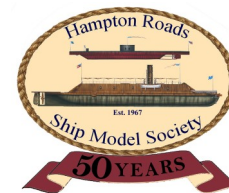


# Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

# Logbook!

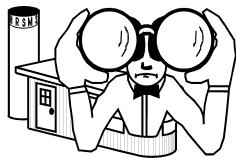


No. 373

WWW.HRSMS.ORG

July, 2017

## From The Bridge



## Mystery Photo



Captain's Log 7.8.17

As Joe Gideon once said, "It's Showtime, folks!"

Starting on Mon. 10 July, the Museum staff will be mounting our models into the display cases. Final details of delivery times and logistics will be communicated at the upcoming Sat. meeting. What I can describe, at this time, is a four-phase process with models being delivered for each of the four cases in turn. This process will minimize the handling and storage of the models prior to being placed in the cases.

A schedule has been worked out to meter the flow of arriving models based on the assigned display case. Peruse the schedules for your name and date to see what slot has been set aside for you. A time window has yet to be determined. I will have more details by the meeting on Sat. For those of you working during your assigned slot, we'll work something out. It's imperative you let me know as soon as possible if you cannot make your assigned date.



At this month's meeting, I'll explain the process of registration and update any information unavailable at print time. I strongly encourage you to attend, especially if you are going to contribute to the exhibit and "All that Jazz."

SD

"If one does not know to which port one is sailing, no wind is favorable."

Lucius Annaeus Seneca

If it's shaped like an anchor, it's got to be good! Right? I mean the anchor is the symbol for hope! As in: "I hope I can solve the Mystery!" "I hope I get it right!" "I hope someone throws me a lifeline!" "I hope there's no test at the end." Test or not, lifeline or not, this anchor is part of the Mystery for this month. Obviously the photograph is an aerial shot, possibly made by a satellite, and it shows the anchor—with something on top. So ask yourself, "Do anchor shaped islands occur naturally?" Be careful how you answer the question.

Anchor: the word can be used as a noun or a verb.

As a verb it sort of defines the opposite of action, "secure firmly in position." As a verb it usually appears in the past tense or as a past participle, i.e., "They anchored the team," but you could say, "We will anchor over there."

As a noun it can mean the principal store at a mall or strip shopping center. It can mean the head news guy broadcasting your favorite fake news. It can mean that heavy object attached to a rope or a chain used to moor a vessel to the sea bottom. Or it could be the pivot point that provides stability to an object or an organization.

If it's uniquely shaped islands you're interested in, does your mind tell you to first look at the tiny nation of Dubai located smack dab on the south eastern tip of the Persian Sea? Some pretty good man-made sculptured islands have been built there by dredging sand. There are two or three palm shaped groups and one the looks like a Hammer projection of the world. Looking at our mystery photograph we see an anchor masquerading as an island, or the other way around if you so desire. Nevertheless we have the island, and it supports the object we need to define. Oh, you could just intrinsically know the answer or you could rely on the giant clue conveniently left there for your use.

Who knows and who needs the lifeline?

The answer does not lie in Dubai. And three of the four replies we have for the month—an encouraging high number for a change—set the result somewhat closer geographically to Bali-Hai. Greg Harrington played and calls it an

*(Continued on page 2)*

## MEETING NOTICE

**Date:** Saturday July 8, 2017

**Place:** Mariners' Museum

**Time:** 1000 Hours



the ship as “another Newport News SB&DD built ship - *MV Medina*.” Now I know he meant to say *SS Medina*, but in the modern age we tend to overlook and forgive a lot. The ship didn’t actually transition from SS to MV until much later. Perhaps we need to chronicle this vessel carefully.

