

MAHS NEWS



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The Archivo General de Indias of Seville

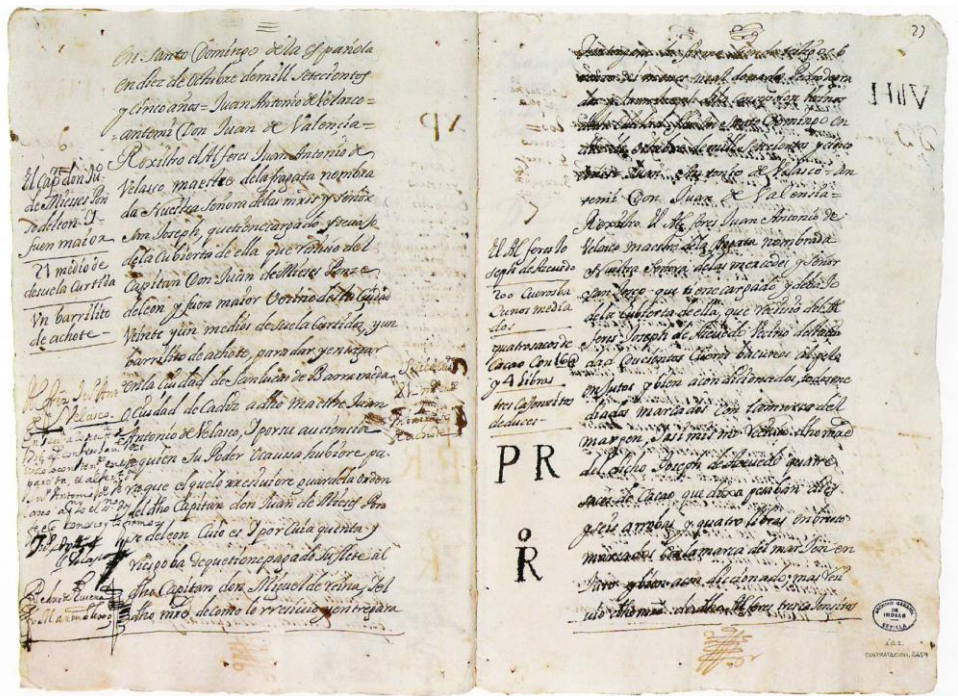
By Victoria Stapells

“...the great Sevillian Archives is practically inexhaustible in its wealth of material on almost every conceivable subject in Spanish colonial administration and is the most valuable single archive on that field in existence”

Charles E. Chapman (1959)

On the afternoon of October 14, 1785, as the cathedral bells of Seville sounded a quarter to five, 24 mule-drawn carts arrived at the Casa Lonja de Mercaderes. They had set out from the archives of Simancas, just outside Valladolid, in the north of Spain. They carried a most valuable cargo of 257 boxes protected with a covering of oilskins. Inside were more than 20,000 kilos of documents dating back to the time of Columbus. The journey south had passed through Castilla La Mancha and once reaching Andalusia, the carts veered southwest to Seville.

Located in the old quarter of the city and next to the cathedral, this building was destined to become the *Archivo General de Indias*. Its 43,000 boxes of documents stored on more than 10 kilometers of shelves have inevitably linked the history of Spain and the Americas for all time.



Ship manifest of Nuestra Señora de Mercedes y San José, 1706. A.G.I. Contratación, 2429.

The Casa Lonja

The origin of the Casa Lonja building goes back to the beginning of the 16th century, when the merchants of Seville conducted their overseas commercial transactions just outside the cathedral. One can imagine the disagreements that took place between the merchants

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Notes from the Prez – Steven Anthony

There is something addictive about diving in 80 degree water, with 80 feet of clear viz and surrounded by Florida's most beautiful and engaging marine life. So, in June MAHS sent a team to the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary once again to work on the shipwreck site on Pickles Reef. Under the guidance of Brenda Altmeier, NOAA Maritime Heritage Program Coordinator, and Matt Lawrence, NOAA Maritime Archaeologist, the MAHS team continued this year to collect detailed measurements of selected features that appear to be the remains of a metal sailing schooner. Adjacent to the wreck and strewn throughout the site is an array of cement barrels. The objective is to hopefully identify the name of this wreck and contribute a site map for the Sanctuary archives.

The Pickles Reef project also offers MAHS the opportunity to advance our study of 3D site survey techniques, which hold the prospect of more accurate and efficient site mapping capability. Board member Dave Shaw has been spearheading this effort for MAHS and has also spent a considerable amount of time this year evaluating the various software solutions on the market.

In August, MAHS invited all members and their guests to the annual MAHS picnic at Seneca Creek State Park in Maryland. It was a warm sunny day and MAHS Directors Dave Shaw and Dennis Knepper worked the grill as usual. Everyone seemed to enjoy the opportunity to spend a lazy summer afternoon among friends.

As summer waned and turned into fall, MAHS announced that its fall field school would be conducted on the Bodkin Point site in the Chesapeake Bay. This field school is intended to introduce students to a shallow, cold water, zero-viz mapping experience on the remains of a 20th-century wooden-hulled schooner. Several problems occurred with the charter boat arrangements, so the field school was postponed to October 24 and 25. That weekend the weather turned out to be cold and blustery, with the water whipped up by northeasterly winds. The conditions proved challenging for the class and served as a sound lesson in how difficult things can become when Mother Nature doesn't cooperate.

As the year 2015 comes to a close MAHS members are working diligently in support of the annual conference of the Society of Historical Archaeology and Advisory Council for Underwater Archaeology (ACUA) which will be held in Washington, D.C., from January 6-10, 2016. MAHS will be involved in the ACUA Board

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*Casa Lonja of the Archivo General de Indias, Seville.
Photo by the author.*

and the ecclesiastical authorities of the city. The conflict was resolved during King Philip II's visit to Seville in 1570. He proposed that a merchant exchange be built near the cathedral esplanade. Construction began in 1583, with the cost covered by the *derecho de Lonja* tax, which was deducted from all goods leaving and arriving in Seville.

The Casa Lonja construction was a complex and lengthy affair of fifty years, an exciting period for this bustling city, when fleets of galleons arrived from the Indies laden with rich cargoes of silver, gold and pearls, *grana cochineal* and *añil* (red and blue dyes for textiles), cacao, tobacco and sugar. From 1589 to 1717, for as long as the Indies trade was based in Seville on the banks of the Guadalquivir River, the *Casa de Contratación* (representing the crown) and the *Consulado de Comercio* (representing the merchants) controlled all commercial dealings from the Casa Lonja building.

Founding of the Archivo General de Indias

As of 1680, the city of Cádiz assumed an increasingly important role in the Indies trade. The gradual silting up of the Guadalquivir River and ever larger galleons made it difficult, and certainly dangerous, to cross the Sanlúcar sandbar at the mouth of the river. And thus by 1717, commercial activities had been moved from Seville to Cádiz and the Lonja fell into disuse.

Toward the end of the 18th century, the enlightened Bourbon King, Charles III, transformed the neglected Lonja into the sole repository for all the documentation related to

the history of Spain in the New World. Two men in particular were crucial for the founding of the *Archivo General de Indias*. The first was the monarch's *Secretario de Indias*, José de Gálvez. He visited the archives at Simancas in 1773 and saw for himself the disorder of the documents from the Americas. Many of the Indies documents had been stored in Simancas since 1544, according to the *Real Cédula* of Emperor Charles V. In this royal decree, issued on June 30 of that year, the Emperor had ordered that all documents and papers referring to "Indias" then filed in different offices of the Consejo were to be sent to Simancas. Bundles of documents arrived there over the next century and a half, but the collection was far from complete. Gálvez knew that other Spanish cities also had colonial papers.

