

Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

Logbook!



No. 396

WWW.HRSMS.ORG

June, 2019

HRSMS Members Honored

The Mariners' Museum held their Volunteer Awards Breakfast is on Thursday, May 23rd. Two members of the Hampton Roads Ship Model Society were recognized for their contributions.

Dave Baker received The Robert Strasser Memorial Award. This award was created to recognize a volunteer who is the epitome of graciousness and warmth, and who truly extends himself or herself in attending to the needs of Museum guests, treating them with exemplary respect and warmth! He received a certificate and a card to choose a print from our collection.

Dave also received recognition for the hours category of 250-499. He had 345 hours and received a Museum travel mug with candy and gift card to Starbucks inside.

John Cork received the award for the most hours, 706! He received a certificate and a gift card to the Museum Gift Shop.

THE ANSWER

The answer to mystery photo 395:
US Navy ironclad gunboat and ram, USS Lafayette, dressed with flags for some occasion in the Mississippi River, 1863-65.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Nautical Term

Otter Board Either of a pair of boards or metal plates, attached to each side of the mouth of a trawl net at an angle which keeps the net open as it is pulled through the water.

Tim Wood

MEETING NOTICE

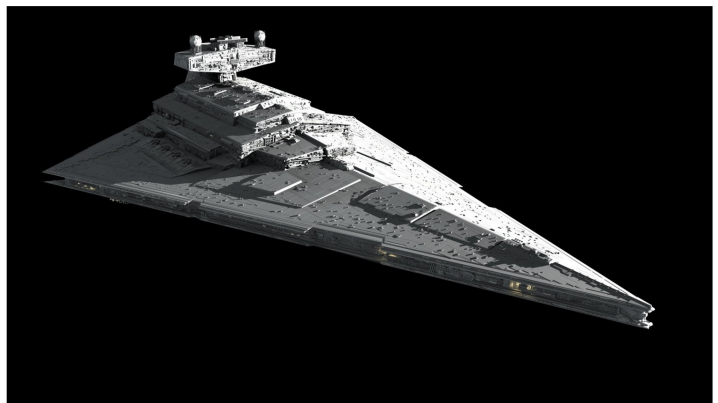
Date: Saturday June 8, 2019
Place: Mariners' Museum
Time: 1000 Hours

Mystery Photo



Mystery Photo #395: Churchill said that "Russia is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." Churchill never faced the Mystery Photo. Had he, he would have begun his quote with "Mystery Photo is...", because that is exactly how we can describe the offering for this month. It comes from a time where engineering could be sketchy and records vague. You will see, as we peel back the layers, that this mystery is indeed "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma."

What we have on offer is an overexposed, sepia toned print showing a slab-sided rivercraft of some sort resting in a body of water that is suspiciously the same color as the surrounding paper and sky—there is the hint of a far shore and, perhaps, a bridge back there as well. On the surface you "fictionados" might think it's a deep space Destroyer straight



歼星舰能摧毁威胁地球的小行星吗？

out of Star Wars or some other sci-fi-based, galactic civilization hovering there defying gravity—there are similarities. But let's go the other way with our thinking. Let's say that the Star Wars model makers drew heavily from US military history for their inspiring designs (of particular note: look up "Snoke's Supremacy Flagship", and you'll see what I mean). With that thought in mind, we can make some interesting guesses about the bones of this beast.

Which brings us to Churchill's riddle: Couple of replies this month, one from way up North, and one from across the Roads. Rob Napier pulls our attention from deep space to way down South. "Well, I looked at this month's MP and

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Modeler of the Month

June 2019

Ron Lewis



CARS!! CARS, CARS, CARS! That's what life was about as soon as I was old enough to drive. But cars, as they rolled out of Detroit, were not finished. Oh, no! They had to be chopped and channeled, "lakes pipes" added, nosed and Frenched, moon discs or "Lancers" on the wheels, louvers on the hood, the grill replaced by a rack of tubes.... Well, as much as we idolized George Barris we couldn't quite afford to do all that with real cars...so we bought plastic model kits and customized them with x-acto knives, body putty and melted plastic. What a mess! But it was a beginning. And as soon as I realized the limitations of plastic, especially lost parts replacement, I turned to wood. Now, with a lumberyard of basswood, holly, boxwood, walnut...I can make any part that disappears and probably do a better job of authentic reproduction than the kit maker! But wood doesn't lend itself well to cars, planes etc. but boats, ships...that's a natural! So I began. And I found it fun, challenging, educational, all the things that any pursuit would have to offer if I was to follow it.

