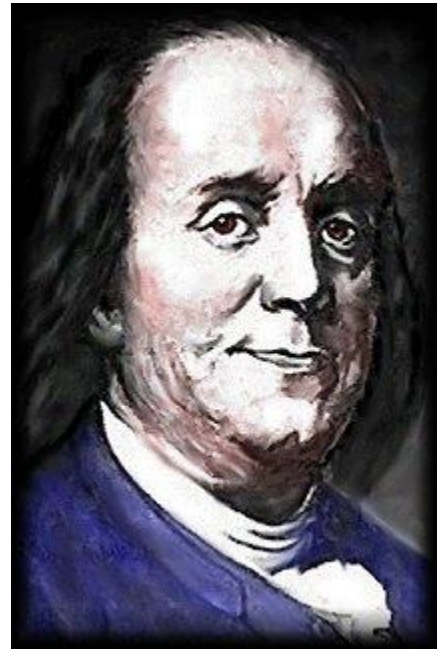


# *The Queen's Report*

*Update from the  
Queen Anne's Revenge Shipwreck Project  
Volume 4, Number 2  
Summer 2004*

## **Benjamin Franklin's Blackbeard Connection**

*M*ost of us probably don't think of Benjamin Franklin as a poet. Essayist, writer, humorist, yes. Statesman, diplomat, ambassador, printer, supporter of independence for America, yes. But a poet? Yes, he was. Franklin wrote a ballad titled "The Downfall of Piracy" when he was 13. That was in 1719, the year after British officer Robert Maynard killed Edward Teach (Blackbeard) in a bloody battle near Ocracoke. The ballad (in very awkward rhyme scheme) described the last hours of Blackbeard's life. In later years, Franklin himself would label it as "wretched stuff", but readers can decide for themselves. Here is just one of the stanzas in the ballad. If you are truly eager to read the whole thing, and if there is an overwhelming demand for it, we will print all 10 stanzas.



**Maynard boarded him, and to it  
They fell with sword and pistol too;  
They had Courage, and did show it,  
Killing of the Pirate's Crew.  
Teach and Maynard on the Quarter,  
Fought it out most manfully,  
Maynard's Sword did cut him shorter,  
Losing his head, he there did die.**

We found this information in a September, 1999 issue of *The New England Quarterly* by Professor Thomas C. Leonard at the University of California, Berkeley. Leonard says this ballad has been under some question as authentic Franklin, whose earliest works have traditionally been designated as beginning in 1722. But scholars now have accepted it as not "inconsistent" with Franklin's works, especially since he was a well-educated and bright youngster, apprenticed to his printer half-brother, James, and living in Boston where he had access to numerous news sources.

Benjamin Franklin's Blackbeard connection was short-lived, and we can all probably be grateful for it. Otherwise, he may have continued to write bad poetry instead of being publisher of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the largest newspaper in America in its time. And he may never have written that wise, witty, and useful book, reprinted many times and translated into languages all over the world, called Poor Richard's Almanac.

### **Modern Piracy**

In an earlier newsletter, we discussed the savage and brutal nature of pirates such as Edward Teach (Blackbeard) and commented on the increasing incidents of modern piracy around the world. On April 4 of this year, the New York Times ran an editorial on the subject, "Piracy and Terrorism". Here are some quotes from that editorial.

"Pirates of the old-fashioned variety, armed with automatic weapons, are not only a real and growing menace, they are also suspected of forging links with global terrorists."

"A hijacked ship carrying a nuclear weapon or radioactive 'dirty bomb' could lay waste to a port, or block a sea lane like the Strait of Malacca, a narrow channel between Malaysia and Indonesia that carries a quarter of the world's trade and half of all its oil flows"

"Ten armed men seized a chemical tanker off Indonesia in March 2003 apparently for the purpose of learning to steer it---a frightening echo of the flying lessons taken by the Sept. 11 terrorists."

"The costs of failure in securing the high seas could be huge---shipping accounts for 80 percent of all trade and disruption could cripple the global economy."