Even more important was the King's cosmographer and court chronicler, Juan Bautista Muñoz. This Valencian scholar was appointed by Charles III to travel throughout Spain and copy court documents, with the aim of writing a history of the Spanish colonies. This opus was based on the original documents sent to and from the New World and was written as a reaction to the Scottish historian William Robertson, who in 1771 had written a most uncomplimentary "history" of the discovery and colonisation of the Americas by the Spaniards. Muñoz rapidly became aware of the necessity to have all these documents brought together, and he insisted on Seville for reasons of safety and space.

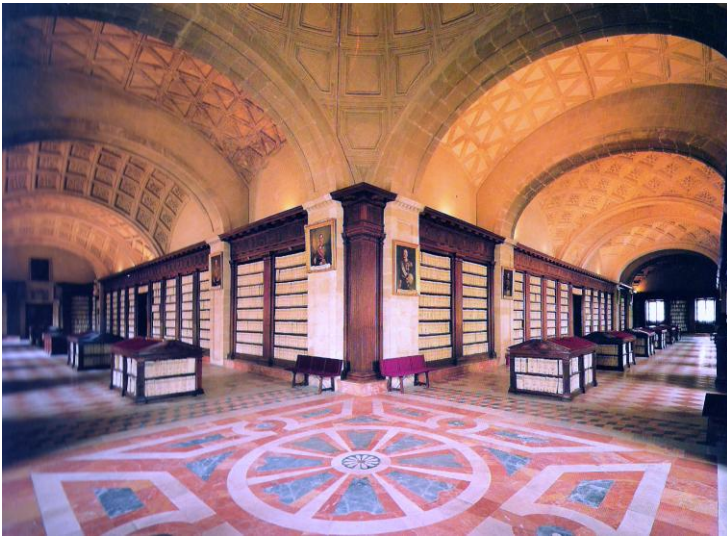
At first the documents in the newly founded archives were consulted by government officials, official



Above: Secretario de Indias, José de Galvez



*Right: Juan Bautista Muñoz, cosmographer and court chronicler.
Public domain images.*



Interior of the Casa Lonja of the Archivo General de Indias, Seville. Photo by the author.

the archives reminding us daily that past meets present. The cannon's last voyage to the Indies was aboard the *Nuestra Señora de la Atocha*, which wrecked off Florida in a hurricane in 1622. Dr. Lyon was responsible for researching the story, and after the galleon was salvaged, he ensured that the cannon returned to its port of departure. There it proudly stands, close to the register in which it is recorded in bundle 1,144 of the *Indiferente General*, the section of the archives containing miscellaneous materials. The story of the treasure and lengthy salvage of the *Atocha* by Mel Fisher is well known. However, Lyon insists that the real treasure from the Indies was not under water. Rather, it is safely kept within the documents: "This is truly the cultural richness of Spain in the Indies."

Victoria Stapells has researched in the *Archivo General de Indias* since 1977. She arrived as a graduate student with basic historical tools but with no training in reading early 16th-century documents. A course in Spanish palaeography at the University of Seville equipped her to embark on a career of more than thirty years of research for academics, institutions, libraries, and the media. She has never lost the thrill of opening a new bundle of documents. Tightly bound accounts secured with crimson ribbon; correspondence held together with rusty pins; illegible water stained papers—many of these give the impression of never having been read. Among her favorite "discoveries," she recalls finding a map showing the location of an 18th-century shipwreck in the Philippines; a fine, ink drawing of a 16th-century Andean musician; and a love poem written at the end of an early 17th-century ship manifest dated at Veracruz. ⚓

The documentation of the Archivo de Indias is divided into 16 sections as follows: Name, number of bundles, and outside time span. The numbers of bundles and time period covered in each section are part of an ongoing process of cataloguing.

- I: PATRONATO (307 bundles)**
1480-1790
Created at the time of the archives, these documents were considered particularly valuable and narrate the conquest and first discovery period.
- II: CONTADURIA (2,126 bundles)**
1510-1778
Treasury records
- III: CONTRATACIÓN (6,301 bundles)**
1492-1795
Shipping and commercial documents, maritime legislation, economic history.
- IV: JUSTICIA (1,207 bundles)**
1515-1617
Law suits
- V: GOBIERNO (18,714 bundles)**
1492-1854
The 14 *Audiencias* (seats of local government) plus a miscellaneous series -*Indiferente General* made up the different geographical areas in the colonies. Official correspondence: Viceroy, government and ecclesiastical officials.
- VI: ESCRIBANÍA DE CÁMARA (2,864 bundles)**
1525-1761
Law suits
- VII: ARRIBADAS (648 bundles)**
1711-1823
Maritime and economic history. Crown correspondence
- VIII: CORREOS (895 bundles)**
1763-1846.
Correspondence, legislation, maps and drawings.
- IX: ESTADO (110 bundles)**
1700-1836
Audiencia material for Mexico and the Philippines.
- X: ULTRAMAR (1,013 bundles)**
1606-1870
Audiencia material largely for the late 18th and 19th centuries.
- XI: PAPELES DE CUBA (2,956 bundles)**
1585-1857
Cuban documents as of 1750.
- XII: CONSULADOS (3,158 bundles and books)**
1543-1857
Merchant Guilds, primarily Seville and Cádiz
- XIII: TÍTULOS DE CASTILLA (14 bundles)**
18th-19th centuries
Titles
- XIV: TRIBUNAL DE CUENTAS (2,751 bundles)**
1851-1887
Treasury records
- XV: DIVERSOS (48 bundles)**
1439-1898
Miscellaneous

In addition, the archives contain nearly 4,000 maps and drawings, and 2,500 objects including flags, textiles, stamps, coins, Papal Bulls, and genealogical charts.

Stormvogel, the Last Sail-Powered Freight Hauler in Bonaire

by François van der Hoeven and Patrick Holian

The 45-foot sloop *Stormvogel*, the last of the sailing freight haulers built in Bonaire, was recently rescued from a back bay in Curaçao where it had been abandoned as derelict. As part of a major preservation effort, the vessel has returned to its home island for restoration to its original appearance.

Bonaire was at one time the center of a small but important boat building industry in the southern Caribbean. Shipping has always been critical to the life of the Caribbean islands, and for most of the historical period, vessels plying the island trade have been sailing ships. Salt, aloe, wood, and livestock were exported from Bonaire, in return for a variety of commodities not available on the island. The vessels working among the islands also carried people, packages, and mail, and in so doing they helped maintain connections between families and friends in an era when isolation was a constant part of life. The trading boats were thus central to the cultural as well as economic well-being of the islands.

The name *Stormvogel* is from the Dutch for storm bird—the petrel or stormy petrel, a species of small, pelagic sea bird, and thus an appropriate name for a boat continually braving the open oceans. *Stormvogel* was built in 1951 by shipwright Etchi Craane on the waterfront of Playa Pabou, north of Bonaire’s capital and main port, Kralendijk. The sloop was constructed for Martinus Ramon Felida, a sea captain who used it initially to haul propane tanks between Curaçao and Bonaire at a time when the refilling of tanks was only

done on the larger island. *Stormvogel* was a cutter-rigged sailing boat, with a single mast and a bowsprit, the latter securing two headsails. This type of boat was known regionally as a *balandra* and was popular for small commercial vessels in the area.

