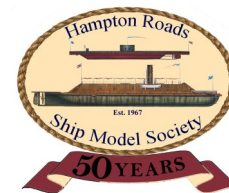


# Hampton Roads Ship Model Society Logbook!

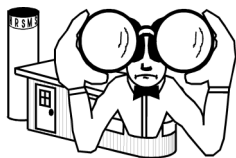


No. 403

WWW.HRSMS.ORG

January, 2020

## From The Bridge



Captain's Log 1.11.20



2020?  
Already?

### Happy New Year's...

Here's hoping the New Year brings new vigor, devotion to modeling projects and further development of skills.

Reflecting over the past ten years, as I progress towards more challenging tasks, I see in myself a

competence not imagined at the onset of the last decade. In this time, I've taken away a few truths regarding my capabilities and measures to accomplish an effect. I've learned persistence over patience, trusting my eye, but then not trusting my eye and embracing new technologies and techniques.

By nature, I am not a patient man. I need immediate results and rail at the notion "watch the grass grow." Glues are too slow, paints dry casually and time ever accelerates. However, with persistence I can push thru the restrictions imposed by the laws of physics. I can't do anything about that, but with endurance I pretend to possess patience, and all's well in my universe.

The eye is a marvelous tool for gauging true lines, angles and proportions in the business of modeling, but not infallible. The eye is often fooled by what the mind doesn't "see." That is why I take so many pictures of my work from many different angles. With the proliferation of cell phones and their high resolution cameras, this new technology has become an essential tool in my quiver of gadgets. The camera simply sees what the mind does not. I can then go back and correct the errors. Try it. You will become a convert.

To my mind, whether you take the high road of traditional methods, or embrace new techniques, technology and products, the road taken dictates the approach to get to the display case. Machiavelli's philosophy of "the end justifies the means," is only another approach to my low road to ship building. What can I say...I'm a charlatan!

Gene

## Mystery Photo



Mystery Photo #402: What's in a name, I ask you? A famous playwright addressed the question years ago: "What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet..." Partially quoting Shakespeare in a Mystery Photo essay is not something I thought I would do in my lifetime. And quoting Romeo and Juliette—even less so. Regardless, the quote lends itself quite nicely to this month's photograph. Shakespeare explained: "Here Juliet tells Romeo that a name is an artificial and meaningless convention", "it is the worth of the individual that counts." "It is counted as one of Shakespeare's most famous quotes, and the idea serves to refine our investigation.

So what is in a name? Certainly for reference, it serves to get the reader focused on a topic. In discourse it aids in identifying the object of the preposition. In the mystery Photo it drives the researcher to an exact identification. For example, if you called this month's offering an aircraft carrier (there are hundreds) and let it go at that, your opinion, while correct to a degree, would be an artificial and meaningless convention. If you used that data to look closer at the reference data and came up with one of three vessel names, your answer would begin to have meaning and your odds of a correct identification would go to one in three. So the name is important.

The photograph offers a somewhat dark print of a "flat topped" vessel preceding slowly along an established waterway. Many piers and an escarpment are in the unfamiliar background; but to the right are two, very definable buildings. Also in the background are two ferries making their appointed crossing—a clearer image would yield their shipping line. The "flat deck" sprouts a forest, maybe only a copse, of antennae, a minimal island, and perhaps a place to land. The hull is somewhat familiar in style, and the hurricane bow is of some interest.

The usual players weighed in: Tim Wood with a very brief four word (not four letter) response that nails the ship's

