

# The Queen's Report

Update from the  
Queen Anne's Revenge Shipwreck Project  
Volume 5, Number 1  
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## Origins of the *Queen Anne's Revenge*

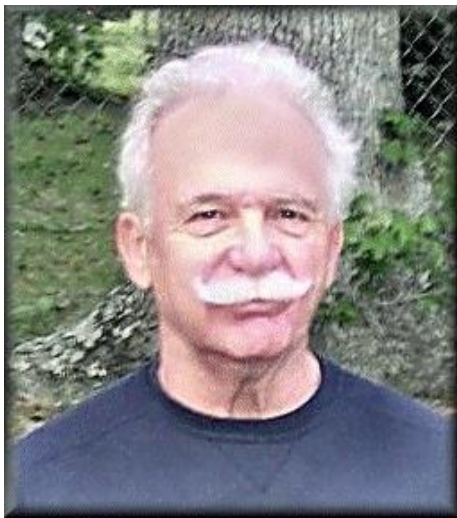


Recently we had an inquiry from Nick Glenister in England asking about information that would help him build "a reasonably accurate model of the *Queen Anne's Revenge*". We asked Dave Moore, Curator of Nautical Archaeology at the North Carolina Maritime Museum, to reply. Remember that the *QAR* is believed to have originally been the French ship, *Concorde*, captured, refitted, and renamed by Blackbeard. Dave gave such a good response that we excerpted parts of it for your information.

"The museum has actually had a hypothetical model constructed although no plans or drawings have been generated from that effort. We did quite a bit of research leading up to the construction and ended up using data from Jean Boudriot's treatise on the French merchant ship, *Mercure*.c.1730, as the primary framework for building the model. We figured we were probably safe building a model of an early 18th century French merchant ship. But there were two things wrong with that assumption that have come to light through additional research over the past couple of years.

We now suspect the *Concorde* may have been built along the lines of a typical light French frigate, hence a bit different from our current model. Also, a document located in French archives strongly suggests that Blackbeard exchanged the ship, shortly after taking her, for a similar sized and armed English ship that may make all our assumptions mute. So, bottom line, we simply do not know what the *QAR* may have looked like apart from a general idea of her size, numerous guns, and three masts. We still believe very strongly that the wreck we've been excavating for the past eight years is indeed that of Blackbeard's flagship, but are back to square one in our research to figure out her exact origin. Just make sure (your model) has three masts and slap a pirate flag on it."

## A Conversation With Phil Masters



We recently did what we think everybody interested in the *Queen Anne's Revenge* Shipwreck Project should do at some point in time: have a conversation with Phil Masters, President of Intersal, Inc. It was Phil and Mike Daniel, President of the non-profit Maritime Research Institute in Riviera Beach, Florida, who discovered the wreck of the *Queen Anne's Revenge*. Actually, Phil wasn't on the boat at the time. After working with Mike for a week, he left on business, and Mike called him four days later to say he had found the wreck site.

Typically, treasure hunters and archaeologists don't like to exchange the time of day with each other, but Phil Masters is not your ordinary treasure hunter. He is an energetic sixty-seven year old father and grandfather with handsome white hair and mustache who has been diving for over forty years. He has had many jobs, including one from 1978 through 1988 as a wholesale jewelry salesman, in those years driving as much as 50,000 miles a year throughout Florida and the Southeast. But his real interests have been in research, specifically maritime history (1700-1750) from Nova Scotia to the Caribbean. He claims to have done research in 57 major archival libraries, in the USA and Europe, and that nobody involved in the *QAR* Project has spent more time reading and studying original 17th and 18th century manuscripts. In 1989 he took an intensive course in Spanish paleography (study of ancient writing) at the University of Florida so that he could read the original documents in the Seville archives.

It is true that Phil Masters and Mike Daniels found the *QAR* wreck while searching for a more lucrative prize, the Spanish merchantman, *El Salvador*, that went down in North Carolina waters during a 1750 hurricane and is reported to have gold and silver treasures aboard. However, Masters stoutly insists he is a shipwreck explorer and not a treasure hunter. "El Salvador has great potential historically and monetarily", he said, " but treasure is not the end. It is the means to an end. I knew the *QAR* was out there somewhere, and historically it's a great find, but I never believed it would have monetary value." After diving and inspecting the site, Masters relinquished whatever rights Intersal may have had to any *QAR* artifacts. He showed us a map of Beaufort Inlet with graphs showing where a navigable channel was at the time of Blackbeard and

indicating where the pirate took a wrong turn and ran aground.

