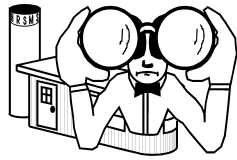




## From The Bridge



### Captains' Log 4.13.19

We celebrate Greg Harrington as the recipient of this year's Founders Award for his contributions to the web site and banquets. And, as it happens, he is also this month's Modeler of the Month. Don't let it go to your head...! Congratulations.

Like most of you, I am looking forward to the day I can throw open the garage (workshop) doors to allow fresh air to circulate regularly. Having been cooped up all winter I've bundled against the cold, paint fumes and dust. They made me less than sharp, if not creative. We've had a taste of a few sunny days recently, so it won't be long...I'll complain about the heat later.

The hour's late with nothing more to say. So, "Good night, Gracie".

Take care, and model onward...

SD

### THE ANSWER

The answer to mystery photo 393:

Launch of the Pre-Dreadnaught Georgia  
Bath Iron Works, October 11, 1914

### Nautical Term

**Gunwale** The upper edge, or lower bulwark on the side of a vessel. The definition has varied over the years with changes in ships' and boats' design. Earlier, and generally, it was the top of the bulwark structure, the guns being carried on the main deck. Often contracted to gunnel.

Tim Wood

### MEETING NOTICE

**Date:** Saturday April 13, 2019  
**Place:** Mariners' Museum  
**Time:** 1000 Hours

## Mystery Photo



Mystery Photo #393: Well, this might be a first for Mystery Photo. This might be the first time we've offered a ship's launching as our subject for the month—I don't remember. Nice thing about this image is if you can identify the ship, you can pin the timeline to a day. Right now, I don't know which ship this is so the date and the day of the week, for that matter, are very much mysteries. In this modern era, launchings usually occur on Saturday—there's a lot of reasons why, most of them economic. In the past, they happened whenever the ship was ready to go. There were more launchings back then and, in a lot of cases, the builder was not waiting on a tide, they just needed to clear the slip for the next new build—again, economics.

So we have a new build on the verge of her launch. Shortly, after the crowd gathers, the dignitaries will arrive and mount the platform. The music will stop, the speeches will start. And in the background the rhythmic, staccato din of big wooden beetles will be heard as the shipwrights remove the last of the building shores transferring the load from the ground ways to the launch ways where it is held tight by the trigger. It's a well-timed choreographed event designed to have the weight of the ship rest on the greased shipways for only the time required for the dignified hot air to leave the principle speaker and for the launch party to assemble at the launch platform. After that the ship's sponsor will christen the ship by breaking a bottle of specific liquid across the ship's stem and utter the standard phrase, a whistle will blow, and the man in the trigger pit will pull the trigger allowing vessel to begin its slide to the water.

The photograph captures a festive and party atmosphere, bunting around the speaker's platform can attest to this. Men, women, and children are arriving dressed for the occasion, perhaps that's the last of them ascending the catwalk now. It's not a huge crowd but one, no doubt, mostly representing the families of the shipbuilders. A band is either playing or preparing to play the appropriate music. The ship is dressed as best it can be, the flags show a freshening breeze. The photo-

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Thanks

Thanks to Tony Clayton and his wife, Dorothy for their hospitality at the March meeting in Norge Hall.

# Modeler of the Month

## April 2019

Greg Harrington



My passion for ships began around age 5, when my parents would take me to a park at the base of the Blue Water Bridge, where Lake Huron empties into the St. Clair River. There, we would watch the big freighters pass by. For no reason I can name, “Cleveland Cliffs” was a sentimental favorite. Seeing these massive machines up close was clearly impactful.

As for models, I’ve been fascinated with anything miniaturized for as long as I can remember. I favor boats, but I enjoy anything shrunk down into another world – planes, trains, doll house furniture, and dioramas of all sorts. Like many modelers, I began building in plastic. I believe the first was a Revell snap-together F-4 Phantom. I was approximately 7 years old, and I recall working at our kitchen table with my parents close at hand.

