—they neatly frame the aft part of our MP. Nicely framed, nicely presented.

Let’s see if we can answer our core questions; what ship is this, where is this, and when was the image made? New first responder this month. Sean Maloon beat the hoard by stating: “My guess, USS Neches AO-5, sunk by I-72 on January 23, 1942 at about 03:19. The picture was taken in the 1920’s. The source is James Gholson for his father James Everett Gholson SC3/c...” Heady stuff, no sources given. His reply was followed a few days later with this from Bob Moritz who agrees with Sean: “The MP is the Maumee Class Fleet Oiler USS Neches AO-5... The MP picture itself is of the USS Neches AO-5 underway, circa 1920's, location unknown.” Again no sources given, but he does say he found the image on the Internet.

Are they right?

My investigation, naturally, centered on a US Navy tanker or “oiler” so it was easy to dial up Google and visit NavSource.org to see what was on offer. I went straight to the “Auxiliaries” section and found the oilers under Fleet Replenishment. The first ship in the “AO” list was USS Kanawha AO-1. At the time of her commissioning in 1914 the type was known as “Fuel Ship” and Kanawha was Fuel Ship #13. Number 13 bore more than a superficial resemblance to the vessel in our MP and I might have stopped there if I’d found a match to our MP. Since no match was available I continued down the list of AO’s until I hit Fuel Ship #17, USS Neches AO-5, and found our MP bearing the info supplied by Sean. Other data found there matched Bob’s reply. So the Mystery is solved, and they are right! The only problem now was to see if we could define date and place.

For this task, Bob offers just a wee bit more with this succinct history of Neches. His short version says that Neches was “Laid down June 8, 1919 at Boston Navy Yard, Boston, MA. Launched June 2, 1920 and commissioned October 25, 1920 with CDR H.T. Meriwether, USNRF in command. Lost to enemy action on January 23, 1942 with the loss of 57 men. Tor-

pedoed by Japanese submarine HIJMS I-172. USS Neches earned one battle star for its World War II service.” If you want the longer version and to fill in the missing twenty years, you have to go to DANSF.

And that’s just what I did.

Let’s begin with Neches’ specifications. Neches, as were most oilers back in the day of consistent vessel naming, was named after a river. The river Neches runs through east Texas and empties into the Gulf of Mexico. Neches the vessel displaces 5,723 tons light and 14,800 tons full load. She measures 475 feet in length, 56 feet in beam, and draws 26-1/2 feet of water. Her speed is 14 knots and comes from two Ward boilers feeding two vertical triple-expansion reciprocating steam engines producing 5,200 SHP on 2 shafts. Because of her armament of 4 5-inch and 2 3-inch guns and at sea replenishment role, her normal tanker compliment is augmented to 144. The impetus behind the design can be found in the 1911-1925 “Spring Styles Book” of the Bureau of Construction & Repair. One sheet from that book captured by Naval History Photo No. S-584-086, is titled “Fuel ship 1917 Bldg. Program. Sept. 1915” shows a concept that became Neches.

With that out of the way, we can look closer to her service for clues to help solve the Date/Place conundrum. Remember we are looking for reasons to tie her into leaving a port with a big rock that could be described as “Red right returning!” She began her navy service classified as Fuel Ship No. 17 and ended it classified as AO-5. In fact, her classification to AO-5 happened prior to her commissioning. As a unit of the Atlantic Fleet “she operated out of Boston, Mass. until 3 March, 1922.” During that time she “made several trips to Port Arthur, Tex. for



Dead Mans Island

Nautical Term

Jumbo: Opinions vary on this term, but the prevailing one favors the large fore staysail of a Grand Banks fishing schooner; hence it refers to any fore staysail. A good derivation is impossible, but it could be related to the ears of a large Barnum Bailey elephant.

Submitted by, Tim Wood

fuel oil and gasoline.” After that March date she departed the East Coast to join the Pacific Fleet and her new homeport of San Diego, Calif.

