

# Savannah Shipyard Co. records

## Descriptive Summary

<b>Repository:</b>	Georgia Historical Society
<b>Creator:</b>	Savannah Shipyard Co. (Ga.)
<b>Title:</b>	Savannah Shipyard Co. records
<b>Dates:</b>	1940-1992
<b>Extent:</b>	1.45 cubic feet (3 boxes, 4 folders, 2 oversize folders)
<b>Identification:</b>	MS 1659

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## Biographical/Historical Note

Savannah Machine and Foundry of Georgia originated in 1914 as a marine repair business by the name of Forest City machine and Foundry Company. Over the years it was reorganized several times; in 1929 it emerged as the Savannah Machine and Foundry (SMF). In 1941, SMF contracted with the U.S. Department of the Navy to build three minesweepers. The Savannah Machine and Foundry located their new shipyard on the Savannah River, off North Lathrop Avenue, between the Colonial Oil Co. and the Southern Cotton Oil Co. SMF constructed facilities for shipbuilding and shops for repair and maintenance.

The first minesweeper keel was laid in November, 1941, and was launched in , 1942. The minesweepers were constructed entirely of welded steel. Several of the minesweepers were built for the British navy as part of a U.S.-British collaboration. As a result of the Navy contract, SMF president Walter L. Mingledorff was able to petition the federal government for funding to construct a permanent graving dock (dry dock) at the shipyard. The \$2 million graving dock opened in October, 1933, and was the only commercial graving dock on the Atlantic coast south of Baltimore. In August of 1944, SMF was contracted by the Navy to design and build submarine rescue ships. The first of these welded steel vessels was launched in of 1945.

By the end of the Navy contracts, SMF had constructed 25 minesweepers and 4 submarine rescue vessels. At their peak of production, the shipyard employed between 2,800-3,300 people. During this time, W. Lee Mingledorff, Jr. served as vice-president and shipyard manager. Late in the war, SMF also began producing steel girders, trusses, conveyors, gray iron, brass and aluminum, and could handle almost any type of heavy machine repair or construction. After World War II, SMF continued manufacturing these types of products in addition to their marine repairs service. The shipyard was also involved with the post-war "Operations Zipper" to deactivate and preserve Navy ships.

In 1971, the name of the company changed to Savannah Machine and Shipyard. The name changed again in 1980, to Savannah Shipyard Co. By 1985, a company called Saylor Marine Corporation occupied the former Savannah Machine and Foundry location.

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## Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of papers and photographs from the Savannah Machine and Foundry (later the Savannah Shipyard Co.), including 1942 cost estimates for building a minesweeper, a few miscellaneous papers, a program from the 1992 launching of a minesweeper built by Intermarine, and an oversized schedule of World War II production. The collection is arranged into two series: papers and photographs. The photographs series is divided into six subseries: Navy contract ships; ships and barges; shipyard views; miscellaneous and unidentified jobs; people, and official Navy publicity photographs.

Boxes and folders containing photographs are noted as "VM" (visual materials) in the collection inventory.

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## Index Terms

Business records.  
Dry docks--Georgia--Savannah--20th century.  
Estimates.  
Minesweepers--Production control.  
Mingledorff, R. E.  
Photographs.  
Savannah Shipyard Co. (Ga.)  
Shipbuilding--Georgia--Savannah.  
Ships--Maintenance and repair.  
Shipyards--Georgia--Savannah--20th century.  
Submarine rescue vehicles.  
World War, 1939-1945--Engineering and construction.

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## **Administrative Information**

### **Custodial History**

Material was acquired from the grandson of the creating organization's founder.

### **Preferred Citation**

[item identification], Savannah Shipyard Co. records, MS 1659, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

### **Acquisition Information**

Gift of Neil Mingledorff, Jr., 1999.

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## **Restrictions**

### **Access Restrictions**

Collection is open for research.

### **Publication Rights**

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## **Sponsorship**

Encoding funded by a 2012 Documenting Democracy grant from the National Historic Publications and Records Commission.

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## **Container List**

### **SERIES 1:: Papers, 1942-1992**

This series contains papers from the Savannah Machine and Foundry shipyard, including 1942 cost estimates for building a minesweeper, a few miscellaneous papers, a program from the 1992 launching of a minesweeper built by Intermarine, and an oversized schedule of World War II production.