Trains are also of particular interest, but as a child I lacked the funds to do a first-class job to the extent my heart desired. So, I switched to small scenes with 1:285 pewter military figures by GHQ Models. I still have a few of the figures stored away. The nascence of my interest in scratch modeling was a visit to a neighbor who had constructed a high-quality lake freighter nearly the length of his garage. I did no scratch building at this time, and modeling then took a long hiatus due to teenage distractions and college. In 1990, I started my career at National Steel and Shipbuilding Company in San Diego, CA – a pleasant change of scenery after 21 cold winters. A couple of years later, knowing of my lingering interest in ship models, my parents bought me the “Midwest” Muscongus Bay Lobster Smack kit. I made a few enhancements to improve the realism on this intermediate-level kit. Knowing what I’ve learned since, I could have made many more – but this, of course, is the nature of learning.

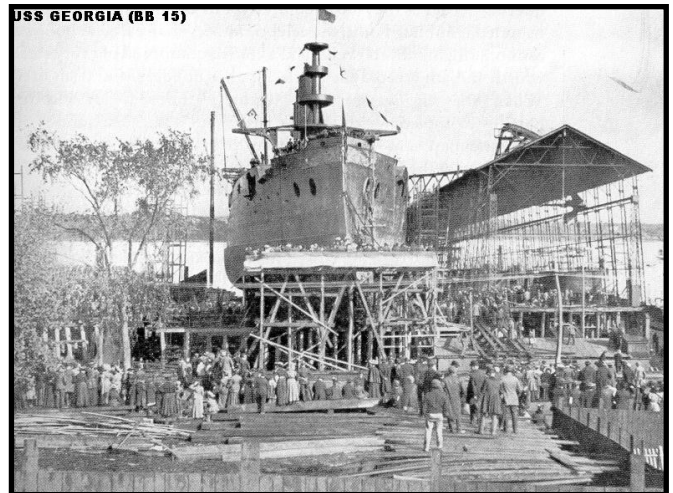
Modeling was put aside again when I took a job at Newport News Shipbuilding in 1994. I joined the Hampton Roads Ship Model Society shortly thereafter, and later became the club’s first (and thus far only) webmaster. A new marriage, job, and

(Continued from page 1)



graph also captures slightly inclement weather. The scene looks wet and a number of patrons have deployed their umbrellas. For all the overcoats you can assume that this is not the summer, but I wonder if it is really all that cold or if the coats are worn to shield from the rain.

The ship itself is large—battleship size. While most ships are not complete at launch, this one is more complete than most; I call you attention to the bridgework, stacks, and masts,



all items usually fitted out pier side. The absence of overhead crane service is probably the reason. You can see a large derrick rigged amidships, but it might not be serviceable to land the stacks and masts. I wonder what was used to accomplish this and how was it set up?

Lets’ walk the ship: We’ll start at the prominent ram-bow. It, and only it, has been freshly painted for the occasion. Two large openings remain in the forward end as the anchor

(Continued on page 4)

house, followed by an unreasonable stubbornness to build from scratch, kept me from starting another project. It would be 12 years before I started a new project, while I collected the funds, tools, knowledge (and nerve) to get started. It would have been better to do a few kits along the way, but that is water under the Blue Water Bridge.

Sail and early steam working boats became my primary interests. My second wooden model, and first scratch-built effort, was a *culé* - a Portuguese riverine cargo boat. I don’t know why I would pick such a subject, as Portuguese working boats are a riot of color, and to me painting is easily the most tedious part of modeling. My current project is a Danish *åledrivkvase*, or eel drifter. I chose it for its interesting rig. A steam tug and some decorative half hull models are on the short list for my next project.

Many thanks to all the HRSMS members for sharing their knowledge and friendship. I hope I am part of this association for many more years.

## What's Happening at the Museum

If, as we know. April showers bring May flowers, what, then, do May flowers bring? I'm sure most have noticed that the Age of Exploration gallery is partially open so we can now avoid going through the ship models gallery to get to the Monitor Classroom to attend our monthly meeting; although I don't know why anyone would bypass the most important gallery in the Museum! Models "R" us!