Stormvogel was considered a fast sailer, sailing well when close-hauled. Felida had the vessel painted black to



Captain Martinus Felida
Photographer unknown.



Stormvogel moored in Curaçao. Photo by M. van Veldhoven.

set it apart from other *balandras* in the area. Legend has it that when another skipper painted his *balandra* black, Felida ‘persuaded’ the man to change to another color.

Seventy-nine-year-old Lucio Soliano was a deckhand on *Stormvogel* and recalled the variety of cargo hauled by the vessel. In one instance, they transported live goats: “We would load between 80 and 90 goats and deliver them to Curaçao. We would put as many as we could below deck and tie the rest above deck. With a crew of five, it was pretty crowded.”

In the 1960s, the vessel’s mast and bowsprit were removed and a diesel engine and deck house added. A fiberglass shell was also fixed on the exterior of the hull.

Stormvogel was recently found by the senior author, abandoned and deteriorating in Macola Bay, one of the many small bays in the extensive interior of Willemstad harbor. The Fundashon Patrimonio Marítimo Boneiru (Bonaire Maritime Heritage Foundation) was established to oversee conservation and restoration of the boat to its original condition. The foundation secured legal ownership of the vessel from the Felida family and began fundraising efforts. The latter has resulted in numerous contributions of money, time, and in-kind donations. Local and international foundations and commercial entities have provided funds. Storage space, shipyard workspace, and hauling and shipping services—including transporting the boat from Curaçao to Bonaire aboard a local freighter—have been donated at little or no cost. And a small army of volunteers in Curaçao and Bonaire has contributed labor and expertise along the way.



*A balandra-type vessel under sail.
Photo by E.A. Wegman.*

The vessel was in poor condition when it was found. Cleanup began in Curaçao in November 2014 and continued through the following January. Stripped to its original core, the boat was transported to Bonaire, arriving in late March 2015. It was transported to a new shipyard, where a cradle was constructed to support the hull during the refurbishing. Additional demolition and cleaning were carried out, and then the process of reconstructing the boat began and has continued through the summer and fall of 2015.

The original Bonaire shipwrights built by eye, using experience and intuition to guide their design. But now the project's consulting shipwright, Bruce Halabisky, has carefully measured the boat and generated a 3-D model of the hull, producing what are believed to be the first-ever plans of a Bonaire-built vessel.

Brass hardware along the rails was removed, to be cleaned and reinstalled on the ship toward the end of the restoration. Other repairs, however, have been considerably more extensive. The fiberglass shell was stripped from the exterior of the hull, allowing assessment of hull planking and frames for water damage or rot. The boat had been lifted by crane five times in six months during various transfers and preliminary work. Despite the best efforts of the team, the lifts took their toll. The hull developed a noticeable twist amidships, seen particularly on the port side where the frames were already damaged and the deck had separated, threatening the structural integrity of the entire vessel. The team reinforced the inside of the hull on the intact starboard side and then jacked up the damaged port side area until it matched the starboard side.

Much of the port side framing was either missing or not salvageable and needed to be replaced. To replicate the framing pattern on that side of the hull, a form was

made of each starboard frame and the corresponding port frame was cut as a mirror image. New frames are being fashioned from *kui*, the wood used in the original construction. A type of mesquite, *kui* is still abundant on the island. Most of the wood to be used in the reconstruction is taken from trees already cut down for development projects on the island. When necessary, live trees are harvested sustainably, with only a few branches taken.

Public outreach is a major part of the restoration project. Complete photographic and video documentation of the project is being conducted, and a Facebook weblog is regularly updated. Interviews have been held with old timers, including sailors and boat builders from the island, for insights into construction techniques and stories about the vessel itself. The anecdote from Lucio Soliano about hauling goats resulted from one such interview. A short film about *Stormvogel* and Bonaire's maritime history is also being produced, with Bonaireans including Ismael Soliano, *Stormvogel's* captain over a period of four years, appearing in some of the roles.

An exciting part of the outreach effort is the Junior Shipwright program, which includes lectures on nautical heritage presented by visiting shipwright consultants and by the noted Bonaire historian, Bòi Antoin. A 10-hour course for students allows them to experience working alongside local boat builders. One of the latest fundraising efforts is the Adopt-A-Rib program. For a contribution of \$50, one of the new hull frames will be inscribed with the donor's name prior to installation.



*Volunteers harvesting kui wood for new frames.
Photo by P. Holian.*



Stormvogel out of the water and readied for initial cleanup in Curaçao. Photo by F. Van der Hoeven.



One of the shipwrights, Johnny Craane, inspects the frames for deterioration. Photo by P. Holian.



Crane operator removing the diesel engine. Photo by M. van Veldhoven.



Stormvogel, stripped to its historic core, is prepared for transport to Bonaire. Photo by F. Van der Hoeven.

Current plans are for *Stormvogel* to be fully restored to sailing condition. The balandra will sail again in the protected bay in the lee of Bonaire for the enjoyment and education of island residents, tourists and, especially, the youth of Bonaire. The vessel will in addition serve as the focus of a proposed Bonaire Maritime Heritage Center, to be developed by the Foundation.



Stormvogel Project T-shirt design. Image by P. Holian.

François van der Hoeven is a resident of Curaçao and serves as Secretary of the Foundation for Maritime Archaeology, Curaçao (STIMACUR), and as a Board member of the Bonaire Maritime Heritage Foundation.

Patrick Holian is a journalist living on Bonaire and serves as Secretary of the Bonaire Maritime Heritage Foundation.

The Project Stormvogel blog is at: <https://www.facebook.com/StormvogelBonaire> ⚓

Hermione Sails Across the Atlantic Again After 235 Years

by Dennis Knepper

A replica of the French frigate *Hermione* sailed across the Atlantic from France to North America and toured the Eastern seaboard in the summer of 2015. With stops from Virginia to Nova Scotia, the ship retraced many of the steps of its namesake during the American Revolution, when it brought the Marquis de Lafayette to the United States on his mission to aid the embattled rebels there.

Hermione (pro-nounced Air-me-on) was one of three *Concorde* class frigates in the French Navy in the late 18th century, 32-gun warships armed with 12-pounder long guns. It was the third and last of the frigates built, constructed in Rochefort, on the Charente River in western France, by the shipwright Henri Chevillard. The keel was laid in March 1777, and the vessel was launched in April 1779, eleven months later.

Hermione arrived in Boston on April 28, 1780, under the command of Lieutenant Latouche-Tréville, carrying General Lafayette and news of French reinforcements for Washington's forces. After a brief mission to Penobscot Bay to reconnoiter the British garrison at Fort George, Latouche and *Hermione* sailed to Rhode Island, and then to New York with orders to disrupt shipping entering the port. Following the capture of two prizes there, Latouche engaged the frigate HMS *Iris* (the former USS *Hancock*) and three other warships in the so-called "Action of 7 June 1780." *Hermione* later participated in several other battles before returning to France in February 1782 at the end of the war. After additional service against the British in India, the ship sailed back to France in 1784. In September 1793, it ran aground off Le Croisic, in the northern Bay of Biscay, and broke up in heavy seas.