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## MEETING NOTICE

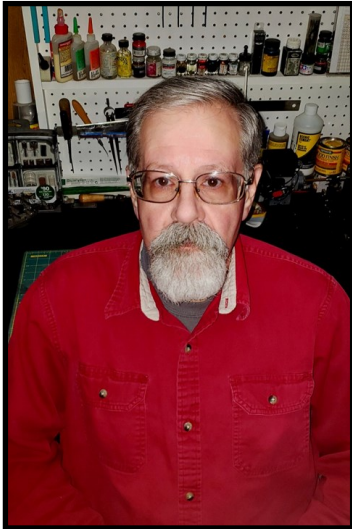
**Date:** Saturday January 11, 2020

**Place:** Mariners' Museum

**Time:** 1000 Hours

# Modeler of the Month January 2020

**Kevin Ritten**



My Dad was the one who introduced me to the modeling hobby. When I was about 7 or 8, I happened to see my Dad working on a 1:144 scale model of a C-130 aircraft, and I thought it was pretty neat. I started out with snap-together aircraft and gradually worked up to more complicated models. It was a conglomeration of just about everything from a dune buggy to tanks, plastic ship models and WW II aircraft. My first sailing ship model was the yacht “America” in her Civil War Navy configuration. When I was 15, I received the Revell “USS Constitution” model for Christmas. I remember spending many an evening with a pair of tweezers in each hand working on the rigging for it.

After high school, my modelling took a short hiatus while I did a 6-year stint in the Navy as a Machinist’s Mate in the Nuclear Power Program. Shortly after getting out of the Navy, a job offer from Newport News Shipbuilding brought me here to the Hampton Roads area in 1984, and I’ve been here ever since. In 1993, I met my wife Dawn at the church I was attending and we were married in August of 1994. We have two sons, Ian (21) and Jon (18).

I had visited the Mariner’s Museum several times over the years but usually didn’t have time to stop and talk with any of the guys from HRSMS at the Modeler’s Stand. However, in March of 2016, I was there for the Battle of Hampton Roads weekend as a Civil War re-enactor when I had a chance to meet Dave Baker. He invited me to one of the meetings and in July of 2016, I became a member. I have really enjoyed being a member of HRSMS. I have learned a lot from the monthly presentations and from just talking to everyone. Since joining HRSMS, I have even gotten into building wooden ship models and enjoy it immensely. My modelling skills have also improved. Modelling will continue to be a hobby that I enjoy for many years to come and when I retire from the shipyard, I look forward to volunteering my time in the Modeler’s Stand.

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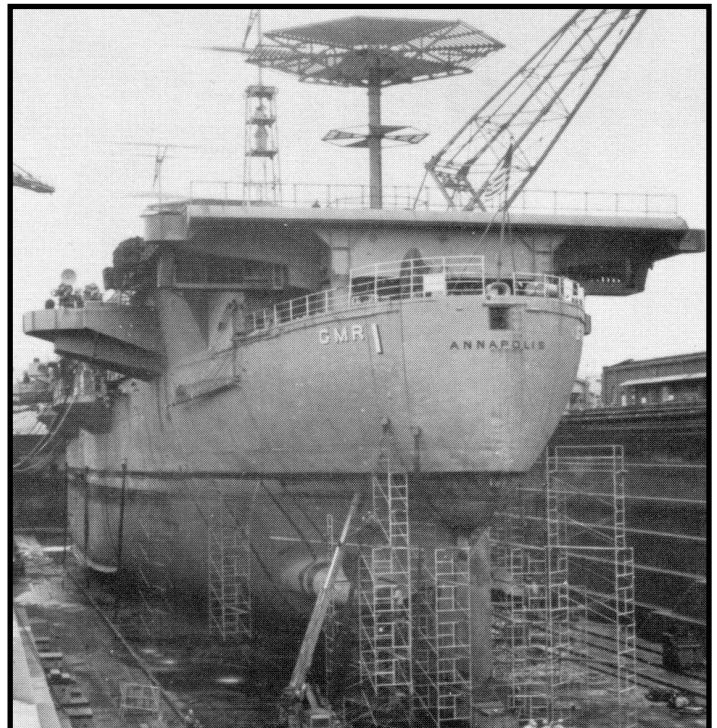


identification, and Dave Baker, who also has the correct identification and a comprehensive report. They agree that the vessel in this month’s Mystery Photo is the USS Annapolis (AGMR-1).