She continued to serve Pacific fleet warships until her overhaul at Mare Island that began in May of 1926. More from DANFS: “Over the ensuing fifteen years, Neches participated in and helped develop long-range fleet tactics, particular in regards to underway refueling operations, and supplied oil and gasoline to bases in the Canal Zone, Caribbean, and Hawaii.” And that takes us to 1941 and the data that Bob supplied. Her post over-

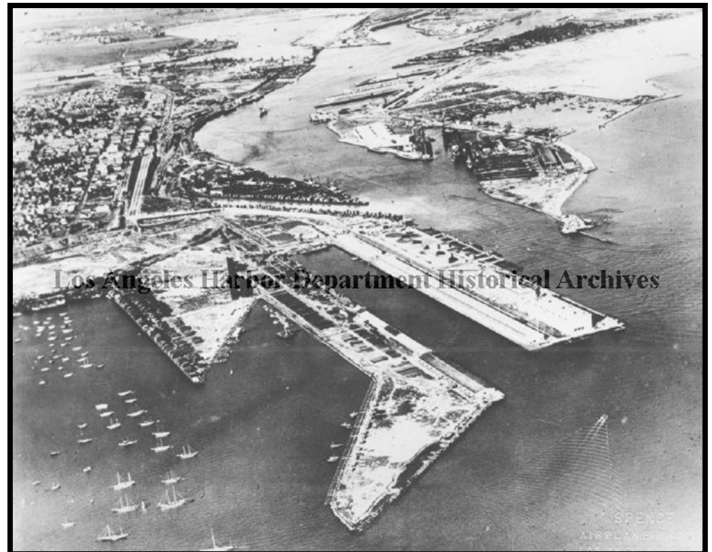
(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)



Mystery Photo

haul portrait, Photo No. 19-N-25775, DTD 29 August 1941 shows a significant alterations, enough for us to realize that the MP is much older. Are there clues in the locations we've already mentioned to help place and date this MP?0

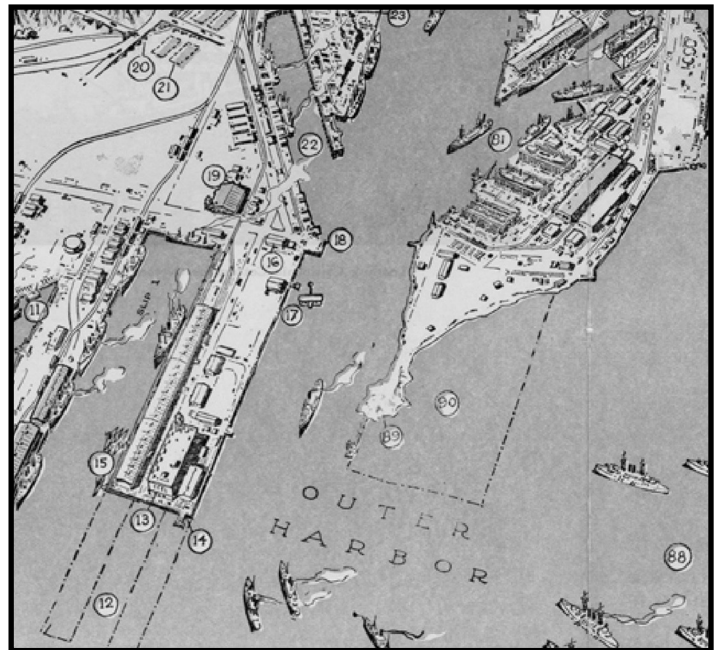


channel extended further seaward. Aside from Gibraltar which has its own rock of significance, can we identify a port that had a rock lucky enough to find its way into our MP? "Easy-peasy-Japanesey" as Michael Cain says in a recent comedy spoof! Several resource books and Google Maps makes it so.

I am fairly familiar with the east coast ports and I think I can convincingly say that none has the topography and orientation we see in the MP. Not being familiar with ports along the Gulf of Mexico I googled one to see if my understanding of the geography (that the shore line is flat, muddy, and lacking in real rock formations) held any water. I chose Port Arthur, Tex. as