Phil is disappointed that the state of North Carolina has not funded a swifter recovery of *QAR* artifacts. Currently only about 2% of the overall site has actually been excavated. And he is frustrated that state archaeologists, with mounting circumstantial evidence but no definitive proof, still hedge their statements about the shipwreck by saying "it is believed to be the flagship of Blackbeard the pirate". "What else could it be?" Phil asks. "I am positive it is the *Queen Anne's Revenge!*" And is he positive he will find *El Salvador*? "Oh, yeah!" was the immediate answer. His enthusiasm is contagious. We think he will, too.

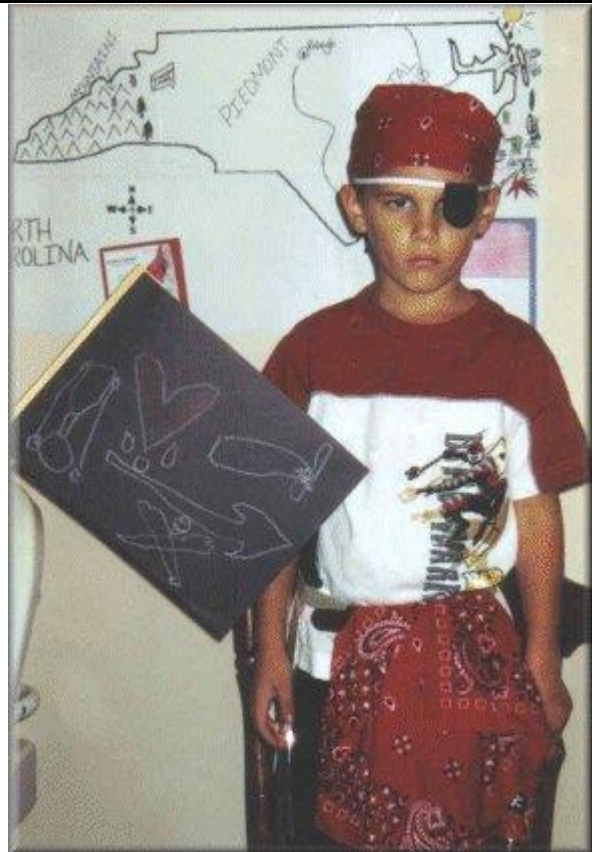
## Eating Sturgeon High on the Hog?

We got a letter from Milo Tsukroff from near Poughkeepsie commenting on our Volume 4, No1 newsletter statement that fish vertebrae found at the *QAR* site may represent sturgeon and meant that the pirates weren't eating high on the hog. He told us that Hudson sturgeon, once so plentiful that it was considered a nuisance fish, was almost wiped out in the early 20th century. "Sturgeon was disposed of in bulk in Albany. Up and down the Hudson valley, and in New York City, it was known by the epithet Albany beef. The sturgeon on the *QAR* might have come from the Hudson and also might also have come from fisheries on the Delaware River. A pirate's diet may have included sturgeon because it was cheap."



## We Get Mail

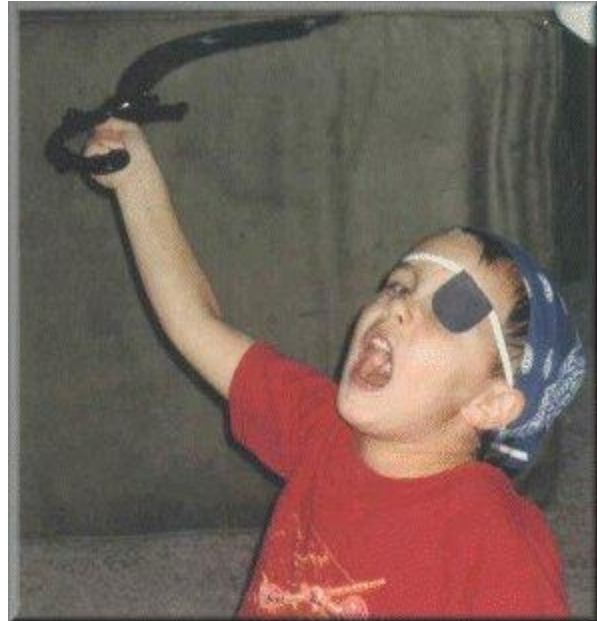
We got a letter from Michelle Fox. She and her husband, Darren, are the parents of two sons and a daughter. Michelle wrote: "I am home schooling my two boys. We recently started a unit study on the US and are beginning with NC. We are currently discussing the coast and the lighthouses located there. I wanted to introduce them to Blackbeard, as they love pirates. (We just had a pirate birthday party.) I was wondering if there is anyway you could send them any information concerning Blackbeard and the surrounding



history. Anything would be appreciated. Just a package in the mail merits huge excitement."