Hermione's sister ships, the two other *Concorde* class frigates, were both eventually captured by the British: *Concorde*, in the West Indies at the end of the



Hermione in the harbor at Brest during sea trials.
Photo by Y. Le Bris.

war in 1783; and *Courageuse*, off Toulon in 1799, during the French Revolutionary Wars.

Planning for the reconstruction of *Hermione* began in 1993 when French author Erik Orsenna and Franco-American Benedict Donnelly, a public relations executive and recreational sailor, devised a project bring *Hermione* back to life. The ship was rebuilt

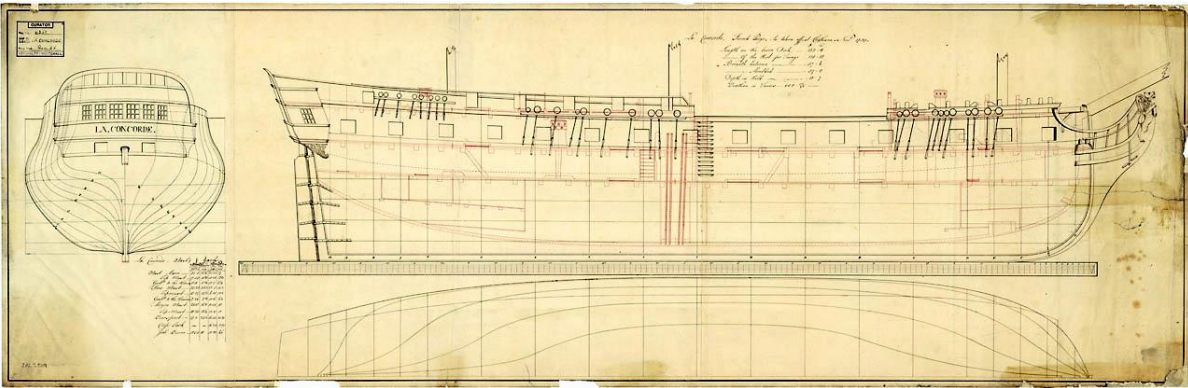
using period plans found in the naval archives at Greenwich—plans drawn by the British Admiralty from the captured sister ship *Concorde*. The *Hermione-Lafayette* Voyage project, as it became known, was envisioned as a celebration of the shipbuilding industry in western France and, as noted on the project website, a tribute to the inspiring example of Lafayette, a man known as the "Hero of Two Worlds." The cooperation between the two nations—France and the United States—in developing and executing the project was testimony to the enduring relationship between the countries. "The French-American partnership in making this transatlantic project a reality reaffirms the long friendship between France and the United States.

The *Hermione* Voyage 2015 celebrates the indomitable spirit of the Marquis de Lafayette," said Miles Young, President of the Friends of *Hermione-Lafayette* in America, Inc. "Lafayette, teen hero of the American Revolution and French

Founding Father of the United States. The voyage also returns this historic tall ship to 12 iconic ports of the War of Independence, in one of the most remarkable and authentic reconstructions in the world. This ambitious project brings history alive, while exemplifying Lafayette's family motto, *Cur Non*—"Why Not?"

The voyage of the new *Hermione* occurred from early June through July 2015, following two months of

The French-American partnership in making this transatlantic project a reality reaffirms the long friendship between France and the United States.



*Plans of Concorde, sister ship of Hermione, from which the replica was constructed.
Image from the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.*

sea trials between Brest and Bordeaux in the fall of 2014. The 40-day, 9,000 nautical mile itinerary began in Rochefort, included a stop in Las Palmas, then across the Atlantic to Virginia, with stops at Yorktown, Mount Vernon, and Alexandria; on to Annapolis and Baltimore in Maryland; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; New York City and Greenport, New York; Newport, Rhode Island; Boston, Massachusetts; Castine Maine; Lunenburg, Nova Scotia; and re-crossing the Atlantic to the port of Brest.

Construction of *Hermione* began anew in Rochefort in 1997, in what was described in a 2007 *NY Times* article as “a cavernous 18th-century cobblestone dry dock” beside the Corderie Royale, or royal ropewalk, the great museum complex in the heart of the Rochefort dockyard. Original materials and traditional construction methods were used whenever possible. The shipyard site was open to the public, and admission fees helped fund the project.

Weight was a concern in the reconstruction. The cannons and cannonballs were non-functional and made of lighter cast iron than the originals. The woven hemp used in the original 19 working sails was judged too heavy, and so the sail cloth was woven from French flax. The sails were cut to shape by sail maker Anne Renault. The only sail maker on the project, Renault reinforced each corner with several layers of cloth and created 250 eyelets for the rigging using hand-made hemp rope.

For authenticity, the shipwrights used only oak from France in constructing the hull, superstructure and deck. The scarcity of mature oak trees large enough for some of the frames required the builders to scour forests across France, as far away Versailles and Fontainebleau.

According to information presented dockside at the various stops in the U.S., *Hermione* measures 217 feet (66 meters) in length overall, with a hull length of 148



*Tours were conducted during the construction at Rochefort.
Photo: CMT-S.Sciot.*

feet (45 meters). The main mast rises 155 ft (47 m) above the deck, and the running rigging alone totals 17.5 miles (28 km), much of it hand-made rope.

More than €26 million (nearly \$30 million at current exchange rates) has been raised toward the costs of the project from local and regional French governments, the European Union, private and corporate sponsors, and ticket and gift shop sales. In addition, at least \$7 million (€6 million) has been raised in the United States for modern navigational equipment and for the trip across the Atlantic.

The ship is manned by a crew of 150, about half the original complement. They are described as young volunteers and a core of professionals. The 53-year-old captain, Yann Cariou, readied the crew, spending long hours in the dock before going to sea. “Every maneuver is very complicated on such a large and fast vessel,” said Cariou, “especially with three masts and 2,500 square meters of sail.”



Hermione moored along the waterfront in Alexandria, Virginia. Photo by the author.



Climbing to the masthead 150 feet above the deck.
Photo: BBC News.

the vessel was—“But it’s so small How did they fit 300 sailors on something this size?”

American historians believe Lafayette was instrumental, in so many ways, in winning our independence,” quoting the Friends of Hermione-Lafayette in America website, “yet it must be acknowledged not enough American citizens fully appreciate him and know about his life, especially the fact he returned to the United States in 1824-1825, where he was feted at every stop during his triumphal return tour.”

The story of *Hermione* and its significance to the Marquis de Lafayette and the American Revolution may not be well-known in this country, but the name Lafayette is very familiar. Numerous towns and cities are named after the Marquis, as well as many streets, schools and colleges.

“We, at Friends of Hermione-Lafayette in America, Inc., are...spreading the word about the friendship between our two republics, about Lafayette, and about the French Frigate of Freedom, the *Hermione*.” Various outreach and educational programs are planned as part of the project’s educational mission. “One exciting example that we are currently working on for younger people is the ‘Tides of Revolution: The Hermione Game,’ which is a web-based exploration of the background of the events leading to the surrender of the British army under Cornwallis at Yorktown.”

The Mission Statement of the Friends of Hermione-Lafayette in America, Inc., summarizes the ultimate purpose of the venture:

“To demonstrate the inestimable value of history, to the present and the future, and to show that it can be a living force in increasing our understanding of the world.”