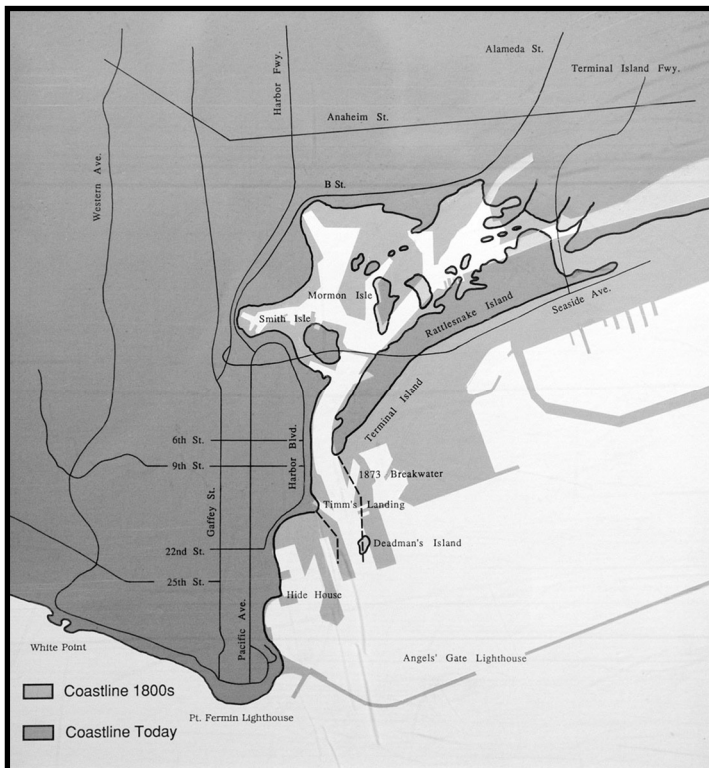
Dead Mans Island Fill Site

The first thing you should realize from the clues is that Neches operated in a very narrow band in terms of ports from 1920 until 1941. One of these ports has a fairly large rock guarding the right side of the channel and one that has the left side



we've already learned that Neches called there for product prior to her transition to the West Coast. It's interesting to learn that the starboard shore (when leaving) does extend further than the port shore, as in the MP, but no other geography seems to fit. And with a seemingly unrelated issue, on page 70 of James Shaw's book Ships of the Panama Canal, we learn that the undated Navsource image of Neches transiting the Culebra Cut in the canal was make on 5 April 1924. Neches is fitted out exactly the same in this image as in our MP. The dated image is signifi-

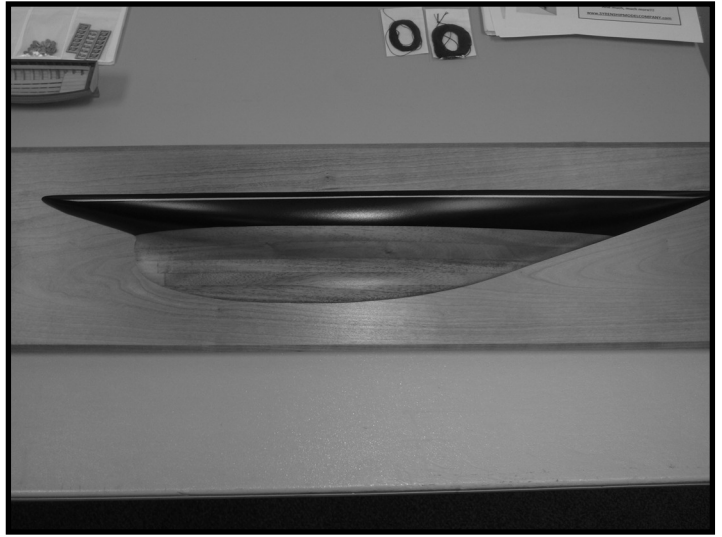
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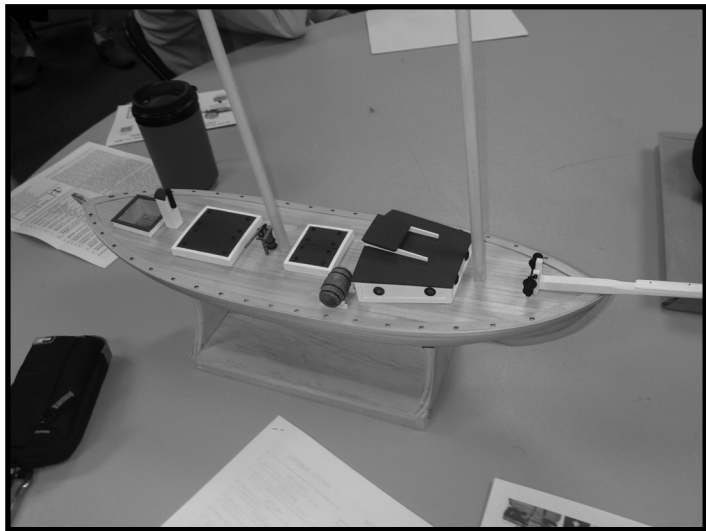
Coastline Change