So, what’s in a name? According to Dave, the “U.S. Navy Major Communications Relay Ship U.S.S. ANNAPOLIS (AGMR-1) was initially a unit of the COMMENCEMENT BAY class of escort carriers, which were built on the hull and steam turbine propulsion plant of a Maritime Commission T-3 tanker. Initially named the ST. ANDREWS BAY (CVE-107), the ship was the third unit of her



USS Gilbert Islands (CVE-107) in rough seas, sometime in 1945



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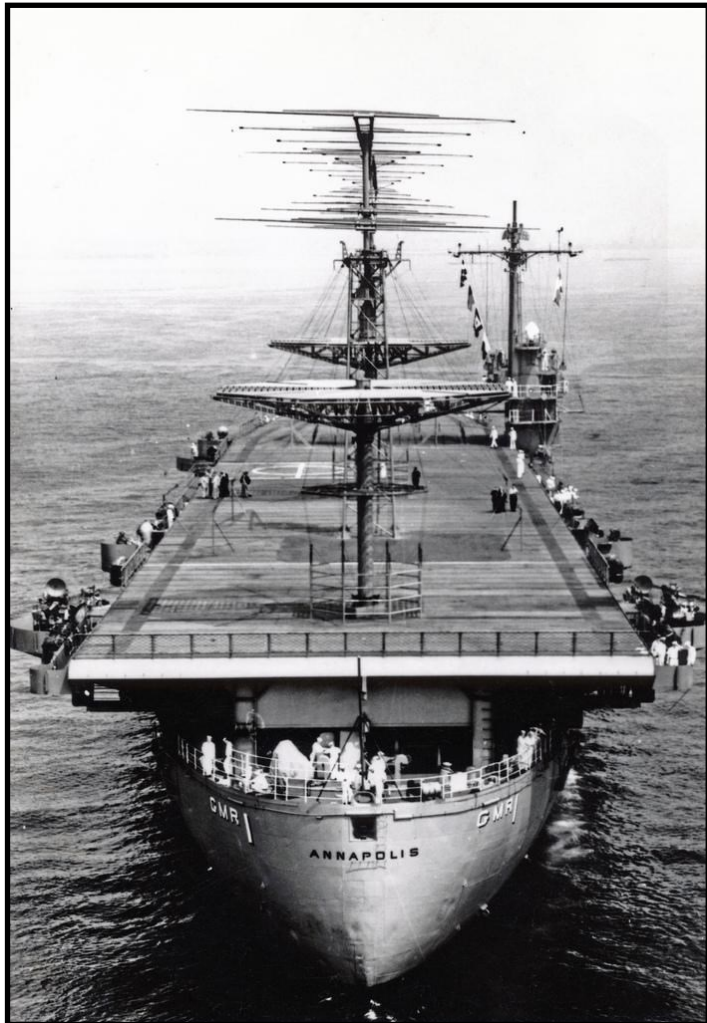


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jeep carrier class. Prior to her launch at Todd-Pacific Shipbuilding Co., Inc. at Tacoma, Washington on 20 July 1944, the ship had been renamed GILBERT ISLANDS and was commissioned on 2 February 1945.” He came up with three names so he has the one in three chance of getting it right.

From Dave’s report: “The GILBERT ISLANDS was



built for all of \$11,021,000 and displaced 24,275 tons full load as a CVE. Her length was 557-ft. 1-in. (525-ft. waterline), beam 75-ft. hull/105-ft. extreme, and maximum draft 32 ft. On trials, she made 19.1 knots of 16,000 shaft horsepower from her two turbo-electric engines driven by steam from Combustion Engineering 2-drum “D”-type boilers. As completed and into the early 1950s, she ship’s armament was two single 5-in. 38-cal. dual-purpose guns in open mounts, three quadruple and 12 twin-barreled 40-mm mounts, and 20 single 20-mm AA. As AGMR-1, she had four twin 3-in. 50-cal. mounts which were, from personal experience, not much protection except against slowly moving seagulls.”

How did she become USS Annapolis, you ask? Like many war-built vessels, the carrier had a very short career and saw limited, light action while operating in her originally designed role. It’s likely that her most exciting wartime experience

(Continued on page 4)

## AMERICAN NAVAL HISTORY 1824

August 17: The schooner Terrier captures a pirate launch off Havana, Cuba.

August 26: The Terrier captures a pirate schooner in Bahia Honda, Cuba.

October 20: Near Matanzas, Cuba, the schooner Porpoise, supported by five boats, captures a pirate schooner and three boats.

October 27: The schooner Beagle, lands at Fajardo, on the east coast of Puerto Rico, to confer with Spanish officials regarding the rumored presence in the town of property from the American consul on St. Thomas. The local authorities pretend to disbelieve that they are American officers and are detained most of the day.