We caught up with the ship at its stop in Alexandria. The day was sunny, with a clear, deep blue sky, unusual for this time of year in the Washington, D.C. area. People crowded the waterfront to see this full-sized replica of one of the vessels from the period of the American Revolutionary War. While warships of the Age of Sail were considered the largest and most complicated machines in existence at the time, one of the many comments heard from those lucky enough to board



Statistics and other information about Hermione as presented dockside. Photo by the author.

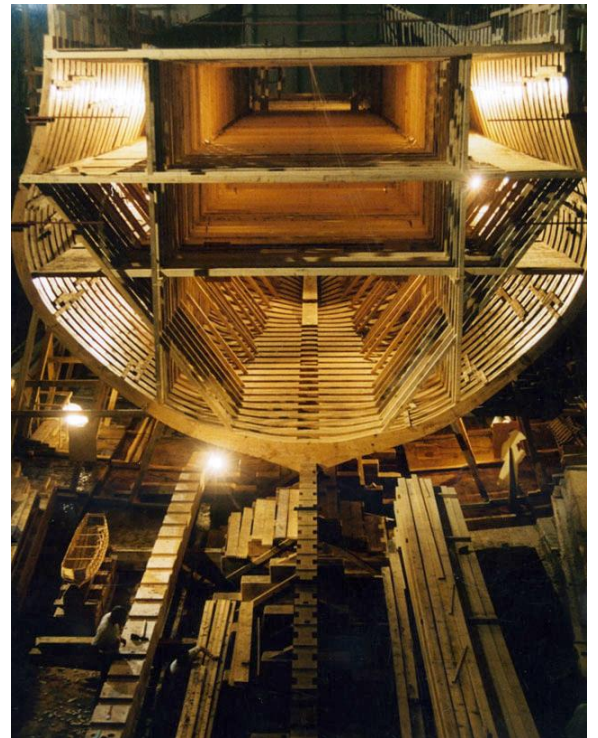


Hermione moored in the Inner Harbor of Baltimore, Maryland. Photo: Baltimore Sun.



Above: The Marquis de Lafayette in 1791 (by Joseph-Désiré Court).

Right: Lafayette in 1825 (by Matthew Harris Jouett).



Hermione: cross-section during construction at Rochefort. Photo: Asselin, Inc.

This article was compiled in part from reports by the BBC News; The Connexion, a French English-language newspaper; and www.Hermione2015.com, website of the Friends of Hermione-Lafayette in America, Inc. ⚓

A Tale of Two Slave Ships: *Guerrero* and *São José Paquete de Africa*

by Jay V. Haigler

The trans-Atlantic slave trade, the business of procuring, transporting and selling slaves, especially black Africans, began around the mid-15th century, when Portuguese interests in Africa moved away from searching for the fabled deposits of gold to a much more readily available commodity—people.

A Spanish slave ship called the *Guerrero* was wrecked December 19, 1827 on a reef near Key Largo, Florida. It was carrying a cargo of 561 Africans. These Africans were being carried to Cuba from Mozambique to be sold to plantation owners. *Guerrero* met its doom after the British Navy schooner HMS *Nimble* intercepted it while patrolling the waters near the Bahamas for illegal slavers. A chase began near Orange City in the western Bahamas and ended a few hours later when both ships struck the shallow, hard bottom at Carysfort Reef, near Key Largo. The impact sank *Guerrero* in the shallows, drowning 41 of the captive Africans. *Nimble* was luckier—with much difficulty it was eventually re-floated.

The story did not end there, though. After wrecking vessels came to the aid of both ships, *Guerrero*'s crew hijacked two of the rescuing vessels. Those on the damaged *Nimble* could only watch as the pirates got away. *Nimble* had lost her rudder when she grounded but was helped by the wreckers, who fitted the rudder salvaged from *Guerrero* to her.

The pirates and nearly 400 Africans made their way to Cuba. *Nimble* was towed by one of the wreckers, ultimately reaching Key West with 120 of the rescued Africans. After a long period living as virtual slaves, those Africans that survived were taken to Liberia to begin life anew.

Historian Gail Swanson has published a book, *The Slave Ship Guerrero* (Infinity Press, 2001), which nicely summarizes the saga from the time of the ship's sinking to what became of the African survivors and their lives in Liberia.

In 2003, members of the National Association of Black Scuba Divers (NABS) participated in the "*Guerrero Project*," a documentary about the search for the slave ship as told through Swanson's book.

The late Brenda Lanzendorf, "star" of the documentary, was at that time the only archaeologist at Biscayne National Park and needed help documenting the 100 or more shipwrecks estimated to be in the park. The National Park Service lacked the resources and manpower to search out and map the wreck of *Guerrero* and other vessels. In 2005, in part to fill the gap, Lanzendorf and Kenneth Stewart, of the Tennessee Aquatic Project (TAP), a NABS affiliate club, developed the Diving With a Purpose Program (DWP). Today, DWP is a 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt non-profit organization that manages and conducts maritime archaeology and coral reef restoration field programs. Based in Nashville, Tennessee, with offices in Washington, D.C., DWP abides by a code of ethics and recently established a Youth DWP maritime archaeology program.

Over the last ten years, more than 120 people have participated in the DWP maritime archaeology field program, and most are repeat attendees. DWP has documented 14 shipwrecks, including 18th and 19th century sailing vessels, and has accumulated over 12,000 volunteer hours in Biscayne National Park and National Marine Sanctuaries.

From its inception, one of the primary missions of DWP has been to develop a team of divers to participate in the search for *Guerrero*. In 2010, after five years of training with DWP and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), DWP members joined staff members of NOAA's Florida Keys National

Marine Sanctuary to search for the wreck site. A possible site was identified and a team was sent to assess the shipwreck there.

The DWP team included Ken Stewart (DWP Program Director), Erik Denson (DWP Lead Instructor), Erly Thornton (DWP Lead Instructor), Dr. Albert José Jones (NABS Science Committee Chair and DWP Instructor), and Jay Haigler (DWP Lead Instructor). Fragments

of ceramic and glass, including a cologne bottle from the early 1800s, bone china, and blue-edged refined earthenware, were documented at the site, along with



2012 Expedition - Search for the *Guerrero*.
Photo courtesy of DWP.



Above: Divers document the São Jose.



*Right: K.Sadiki and K.Victorino in the conservation laboratory.
Photos courtesy of Iziko Museums.*

metal rigging, copper fasteners, lead and iron shot, and samples from wooden planks. *Nimble* lost its anchor during the encounter with *Guerrero*, and an anchor for that type of ship was found at the site. So, there is a lot of empirical evidence that points to this site as the wreck of *Guerrero*, but still no direct evidence—no smoking gun!

In 2012, 21 DWP graduates and NOAA personnel continued to explore, survey, and document the site. While positive evidence of the wreck’s identity remains to be found, many more artifacts have been discovered and mapping of the site has continued. The 2012 expedition was featured in the PBS “Changing Seas” documentary series in an episode called “Sunken Stories.”

The São José Paquete de Africa

DWP has continued its work in maritime archaeology by joining an international coalition with four institutional partners—George Washington University Department of Anthropology; the Smithsonian Institute National Museum of African American History and Culture; the United States National Park Service, Submerged Resource Center; and IZIKO Museum of Cape Town, South Africa—to form the Slave Wrecks Project. The aim of the Slave Wrecks Project is to locate, document, and preserve the archaeological remains of ships that wrecked while engaged in the international slave trade from Africa. It is estimated that over 600 slaving vessels were lost in the trans-Atlantic slave trade alone.