Ron Lewis' Restoration of the Kate Cory



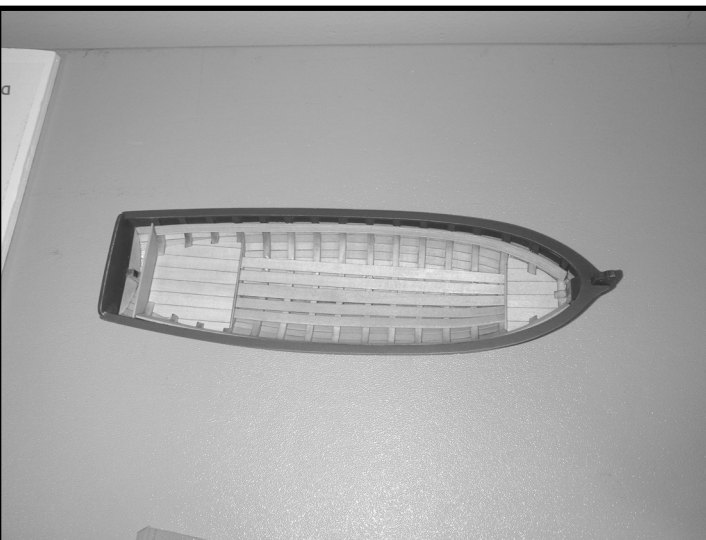
Tim Wood's Atlantic



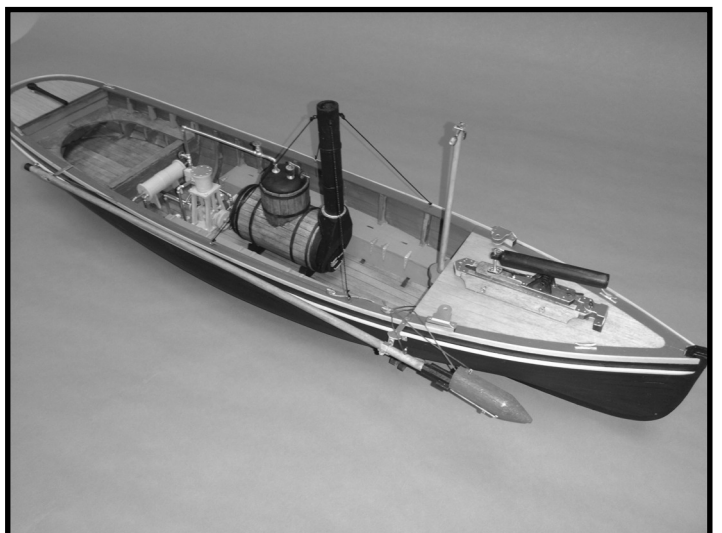
Henry Clapp's Pinky Schooner



Greg Harrington's Taper Jig



Ryland Craze's Longboat

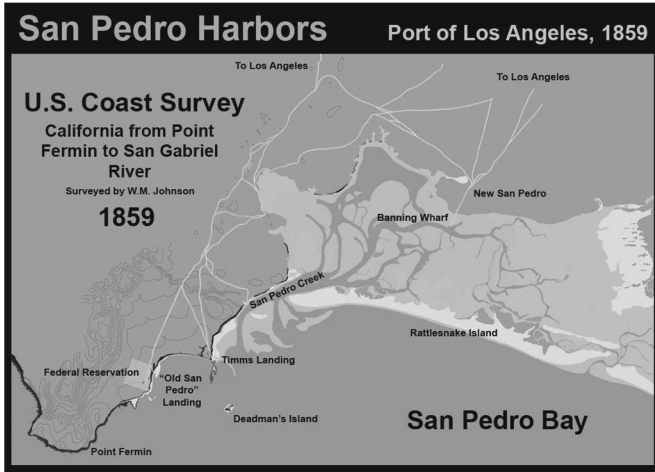


Bruce Brown's Picket Boat

(Continued from page 3)



cant as it establishes the fact that no significant or identifiable changes occurred to Neches at least through the 1924 date. And it helps us to continue our focus shift to the left coast.