If you haven't noticed, the Monitor's turret is undergoing its most critical process since the actual recovery in August 2002, in itself, a six month project. The turret, a unique design of John Ericsson, had rested on the floor of the Atlantic Ocean, about 240 feet below the surface and about 16 miles off the coast of Cape Hatteras, for nearly 140 years. I mentioned this event last month but here are some more details on the project. Through the cooperation of a number of resources, i.e. Newport News Shipyard, Colonna Shipyard, Fair Lead Boat Works, Hampton Rubber Company and NOAA, the iconic turret will move for the first time in nearly 20 years! It will move about two inches up, on hydraulic lifts, the metal framework supporting it will be replaced with a system of custom designed supports, and then it will be lowered back to its position atop the new supports, allowing better access to the roof and a somewhat easier conservation process. We're still years away from the completion of this, the largest metals conservation project in the world. But progress is very satisfactory. As with any effort this vast, the conservation is accomplished in phases and each phase brings us closer to a successful conclusion. If you get a chance, speak with Will Hoffman, our chief conservator, or Howard Hoege, our President and CEO. They are both very proud and very passionate about this unique program.

Now, on April 14 a special presentation marking the night the RMS Titanic struck an iceberg and began her slow journey to the bottom of the North Atlantic, taking hundreds of souls with her. The presentation begins at 1:30 but reservations are required so, if you're a member, call in your RSVP today! And go to the Museum website for many other interesting options in the Museum's event schedule.

### The Museum Challenge

I'm amazed that I've had not a single response to our March challenge. It's an interesting detective question! This one is not so complex. One of our prize galleries has been in the same location since 1956. You know the collection and many knew the artist. He was not an armorer but a builder of miniature ships. Therefore, as several of the ships were built to carry cannon, in fact, over two hundred guns in total, there are not anywhere that many actually placed in the ships. How many cannon are there in this unique collection? First correct answer wins the prize. Send me your answer at [rlewisclu@aol.com](mailto:rlewisclu@aol.com). I won't attend the April meeting because my brilliant and wonderful granddaughter will be here from Scotland where she is studying Linguistics and Cultural Anthropology (What?) at the University of Edinburgh! But I'll award the prize in May. You can still submit an answer for last month!

Ron Lewis

P.S. What do May flowers bring? Pilgrims!

## AMERICAN NAVAL HISTORY War of 1812

1814 Part 4

September 1: Under Captain Hyde Parker, a British amphibious expedition captures Castine and Belfast, Maine.

September 1: The sloop Wasp sinks the British brig Avon in a night action in the eastern Atlantic.

September 1,4: On Lake Huron, the schooners, Tigress and Scorpion, are captured in a boarding action by the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

September 3: The frigate Adams, is burned to prevent her capture at Hampton, Maine.

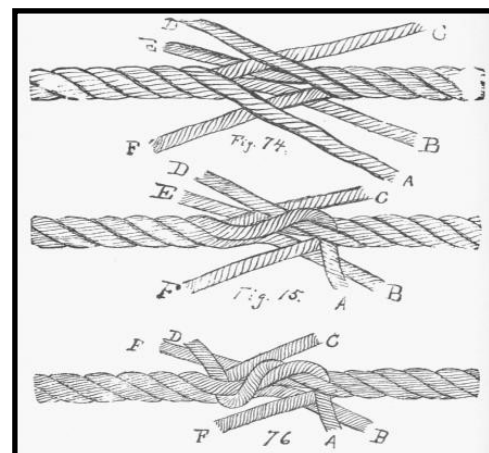
September 11: Commodore Thomas Macdonough's American squadron, composed of the corvette Saratoga, brig Eagle, schooner Ticonderoga, sloop Preble and 10 gunboats, fought an action with British squadron under Commodore George Downie consisting of the frigate Confiance, brig Linnet, sloop Chub and Finch and 13 gunboats. The action lasted 2 hours and 20 minutes with all four of the principal British vessels forced to surrender, 3 gunboats are sunk, with the others put to flight. This event, more than any other, convinces the British government to seek peace.

September 11 – October 1: The pirate, Jean Lafitte, on Barataria Island near the mouth of the Mississippi River, is attacked by an expedition consisting of the schooners Carolina, Seahorse and six gunboats, supported by 70 men of the 44<sup>th</sup> Infantry. The settlement is burned and 11 vessels mounting 20 guns are captured.

September 12-14: The British army, fresh from the scorching of Washington, lands at North Point on the Patapsco River, while the British Navy continues upstream to bombard Fort McHenry, commanding Baltimore harbor. Major General Robert Ross is mortally wounded in action with militia who do not run away and Fort McHenry, the defense of which eyewitness Francis Scott Key immortalizes in 'The Star-Spangled Banner' is not silenced. The British reembark.