October 28: The schooner Wild Cat is lost with all hands between Cuba and Thompson’s Island, West Indies.

November 14: Foxhardo Affair. Outraged by the treatment at Fajardo (see October 27), Commodore David Porter goes ashore with 200 seamen and marines from the frigate John Adams and sends a message to the town demanding an apology to Lt. Charles Platt. If any resistance is made, he warns, the total destruction of Foxhardo will be the certain and immediate consequence. The apology is promptly tendered. Upon returning to the United States in the spring of 1825, Porter is court-martialed for exceeding his instructions and suspended from duty for six months, albeit at full pay. Outraged again, he begins to investigate the possibility of obtaining a commission in the Mexican Navy.

December 27: Captain Lewis Warrington succeeds David Porter as commodore of the West India Squadron.

1824 Ends with no further actions.

Bob Moritz

### THE ANSWER

The answer to Mystery Photo 402

USS Annapolis (AGMR-1) underway at slow speed in New York Harbor after leaving New York Naval Shipyard soon after completing conversion from USS Gilbert Islands (AKV-39, originally CVE-107). Staten Island ferryboats are in the left and center backgrounds.

Date: 11 June 1964

### Nautical Term

**Make Fast** To fasten a line, especially to a cleat or bits. Fast is from the same word in Anglo-Saxon.

Tim Wood

(Continued from page 3)

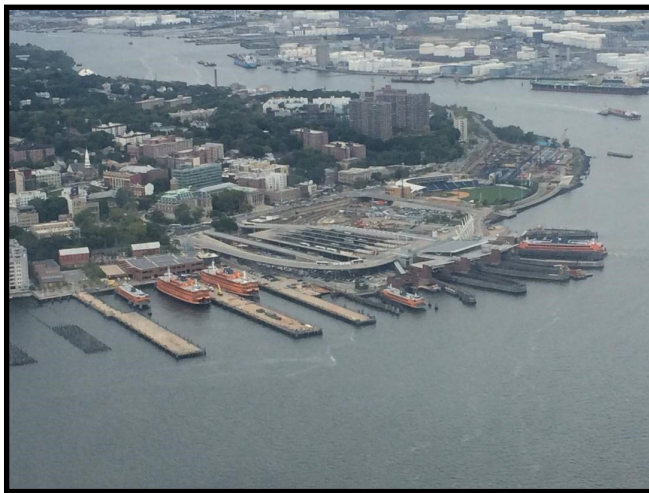


was riding out that famous typhoon mentioned in last month's MP. Dave provides some highlights: "Post-war, CVE-107 was decommissioned on 21 May 1946 at Norfolk, VA and then towed to Philadelphia during November 1949 for layup. Recommissioned on 7 September 1951, the ship was transferred to the Pacific Fleet where she was employed as an aircraft transport until returning to the Atlantic Fleet for use in training during 1952 until decommissioned again on 15 January 1955. Redesignated as Aircraft Transport AKV-29 on 7 May 1959, she was stricken from the



Navy list during 1961."

So, what's in a name? 1961 might have been the end of the ship named for the Gilbert Islands campaign had necessity not stepped in. Dave tells us how "she received a reprieve and was redesignated as Major Communications Relay Ship AGMR



Staten Island Ferry Terminal

on 1 June 1963 and was renamed ANNAPOLIS on 22 June of that year." From a website dedicated to communications relay ships we learn: "The concept of the Annapolis envisions providing mobile communications for the command and control of fleet operations in areas where shore-based communications facilities do not exist or are inadequate." Ships of this type eventually numbered about 24, there may have been more, assigned to various communications roles and carrying various classifications that closely followed their tasking. They were the global satellites of their day as you will see.

So, what's in a name? Dave's reply allows that "After undergoing a major refit and reconfiguration at the Boston Navy Yard, with her flight deck then employed for a forest of long-range communications antennae and hangar space converted to handle communications equipment, the ANNAPOLIS was recommissioned on 7 March 1964, and accepted for Fleet service on 16 December of that year. With the coming of reliable satel-



Staten Island ferry Richmond, 1908

lite communications, the ship was quickly made obsolete and was decommissioned in 1969 and finally sold for scrap 1 November 1979."