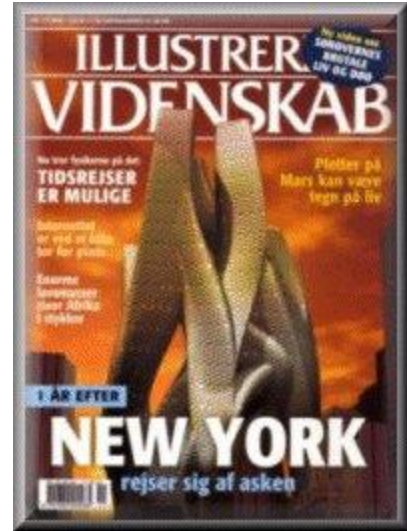
If you don't believe modern piracy is a looming problem, enter the term into a search engine and look at the number of hits. We got over 15,000 on our first try.

For another good source of information, try the website of the International Chamber of Commerce, especially its International Maritime Bureau at:

[http://www.iccwbo.org/ccs/menu\\_imb\\_bureau.asp](http://www.iccwbo.org/ccs/menu_imb_bureau.asp)

## Translation of Blackbeard Article in Danish Magazine!

Readers may remember that in the Spring 2003 issue of *The Queen's Report*, we issued a call for help in translating an article in a Danish Magazine, *Illustreret Videnskab*, that included information about Blackbeard. We found assistance from none other than a cousin of our Director, Mark Wilde-Ramsing: Eva Hage and her husband Svend Bak. Eva recently sent us a translation, and, as we suspected from the colorful illustrations, it is a general article about pirates with an emphasis on the three they considered the most infamous: Blackbeard, Black Sam Bellamy, and Captain Kidd. It also includes a discussion of the favorite routes and party places of 17th and 18th century pirates and a description of the events leading up to Blackbeard's death. Bellamy drowned with 142 crew members when his ship, the "Whydah" (pronounced "whedah") went down, and Kidd was hanged in London.



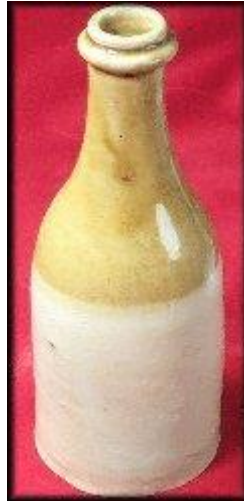
## Modern Intrusives At The Shipwreck Site

**Question: What would you guess these items have in common: golf ball, peanut shell, beer can, fishing lure, plastic fishing line, laminated plywood, beer bottle fragments, pieces of sand fence, plastic bottles and bags, a cork, a wooden cigar mouth piece, and a Budweiser can?**

**No, the answer is not a landfill, They were all found on the site of the *Queen Anne's Revenge* shipwreck. Archaeologists call them modern intrusives, that is, they were not at the site at its beginning but were dropped there or washed up there after the ship went down in 1718.**



The items mentioned above have probably been deposited on the site in very recent years, maybe even months or weeks. But other intrusives found there are older. We found bottleneck fragments that have been identified as probably from the 1880's, and a ginger beer bottle with the name "Price-Bristol" stamped on its base is probably from the Civil War era.



A food storage may also be from the 19th century. A 24-pound cannon ball is intriguing because our archaeologists believe there were no cannons on the *QAR* that size. Paul Branch, historian for the Fort Macon State Park suggests that it may have resulted from target practice from nearby Fort Macon, which during the Civil War had as many as nineteen 24-pound cannons.

All modern intrusives are treated with the same care as any other artifact. They are identified, numbered, and listed: who found it, when and where on the site, how much it weighs, how long/wide/high and what color it is. It may be drawn or photographed, will certainly be studied and analyzed, and then stored in a safe place. Rarely is anything thrown away and then only after undergoing a formal de-accession process that must be approved at several levels.

On *QAR* conservation information sheets, there is a space that asks for "Provenience". That means origin or source, and it is here that the diver recovering an item must list where on the site it was found. On one form, a diver snared a piece of fishing line from what he or she called "General Surface". The likelihood is that it was floating in the water just above the site.