Charles starts us off with the Reader’s Digest version: “The ship was built in 1914 as *MV Medina*, a break bulk freighter. After service in two wars, she was bought by an Italian shipping company and converted to a liner, first the *MV Roma*, then later sold to the Costa line and renamed *MV Franca*. As a liner she carried vacationers from the Atlantic seaboard to the Caribbean. Interesting a wall sculpture she carried in Italian service (picture attached) was removed and later installed in the ill-fated *Costa Concordia*. I wonder if the sculpture went down with that ship. Finally she sailed as the *MV Doulos* for 32 years as a floating Christian book store. So now she [is] beached to be a hotel.”

The short version is good and essentially we are finished. But someone took the time to build the anchor-shaped island and haul the ship up on it, so we should take the time to enrich the story a bit. Michener would be proud. But the real reason is, if a vessel survives for over a century and was productive throughout that time, she deserves to be properly chronicled. Can I get a like? Now let’s take it a bit slower and begin with our focus a bit closer to home—like right down the street.

Would you believe me if I told you that the break-bulk freighter turned favorite liner was originally used “for transporting onions from east Texas to her home port, New York City?” Not glamorous duty but definitely useful. The ship, as Charles says, was built at Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry dock Company. She was one of two sisters whose hulls numbered 175 and 176. Number 175 as named *Neches* making number 176 *SS Medina*. “The keel for hull No. 176 was laid on 21 January 1914 and officially became the *SS Medina* when she was christened just a few months later on 22 August 1914. Her sponsor was 15-year-old Frances Stuart Semmes, daughter of the then-mayor of Newport News.”

Always good ships.

An excellent Wikipedia entry exists for this ship, it is heavily quoted below: “*Medina* was in a high stage of completion when launched, for she was delivered just five weeks later on 29 September 1914. Total elapsed time, from keel laying until delivery, was less than nine months. One reason for the rapidity of construction was due to the normal work week at the shipyard, which in those days was 50 hours a week (in 1913, the regular work week was six, ten-hour days, but that proved impractical because of limited daylight hours during the winter-time.)”

“The vessel will be a single screw steamship of the hurricane deck type with straight stem and elliptical stern, and with deck houses amidship and aft for the crew accommodations...As built she measured 421 feet long and displaced 9,245 tons. At the time of her completion *Medina* was fitted with four coal-fired boilers and a single, triple-expansion engine rated at 4,100 shaft horsepower. Her top speed was listed as 14 knots. Her sister ship *SS Neches* was completed first and apparently her sea trials went so well that *Medina* did not have to undergo similar testing.”

Impressive for ships and shipbuilding in this age. “In the September 1914 issue of *International Marine Engineering*, she was referred to as “One of the most modern and largest freight steamships operating on the Atlantic coast. ”” It is interesting to note that while *Medina* has enjoyed a long and varied career (not yet over) her sister was not so fortunate: “*Neches* would be lost in a collision with British warship in 1918.”

(Continued from page 1)



“interesting find!” Then adds, “The ferry route on the map made it too easy, but I like it.” Dave Baker was stymied and befuddled: “Sigh . . . I’ve got absolutely no idea what the Mystery Photo depicts. Bummer.” Charles Landrum, not so much: “So the clue was the google image that showed the ferry line from Tahah Merak, Singapore to Bandar (port in Arabic) Bentan Telani, Indonesia.” Tim Wood offered a bit of advice: “The editor should have left the ferry line route out of the photo! Took me about two minutes to find it!”

And find it they did, lock, stock, and keel block, right where the clue said it would be—on a man-made spur of land shaped like an anchor connected by a rode to the finger of land that houses the Bandar Bentan Telani ferry terminal, in the South Pacific! The finger is attached to the island of Pulau Bintan which is part of Indonesia. Basically we see the eastern terminus of the local ferry line from Singapore to the island. The island features many resorts one of which, Treasure Bay, Bintan, features the largest conditioned swimming hole (Crystal Lagoon) that I think I’ve ever seen! It is easily four or five times larger than our Mystery-ship-on-an-anchor and is reported to be 6.3 hectares or 115,060,000 liters in size. I think it just might accommodate Gene’s fleet!

But I should digress.

