

Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

Logbook!

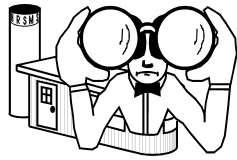


No. 371

WWW.HRSMS.ORG

May, 2017

From The Bridge



Mystery Photo



Captains Log 5.13.17,

An email from Tom jarred me into reality that another month had flown by. I was still penning last month's issue. That doesn't make any sense to me. The point being is that the theory of constant time....is bunk. Time is accelerating. Years turn to months to days to hours. It's just not fair.

The 50th Anniversary Committee met at my house on Drinko de Mayo to plan the display and select models for the exhibit. With over 70 models to choose from we compiled a list that realistically reflects the space allotted to us by the museum. I hope everyone will be pleased with the outcome. There is still much to accomplish in the next couple of months, as my nemesis... TIME...will undoubtedly compress into weeks.

Otherwise, we forge forward, forthwith and with fortitude.....yet, in a friendly fashion.

Gene

MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society
Monthly Meeting
Mariner's Museum
April 8, 2017

Guests: Andy Hahn, 1st meeting
Vijayadurga Gutha, 1st meeting

The meeting was called to order by Skipper Gene Berger at 1000 hours. The Skipper recognized the guests and they introduced themselves. Gene the offered positive commentary on the March banquet. He also noted that the March auction was not as profitable as in the past and with tongue-in-cheek, chided the members to "dig a little deeper" at the next auction. There were no corrections to the minutes as published. Ryland Craze gave

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The fellow who submitted the Mystery Photo tells the editor that he's never seen it before. The editor says that he hadn't either. Does that make it rare? Does that make it obscure? Does that make it hard to identify? Does that mean these guys are out of their element? The answers to these and other questions will be revealed in this essay.

The image shows a large warship at speed at sea firing what appears to be a missile from a raised platform erected above the aft deck. Since ship's names usually appear at the stern we can safely assume that the submitter or the editor erased it for our convenience. They didn't, however, erase the United States flag that flies prominently from a position somewhat lower than the main yard. And, as luck would have it, neither did the missile smoke. Do you see it? It flies from a gaff fitted to the after director tower. I wonder if the flag was moved there to prevent it becoming entangled with one of the large and varied radar antennae fitted in the same general area?

Incidentally, the radar antenna atop the tall, tri-pod main mast looks, for all the world, like the Soviet S-band "head Net" air search radar. If it was, then this Mystery photo identification would have to be taken to a whole new level. But, thanks to piles of research condensed into a single reference, we have the real answer. On page 155 of Norman Friedman's book Naval Radar, we see that this radar is cataloged as an SX (CXHR).

To bore you, we'll learn that this radar is a "powerful dual-frequency air search/height finding system, which led to SPS-8." And I know you all remember the SPS-8 radar! "[SX] consisted of two antennas mounted 90-degrees apart: a 14ft X 4ft parabola with a 1.6-degree X 18-degree beam for air search and a 5ft X 15ft vertical parabola with a 4-degree X 1.2-degree beam for height finding." (Would it be more fun to talk about Chevy small-block engine specs?)

The most important spec and the one that interests us the most is this: "About 45 were produced, including two prototype CXHRs in 1945, and SX served aboard carriers and the experimental ship *Mississippi*..." Is this a great clue to find or