Since most of our information is on our website, we don't have many printed materials, but her last sentence convinced us we should send them something: "You would have the pleasure of knowing you are playing a role in deepening their appreciation for our state and its history." We scrounged up some brochures and drawings, largely from the North Carolina Maritime Museum, and sent them off. Bingo! We received thank you cards and pictures, including one of a very serious Malachi, 6, who calls himself Captain Red Eye and his ship Sea Monster. Younger brother Jacob, 4, is Captain Killer and his ship is the Pirate Raider. They have turned their sofa into a ship, drink water and eat crackers, search for hidden fake gold, and throw wadded up paper for grenades. Their sister Sarah, 2, is apparently not yet ready to put to sea.

Michelle plans to home school all her children indefinitely because she wants to develop the proper bonding and the relationships among them. She has had no formal training as a teacher, but our conversations with her have convinced us she is a natural.



## Directors Report

It has been a busy spring for project staff. All were involved in wrapping up various lines of artifact analysis and working closely with specialists who were doing the same. The push was to complete this work in order to present findings at the *QAR* symposium and to complete the interim report, which is due out before the end of the year. And perhaps most importantly, this information provided the foundation upon which to design research and recovery planned for May 2005.

The *QAR* symposium held on the campus of East Carolina University last month was a resounding success. The audience, which totaled several hundred, was treated to in-depth presentations on a range of multi-disciplinary fields, each of which advances our understanding of this historic shipwreck. The event began with Dr. Lindley Butler's keynote lecture discussion the early days of North Carolina's development as an English colony to provide historical context to shipping and pirates. Research presentations filled the following morning and illuminated the discovery, geological history, and organic and inorganic analysis by some of the country's leading experts in their respective fields, all of whom have volunteered services to advance research at the *QAR* site. In the afternoon, presentations by project staff continued to examine various artifact classes recovered from the shipwreck including glass, ceramics, pewterware,

casks, arms and armament, and ship structure culminating in my summary of results. The most significant was research on the cannon, which point to the vessel as being a twenty-gun ship, comparable to a 6th rate English or a French light frigate, with four small guns added (1 lb. or smaller). A chart of the datable artifacts shows that none post-date 1718 and together provide a mean date of 1704. If several years are added to account for usage, this fits comfortably into what might be expected for *QAR*. The cultural affiliation of materials was interesting in that they were predominated by French and English artifacts, which would be expected from a French vessel commandeered by English pirates.



The final portion of the symposium allowed a panel of nationally respected underwater archaeologists to voice their comments after having listened to the presentations. Dr. Charles Ewen, ECU Anthropology, served as moderator and the panel consisted of (from right to left in photograph): Dr. Roger Smith, Chief State Archaeologist, Tallahassee, Florida; Dr. Paul Johnston, Curator of Maritime History, Smithsonian, Wash, DC; Dr. John Broadwater, Program Manager, Maritime Heritage Program, National Marine Sanctuaries, NOAA, Newport News, VA; Dr. Lawrence Babits, Acting Director, Maritime Studies, ECU, Greenville, NC; Dr. Donny Hamilton Program Head, Nautical Archaeology Program, TX A&M and President of the Institute of Nautical Archaeology. I am sitting at the far end of the table. Mr. Larry Murphy, Chief, Submerged Resources Center, NPS, Santa Fe, NM, was unable to attend, however, provided written comments.

In summary, the discussants collectively made several key points. They praised Phil Masters and Mike Daniel for "doing the right thing" and relinquishing their interest in the shipwreck for the benefit of the people of North Carolina. The vessel, as an underdisturbed, classic early 18th century site, making it significant on a national level and all agreed that there is no reason to believe it is anything other than *Queen Anne's Revenge*. Because of its threatened state due to exposure and heightened hurricane activities, discussants also agreed that the most appropriate and cost-effective way to mitigation loss was to start whole-scale recovery as soon as possible. They urged that state of North Carolina find the financial means to get artifacts out of harm's way. Finally, the collective message was that many opportunities for student research and involvement from East Carolina University exist and should be seized, which in turn would

greatly help state archaeologists who are tasked with managing the site. All indicated that they were impressed with the level of research, amount of volunteer hours committed to the project and dedication of all who have been involved.

Thank you to discussants, presenters, project staff, and attendees for making the symposium an important contribution in meeting our research and management goals for the site. A large thank you goes to the “behind the scenes” operators that made everything run smoothly: Karen Browning, Wendy Welsh, Francis Hayden, Eric Nordgren, Kim Smith and especially, symposium coordinator Calvin Mires.



**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*.