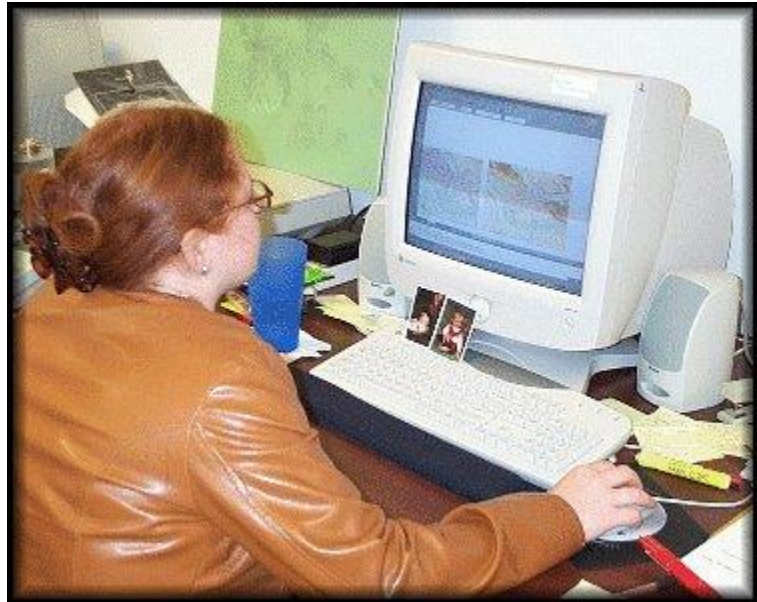
Why is so much care taken to preserve items that are obviously not associated with the time period of the *Queen Anne's Revenge* or the shipwreck? Project Director Mark Wilde-Ramsing and Connie Mason, Curator and Collections Manager, at the N.C. Maritime Museum, responded alike to that question. In the first place, archaeologists are hesitant to throw anything away because their job is to preserve, not discard, and it may take years to judge the value of any item found. It is careless procedure to take anything found on a site lightly. In the second place, proximity, that is where an item is lying and what it was lying next to is of significance to land or underwater archaeologists. For example, a piece of wood that looks like a sand fence fragment is found under scraps of metal indicating that they may have once been parts of a munitions box. Or they may not have been. The important thing is that all the potential pieces of the archaeological puzzle must be preserved for study and analysis, and that can't be done accurately when any part is thrown away, even one that appears to be too modern.



## Director's Report

Volunteers and interns have been a mainstay with the *QAR* shipwreck project through the years. This summer we have been pleased to have Allison Suggs from Kannapolis, N.C. on the *QAR* staff. The internship is her final requirement for graduation from Appalachian State University. Allison majored in geography with a specialty in Geographic Information Systems, a program using computers to graphically demonstrate the real world. Her activities this summer included research on the voyages of the French slave ship *La Concorde* and the design of an electronic map of those voyages. Blackbeard captured the *La Concorde* and re-named it the *Queen Ann's Revenge*.

Allison's major accomplishments was digitizing a series of Beaufort Inlet maps to track channel movements and water depths over the shipwreck during the twentieth century. She was able to document a period when the natural channel passed directly over the *QAR* site and the steady loss of sand over the site from the 1930's when 6 feet of water and 14 feet of sand covered the shipwreck to today when there is 23 feet of water and very little sand. This study provides the basis for our examination of the effects on the shipwreck by Beaufort Inlet channel dredging.



By the time this newsletter comes out, Allison will have completed her internship and will be on her way to a career. We wish her well! She thinks the *QAR* Shipwreck Project is cool!

Other support is garnered through donations and use of equipment for the project. Many thanks to the Purifoy's and Olympus Dive Center, Morehead City, who provided a boat for our recent site inspection. It was also with great pleasure that we received ArcEditor 9 from Christen Carlson, Manager of ESRI Charlotte, N.C. These tools will be a valuable asset as we manage and interpret a whole range of site data.

**In the Morehead City/Beaufort/Cape Lookout area?** Visit the North Carolina Maritime Museum at 315 Front Street, Beaufort, NC and see many of the actual artifacts from *Queen Anne's Revenge*.