The War of 1812 Continues

Bob Moritz



(Continued from page 2)



bolster castings have yet to be installed, but above that the decorative scrollwork is. Just aft of the poppet we see a round plated off opening. The plate covers the opening for an underwater torpedo tube. The fore poppet is in place but some of the shores remain letting us know that the ship is not fully rammed up. The split bilge keel is evident and there is a glimpse of a docking keel under the forward half (you can see it if you find the original image on line). Way at the stern a single propeller blade is in view. The hull plating is visible as well as the shelf designed to hold the side armor. The rows of white



USS Georgia after launch



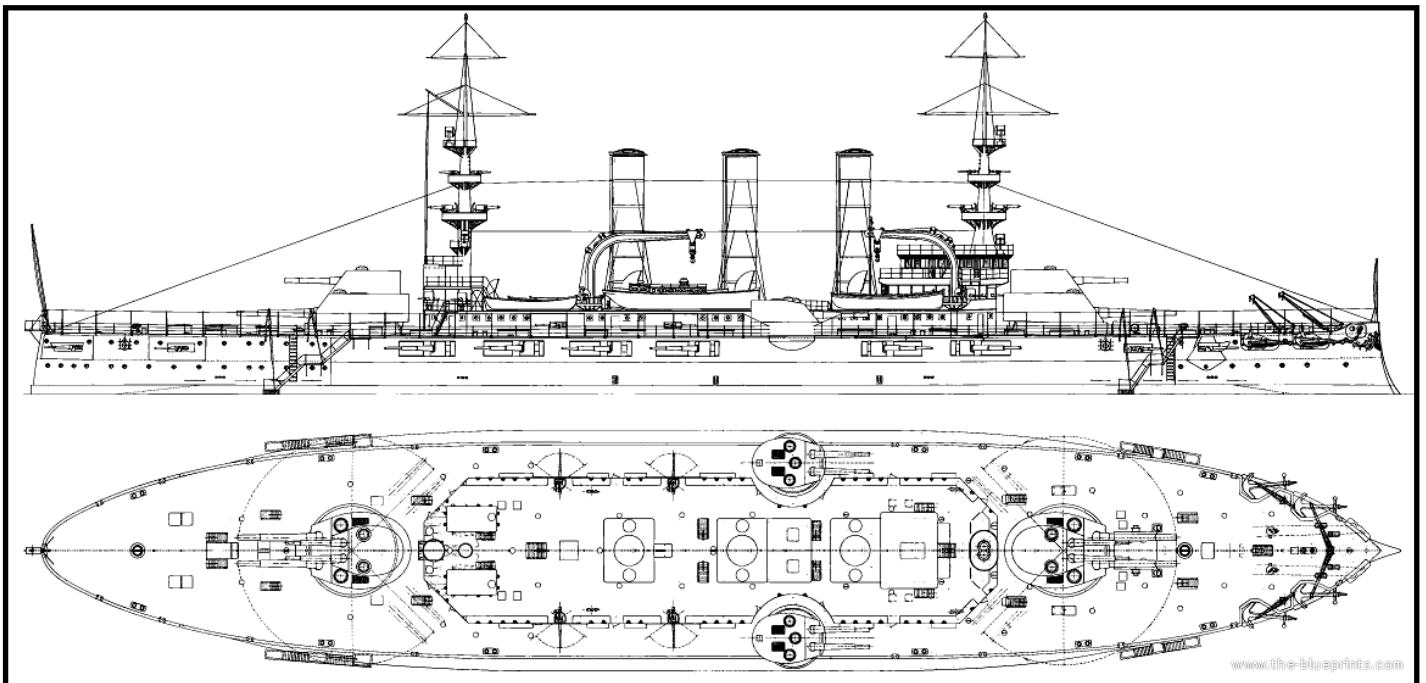
dots are really the spots where the shell plating will be drilled for the rivets or bolts that will hold the armor plating. A very good diagram of this appears on page 149 of Reilly and Scheina's book *American Battleships 1886-1923*. Above all this we see an anchor platform and numerous openings for the casemated tertiary guns.