To complete the shift, I remember from our study of Roosevelt in MP #325 that the topography in and around Panama and the canal does not match what we see in our current MP. Since Neches seemed to spend at least 15 years of her service in and around several California ports it seems logical that the MP might capture Neches leaving one of them. I also remember from our study of California in MP #338 that the topography around San Pedro, Calif. is quite similar to what we find in the MP, so that's probably the best place to look.

Online I found an undated map titled "Coastline changes from 1880 to today", which must be at least 20 years old by now, showing the "San Pedro Harbors" fill. Another map, DTD 1859, shows the original harbor delta prior to changes. In it you can see where the San Pedro Creek empties into San Pedro Bay at Timm's Landing. A small island named Deadman's (one word) Island sits off shore from the mouth of the creek. One piece of data that I collected for MP #338, was another map, DTD 1923, showing "improvements contemplated" for the Port of Los Angeles complex. In an enlarged section of that map at a place where the channel meets the outer harbor, we see a spot

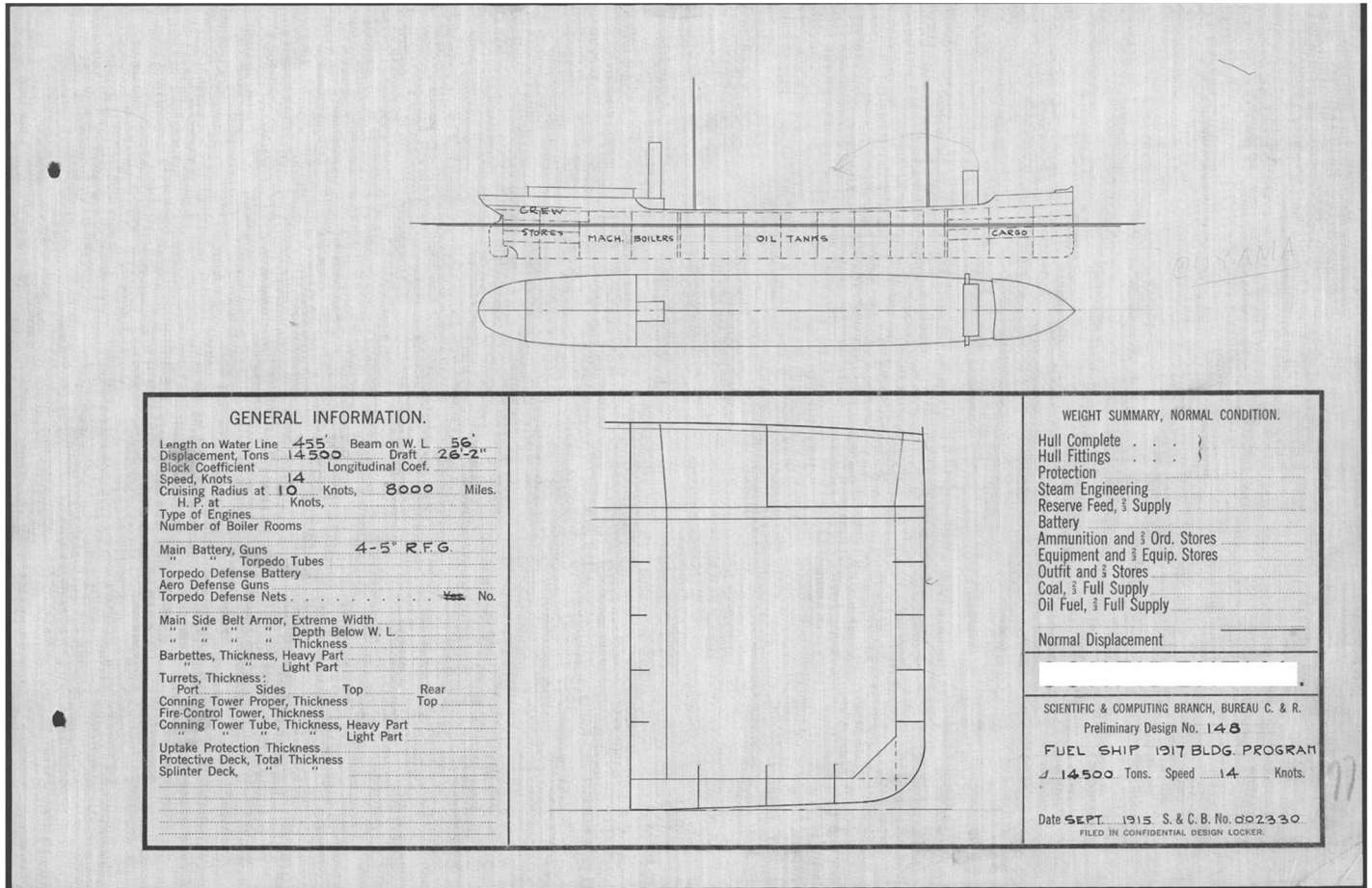
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Bob Moritz-Home Demo

The demo at Bob's on January 24th will begin at 1000 hours. Lunch will be provided. Details will be given at the December meeting.