It's interesting to look where Dave says that the conversion took place as it could begin another mystery. "The photo was probably taken after completion of her conversion at Boston Navy yard, and the location for the photo may be Boston, Mass. in June of 1964." The DANFS entry for Annapolis contradicts Dave stating that "The conversion to a communications ship began in August 1962 when Gilbert Islands was towed from her berth in the Reserve Group at Bayonne, New Jersey, to the New York Naval Shipyard where the conversion took place." Humm!

Now I ask, what's in a place? Do we know if a shipyard by any other name would smell as sweet? When you find the image on line, the attending caption reads: "USS Annapolis

(Continued on page 5)



(Continued from page 4)



(AGMR-1) under way, 12 June 1964, leaving the New York Naval Shipyard, Brooklyn, N.Y., where she was converted to a Major Communications Relay Ship (June 1963 - February 1964). In the background are two Brooklyn - Staten Island Ferries. US Navy photo # USN-1103576 from the collections of the US Naval Photographic Center.” Is this conclusive? Are our odds at fifty/fifty for a correct location or three to two?

Let’s look at the photo again and see if we can determine the location. I think we can accept the date of 12 June 1964, the photographer probably wrote it on the photo card. The caption says that Annapolis is “leaving the New York Naval Shipyard, Brooklyn, N.Y.” Geographically speaking, if she is leaving the harbor then she is steaming in a roughly southerly direction. That would place the land on the east side. A study of New York harbor shows that no really high ground exits on the east side from the Navy Yard to the lower bay—at least not high enough to show the bluffs we see in the photograph. The western side is a different story. We all know about the Palisades of Jersey, that high bluff on the west side of the Hudson opposite of Manhattan Island. And there, around Hoboken we have piers and ferry terminals. Could it be that the vessel is steaming up the Hudson?

Remember those “very definable” buildings I mentioned at the top of this broad cast? Well, if you enlarge the image in your .pdf newsletter, or if you go to NavSource.com and find the picture, way over on the right side you see a building



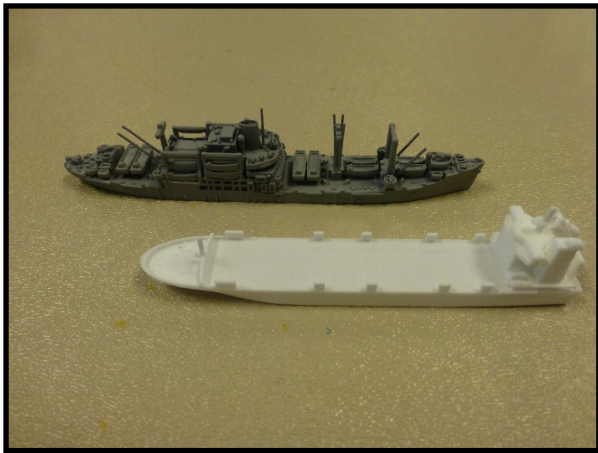
Richmond County Courthouse

with columns that looks like a Greek temple. To its left is another building that looks a bit French in design with a hint of a mansard roof. To the water side of these building is a strange structure that I took to possibly being ferry terminals as we have ferry boats in the photograph. Moving your eye to the left you

(Continued on page 6)



Staten Island Borough Hall



Bob Moritz's 1:1200 3D printed models



Karol Budniak giving his presentation



Yves Pochard's collapsible spray paint enclosure



The gang listens to the Skipper

*(Continued from page 5)*



see piers occupied with boats painted white and then piers topped with warehouses. A very definable area if we can find it.

Well, I reasoned that if the high ground was west of Manhattan then the ship must be arriving, not leaving as the photo caption suggests. So, I went to Google Maps and placed myself at the shore in the Bay Ridge section of Brooklyn about opposite of the giant Bayonne pier, the one with the dry dock at the end, and visually worked my way north. Nothing! So I went back to my starting point and turned my attention to the south west. There, across the harbor, the land started to rise and resemble the background behind Annapolis in our MP.