Nearly 30 years ago I joined The Mariners' Museum as an interpreter, speaker and participant in the Bronze Door Society. My main Museum assignment was the Crabtree gallery and I was fortunate to be able to assist in the label copy when the gallery was redone in 1998. Then I met Bob Comet and Joe McCleary. Two artisans who taught me the rudiments of collecting wooden model kits and storing them under beds, in the attic, etc. Oh, and also building some of them! They also introduced me to the Hampton Roads Ship Model Society, probably the best advice I've received! My wife gifted my first real kit, the *Willie L Bennett* which gave me a real education in the construction of Chesapeake Bay watermen's craft. Other than those iconic work boats, log canoes, bugeyes, etc. of the early 20th century, my interest is in the mighty sailing ships of the Age of Exploration up to about 1840. Recently, my time has been spent restoring damaged models for Mariners' Ed Department, the Deltaville Museum and many for Museum visitors and patrons. These repairs and restorations have generated gifts from the model owners to the Museum's general fund of over \$7,000.00. I am most proud of that aspect of my admittedly limited talent.

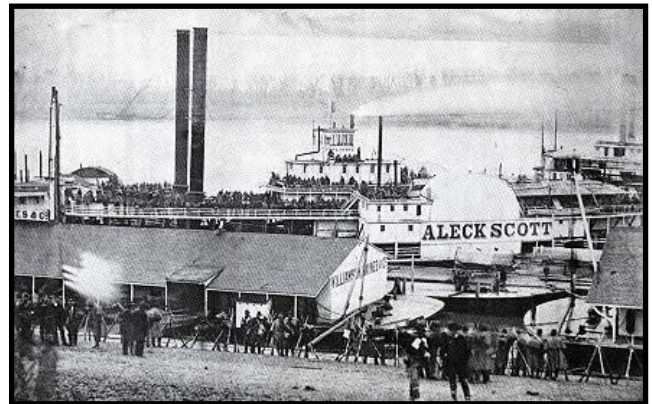
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thought: "Oooh, this is one of my favorite all-time weird vessels. Looks like a giant-haunched 'gator slithering through the 'glades, waiting to snap up an unsuspecting anhinga. Let's see, what's its name --- Native, I think --- ah, yes: Choctaw." Couldn't be from any other era than US Civil War."

For Tim's money, I think he's too heavily invested in "that" mahogany brown elixir. "In this month's mystery photo we can see an ironclad ship flying several flags along with the Union flag, possibly for a change of command or possibly being commissioned into the navy." Ok, I know they're there and you know they're there, but does it take a dram from the top shelf to elicit useful data from these flags? And to complete the simile, "The ship in question has little to no freeboard; we can assume she is for river use or what is referred to today as "Brown Water"." I like his thinking cause I'll have some "Brown Water" later...I think.

I like Rob's thinking, too! And I like new words, so I had to look up anhinga. Cause if I'm 'gator slithering' and I'm



Aleck Scott converted to troop transport after the Civil War began.

gonna 'snap it up', I better make sure that it at least tastes good. Seems to me that an anhinga is a little on the scrawny side. Looks a little like a cormorant but with a flamingo-like neck. The dictionary says it is sometimes referred to as a snakebird, a darter, or a water turkey (?). Snake...no way. Water turkey....I don't think I want the drumstick...

They continue to solve the riddle. Tim's logical breakdown goes like this: From her general appearance and arrangement he concludes that she is an ironclad. "The union navy had eight categories or loosely stating classes of ironclads, these are Coastal monitors, River and harbor monitors, Ocean-going monitors, Riverine casemate ironclads, Ocean-going casemate ironclads, Commissioned ironclads, Non-commissioned ironclads, and finally Miscellaneous ironclads. From this information we can see only two classes have paddlewheel ironclads, the Riverine casemate ironclads has eight in the class, the Commissioned ironclad class has only one ship and it's the *USS Eastport*. Our mystery ship by default falls into the Riverine casemate ironclad class, the ships in this class include; *USS Indianola*, *USS Benton*, *USS Essex*, *USS Chillicothe*, *USS Choctaw*, *USS Lafayette*, *USS Tuscomb* and finally the *City-class* ironclad. At this point it's easy to identify the mystery ship as *USS Lafayette*."