In February, 2013, the Slave Wrecks Project conducted an expedition to document a shipwreck off the coast of Cape Town, South Africa that is believed to be the slave ship *São José Paquete de Africa*. The DWP team member on the expedition was Kamau Sadiki (DWP Lead Instructor and NABS Vice President).

The Portuguese slaver *São José* was involved in the 18th-century East African slave trade, sailing from the port of Inhambane, Mozambique and reportedly headed for a port in Brazil with a cargo of more than 500 Africans. On the night of December 27, 1794, the ship struck the rocky cape coast near what is now Clifton Beach in Cape Town, South Africa, after navigating the treacherous waters of the Cape of Good Hope. The vessel went down in pounding surf in about 25 feet of water. The captain survived and was interrogated after the accident. He made a statement to interrogators about the ship’s location and reported losing 200 African souls in the accident.

Thick kelp forest dominates the wreck site, with a continuous underwater surge of 10 to 15 feet. Visibility varies from five to 25 feet, with kelp debris and sand continuously suspended in the water due to the turbulence. The site of the shipwreck is covered with as much as five feet of sand that has accumulated over the years.

Additional research has revealed strong circumstantial evidence that the wreckage is that of *São José*. To date, cannons, ballast and some substantial wood members have been identified at the site. Work will continue on the *São José* site in the future. Artifacts are currently undergoing curation, and the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture and IZIKO Museums of South Africa have entered into a formal long-term agreement to loan the artifacts for exhibition at the museum in Washington, D.C., which is scheduled to open in the fall of 2016.

Jay Haigler is Lead Instructor for DWP. The organization’s website is www.divingwithapurpose.org.

More information about NABS can be found at their website, (www.nabsdivers.org).

The PBS program “Sunken Stories” was produced by WPBT2 in Miami, and can be viewed at www.changingseas.tv. ⚓

Review

Shipwrecked in Paradise: Cleopatra's Barge in Hawai'i

by Paul F. Johnston (Texas A&M Press, 2015)

reviewed by Dennis Knepper

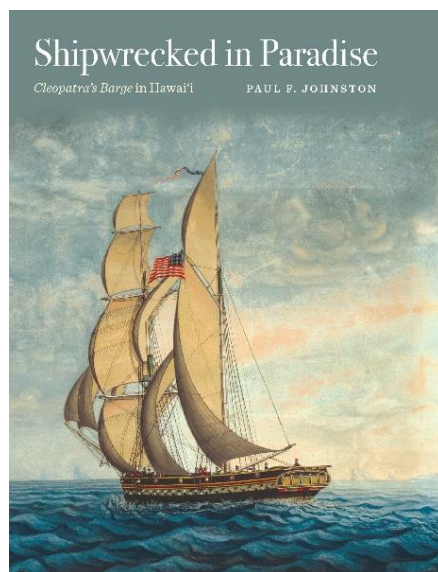
In 1824, a ship with the intriguing sounding name, *Cleopatra's Barge*, sank in Hanalei Bay on the Hawaiian island of Kaua'i. How the ship got there and its unique history is the subject of a fascinating book, *Shipwrecked in Paradise: Cleopatra's Barge in Hawai'i*, by Paul F. Johnston, Curator of Maritime History at the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C.

The outlines of the story of *Cleopatra's Barge* may be familiar to readers of *MAHSNEWS* from the article that appeared in the last issue describing the return to Hawai'i of artifacts from the wreck that had been analyzed and conserved in Texas and at the Smithsonian.

Cleopatra's Barge was built in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1816, the first oceangoing yacht in the United States, a pleasure boat launched at a time when ships, on the western side of the Atlantic at least, were built solely for trade or war. The vessel had a square-rigged foremast and a fore-and-aft rigged main—technically speaking, a hermaphrodite brig. It was built by George Crowninshield, Jr., of the Crowninshield family of New England, famous for its fast-sailing merchant ships that were also renowned as privateers during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. *Cleopatra's Barge* was sleek and speedy, built on the lines of Crowninshield's notorious *America*, one of the fastest and most successful privateers in the latter war.

As Johnston notes, "the Crowninshield family had a history of eccentric behavior." In 1796, they reportedly brought the first elephant to America, which they put on display in Boston and eventually sold for \$10,000 (close to \$200,000 in today's terms). George, Jr., was from the same eccentric mold, if that is not a contradiction in terms. He furnished *Cleopatra's Barge* luxuriously, with opulent staterooms, custom china and silver services, and even internal plumbing, which would have been an unusual amenity in most houses of the period, let alone on a ship. The origin of the yacht's name was mysteriously never revealed, but may have been related to descriptions of the queen's barge in Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*.

Crowninshield toured the Mediterranean in the ship in 1816-1817, but died shortly thereafter. The vessel



changed hands several times and was eventually purchased by King Kamehameha II, the second king of Hawai'i, in 1820. The sale price was famously reported as one million pounds of sandalwood, about \$80,000 worth (around \$1.5 million today). Sandalwood was a prized China trade commodity sought after for use as incense and in cabinetry.

As we noted in the earlier newsletter article, three books and dozens of articles have told the story of *Cleopatra's Barge* but there has been little mention of the years in Hawai'i. Kamehameha renamed the vessel *Ha'aheo o Hawai'i (Pride of Hawai'i)* and used it for the next four years, first

as his private yacht and later as a cargo and passenger transport, a diplomatic vehicle to aid in consolidating his power over the other chiefs in the Hawaiian archipelago, and once even as a pirate ship. The vessel sank in April 1824 in Hanalei Bay on the north coast of Kaua'i, while the king was away on a tour of the United Kingdom.

The introductory sections of Johnston's absorbing book include three full pages of acknowledgments. Almost all of the contributors provided substantive input to the project, and the array of specialists is notable, from various archaeologists who lent time and expertise, to a variety of lab analysts and artifact conservators, archival researchers, government officials in Washington and Hawai'i, a whale ivory expert, and a blacksmith. Speaking from my own more limited but nevertheless long-time experience as an archaeologist, the fact that such a variety of interests came together in so successful manner is a tribute to the vision and organizational ability of the project manager and author.

Shipwrecked in Paradise begins with an introductory chapter which describes the five seasons of underwater field work and excavation conducted at the site. Johnston obtained the first underwater archaeological permits ever issued by the State of Hawai'i, allowing him to conduct the work which he describes in an engaging fashion. An extensive history of the ship, from its construction in Salem to its days in Hawai'i follows. Two lengthy chapters detail the archaeological finds: one describing ship architecture and structural remains; the second describing other

artifacts—ceramic, glass, metal, bone, ivory, wood, brick, along with a number of Native Hawaiian items. The latter included stone adzes and grinding stones, a thin-walled gourd bowl fragment, a *pu* or conch shell horn, cowrie-shell octopus lures, net sinkers, reef anchors, and “canoe breakers.” These last were large round or oval stones with cut grooves for attaching lines: “The grooves were for ropes to encircle the big rocks, which were slung at enemy canoes or their crews and then hauled back for another broadside.” A final chapter includes a brief summing up.