Staten Island has high ground. I had never really considered that before. I knew it was a bedroom community of New York and that most folks arrived in Manhattan aboard those famous ferries, and I just assumed the land was relatively low like the other lower boroughs. But there in front of me was the virtual scene that matched the background in the Mystery Photo. The buildings on the right matched. They are located in

the area known as St. George; the one with the columns is the Richmond County Courthouse, the French inspired building next to it is the Staten Island Borough Hall. In front of those buildings at the water's edge is the Staten Island Ferry Terminal. The piers directly behind Annapolis are in an areas known as Brighton Heights and Stapleton Heights. To the left of that is Clifton. And as we climb the hill we see neighborhoods like Silver Lake, Grymes Hill, Fox Hills, and Tompkinsville. So, yes, what's in a name is important.

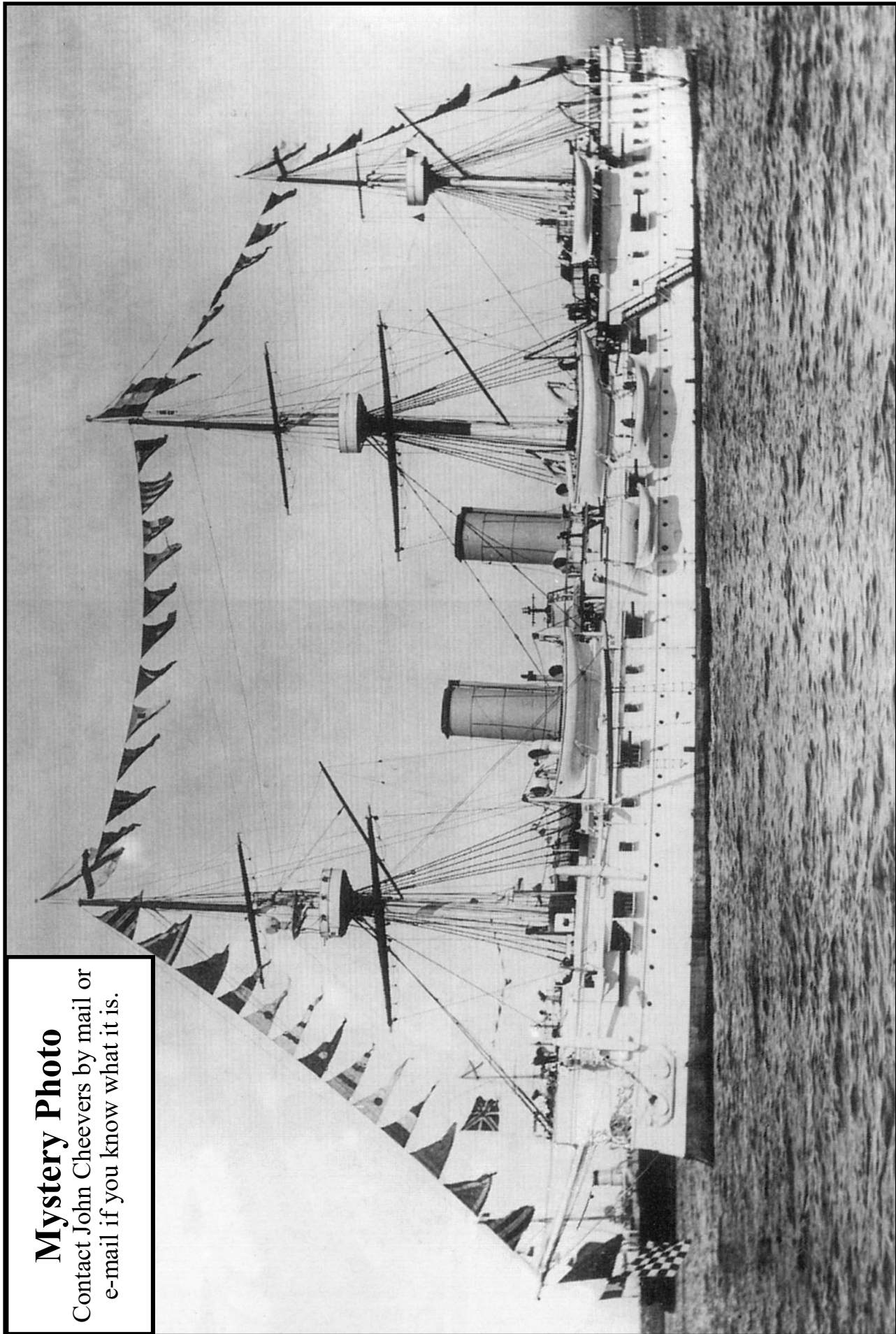
I think we have enough to prove that Tim and Dave are correct in identifying the vessel. And I think we have beaten the location into the ground—or set it in stone as it were. This was a sweet Mystery Photo to solve. The vessel's name at the time of the photograph is important as her name changed three times during her modest service life. Getting it right allows the researcher to understand the nature of the vessel as captured by the photographer, while discovering the other names allows for the opportunity to learn more. Now, if only there was a way to amend the caption to the official navy photograph...the rose might smell sweeter.