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What's Happening at the Museum

June is bustin' out all over! I suppose most of us consider summer beginning on Memorial Day. The season actually begins on Friday, June 21 at 11:54 A.M. in our time zone. That's astrological summer. Meteorologists always use the first of June (and the first of all the other seasonal beginnings) for statistical purposes. How did the ancient mariners deal with this? Answer, they didn't! What did they care about season changes? They cared about winds and currents and their nautical knowledge and experience gave them their answers. The relative positions of major stars indicated to them the beginnings of a calm seas period or the closing of the familiar sea lanes due to a history of rough weather. Atlantic sailors took warning from the old adage; "July, stand by, August, you must, September, remember (?), October, all over". Well, all that prologue just to announce the "Age of Exploration" gallery is now fully open. It's been slightly reset to tell the stories of cartography and voyages of discovery more clearly. And, our meeting day, Saturday the 8th, is World Oceans Day so our staff will be in the galleries talking about our position in a maritime world and the interesting stories behind many of our exhibits and artifacts. June also holds a mouth-watering event for all those wineaux among us! On Saturday, June 15, please join The Bronze Door Society as they present The Mariners' International Wine Classic annual fundraiser to support the conservation of the Museum's collection. This upscale wine tasting event is held in the beautiful Main Lobby of the Museum, and features over 80 international and domestic wines. Guests will enjoy unlimited wine tastings, gourmet food pairings, and live music by the Jae Sinnett Trio. The Bronze Door Society is the premier donor society of The Mariners' Museum and Park, with a focus on preserving the world's rich maritime heritage through the conservation of artifacts, works of art, and archival materials. Starts at 6:00. Better get your tickets as soon as possible!

I believe some of our members are also members of HNSA, the Historic Naval Ships Association, and receive the journal. For those who are not members, the current Spring edition features a two-page interview with a fellow mariner we all know, our President and CEO, Howard Hoegle! It's an interesting discussion and examination of Howard's role as steward of the Museum and its history and purpose within the community. And it illustrates the extreme pleasure and devotion he has found in the Museum and its very competent staff.

June Museum Challenge

O K ! I just can't keep up with the fevered pace of responses to the Monthly Challenge so this one will be the final edition. And it's so simple it really should not be a "challenge" qualifier. But, here goes! The Dahlgren Cannon could be considered a "safety cannon" because of its history and the compelling reason behind its design and use. It was a big, heavy gun! What is the weight of a IX inch Dahlgren cannon barrel? First correct answer to rlewisclu@aol.com wins this month's grand prize.

Ron Lewis

AMERICAN NAVAL HISTORY War of 1812

1815 Part 1

January 6: On Lake Borgne, La, the British brig Cyprus, carrying clothing for Pakenham's army, is boarded and captured by a boat party of 38 men under Sailing Master William Johnson.

January 8: Battle of New Orleans. The British have lost 2,036 men killed, wounded and missing including General Pakenham, who is picked off while leading an assault, the Americans losses are 71.

January 13-15: Attempting to run the blockade out of New York, Decatur in the frigate President encounters the British frigates Majestic, Endymion, Pomone and Tenedos. After a chase, Decatur turns and disables the Endymion, but this allows the Pomone and Tenedos to overtake him. With almost 20 percent of his crew already dead or wounded, Decatur deems the situation hopeless and strikes his flag.

January 19-21: Six boats carrying 50 men under the command of Purser Thomas Shields captures two British schooner, a launch and six boats on Lake Borgne, La.