The background:” If you look past the ram bow and through the open shed, you will see the mast of a ship, the rat-lined stays and mast cross-tree is visible. Several intrepid inter-

lopers have stationed themselves there to witness the event. That's Yankee ingenuity! Not to be outdone in this category, down in the lower right of the image you can pick out two very brave—or stupid—men who have climbed the power pole to get a better view of the proceedings. The less brave or more sensibly minded have taken to the scaffold and shed roof on the left. The real lucky ones are the folks who get to “ride the boat” as it slides in the river. (I remember getting my best launch tickets from a guy who got the opportunity to ride. It was the launch of USS Albany, last slide launch of a submarine at NNS. He rode the boat while my party got to stand almost under the boat on a platform built right next to the trigger pit!)

One reply this month, from none other than Rob Napier, and it begins this way: “I love when I already know the Mystery Photo. This one is incredibly familiar to me. I think I actually have a good-quality print of it somewhere in the house.

(Continued on page 5)



(Continued from page 4)



But can't find it right now. I drive past this exact spot several times a year. It is Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine."

And if his knowing the location wasn't good enough he also knew the vessel's identity. "The ship in the MP is the future Virginia-class battleship USS Georgia. The image date is October 11, 1904. There are 3 great shots taken within minutes of each other at this launch. The first is the MP. Recognizable because many onlookers have rigged their

weapons. It is really easy to visualize the ship's skin stretched around the frames, to see how thin, frail, even a huge ship really is. With a lot of work to do after the MP was snapped, Georgia wasn't finished for another 23 months. She was commissioned in Boston September 24, 1906."

And some more from him that I sort of disagree with: "It's interesting to see that the ever-thrifty Mainers haven't spent a huge amount of time matching the poppets of the launching ways to the shape of the hull. They've just crammed wood in there that will fill up the spaces, probably using wedges only for the final fit." I think

that while they probably were thrifty, they are also very practical. Poppets, the reusable part usually consists of heavy vertical timbers and a saddle plate we see them here. The softer wood packing is fitted between the saddle and the hull—we see that in our Mystery photo. This packing is designed to shift and crush, and possibly dislodged as the hull begins to pivot on the poppet when the stern begins to float. You'll notice that these poppets are not secured (cabled) to the hull as they usually are at other yards, and that is why the "cramming" would be OK. With cabled poppets we usually see a concrete cap covering the soft wood packing. With this shipyard lacking a dry dock, I suppose the intent was to leave the poppet on the way as the ship floats off.

And some final observations from Rob: "It's astonishing how much timber is required to build a steel ship. The Iron Works had to consume a lot of trees just for the visitors' platform (which actually may be staging for another vessel). Looks like only one person arrived at the event by bicycle. Conspicuous by their absence are huge cranes. Georgia didn't have to wait to be commissioned to experience one the trickiest bits of navigation she'd have to perform during her entire career. Less than two miles below Bath, the Kennebec River

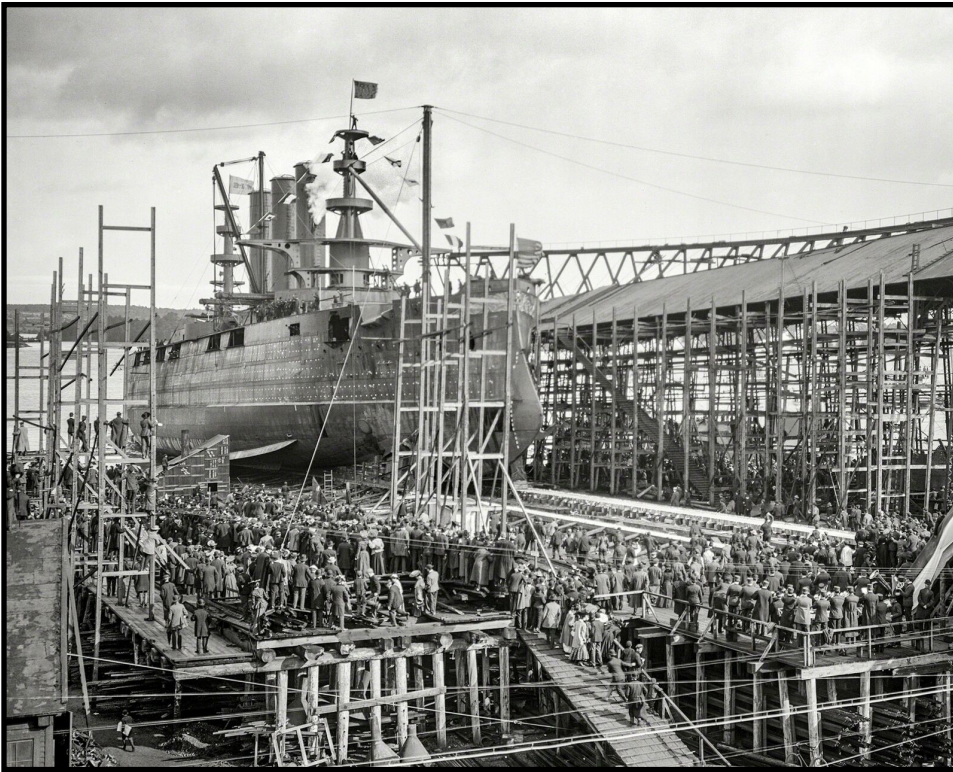
takes a hard 90-degree sharp turn to the left, where the river is only two ship-lengths wide. In another half mile, she has to turn hard right. They learn immediately how the ship will steer, whether under its own power or tow. Bath is thirteen annoyingly narrow miles from the open sea."

