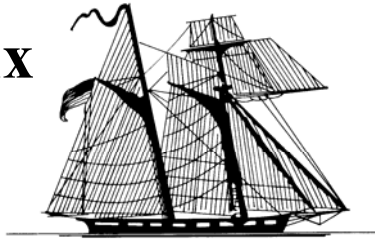


The Lynx



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Skipper's Corner

The World of Gloucester, Massachusetts

*by Joe Miller
WSMS Skipper*

As we move into Spring, we get ready for some significant changes and challenges for the WSMS. I remind everyone that elections are coming up for the Bridge, and Harry Ohanian is coordinating the effort. To be perfectly honest, although I have enjoyed the privilege you bestowed upon me over the past 4 years to be the First Mate, and then Skipper, I am more than

ready to turn that over to a successor. I really want to get back to at least a little modeling!

In the meantime, I must also apologize for not being able to get to the last meeting. I found myself once again in Maine, where we are completing the groundwork (figuratively and literally) for our retirement house near Bath.

(Those of you who attended the NRG in Portland last September will know where that is.) Happily all went quickly and well, and I had some spare time -which was put to good use by taking a daytrip to Gloucester, Mass. I was there for only a few hours, but I was fascinated!

Before I visited, Gloucester to me was the home of Gorton's, the seafood company, and indeed there is an absolutely huge factory complex right along the front street of town, overlooking the water. Fishing boats literally "drive up" to the unloading docks and drop off catches. . There is also a street aimed at tourists, but it is mercifully short and unimpressive. Much more significant is the waterfront - this is not a movie set, or a model, or a picture - this is where real fishermen occupy themselves with the single most dangerous profession in the United States. They go fishing into the early part of winter, and Winter North Atlantic can be an absolute Nightmare!!! I had the opportunity to wander down to the public docks where the fishing boats off load some of their catch, and watched. I still cannot forgive myself for not having a camera!! Those who saw the movie "The Perfect Storm" will remember "The Crow's Nest" bar. It really exists, and

**Next Meeting
Tuesday, March 8, 2005
At 8 P.M.**

**At
Bethesda Naval Medical Center**

Mr Joe Bles will give a presentation about the assault on Iwo Jima.

Bethesda Naval Medical Center is located on left side of Wisconsin Boulevard approximately one mile inside of the beltway. It is across the street from the National Institutes of Health. After going through the guard gate, take the first right and proceed to the first street on your left. Turn left and make an immediate right into the outpatient garage. Proceed to the second floor, and take the skyway to the hospital. A member will meet you as you enter.

Please be sure to bring your parking pass or military ID, and that all persons in your vehicle have photo identification. Vehicles may be searched by the Marine Guard contingent before entering the grounds, so try to leave extra time before the meeting.

overlooks the waterfront, but it did not look like the movie, and had all the ambiance of every tough bar I have ever been in - certainly not the place to bring the family. Nevertheless, I survived it - the people there were clearly the ones making a living from those fishing boats, and were all the more impressive for it.

Later I had a lobster roll in a little "mom and pop" restaurant ("Manuel's") just up the street from The Crow's Nest. It overlooked the waterfront - I ate while watching the harbor and reading the opening portions of Sebastian Junger's book. This was a little place, but was the only restaurant open - tourist season had not yet struck, and the fancy restaurants were still closed. (The bars were all open, however). That was one of the best lobster rolls I have ever had, and the place was often filled with people who definitely were not tourists or sports fishermen. I was also struck by the houses - they were very definitely not suburban affluent. In short, this was a real, operating industrial town, hard-bitten, unglamorous, with tough people facing a really tough way of living, dependent on bringing home a living from the sea. It is definitely not a romanticized Mystic Seaport.

If you have not been to Gloucester, you owe it to yourself to do so, and if possible, outside of tourist season.