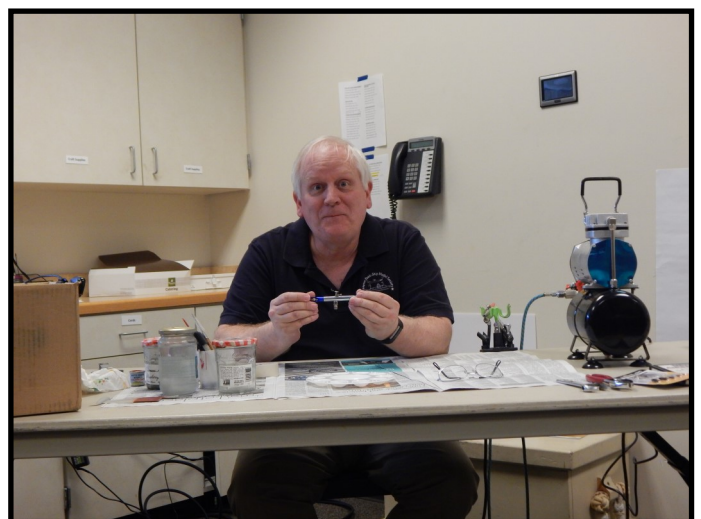
January 29: Off North Edisto, South Carolina, Lieutenant Lawrence Kearny, leads 25 men in 3 barges to board and capture the tender and launch of the British frigate Hebrus.

February 17: Official end of the War of 1812. Congress ratifies the Treaty of Ghent.

February 20: Constitution vs. Levant and Cyane. 180 miles east of Madeira, the frigate Constitution encounters the British frigate Cyane and sloop Levant. Although the two British ships together are superior, by skillful seamanship, the frigate Constitution engages and captures each in turn.

The War of 1812 End

Bob Moritz



Charles Landrum
Giving His presentation at the May Meeting

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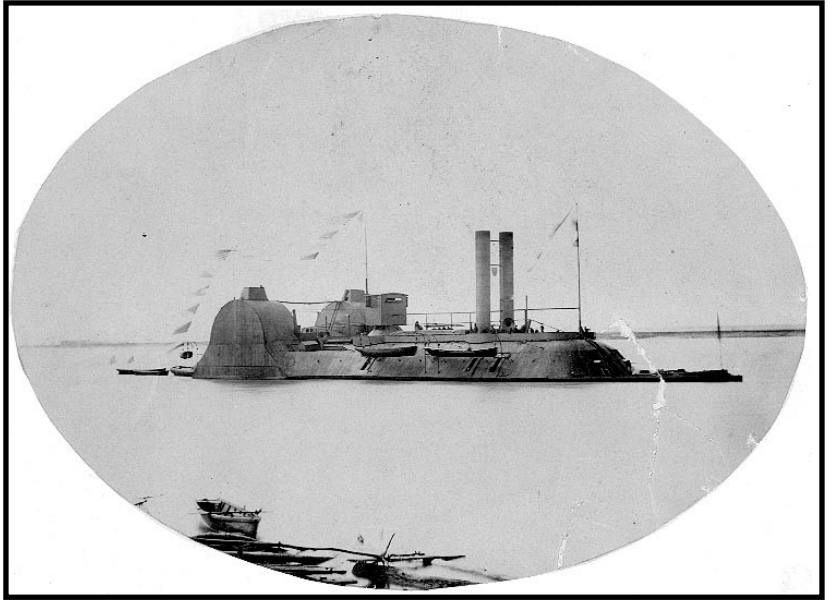
Meanwhile, Rob is “[off] ...to Paul Silverstone’s “Warships of the Civil War Navies.” But, damn, Choctaw is not the MP. Choctaw has that forward raised part to her casement --- the ‘gators’ eyeball --- and the vessel in the MP doesn’t. Further the vessel in the MP, as weird-looking as she is, is actually shapelier than Choctaw, all because the MP ship has a rounded top to her full-length casemate. So, back to Silverstone, flipping pages. And there we find the MP --- USS Lafayette.”

“Now, this beast was built in St. Louis in 1848 and named Aleck Scott (Tim says it’s sometimes spelled Alick Scott). She was purchased by the Union War Department in September 1862, converted to an iron-clad ram, and renamed Lafayette. A month later, she and all the other vessels in the Union’s western flotilla were transferred to the Union Navy. Lafayette was busy the next spring and early summer at the Battle of Vicksburg. She also participated in other Civil War campaigns. At the end of the war, she was laid up at New Orleans, then sold in 1866.”

From the Silverstone book we find on page 158: Lafayette (ex Aleck Scott) built in Louisville in 1848. Tonnage: 1,193 tons. Dimensions: 280’ LOA x 45’ x 8’. Machinery: Side Wheels, 2 engines, 6 boilers, 4 knots. Compliment: Crew of 210. Armament: 2 11” SB, 4 9” SB, 2 100-pdr R. Armor: 2.5” + 2” rubber casemate.