John Cheevers



## **Mystery Photo**

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



# NOTABLE EVENTS

## JANUARY

- 11 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Nomination of officers
- 17-19 Cabin Fever Expo, Lebanon, Pa.

## FEBRUARY

- 8 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Election of officers
- 28 IPMS Richmond Old Dominion Open, Richmond Raceway

## MARCH

- 14 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

## APRIL

- 11 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Auction, Norge Hall

## MAY

- 9 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

## JUNE

- 13 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum

## JULY

- 11 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation: TBA

## AUGUST

- 8 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation, TBA

## SEPTEMBER

- 12 HRSMS Monthly Meeting  
Picnic, Newport News Park
- 19 Talk Like a Pirate Day

## OCTOBER

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

## NOVEMBER

- 14 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation,

## DECEMBER

- 9 HRSMS Monthly Meeting: Mariners' Museum  
Presentation:

### 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) 218-5368  
Photographer: Marty Gromovsky

# MINUTES



Hampton Roads Ship Model Society  
Monthly Meeting  
December 14, 2019  
Mariners' Museum

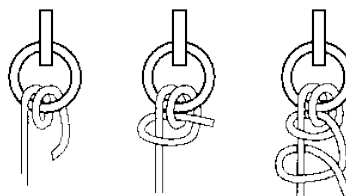
The meeting was called to order by Skipper, Gene Berger at 1006 hours. There was no correction to the minutes as published. Ryland Craze gave the Purser's report detailing receipts, expenditures and account balance. Greg Harrington gave the Webmaster's report. Greg said that he added a help page to the website and that he continued to transfer content from the old site to the new one.

Old Business: Ron Lewis and Greg Harrington reported on their inquiries about the banquet. Greg said that the Warwick Yacht Clubs cost would be approximately \$53.00 per plate. Ron said that he had talked to the museum and that we could have the Huntington room at no cost and that the museum's caterers would need a price point from us to determine their offering. Ron also inquired at the Williamsburg Lodge and found the cost prohibitive. There was much discussion and the final decision will be made at the January meeting. John Cheevers said that the Founders Award committee will have their work done by the January meeting. It was decided that we have enough material to have an auction. Tony Clayton said the he will be unable to host a March auction at Norge Hall. Tony was asked to look into the hall's availability to have an April auction. Tim Wood noted that he would have the HRSMS hats at the January meeting. Ron Lewis encouraged the membership to use the business entrance when attending the meeting.

New Business: Dave Baker suggested the HRSMS join the Nautical Research Guild (NRG). After discussion a motion was made and passed to spend \$30.00 for a club membership. Ryland Craze was appointed to be the contact person for the NRG. Ryland asked if any one needed a name tag, then took tag orders for them.

Show & Tell: Ryland Craze showed the progress on his Syren Longboat, using monofilament for trunnels. Yves Pochard showed a catalog from Lee Valley Tools and a collapsible spray paint enclosure. Bob Moritz showed Shapeways 3D printed models of the *MS Clipper Ranger* and the *USS Bayfield* in 1:1200 scale. John Cheevers had a copy of Dudley Pope's Ramage book number one to give away. Gene Berger showed several slides of the progress on his *Olympia*. It was noted that the HRSMS will make a donation to the Mariners' Museum in the name of Henry Clapp.

The meeting was adjourned to a presentation, "Making Paper Models" by Karol Budniak.



Anchor  
Bend