Yes they found it and, yes, they identified it and, yes, it was the clue that did it. Greg was first and Greg says the ship is the *MV Doulos Phos*. Everyone but Dave concurs. But Charles, in his response, took a step further back in time and identified

(Continued on page 3)

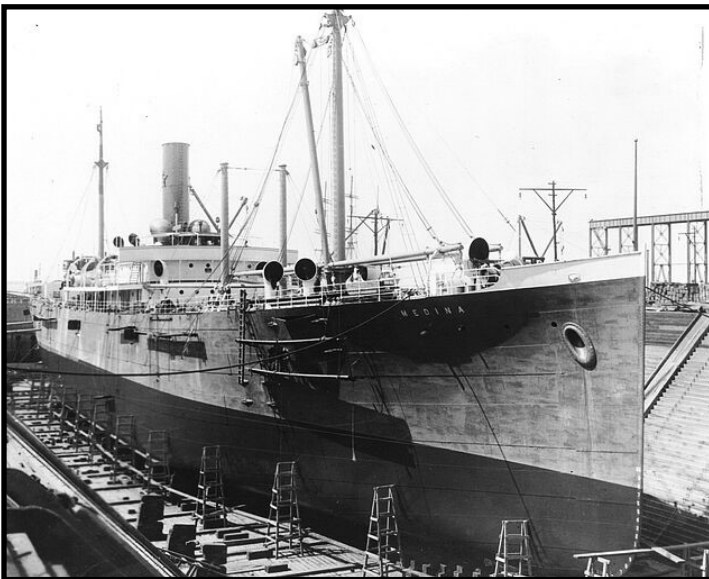
(Continued from page 2)



But that is just her beginning. In 1922 “she was modernized and her boilers converted to burn oil. During World War II she served once again as a military supply ship. During her second stint of wartime service *Medina* rammed a Canadian corvette class naval vessel almost cutting it in half while *Medina* apparently suffered little damage as the result of this mishap.”

“After World War II, *Medina* once again returned to civilian ownership. Faced with ready access to numerous and more modern vessels, her owners had the freighter laid up and placed for sale on the open market. With now over thirty years of service it was anticipated that she would be purchased by a ship breaker. However, she was acquired in 1948 by the Italian company Genaviter.” A cargo ship she would be no more...

“In 1949 Genaviter converted *Medina* to a passenger vessel in La Spezia, Italy. Her bridge was lifted up one deck, her superstructure was enlarged extensively and her tall black funnel was replaced with a more modern-looking one. She was given a raked bow, and accommodations for up to 981 passengers were added, including 287 First Class passengers. Howev-



er, her 694 Tourist Class passengers were berthed in basic dormitory style spaces. Upon completion she was given a new name, SS *Roma*. In 1950, *Roma* was chartered to the "International Roman Catholic Travel Committee" and undertook a series of four Pilgrimage voyages from America to Italy. Then, her owners decided to try her out on the Australian immigrant service. In early October 1950, she embarked 949 refugees; the vast majority of whom were from Eastern Europe countries. Most of her passengers had survived World War II, and were seeking a more peaceful life in Australia. The long voyage from Europe to Australia proved difficult for both passengers and crew. Many of her passengers suffered severe sea sickness, and her crew was kept busy dealing with numerous mechanical problems during the long voyage. Her slow rate of progress required a stop in Ceylon for repairs and also to take on additional provisions and fuel oil. *Roma* finally arrived at her destination on 18 December 1950, after a full two months at sea. But that was only the beginning of the ship's difficulties. Her owners abruptly declared bankruptcy, leaving the crew left without pay for almost three months. Finally, the Italian Consulate came to the rescue and arranged a charter of the SS *Roma* with another Italian shipping company, Lloyd Triestino. Upon

her return to Italy, she was arrested due to her debts to the shipyard who had converted her from a freighter to a passenger ship. At this point, she was 36 years old and her steam propulsion machinery – which was not replaced during the passenger ship conversion – was in bad shape. Once again, she was laid up, and her future looked very bleak. In April 1952, *Roma* was sold at auction to the only bidder present; another Italian shipping company, Costa Lines.”