So we have an identification. Tim provides a pick list, Rob provides some history and Silverstone provides specifications which together form the beginnings of our Mystery—several actually. Rob writes that “Silverstone observes that the vessel’s conversion to a warship was designed by William D. Porter and executed by Eads --- no doubt the engineer of bridge fame.” William D. Porter, that name sounds familiar—way back in MP 365 we chronicled the service of a Fletcher class destroyer of the same name. Porter came from a long line of navy men being related to David Dixon Porter and David Farragut. During the Civil War, William D. found that “In the summer of 1861, [he was] assigned to special duty in St. Louis, Missouri, to assist in establishing the Western Flotilla to

seize and control the Mississippi and its tributaries for the Union.” This certainly put him on scene during Lafayette’s conversion.



USS Lafayette Photographed, circa 1863-65

The Eads in question, must be James Buchanan Eads the famous “American civil engineer and inventor.” Aside from being associated with, what Rob calls “the bridge”, Eads is the guy who came up with that “other” turret design, the one that competed with John Ericsson’s model used in Monitor and one from Englishman Cowper Phipps Coles. But Rob is right. Eads is better known for the bridge than by his work building river gunboats for Grant’s Mississippi campaign--shame.

“The Bridge” is that Saint Louis landmark appropriately named the “Eads Bridge.” It doesn’t get any simpler than that—Einstein would be proud! Briefly: “Eads Bridge is a combined road and railway bridge over the Mississippi River connecting the cities of St. Louis, Missouri and East St. Louis, Illinois. It is located on the St. Louis riverfront between Laclède’s Landing, to the north, and the grounds of the Gateway Arch, to the south. The bridge is named for its designer and builder, James Buchanan Eads. Opened in 1874, Eads Bridge was the first bridge erected across the Mississippi south of the Missouri River. Earlier bridges were located north of the Missouri, where the Mississippi is smaller. None of the earlier bridges survive; Eads Bridge is the oldest bridge on the river.”

Another piece of the Mystery concerns a note in Silverstone’s book and Rob’s response. Quoting Rob: “Silverstone also notes, “Rubber armor useless.” Rubber armor? This is the first I’ve ever heard of this. Then I noticed it was used on other vessels, too. Like Choctaw. I hope some respondent to the MP can shed light on this rubber armor phenomenon. Seems to me, if they’d wanted cannon balls to bounce off, they’d have used live oak, like Constitution.” If you study our image of Lafayette, perhaps it occurs to you that the joint where the sloping sides blends with the upper deck is curved. Are we looking at the 2” rubber applique?



Eads Bridge

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)



Now what of the enigma? The enigma stems from all the errors in the historical lists and references, sprinkled heavily with opinion and conjecture. Add time and you have a witch's brew of confusion. Some say that Lafayette was built in St. Louis. Others indicate Louisville or that Jeffersonville place just across the river. Was she built in 1842 or 1848? How about the spelling of her original name—is it Aleck or Alick? Was Lafayette an ironclad or just a gunboat?

The historical records are generally correct. It is us, the users of the data, who color the water. It is our responsibility to "get it straight", as Springsteen implores in the song Badlands. Here are copies of their registries from Riverboatdaves.com:

Name: ALECK SCOTT/FORT HENRY/LAFAYETTE (also see ALEX.(ander) SCOTT below)

Type: Stern-wheel, wooden hull packet. Size: 296' X 44'
Power: 25's-10 ft., 6 boilers.

Wheels: 30' in dia. w/15 ft. buckets, 28" dip
Launched: 1848, Louisville, Ky., completed, St Louis
Area: 1848 St. Louis - New Orleans
1862, Feb. Tenn. R.

Owners: 1848, Possibly in part by Capt. John C. Swon
Later, the Railroad Line

1862, acquired by U.S.Q.M.C. and renamed FORT HENRY
Captains: 1848 when new, Capt. John C. Swon Later, Switzer
At outbreak of C. War, Robert A Reilly

1862, pilot was Horace Bixby with Sam Clemens as cub
Comments: 1862, Feb. when Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck,
Western Dept. sent 17,000 troops under command of Brig. Gen.
U.S. Grant to up the Tenn. R. to Fort Henry, this boat was one
of the fleet of transport boats.