The book is very handsomely produced by Texas A&M University Press, as part of the Ed Rachal Foundation Nautical Archaeology Series, and, reflecting our modern global economy, printed in China. The volume is quarto size, with solid hardback covers, heavy bond paper, and high quality illustrations, the colors true and a number of fine line drawings clearly reproduced. The text runs to 185 pages, with 10 pages of endnotes that are not merely citations but add information to the text; a 3-page bibliography; and a useful 4-page index.

The story of the ship itself is interesting, full of wry elements and quirky characters. But it has deeper, more serious undertones regarding the challenges faced by many cultures in the modern world when forced to interact with larger powers at sometimes very different levels of material and spiritual accomplishment. The time of *Cleopatra’s Barge* was an era of contrast and transition in Hawai’i. “[Kamehameha] only reigned from 1819 to 1824, but Old Hawai’i changed forever and irrevocably from the changes he put into place during that short period.” After coming to power in 1819, the

King abolished the Hawaiian kapu (taboo) system and admitted Christian missionaries, accelerating cultural change underway at the time.

The wreck itself, with its mix of European and Native Hawaiian artifacts, embodied this transition when, as Johnston put it, “the islands had one foot in each culture, and the islanders to some degree still were looking at Western ways before complete inundation.” Lamp chimney glass occurred alongside a lamp made from a local *kukui* nut, knives and iron adze heads alongside stone adzes, cannon balls alongside stone canoe breakers—and a true amalgamation of cultures, a sheet of copper sheathing folder over and used as a scraping tool.

The literature of shipwreck archaeology in Hawai’i is limited, particularly for the pre-World War II era, which makes *Shipwrecked in Paradise* an even more important work. It fills a significant gap, and in telling its story may itself be as emblematic of the transition in cultures as the ship it describes.

The artifacts recovered from *Cleopatra’s Barge* are now at the Kaua’i Museum in Lihue, Kaua’i, which has been designated by the State of Hawai’i as the official repository for the material. Portions of the ship’s hull remain in the sands in Hanalei Bay. *Shipwrecked in Paradise* is the highly readable, appealing, and informative record of the ship, its contents, and its story.

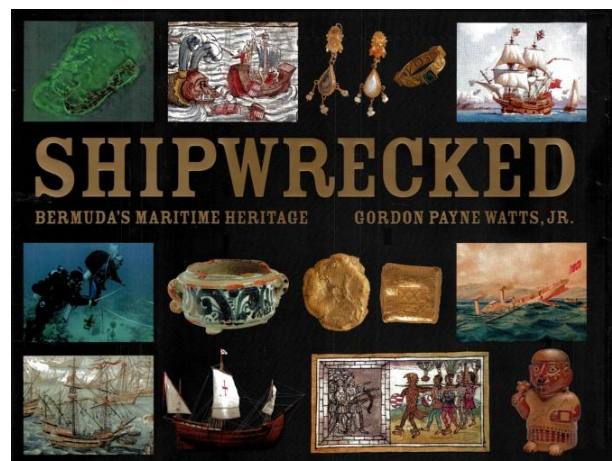
Paul F. Johnston is Curator of Maritime History, Division of Work and Industry, at the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 📍

Review

***Shipwrecked, Bermuda’s Maritime Heritage*, by Gordon Payne Watts, Jr.**
(National Museum of Bermuda Press, 2014)

reviewed by James Smailes

Hundreds of shipwrecks, some dating to the early 1500s and the Age of Discovery, have been lost on the treacherous reefs surrounding Bermuda. Merchant ships, treasure-laden vessels, warships, and other vessels from virtually every nation engaged in maritime commerce in the western Atlantic can be found in the waters surrounding the island chain that is Bermuda. Most were ensnared during the Age of Sail, but many modern ships were to fall victim to the reefs as well, despite the development of modern navigational instruments. Yet it was not until after the Second World War that divers took a keen interest in the wrecks scattered about reefs of Bermuda.



Shipwrecked, Bermuda's Maritime Heritage, by the former director of the Maritime History and Underwater Archaeology Program at East Carolina University, Gordon P. Watts, Jr., brings together in one place the results of the extensive maritime research that has been conducted, published in numerous professional journals, magazines, and newspapers, and displayed at the Bermuda Maritime Museum, now the National Museum of Bermuda. The history of Bermuda and the exploration of the New World are presented in six detailed chapters, highlighted with the stories of 32 significant shipwrecks, the most important being the *Sea Venture*, which resulted in Bermuda's initial settlement. As exploration and settlement of the New World proceeded, more and more ships would pass by Bermuda's reef system, and some would be lost on those reefs.

The chapters are organized by century, and each one is beautifully illustrated with early maps, drawings and paintings of settlements, and for later periods, photographs as well. At the end of each chapter are presented the significant shipwrecks from that century, with explanations of how they were found, photographs of the wreck sites, site maps, artifacts and the importance of those wrecks in understanding the development of the Americas and the impact on Bermuda.

The archaeology of the *Sea Venture* is given a much needed lengthy explanation. It was the discovery of the *Sea Venture* in 1958 that caught the attention and imagination of overseas underwater archaeologists and historians and which began a vibrant period of wreck discovery and investigation that continues to this day. The text is well annotated with 12 pages of end notes.

The book begins appropriately with the discovery of the islands in 1505 by Captain Juan de Bermúdez as he returned to Spain from the New World. The first chapter, Bermuda and the Sea, continues with the initial exploration of the islands by the Spanish. King Charles V of Spain twice authorized colonizing the islands, but despite the increasing number of shipwrecks, no action was taken. At least 16 known wrecks have been dated to the 16th century.

Permanent settlement of Bermuda resulted from the wreck of an English ship, *Sea Venture*, one of seven ships bound for the Jamestown colony in Virginia in 1609. Over the next 10 months, the survivors explored and mapped the islands and used the native Bermuda cedar trees to build two vessels, the *Deliverance* and the *Patience*, to complete their trip to Virginia. With this, the value of the islands was established and their settlement was added to the Virginia Company's charter.

The chapter continues through the 21st century explaining Bermuda's development. The following chapters explore in detail the activities in the New World

in each century and the impact on Bermuda's development up to the present.

The second chapter, Exploration and Conquest, begins long before Bermuda's discovery with the immediate aftermath of Columbus' discovery of the Americas and the exploration and conquest of the West Indies and Aztec and Incan Empires by the Spanish. A detailed explanation of the Flota System is provided, with the types of vessels employed and their roles in the series of convoys organized by the Spanish to protect their treasure ships from pirates and privateers. Also covered is the creation of settlements throughout the Caribbean and the Americas by the French and English.

In this chapter, the details of the archaeology of shipwrecks begins with the *San Pedro*, a Spanish *nao* lost in 1596, and two other 16th century wrecks. The artifacts recovered from these wrecks include an amazing range of navigational instruments, ship's tools, rigging, ship's ordnance, shot and weaponry, arms, armor and domestic items. Exotic artifacts include gold and stone items from the Aztec and Inca Empires, and perhaps the most famous artifact found in Bermuda, an emerald and gold pectoral cross.

Chapter 3, New World Empires, features the settling of Virginia, first at Roanoke, later at Jamestown, and how the link between Virginia and Bermuda was established. The details of seven 17th century shipwrecks that have been surveyed are provided, from the first known, a Spanish galleon in 1603, and of course, the *Sea Venture*.

Chapter 4, Rise of the Colonies, covers the 18th century and the evolution of the early colonies dependent upon the home country into complex, self-sustaining societies that would play a major role in the development of European economies. The American Revolution is highlighted along with its impact on Bermuda trade with the colonies.