## **Fldr**

- 1 Estimates. Minesweepers, 220' M100-131 (1 boat)  
Minesweeper estimate, includes cover letter to Mr. A.M. Harper of Arthur Andersen and Company (Atlanta)

## **Fldr**

- 2 USS *Ptarmigan*  
3 letters, all relating to contact information for the Sponsor and Matron of Honor and photographs for reunion of the *Ptarmigan's* crew (1973-1974)

## **Fldr**

- 3 Miscellaneous  
2 items, both referring to photographs but neither item was attached to specific photos, so it is impossible to determine which images were referenced

## **Fldr**

- 4 Intermarine "Heron" (MHC-52), launched March 21, 1992, 188' x 36' beam, \$80+ million (they mentioned Heron AMS-18 built by SMF?). Program for launching

## **Fldr**

- 5 Schedule of World War II production

## **SERIES 2:: Photographs, 1940-1973**

This series consists of six subseries: 2.1, Navy contract ships; 2.2, ships and barges; 2.3, shipyard views; 2.4, miscellaneous and unidentified jobs; 2.5, people; and 2.6, official Navy publicity photographs.

### **SUBSERIES 2.1:: Navy contract ships, 1941-1946**

This subseries contains photographs of Navy contract ships, usually including images of the individual ship, the launching ceremony and the sponsors, and the ship headed into the water. These photographs are arranged by the working number given to each ship by SMF-the hull number. The name and the second number (usually prefixed by AM or ASR) were assigned by the Navy. AM is the prefix for minesweepers and ASR is the designation for submarine rescue ships. Many launching folders also contain photocopied information identifying the sponsor and other launching participants. Some correlate to photographs in the collection, other refer to photographs not found in the collection. Please note: there were discrepancies regarding information for hulls 12-17, including differing hull numbers, names, and launching dates. Some information on the backs of the photographs did not match information written on the original folders, a list of keel laying and launching dates for all ships built at SMF, or articles in the newspaper. Probably

errors are noted. The most correct information, based on newspaper articles is give at the end of the folder title. The list of keel laying and launching dates for all ships built at SMF was provided by the donor and follows this inventory.

USS *Symbol* (Hull 1) AM 123

**Online Inventory Contains Digitized Items**

<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	1	1st keel laying, November 18, 1941, 13 items, plus duplicates. <b>View images: 1   2.</b>
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	2	Launched, July 2, 1942, 20 items, plus duplicates. <b>View images: 1   2.</b>
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	3	USS <i>Threat</i> (Hull 2) AM 124, launched, August 15, 1942, 21 items
<b>oversize_vm_folder</b>		
1		USS <i>Tide</i> (Hull 3) AM 125, launched, September 7, 1942, 1 item
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	4	HMS <i>Gazelle</i> (Hull 4) BAM 17, launched, January 10, 1943, 7 items, plus duplicates
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	5-6	HMS <i>Gorgon</i> (Hull 5) BAM 18, launched, January 24, 1943, 35 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	7	HMS <i>Grecian</i> (HULL 6) BAM 19, launched, March 10, 1943, 2 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	8	HMS <i>Magic</i> (Hull 7) BAM 20, launched, May 24, 1943, 1 item
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	9	HMS <i>Pylades</i> (Hull 8) BAM 21, launched, June 27, 1943, 4 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	

1	10	USS <i>Implicit</i> (Hull 9) AM 246, launched, September 6, 1943, 5 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	11	USS <i>Improve</i> (Hull 10) AM 247, launched, September 26, 1943, 4 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	12	USS <i>Incessant</i> (Hull 11), AM 248, launched, October 22, 1943, 2 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	13	USS <i>Incredible</i> (Hull 12) AM 249, launched, December 12, 1943, 5 items This is probably the USS <i>Indicative</i> .
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	14	USS <i>Indicative</i> (Hull 13) AM 250, launched, November 21, 1943, 3 items This is probably the USS <i>Incredible</i> .
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	15	USS <i>Inflict</i> (Hull 9) AM 251, launched, January 16, 1944, 4 items, plus duplicates This is actually Hull 14.
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	16	USS <i>Instill</i> (Hull 15) AM 252, launched, March 5, 1955 This is probably Hull 16
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	17	USS <i>Intrigue</i> (Hull 16) AM 253, launched, April 4, 1944, 5 items This is probably Hull 17 and was launched April 8, 1944. The original launching was delayed because of flood conditions.
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	18	USS <i>Invade</i> (Hull 17) AM 254, launched, February 6, 1944, 6 items, plus duplicates This is probably Hull 15.
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	19	USS <i>Pochard</i> (Hull 18) AM 375, launched, June 11, 1944, 17 items, plus duplicates