THE ANSWER

Mystery Photo 341
USS Neches
Undated Photo



Preliminary Design Proposal for 14,500 Ton Oiler

(Continued from page 5)



Mystery Photo

that looks very promising. If you were to place the photographer near location #14, assume the steamer is Neches, and place the rock at the spot marked as #89, you could almost see our MP taking shape.

Well spot #89 on the "Improvements" map is the previously mentioned Deadman's Island. Deadman's Island no longer exists. It was removed in 1928 when additional harbor improvements bought a better aligned channel. Wanting to absolutely identify the rock in our MP as Deadman's island, I searched until I found a 1920-era aerial image of the harbor in the Los Angeles Harbor Department Historical Archives. In the image, you can see the dock, the rock, and the structure behind—a perfect match to the geography seen in our MP. An additional image showing a dredge beginning work on clearing Deadman's Island shows the background structure and cranes more clearly. Incidentally, the lattice structure is the former Bethlehem Steel shipyard which became the more familiar Todd shipyard. Todd, San Pedro, built quite a few of the US Navy's recently retired FFGs.

And in an irony that inspired my Dead Man Walking comment, besides the obvious reference caused by the Island's name, when the island was removed it became fill for the adjacent area, primarily the land between the shipyard and the island itself. Among other things, that land was subsequently used for two Government institutions, The Coast Guard and a Federal Prison. For what it's worth the prison once housed Al Capone, Charles Manson, and Timothy Leary. The land beyond the shipyard, seen as a narrow strip of shore in the distance of our MP was once called Rattlesnake Island but later was known as Terminal Island. The Terminal Railroad ran down its length to the tip servicing the cannery industry.

Employment in the cannery industry was dominated by Americans of Japanese descent. A reporter from The Daily Breeze writes: "During commercial fishing's heyday in the Port of Los Angeles, 16 canneries operated across the harbor on Terminal Island, sending the industry's sounds, odors and workers throughout the seaside community." From SanPedro.com we learn that "In 1941, 3,000 first and second-generation Japanese made their homes in an area of Terminal Island known as East San Pedro." They named their village Furusato. "On February 19, 1942, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. This Executive Order sent 120,000 Japanese Americans to internment camps" All this despite the fact that 62% were American citizens. "In February of 1942, Terminal Island residents were the first Japanese Americans, on the West Coast, to be forcibly removed from their homes. They were forced to evacuate their homes within 48 hours and had to leave almost of all of their possessions behind including all of their fishing boats and fishing gear." They never returned. A memorial to these people now sits near the prison.

Bob mentions how Neches was torpedoed and lost in 1942. San Pedro Harbor historical data shows how Deadman's Island was removed in 1928. And local history tells how many of the local citizens were removed in 1942. Perhaps a good caption for our MP would be 'Neches and Island on the Green Mile'. And since I'm not real sure, I suppose our timeline for the image should be between 1922 and 1928.

Now if only someone would do something about those bridge windows...

John Cheevers

MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society
Monthly Meeting
Mariners' Museum
November 8, 2014

Guests: John Cork, 2nd meeting
Bill Welsh, 1st meeting

The meeting was called to order by Skipper, Tim Wood at 1004 hours. The Skipper asked for corrections to the minutes. While no corrections were proffered at that time, later in the meeting Tony Clayton called the Clerk before the mast to inform him that his new hat was a Victory cap and not the Essex as reported. Eric Harfst gave the purser's report giving account balance and membership totals. Eric asked that at the next auction, members use a 3 X 5 index card with name and amount paid when paying for their purchases. Greg Harrington gave the Webmaster's report. Greg commented on his request for information on member's photos on the web site.