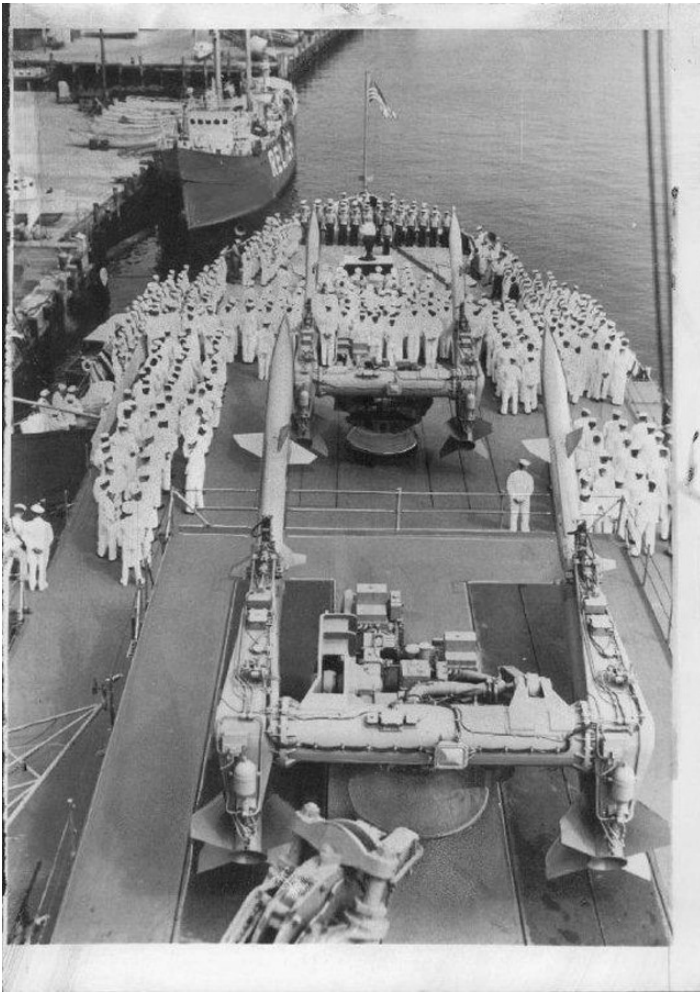
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MEETING NOTICE

Date: Saturday May 13, 2017

Place: Mariners' Museum

Time: 1000 Hours



Wire photo dated 1 August 1956 showing stern stingers.

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what? To make it even more fun, ole Doc Friedman provides a picture, on page 56 of his book—captioned *Mississippi*—that not only shows our favorite SX radar at the main mast but the photograph itself could be a dead ringer for our Mystery Photo except that in this image no missile is being fired and a name and classification number both appear on the stern.

One response this month and it arrives almost in the form of an afterthought: “Oh, the mystery ship is the U.S.S.

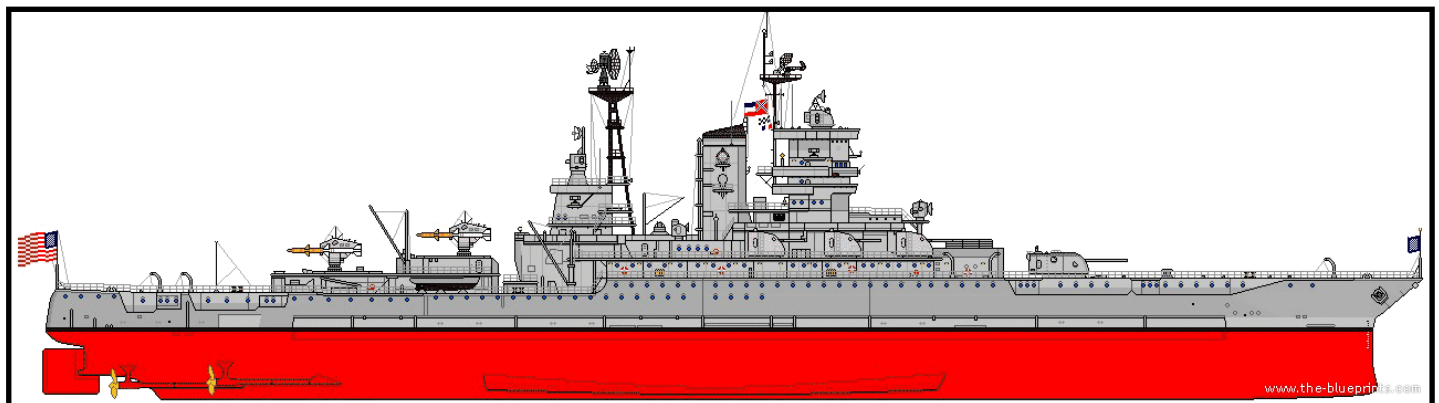
MISSISSIPPI (AG 128) in her third post-WW II configuration with two early-model twin launchers for Terrier SAMs.” Or, so says Dave Baker. He raises his own bit of intrigue with his “third post-WWII configuration” comment—perhaps we have more dirt to dig. Perhaps, not. The three guises happened in rapid order and spanned about 7 years, culminating in the arrangement we enjoy in our Mystery Photo. Dave supplies the details: “Initially after the war, the ship retained her after triple 14-in. mount and got a selection of 3-in. and 5-in. DP mounts as fleet gunnery training ship. Then, for a brief period, she had absolutely nothing above deck on the fantail but did have a prototype twin 6-in DP mount on the bow in A position (same mount as on cruisers WORCESTER and ROANOKE). And the, in her final guise, she appeared as in the photo, although even there the ship initially had a very early pair of missile target illumination radars that were replaced with more effective ones. Since the smoke from the solid-fuel booster of the Terrier covers the two directors, I can’t place the date, but I’d bet the shot is on Navsource.”