“Costa Lines registered the vessel in Genoa and renamed her *Franca C*. Her steam propulsion machinery was replaced with a diesel engine that could develop 4,200 Shaft Horse Power which gave the ship a respectable speed of 15 knots. Further additions to her superstructure were made and her funnel was again modernized and included a Costa Lines' logo: a large “C” painted on both sides.”

“For the next several years, she made regularly scheduled trips between Italy, and Central and South America. In 1957, her funnel was modified yet again, by adding a pipe-like extension to help keep diesel fumes and smoke away from her open passenger decks, aft. In 1959 she was withdrawn from the trans-Atlantic trade and transformed into an all first class cruise ship, operating out of Genoa. An important part of her transformation was the addition of air conditioning throughout the 45-year-old vessel. As a one-class cruise ship, her number of passenger berths was reduced to 552, and all her passenger cabins were fitted with private baths. *Franca C* continued cruising until 1970. By then the ship was 56 years old, and her owners had begun to think seriously about taking her out of service and selling her for scrap. But her all-riveted hull was still in excellent condition and her first diesel engine had been replaced just a few years previously with a newer and larger diesel engine rated at 8,100 Shaft Horse Power.”

“A decision was made to keep *Franca C* in service, and during a brief overhaul many of her passenger spaces were refurbished internally. On 4 February 1971, she began a series of 14-day cruises in the Mediterranean. In 1974 she returned to the Caribbean and made a series of three and four-day cruises to Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao and Margarita. *Franca C* returned to Europe at the conclusion of the 1977 Mediterranean cruise season and her owners once again contemplated ending her career. Most ocean-going vessels remain in service for 30 to 40 years. At age 63, it was logically assumed by most maritime observers that she would be scrapped. However, certain passengers on the ship's very last cruise had other plans for the ship.”

(Continued on page 4)

## Nautical Term

**Landlubber** A shoresider, especially one who knows little about the water. **Lubber** comes from Anglo-Saxon, also from old French.

Tim Wood

## THE ANSWER

The answer to mystery photo 372:

Google Earth image of the MV Doulos Phos on shore at the Bandar Bentan Telani ferry terminal in Indonesia.

(Continued from page 3)

“Several representatives from a Christian charity organization were on board during her last cruise under Costa Lines' ownership, looking for a ship suitable for their operations. *Franca C* was still in excellent condition and they considered her well suited for their purposes. In addition, her asking price was very reasonable at less than one million USD. On 4 November 1977, her ownership was transferred to GBA (which stands for Gute Bucher fur Alle, or Good Books for All), an affiliate of a German Christian organization whose primary mission is to distribute heavily discounted educational and religious books worldwide. GBA renamed her M/V *Doulos*. She would continue in ocean going service for almost 32 more years.”



Surviving a terrorist attack only to succumb to regulation: “On 11 August 1991, during the final night of the MV *Doulos*' stop in the southern Philippine port of Zamboanga City, two of her foreign crewmembers were killed when a grenade thrown by members of the Abu Sayyaf Islamist terrorist group exploded on stage during a performance by its Christian volunteers. Four locals were killed and 32 others were injured, including several crew members of the missionary ship. In 1993, after her initial fifteen years of such service, it became apparent that some significant repair work was needed to keep her sailing safely. That work commenced in May of that year, in Cape Town, South Africa. Over 170 volunteers flew there from four continents to minimize the cost of what was dubbed "the electrical project". That effort involved replacing much of the ship's original DC electrical system and replacing it with a modern AC system. A number of other major modifications and hull repairs were also made during this refit period. She left Cape Town in mid-November, refreshed and ready to continue her missionary work. In 1995, in order to conform to then new SOLAS regulations, she was fitted with a sprinkler system and combustible wall panels were removed and replaced. This un-

fortunately meant the loss of many of her wall murals that had been installed by Costa.”