This is all well and good, but what's in it for us ship modelers you ask. From our point of view, I have not seen much written about modern fishing, especially the "long line" boats (there are "Western" and "Eastern" rig trawlers, and a world of specialized vocabulary for all this) - indeed, this sort of fishing is only about 20 years old. Not many model the boats yet this is every bit as rich a portion of our maritime heritage as anything else I have encountered, and one associated with real adventure. I have always been frustrated by the lack of detail information in many of my areas of interest. No problem here - opportunities for documentation are fantastic. I think this is a rich and fertile opportunity for

someone to move into novel model building area, with rich data sources available - both static display and RC enthusiasts could do very well indeed.. For steel navy folks, this would be a straightforward move. No matter what, someone certainly needs to start documenting all this. (There are still some wooden hulls as well, and I intend to take my own advice and start looking into this when we move to Maine in a couple of years.) Incidentally, if you have not read "the Perfect Storm", you owe it to yourself to do so - the first half is simply chock full of information about modern "long line" fishing, and the boats and equipment involved. It's a great introduction to this whole world.

Speaking of modeling, we all need to plan to go to St. Michaels 21 the weekend of 21 May - it should be a really great time!

Upcoming WSMS Meeting Schedule

Regular monthly meetings alternate between Virginia and Maryland locations. Virginia meetings are held on the second Saturday of the month, and Maryland meetings on the second Tuesday. The current meeting plan is:

May 10 (Tuesday) 8 PM – Regular Meeting, Bethesda, Naval Hospital. Topic: Mr Joe Bles will give a presentation about the assault on Iwo Jima. Elections will also be held for the 2005-2006 Bridge.

May 21-22 Maritime Model Expo, Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michaels, MD

May 28 (Saturday) 10 AM – Steel Navy Group, Location TBD.

June 11 (Saturday) 10 AM – WSMS Auction, location to be announced.

July 12 (Tuesday) 8 PM - Regular Meeting, Bethesda, Naval Hospital. Topic: Joel Labow will give a presentation on small boats.

Final Information on Maritime Model Expo at St. Michaels

As we announced in an earlier issue of the *Lynx*, the WSMS once again has the opportunity to exhibit at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels, MD. The Expo will be held May 21 and 22, and will be open to the public. This is a model meet of several different groups, and is inspired and cosponsored by the North American Steamboat Modelers Association, (NASMA). To accommodate the steam-powered models and other low-powered RC models, the sponsors are setting up a large fresh water pond beside the Steamboat Building. They will also be exhibiting and sailing the RC model skipjacks of the Model Sailing Club of the CBMM in the cove in front of the Steamboat Building.

The WSMS will be exhibiting our models in the auditorium of the “Steamship building.” This is the same location that we have used in the past, and is a great venue for this purpose. We will be setting up Friday afternoon/evening. We have 15 or 16 long tables, and will be obtaining table cloths for them. Coffee and snacks will be available for members who are standing watch on the models. I will also be printing up name cards similar to those we have used in the past with descriptions for each of the models. If you have not provided me the information, please do so ASAP.

We currently plan on holding a model competition as well. We will probably make this a “popular choice” competition, with separate ballots for parents and children. The last time we did this we received over 1000 individual ballots.

Most of the attendees will be staying at the Holiday Inn Express in Easton, MD, which is 15-20 minutes away from St Michaels. I believe the organizers have arranged a block of rooms, but at this writing I don't have a price per room. Please contact the hotel directly for your reservations. The number there is 410-819-6500.

As in past years, we will be taking advantage of the local dining establishments for an evening's entertainment on both Friday and Saturday nights. We'll decide where to go when we get to Easton and see who, and how many, want to go out each evening.

Steel Navy Meeting

The Steel Navy special interest group meets the last Saturday of the month in one of the members' homes. The group focuses largely on post-*Monitor* powered ships, with particular interest in steel hulled warships, though merchants and passenger liners are also fair game. Models may be wood, plastic, resin, card stock, metal or “virtual” (i.e., computer generated). Discussions of models, modeling techniques, research and reference material are always lively, with virtually everyone taking home some new ideas to use on their own models.

The next meeting will be held on Saturday, May 28 at 10 AM. The location has yet to be determined. The location and directions will be emailed to members' homes. For information or directions, please contact Vince (703) 345-8644 (daytime) or by email at vincent.mccullough@ngc.com.

Photo # NH 99994 USS Lewis Hancock underway, circa 1951



**Fletcher-class destroyer USS Lewis Hancock (DD-675)
ca 1951 US Naval Historical Center photograph**