And you’d be right! It’s kind of funny that not only does our Mystery Photo appear on Navsource, but it and another image from the series appears on a site called [Laststand-of-the-zombies](#). It is s a big old goofy world after all! If you trust Wikiwand, the site says “The ship had a new RIM-2 Terrier missile launcher installed in 1952, the work being completed on 9 August at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. The first test firings of a ship-borne Terrier missile took place on 28–29 January 1953 off Cape Cod.” The 1953 test is not our Mystery. According to Navsource, our Mystery is dated 28 March 1955, and is marked as USN#659366. That’s pretty definitive.

For the great unwashed, *USS Mississippi*, BB-41 was one of three *New Mexico* class battleships commissioned into the U.S. Navy in 1917. They were an improvement over the preceding *Pennsylvania*’s in that they featured a clipper bow and a new style turret carrying longer caliber rifles and individual slides. After that, they followed the standard U.S. Navy battleship formula for the time—2 turrets forward and 2 aft, casemated secondary guns, a large armored conning tower, modest bridge work, and 2 tall cage masts with the funnel(s) and boat deck in between.

Despite being “part of the standard-type battleship concept of the U.S. Navy”, the three ships of this class were considered an improvement over the 3 year old *Nevada* design. Beginning with the two *Nevada*’s, twelve ships in five classes

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authorized in batches of two or three followed this basic format with the only major difference being a gradual increase in size and a refinement of equipment and features with each succeeding group. If the layout works and is efficient, you stick with it.

Two items of note for our Mystery class: *New Mexico* was fitted with turbo-electric propulsion and *Mississippi* was built right here in town.

They were also the first and actually the only class to receive a mid-life modernization that provided a modern appearance prior to the US entry into World War II. It happened on the other side of the Roads: “All were rebuilt between 1931 and 1934, receiving entirely new superstructures, modern controls for their guns, new engines and improved protection against air and surface attack. Anti-torpedo bulges increased their width to 106 feet 3 inches (32.39 m) and displacement went up by a thousand tons or more.” The bulge is very prominent in our Mystery Photo as are the original, after after hull casemate gun positions.

Shifting gears...



USS Mississippi 1933 off Portsmouth, Va.

If you ordered a 40 at the club, most of you would understand what that means and one or two of you might be able to handle one. If you were the US Navy and you ordered a 4T, what would you get? Well, a 40 is short for 40 beer—a 40-ounce beer, and 40 beer is just a bit larger than a quart but smaller and easier to carry than a six-pack. 4T on the other hand, is an acronym for a family of Navy fleet air defense missiles designed to deal with post WWII air threats. Most of you know this family as the big three: Tartar, Terrier, and Talos. The US Navy surface fleet was equipped with them and their variants for 40 years (ironic). The big three devolved into variations of one missile and today they are all called Standard. Just like a 40, the standard is a bit easier to carry than three distinct missiles and their associated equipment.