1862, May, was acquired by the USQMC, converted to a gun-
boat and renamed LAFAYETTE

Name: ALEXANDER SCOTT (also see ALECK SCOTT
above)

Type: Sidewheel, wooden hull packet.
Size: 266' X 34' X 8', overall width, 69'

Power: 25's-10 ft., 6 boilers
Wheels: 30', 15 buckets with 28" dip.
Launched: 1842, Jeffersonville, Ind.

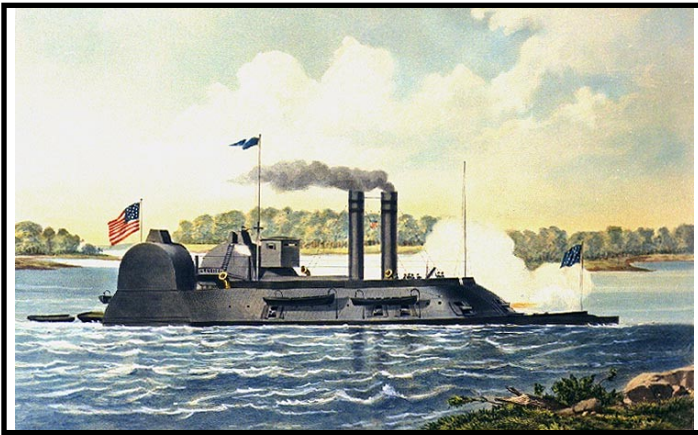
Area: When new, St. Louis-New Orleans
1847, Louisville-New Orleans

Owners: when new, principal owner Capt. John C. Swon
1847, sold to Capt. Edward T. Sturgeon and others
Captains: When new, John C. Swon

It is clear from these records that our Lafayette was the Aleck
Scott built in 1848 at Louisville, KY.

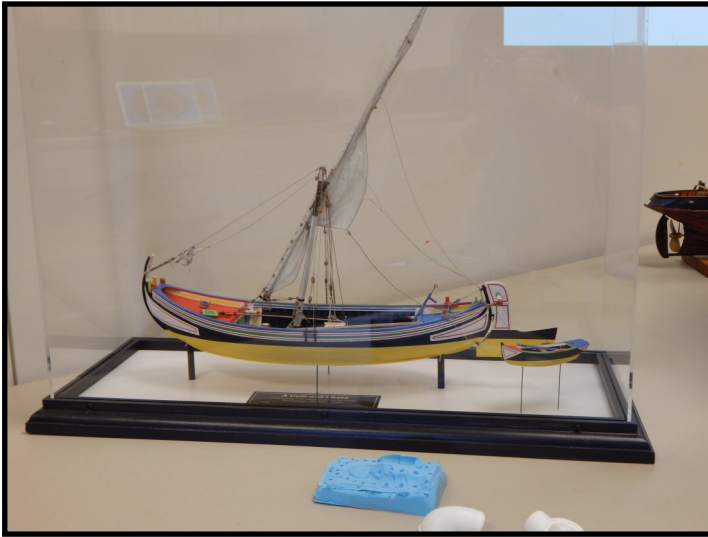
And did you know that as the river steamer Aleck
Scott, our Mystery vessel was briefly piloted by a famous
American writer? Here is a quote from one of his works: "I will
remark, in passing, that Mississippi steamboatmen were im-
portant in landsmen's eyes (and in their own, too, in a degree)