Old Business: The members welcomed George Livingston back from his recent illness. Tony Clayton confirmed that Norge Hall is available for the March meeting/auction. John Cheevers reported that he had made contact with a woman who was wanting to liquidate her father's model shop. John said that his agreement was to put the items in the auction and return the proceeds to her. Dave Baker thanked Tony Clayton for producing 20 tugboat kits to give away to kids at the model builder's stand. Ron Lewis said that he added grips to the interior of the taco stand folding doors to assist in their opening. Bill Clarke resurrected the idea of placing a tool box in the taco stand and stocking it with some basic hand tools. After some discussion, a motion was made, seconded and passed to appropriate \$250.00 for John Cheevers to procure the box and tools. It was noted that members could add items to the chest.

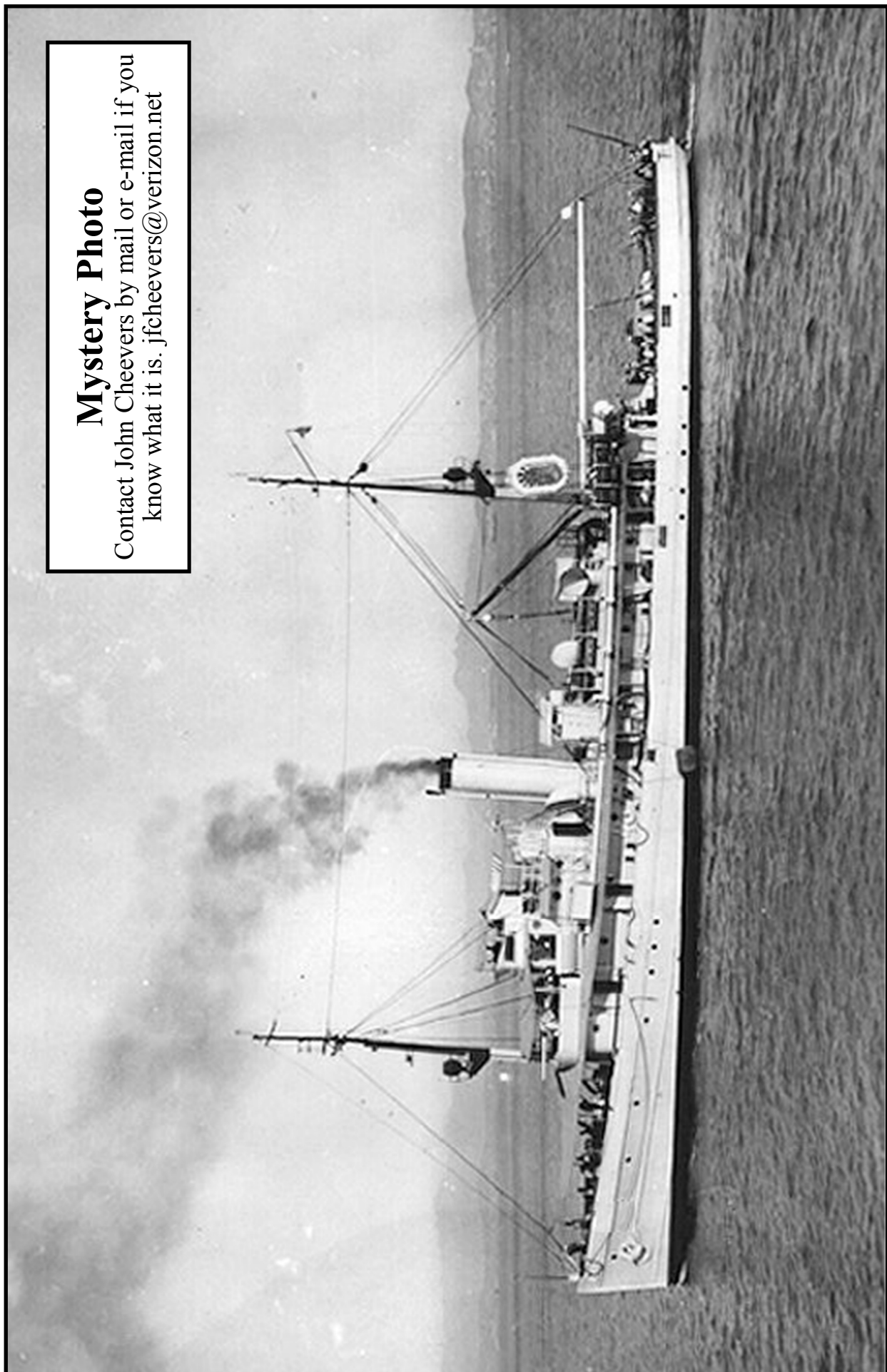
New Business: The Skipper presented an e-mail from IPMS Richmond asking for our participation and support for the 2015 Old Dominion Open. A motion was made and passed to continue our sponsorship at the same level as previous years. Bill Welsh of the Phoebus Auction House talked to the group about an upcoming auction of some of David Tagg's models. The auction will take place on November 16th. Gene Burger said that Karen Tagg needed to store several of David's models until family members could retrieve them. Gene asked about using the taco stand for the storage. It was agreed that all but the largest of his models could be stored there. Bill Dangler said that he would make picnic shelter reservations at Newport News Park for our September Picnic. Ryland Craze noted several nautical events happening in 2015. Dave Baker said that the Small Scale Ship Society would be having their conference in Norfolk during September 2015. (Details of these events will be provided at a later date.) Ron Lewis noted that an exhibition of James Edward Buttersworth's paintings is now open at the museum. Bob Moritz said that he would host a resin model workshop at his home on January 24th.