Why 4T when there are only three? Well before the Aegis system came on line, development was underway for a fourth variant code named Typhon. It never became operational. Of the big three, Terrier arrived first and was considered the mid-range one of the bunch. Tartar was the short range weapon while Talos was designed to handle the long range threat. Con-

fusing and redundant—but necessary considering the state of engineering at the time.

Our mystery Photo shows a Terrier missile just as it leaves the launch rail. The test shot is aimed to port at a low attitude. Does this suggest that the inbound target is at low altitude? A closer look at the shot reveals two such launchers and both were fully armed at the time of this launch. Looking closer at the missile you see booster section with large triangular fins at the tail. Juts aft of where you see the middle set of fins is the joint between booster and missile. So the missile has two sets of fins, one set at the rear and the other about in the middle of the body.

Reading copy from the experts we see that “Initially, the Terrier used radar beam-riding guidance, forward aerodynamic controls, and a conventional warhead.” The U-Tube video shows this and we see, essentially, what are wild gyrations in the missile as it makes its trajectory. The trajectory can be described as a reducing, conical spiral as the missile nears its target. Later versions of Terrier, around 1958, introduced tail control. Tail control greatly calmed down the missile while in flight making it much more efficient. It also changed the appearance of the missile as the middle fins disappeared, replaced by a stabilizing rib we see today that mates with the tail control fins. For a good primer on missile control and guidance, I suggest you read pages 54 through 58 of Friedman’s book.

Four scant years after being fitted as a missile testbed, *Mississippi* had outlived its usefulness, such was the pace of development at the time. After testing the RIM-2 Terrier missile and the AUM-N-2 Petrel missile, she was decommissioned in 1956 and sold to ship breakers in November that year. There you have it. Having explained all of this, I wonder if *Mississippi* is a suitable next project for our new SDSMD—it could tie him up for days or weeks. Whew...I think I need

John Cheevers

Nautical Term

Cleat - A horn-shaped piece of wood or metal, to which a line may be made fast. It comes from Old English, the same word with a similar meaning.

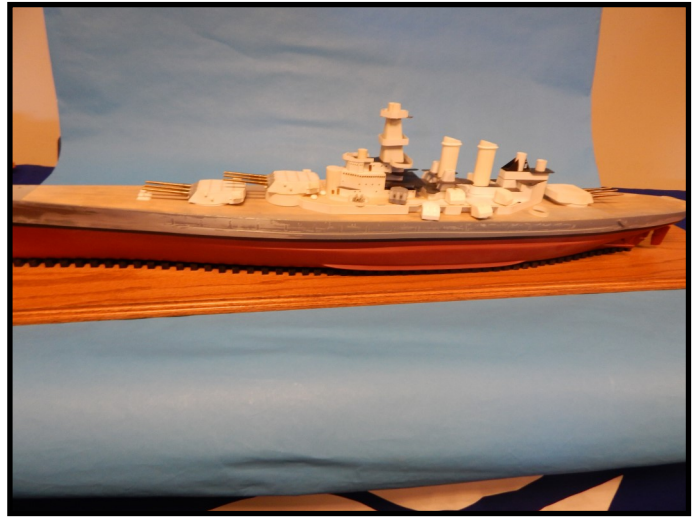
Tim Wood

Get you models ready for the HRSMS 50th Anniversary Exhibition

THE ANSWER

The answer to mystery photo 370:
USS Mississippi (formerly BB-41, now AGS-128) fires a Terrier SAM, March 1955. She'd been converted into a weapons test bed and served until 1956.

Photo submitted by Tim Wood.