ac-

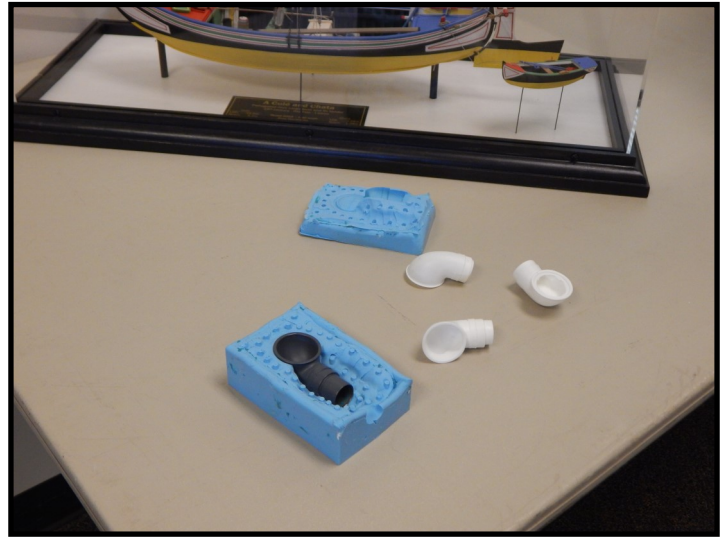


United States Iron Clad Ram "Lafayette"
Mississippi River Squadron





Greg Harrington's Culé & Chata



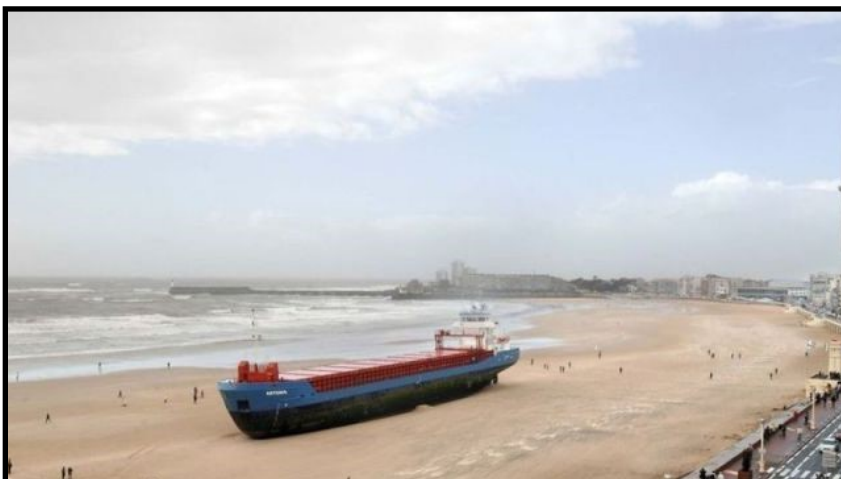
Gene Berger's Cowl Vent slip mold



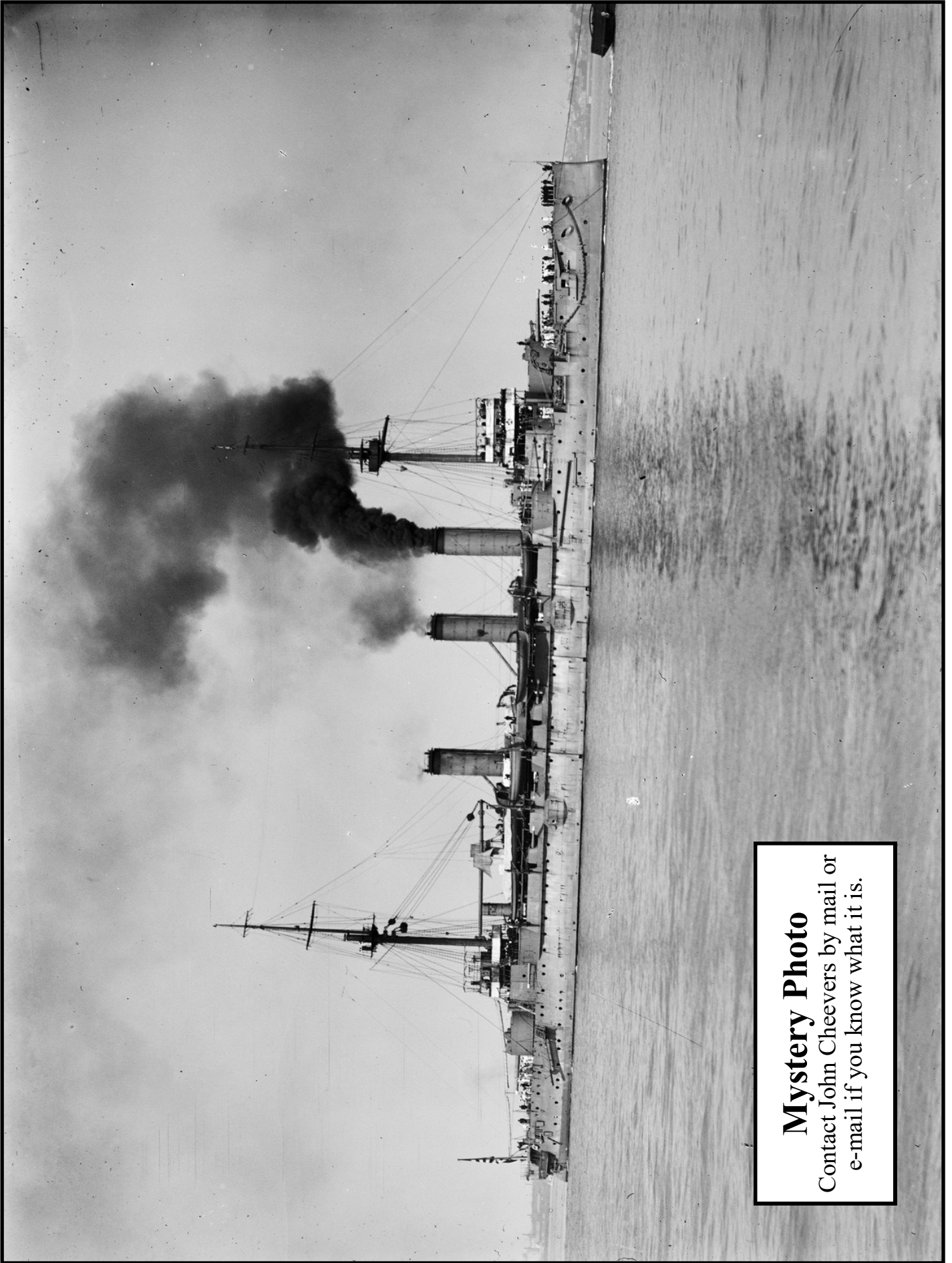
Kevin Ritton's 1851 yacht America



Bruce Brown's Tug Sanson



Well it is not an art project or a restaurant. In 2008, a violent storm caused this Dutch ship, Artemis, to land on the French coast at Sables d'Olonne where it then became beached.
<https://izismile.com/>



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

NOTABLE EVENTS

JUNE

- 8 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation, Round Table, Bruce Brown, Dave Chelmon,
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
Presentation, Karol Budniak ---Making paper models look
like wood

DECEMBER

- 14 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Presentation:

JANUARY

- 11 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum
Nomination of officers

FEBRUARY

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

MARCH

- 14 HRSMS Monthly Meeting:

APRIL

- 11 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

MAY

- 9 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

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
Tom Saunders (757) 850-0580
Webmaster: Greg Harrington (757) 930-4615
Photographer: Marty Gromovsky

MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society
Monthly Meeting
May 11, 2019
Mariners' Museum

Guests: Eric Terry 3rd meeting