The end of sailing, the beginnings of an anchor.

While in dry dock in 2009 *Doulos*' hull was determined to still be in good condition, however a survey revealed significant problems with machinery, structure, and systems. Since the cost to complete repairs would be in excess of 10 million euros, it was decided to end her service with the charitable organization. “She was offered for scrap...and a caretaker crew remained with her, expecting to sail her to the breakers.”

Enter Mr. Eric Saw, director and chief executive of BizNaz Resources International Pte Ltd in Singapore who purchased the vessel for use with a very different mission in mind. The vessel's name was changed, perhaps for the final time, to *Doulos Phos* which means servant of light. The original intend for the ship was to transform her into a floating multi use facility in Singapore. After five years if became clear that the project in its current form was not economically feasible and a new study concluded that it would be “economically and physically feasible to reposition *Doulos Phos* on land and turn her into a luxury hotel.” Her hull was structurally braced to support her weight on dry land, she was towed to the location we see in our Mystery Photo, and then “the ship was hoisted up a slope to a promontory point overlooking the harbor.” You say promontory, I say anchor. In February of 2016 the ship began her conversion to a luxury hotel.

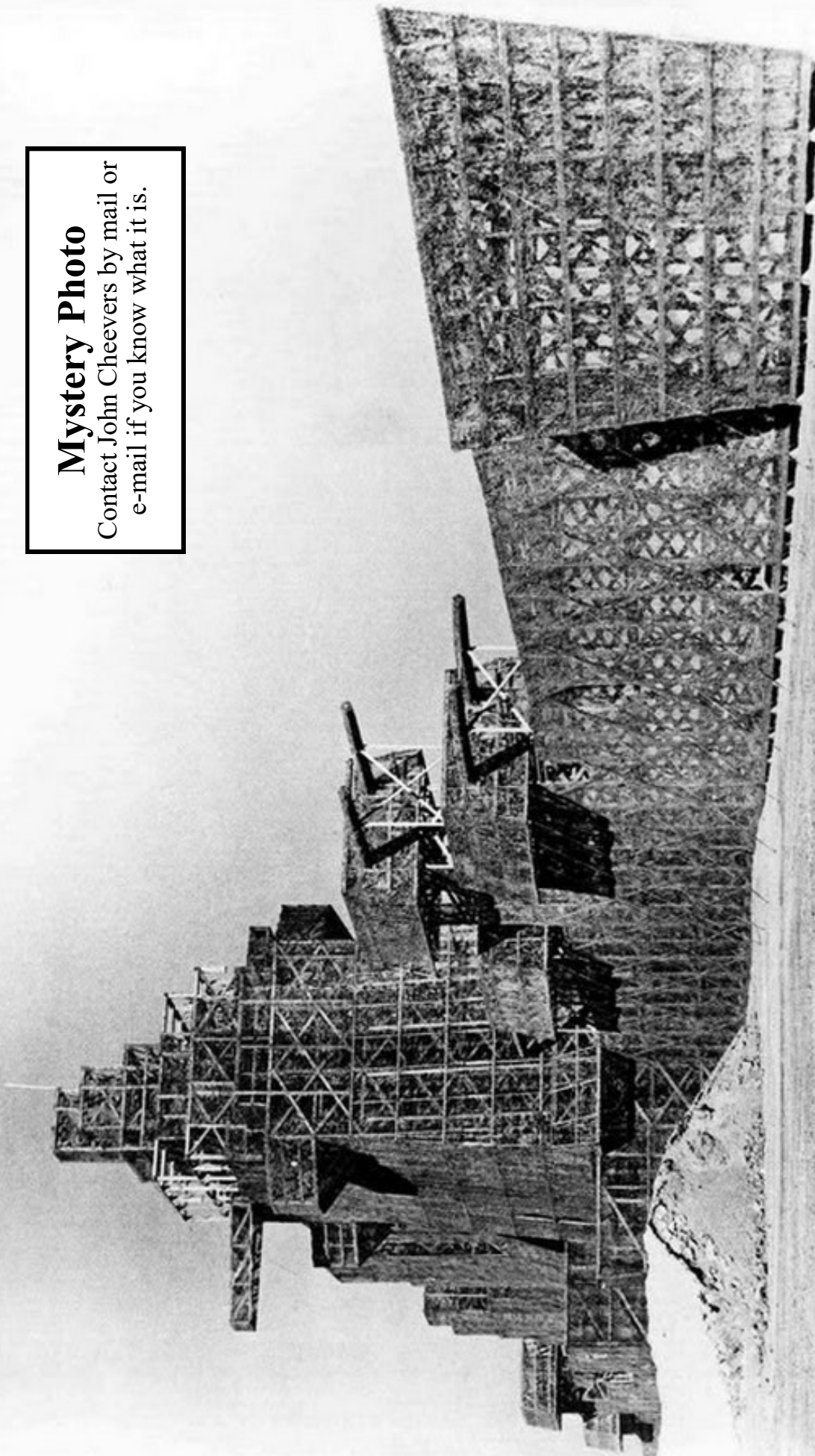
I suppose that I could have shortened the history of Medina/Roma/*Franca C*/*Doulos*/*Doulos Phos*, but, what's the point? You get to be a hundred and you have a story to tell. Besides, the ship held (holds) the record for being the world's oldest active ocean going passenger ship. Once she was placed on the anchor shaped island she became part of the symbol of hope for the organization that bought her. Or maybe we need to think in terms that the anchor is a fitting base for a vessel that spread hope for over 30 years. Greg fittingly ends this tale by stating