<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	20	USS <i>Ptarmigan</i> (Hull 19) AM 376, launched, July 15, 1944, 14 items, plus duplicates
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	21	USS <i>Quail</i> (Hull 20) AM 377, launched, August 20, 1944, 19 items, plus duplicates
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	22-23	USS <i>Redstart</i> (Hull 21) AM 378, launched, October 18, 1944, 26 items, plus duplicates
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	24	USS <i>Minivet</i> (Hull 22) AM 371, launched, November 8, 1944, 5 items, plus duplicates
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	25	USS <i>Murrelet</i> (Hull 23) AM 372, commissioned, August 21, 1945, 3 items  (Please note that these are commissioning photos, not taken during the launching).
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	26	USS <i>Peregrine</i> (Hull 24) AM 373, launched, February 20, 1945, 10 items, plus duplicates
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
1	27-28	USS <i>Pigeon</i> (Hull 25) AM 374, launched, March 28, 1945, 17 items, plus duplicates  Also includes 2 color photos (circa 1970s, unidentified, possibly the sponsor and a converted USS <i>Pigeon</i> ).
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	1-3	USS <i>Kittiwake</i> (Hull 26) ASR 13, progress picture, 26 items, plus duplicates
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	4	USS <i>Petrel</i> (Hull 27) ASR 14, launched, September 25, 1945, 9 items, plus duplicates

<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	5	USS <i>Sunbird</i> (Hull 28) ASR 15, launched, April 3, 1946, 11 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	6	USS <i>Tringa</i> (Hull 29) ASR 16, launched, June 25, 1946, 17 items, plus duplicates

### SUBSERIES 2.2:: Ships and barges, 1950s

This subseries contains photographs of other ships and barges. These are photographs of ships and barges that SMF probably repaired, converted, or in some way was involved in construction. However, not all of these photos were identified as repair work or jobs.

<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	7	USS <i>Rushville Victory</i> . Ship in dry dock, possibly for repairs or conversion, 3 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	8	USS <i>Matthew Maury</i> . Ship in dry dock. The <i>Matthew Maury</i> had been torpedoed in the stern, was completely repaired and converted into a troopship. 8 photos identified as the <i>Matthew Maury</i> , 1 photo unidentified, 12 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	9	USNS <i>Chain</i> . afloat, 1958,, 2 items, plus duplicates
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	10	<i>Thorunn</i> . explosion repair, ship towed to yard, stern first, quoted all risk! 1 photo of <i>Thorunn</i> intact, 1 photo of explosion damage, Circa 1958,, 2 items, plus duplicate
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	11	Miscellaneous ships. <i>Lotta Dan</i> ; <i>Cruz del Sur</i> ; <i>Gold Nugget</i> ; and <i>Bay State</i> , 7 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	12-	Unidentified ship, possibly damage photos of the SS <i>Amar</i> , 35 items

<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	14-16	Fireboat, possibly the <i>Richard D. Sutton</i> , circa 1954, 52 items, plus duplicates
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	17	Gulf barge <i>Mohican</i> , 1 item
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	18	Barge <i>Raymond Demere</i> , Colonial Oil Co., 1956, 15 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	19-20	SOCONY barge #32, 46 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	21	Unidentified barge (possibly SOCONY barge #32), 4 items, plus duplicates
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	22	Unidentified ships, 3 items

### **SUBSERIES 2.3:: Navy contract ships, 1940-1973**

This subseries contains photographs including aerial views of the shipyard and interior views of certain buildings, including the machine shop and fab. shop. Construction views of the shipyard are also found in this series. Not all of the photographs are identified or dated. There is also a folder of images of the Southern Cotton Oil Company waterfront.

<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	23	Progress views, 1941-1942, 24 items Dated views of construction of the shipbuilding facilities at Savannah Machine and Foundry following initial contract with the Navy.
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	24	Graving dock, 1940, 1943, undated, 15 items, plus duplicates Construction views, and in-use views.



<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	25	Caisson gate, 1943 and undated, 7 items Construction views.
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	26	Machine shop and fab. shop, 1944, 2 items, plus duplicates Interior views;
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
2	27	Aerial views of shipyard, 1973, 12 items, plus duplicates
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
3	1	Miscellaneous shipyard views, 20 items Includes some aerial views of the shipyard, most images unidentified, all undated.
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
3	2	Southern Cotton Oil Company waterfront, 1957, 9 items This company was located next to Savannah Machine and Foundry on the Savannah River.

#### **SUBSERIES 2.4:: Miscellaneous and unidentified job**

This subseries contains photographs of work done after the war. Very few images are identified.

<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
3	3	Trailer. Probably a product of the foundry, 2 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
3	4	Hunter Air Force Base. Hangar fabrication job, 1953, 10 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	
3	5	Unidentified miscellaneous jobs, 10 items
<b>vm_box</b>	<b>Fldr</b>	