John Cheevers tug Dorothy

Sean Maloon's USS North Carolina



Kevin Ritton's Picket Boat No. 1

Tony Clayton's rumrunner Speakeasy



John Proudly's USS Kearsarge

Lee Martin's Pegasus

Mystery Photo

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



NOTABLE EVENTS

MAY

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, Bill Fox The James River: Boats and Steam
boats

JUNE

- 10 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation: Ron Lewis, AC 35 (w/AC50s)

JULY

- 8 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, John Cheevers, Carving the Chine Hull

AUGUST

- 12 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, Greg Harrington, Building the Clue & Chata

SEPTEMBER

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting
19 Talk Like a Pirate Day

OCTOBER

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Picnic, Newport News Park
Presentation, Marty Gromovsky, TBA
26-28 NRG Conference

NOVEMBER

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

DECEMBER

- 9 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation: George Livingston, TBA

JANUARY

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

FEBRUARY

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

MARCH

- 10 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting:

APRIL

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

WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL



Skipper: Gene Berger (757) 850-4407
Mate: Ron Lewis (757) 874-8219
Purser: Ryland Craze (804) 739-8804
Clerk: Tom Saunders (757) 850-0580
Historian: Tim Wood
Editors: John Cheevers (757) 591-8955
Bill Clarke (757) 868-6809
Tom Saunders (757) 850-0580
Webmaster: Greg Harrington (757) 930-4615
Photographer: Marty Gromovsky

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the Purser's report. His report included details of the banquet expenditures and the auction proceeds. Webmaster, Greg Harrington had no activity to report.

Old Business: The Skipper asked Ron Lewis about several machine tools that were being donated to the ~~Face-Stand~~ Ship Modeler's Work Shop (SMWS). Ron said that he and John Cheevers would be traveling to visit the person making the donation to retrieve the tools. Ron was then asked about a carved logo plaque for the SMWS. Ron said that he had made an inquiry to a firm in New England but had not heard from them in several weeks. Ron then said that he was also looking at a banner printed on fabric as an alternative. The Skipper issued a last call for models to be exhibited at the museum. Models that could be finished by the June timeframe would be considered for inclusion. The work on the HRSMS brochure was in the final stage of editing. Tim Wood said the he would forward the brochure to Ron Lewis for review who would forward it to Tom Saunders for printing. Greg Harrington said that he reserved a shelter at Newport News Park for the September picnic. Gene asked for another volunteer for the 50th anniversary committee to help organize the exhibit. Stewart Winn stepped up to the plate and agreed to work with the committee.

New Business: The first item of new business was a donation to Norge Hall for their use of the facility for the auction. A motion was made and passed to donate \$100.00 to Norge Hall. Gene circulated a note from Bill Dangler's sister thanking us for the flowers at his viewing. Next Gene talked about a letter from the Richmond IPMS, thanking us for our sponsorship of the Old Dominion open. Tim Wood volunteered to assume the position of Historian. Ron Lewis said that he had a pond yacht that needed a home. Sean Maloon adopted this derelict. Ron then asked for names of individuals interested in being an alternate to work in the SMWS on days when the scheduled builder is unavailable. Gene said that he would like to see the display at the SMWS rotated on periodic basis. Tim Wood asked about getting another chair in the SMWS. Ron Lewis said that he could make that happen.

Show & Tell: John Cheevers showed the progress on his models of the *Monitor* and the tug *Dorothy*. Sean Maloon showed the progress on his plank-on-bulkhead 1:92 *North Carolina*. Bruce Brown had a Unimat lathe from Bowditch family to be donated to the work shop and that he is working on a second model of the French frigate *Hermione*. Tony Clayton his work on R/C Model Expo kit of the rumrunner *Speakeasy*. Kevin Ritton showed his Model Shipways Picket Boat No. 1. Ryland Craze showed a Woody Joe model of the *Yakata-Bune*. Greg Harrington showed a paper model from a shipyard in Japan and showed the progress on his Portuguese river cargo boat. Tom Matthews showed the book, The Battleship Dreadnought (Anatomy of the Ship) by John Roberts. Lee Martin showed the progress on his *HMS Pegasus* and commented on the excellent quality of the plans. John Proudly showed his model of the 1864 USS *Kearsarge*.

The meeting was adjourned to presentation Bicycles + Battleships = ? by, Tom Matthews.

"If you can't tie a knot, tie a lot."

– Author Unknown