The meeting was called to order at 1015 hours. Eric Terry indicated that he wanted to join the HRSMS so he was asked to leave the room while the ritual vote was taken. Eric returned and was welcomed as a new member. There was talk among the group about removing several unclaimed models that were stored in the Model builders stand. Gene Berger said that he would participate in the roundtable discussion to be held at the June meeting. There were no corrections to the minutes as published. Gene Berger gave the Purser's report detailing revenues, disbursements and account balance. Gene announced that Tom Matthews would be leaving the area in the next several months. Greg Harrington detailed several changes in the website, noting the addition of several pages of members' models.

Old Business: Ron Lewis talked about his museum challenges and the lack of response from the membership. Ron revealed that there are two guns on ships in the Crabtree collection and that there was a photo of the Cutty Sark rigged as barkentine in 1923, not as a clipper ship.

New Business: None

Show & Tell: Stewart Winn says he needs a French translator to decipher a piece of printed material for him. Tony Clayton showed a paper model of a C&O canal barge, a finished Midwest kit. "The Dingy" and his completed Model Shipways Caronade. Tony then thanked Gene Berger for giving him a motor to drive the sidewheels on one of his models. Hank Ghittino showed the progress on his Mamoli kit of the 1851 yacht America. Bruce Brown showed his Artesania Latina Sanson Tug Boat. Greg Harrington showed his completed culé. Charles Landrum showed several small hand tools and the work on his AFV LST as HMS 368. Gene Berger showed the molds for slip casting resin cowl vents. Bill Fox showed a collection of Genoese Gozzo fishing boats.

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

(Continued from page 5)



know who wrote this?

Perhaps an enigma for another time....?

John Cheevers