(Continued on page 6)



## **Mystery Photo**

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



## NOTABLE EVENTS

### 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  
Picnic, Newport News Park  
19 Talk Like a Pirate Day

### OCTOBER

- 14 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
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

### MAY

- 12 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

### JUNE

- 9 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 (757) 481-6018  
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

## MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society  
Monthly Meeting  
Mariners' Museum  
June 10, 2017

Skipper, Gene Berger called the meeting to order at 1007 hours. Bill Barker, the museum's archivist talked about an upcoming exhibit commemorating the 100th anniversary of the WWI armistice to be set in the collections gallery during the May – December 2018 timeframe. The museum is looking for 3 dimensional objects to augment the items in the museum's collection. There will be more details on the requirements for this exhibit at a later date. The Skipper said that this is a project that he hopes the HRSMS can support.

Gene presented membership certificates to several members. The next item discussed was the HRSMS 50th Anniversary Exhibit. Gene said that the exhibit would include 54 models. There will be another meeting with the museum on June 19th to discuss signage for the models. A schedule for model delivery will be forthcoming. A reception is being planned for Friday August 4th to mark the exhibits opening. The reception will require a contribution from the HRSMS and that amount will be determined at a later date. Gene then talked about the models that were donated to the HRSMS and the auction to be held later in the meeting. There were no corrections to the minutes. In Ryland's absence, the Skipper gave the Purser's report.

Old Business: Old business was deferred to the July meeting.

New Business: None

Show & Tell: Charles Landrum showed drawings of the French pre-dreadnought Voltaire and a French postcard with a photo of the Onondaga in French service. Bruce Brown showed the progress on his subchaser. John Cheevers showed his Monitor in its final stages.

Gene conducted an auction to dispose of the donated models.

The meeting was adjourned to a presentation "AC 35", by Ron Lewis.

(Continued from page 4)



that "If I ever go back to Singapore, maybe I'll take a ferry ride and spend a weekend in Indonesia." Yeah, and I hope you take Gene's *SS United States* with you to play with in the pool!

John Cheevers

The ship currently known as the *MV Doulos Phos* held the record of being the world's oldest active ocean-faring [passenger ship](#) until December 2009, having plied the world's oceans from the time of her building in 1914 until being retired from cruising service at the end of 2009.