So Rob provides us with an identity and confirmed date. For fun, and out of curiosity, I googled the date, 11 October, 1904, and found out that it was a Tuesday. The three images (four really) can be found at SHorpy.com. Apparently they are large format (8 X 10) glass plate negatives. And they are credited to the Detroit Photographic Company.

You can search on-line to learn of the ship's operational history, her specifications, and fate.

One of the ironies that that exists in all of the pre-dreadnaught and dreadnaught American battleships, some 64 vessels counting cancellations, is that the one in our Mystery Photo is the only one built at Bath. Perhaps that lack of a big crane and that narrow, crooked river had something to do with it.....

John Cheevers



The launch of the U.S.S. Georgia at Bath Iron Works

umbrellas. But in a slightly later image, the 'brellies are furled, the sun is shining, and, in the third image, when the vessel is backing into the Kennebec River, they are still furled. The tubas and trumpets of that big brass band near the foot of the steps up to the upper platform, where the dignitaries wait for Stella Tate to toss the bottle against the stem casting, won't have to be bailed out when the crucial moment arrives. In the image of the ship during descent the band is standing erect, busy at its task. Oompah and tooty-toot-toot. Probably a Sousa march, don't you think?"

The "Sousa march" comment got me to lookin into his music as I have always liked it, especially at naval functions. When his music is played by a service band it's an absolute treat. Four of his works in particular deserve to be recognized: Semper Fidelis, 1888; Jack Tar, 1903; El Capitan, 1895; The Washington Post March, 1889. Google them and play them on your PC while you read and digest this essay.

More from Rob: "I know big metal ships are usually launched before they are completed --- this to keep weight down until the new behemoth has to actually move. But Georgia seems to be still in need of a lot of her stuff. Even the hawse castings haven't been fitted, and the bridge is instill skeletal. No



Two Photos of the Norge Hall Auction



Skipper, Gene Berger addressing Banquet attendees.

Greg Harrington accepting the Founders' Award.

## **Mystery Photo**

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



## NOTABLE EVENTS

### APRIL

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation, John Wyld, "Doolittle Raid"

### MAY

- 11 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation, Air Brushing, Charles Landrum

### JUNE

- 8 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation, Round Table, Bruce Brown, Dave Chelmow,  
A.N. Other

### JULY

- 13 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation, Stewart Winn, Intrepid

### AUGUST

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

### SEPTEMBER

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

### OCTOBER

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

### NOVEMBER

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

### DECEMBER

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

### JANUARY

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

### FEBRUARY

- 8 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Election of officers

### MARCH

- 14 **HRSMS** Monthly Meeting:

## MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society  
Monthly Meeting  
March 9, 2019  
Norge Hall  
Guest: Eric Terry, 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

The Skipper reminded everyone to cast their ballot for Founders' Award and to sign up for the banquet. The meeting was adjourned so auctioneer John Cheevers could conduct our most profitable auction yet.

### Banquet Views



### WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL



Skipper: Gene Berger (757) 850-4407  
Mate: John Cheevers  
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  
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