Show & Tell: Marty Gromovsky showed a 1:72 Tamiya kit-

(Continued on page 8)

Mystery Photo

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



NOTABLE EVENTS

DECEMBER

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, Billy Moore--Chesapeake Boat Builder, By
Tony Clayton

JANUARY

- 10 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Nomination of officers,
24 Workshop/Demo—Bob Moritz 10:00 am

FEBRUARY

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

MARCH

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Auction, Norge Hall

APRIL

- 10-12 Cabin Fever Expo, York, Pa.
11 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation: Tim Wood, TBA

MAY

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation: "Conservation vs Restoration", Ron Lewis

JUNE

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

JULY

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

AUGUST

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

SEPTEMBER

- 12 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting,
19 Talk Like a Pirate Day

OCTOBER

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

22-24 NRG Conference Mystic Ct.

NOVEMBER

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

**WATCH, QUARTER
AND
STATION BILL**



Skipper: Tim Wood (757) 481-6018
Mate: Bob Moritz (804) 779-3365
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

Presenters Needed

**Program presenters are needed for 2015
Contact Tony Clayton
if you are willing to give a presentation.**

**Bring your latest project
to the meeting.**

(Continued from page 1)



"It's always like yesterday when we're out here," Conter added.

The survivors on Tuesday also watched a live-feed of a dive along the Arizona's sunken hull, which still holds the bodies of more than 900 of about 1,177 men who died on the battleship.

Ashes of 38 survivors are interred there.

National Park Service Historian Daniel Martinez, moderating Tuesday's discussion, seemed overcome with emotion when he announced that Arizona survivor Lauren Bruner, 94, of La Mirada, Calif., last year signed paperwork for his intentions to be interred there. Conter plans to do the same, he said.

"It seems like after a while nobody pays attention to them anymore, after about five years," Bruner said of his decision not to be buried in a cemetery. "I hope a lot of people will still be ... coming over to the Arizona and we'll be glad to see them."

I look to seeing everyone on Saturday and as always I encourage you to bring your latest work for show-n-tell.

Best Regards,
Tim

(Continued from page 6)

built patrol boat, Perkasa and a 1:700 Trumpeter kit-built Russian missile cruiser. Bruce Brown showed the progress on his



Model Shipways picket boat. Ryland Craze detailed the progress on his long boat and showed some small tools he bought at the NRG Conference. Charles Landrum circulated a copy of the latest IPMS Journal with photos of the all the contest winners at the August model competition. Henry Clapp showed his version of a Pinky based on Chappelle's boat Glad Tidings, with scratch built deck furniture, rearranged to represent a fishing schooner. Ron Lewis showed the restoration work on the whaler the Kate Cory. Greg Harrington showed a home built tapering jig and demonstrated its use. Bob Moritz bemoaned the fact that he did not prime his PT Boat hull and detailed his tribulations in removing masking tape along with the underlying paint. Tim Wood displayed his half-hull of the Atlantic and showed the progress on his PT Boat.

The meeting was adjourned to a presentation "Air Brushing Techniques" by Charles Landrum.