Chapter 5, The Age of Industry, covers the 19th century and the political development, economic expansion, and rapid technological change in Europe, the Americas, and Bermuda, in the latter case with the expansion of military forts and construction of the Dockyard to service Royal Navy ships. This is the period of Napoleon, the War of 1812, and the American Civil War, when Bermuda was used as a way station for blockade runners. The period also witnessed the development of steam powered warships and ironclads, while tourism became a viable and important source of income for the island.

The final chapter, From Sail to Steam, covers the evolution of Bermuda's economy in the 20th century, with expanding tourism, improved agriculture, and development of financial industries. During the two World Wars, Bermuda played a significant role in naval

warfare in the western Atlantic. Also in the 20th century was the development of air service to Bermuda, first for military and weather service, and later for tourism.

Dr. Watts has been one of the most active archaeologists to work in Bermuda waters, beginning with his first visit in 1982 to examine Bermuda's most historic wreck, the *Sea Venture*. Calling Bermuda "the most incredible classroom in the world," Watts' book presents the rich experiences of his friends, colleagues and students in these explorations. "The value of Bermuda's submerged cultural resources lies in their

capacity to connect the public with details of past lives and technology that would have been lost if the wrecks had not been properly investigated."

Gordon P. Watts, Jr., is the former director of the Maritime History and Underwater Archaeology Program at East Carolina University, is an affiliated scholar with the Institute of Nautical Archaeology, a board member of Carolina Coastal Classrooms and is the President and CEO of the Institute for International Maritime Research and Tidewater Atlantic Research. ⚓

continued from page 2

meeting again this year as an Institutional Advisor. Jim Smailes will be providing volunteer support for the Archaeology Film Festival hosted by Paul Johnston and scheduled for Saturday night. Jim will also be presenting an update on the MAHS Pickles Reef project which is scheduled for Friday morning of the conference. This is a spectacular conference and will not likely be held in Washington again for many years. I urge all MAHS members to attend.

MAHS has a lot going on this year and I look forward to seeing all members at the SHA/ACUA conference and at the MAHS bi-monthly General Membership meetings, where they can learn more about underwater archaeology and become more involved.



See you on the water,

Steven Anthony
President



J. Smailes documents portions of the metal wreck at the Pickles Reef site. Photo by D. Knepper.

MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Statement of Ethics

The Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society is organized for the purpose of enhancing public awareness and appreciation of the significance of submerged cultural resources and the science of maritime archaeology. In pursuit of this mandate, members may come into contact with unique information and cultural material associated with terrestrial and underwater sites containing evidence of the history of humankind. To protect these sites from destruction by commercial salvors and amateur souvenir hunters, the Society seeks to encourage its members to abide by the highest ethical standards. Therefore, as a condition of membership and pursuant to Article 2, Section 1 (A) of the bylaws, the undersigned executes this statement of ethics acknowledging adherence to the standards and policies of the Society, and further agrees as follows:

- 1. To regard all archaeological sites, artifacts and related information as potentially significant resources in accordance with federal, state, and international law and the principles and standards of contemporary archaeological science.
- 2. To maintain the confidentiality of the location of archaeological sites.
To excavate or otherwise disturb an archaeological site solely for the purpose of scientific research conducted under the supervision of a qualified archaeologist operating in accordance with the rules and regulations of federal or foreign governments. Artifacts shall not be removed until their context and provenience have been recorded
- 3. and only when the artifact and related data have been designated for research, public display or otherwise for the common good.
- 4. To conduct oneself in a manner that protects the ethical integrity of the member, the archaeological site and the Society and prevents involvement in criminal violations of applicable vandalism statutes.
- 5. To observe these standards and aid in securing observance of these standards by fellow members and non-members.
- 6. To recognize that any member who violates the standards and policies of the Society shall be subject to sanctions and possible expulsion in accordance with Article 2, Section 4 of the bylaws.

Signature _____ Date _____

**MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PO Box 44382, L'Enfant Plaza, Washington, D.C. 20026**

Application for Membership

Membership in the Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society is open to all persons interested in maritime history or archaeology whether or not they are divers. Members of MAHS have first preference for enrollment in all courses and other activities and projects of the Society. To join MAHS, please sign the Standards of Ethics above and send it to MAHS along with your check and this application form.

Name (print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (H) _____ (O) _____ (FAX) _____

E-mail _____

DUES ENCLOSED	
___	\$30 Individual
___	\$35 Family
___	\$50 Sponsor
___	\$100 Patron

Skills (circle): research / dive / video / communications / writing / first aid / other:

Please mail this form along with your check to: MAHS at PO Box 44382, L'Enfant Plaza, Washington, D.C., 20026

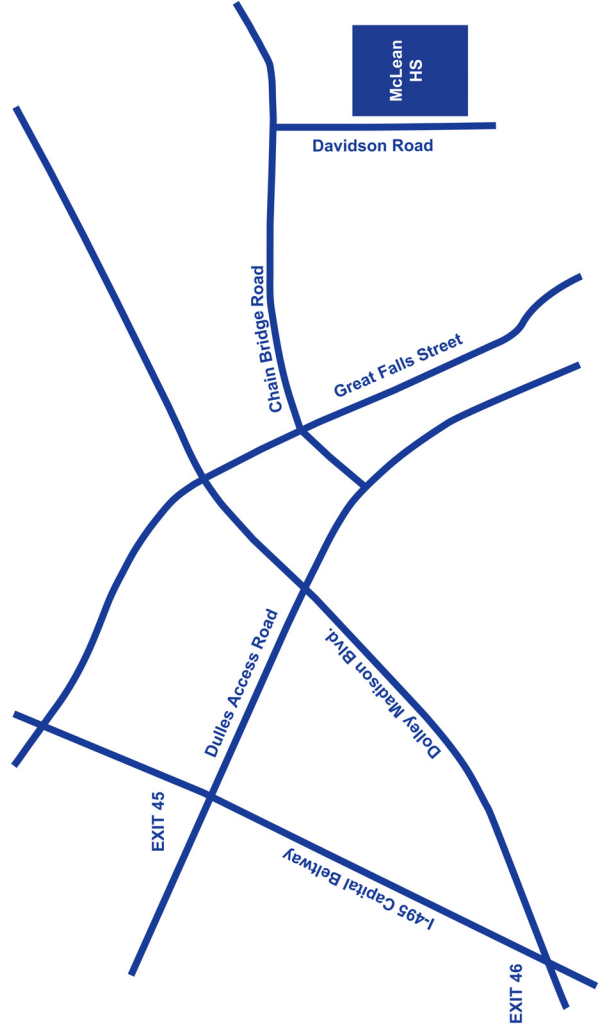
General membership meetings of the Maritime Archaeological and Historical Society are held on a bi-monthly basis, the second Tuesday of the month. Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at McLean High School, in McLean, Virginia, except in August and December. Meetings in August and December are held at other locations for special events and holiday parties.

Please join us and bring a friend. The school is located on Davidson Road, just inside the Capital Beltway (I-495) – use Exit 45, coming from Maryland, or Exit 46, coming from Virginia.

Check the website www.MAHSNet.org for e-mail advisories about any schedule changes.

Renew Now!

It's time to renew your membership in MAHS. It's easy. Just complete the application form on the inside back cover and sign the Ethics Statement, enclose a check for your dues, and mail!



MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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