



San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild ⁶

P.O. BOX 6725, SAN DIEGO, CA. 92106

VOLUME 10 NUMBER 5

MAY 1986

MEET ON BERKELEY

We meet on the ferryboat Berkeley this month as the STAR is getting ready to sail. See you in the yacht room in the bow?

Our speakers will be that dynamic duo Bill Kelley-Fleming and Bob Crawford, a past member of the guild who also works for the Maritime Museum. They have much information to pass along as well as giving us a tour of the model shop and ship models on the Berkeley.

JUNE MEETING: Our speaker will be Mike Rivera who will give a slide show and talk on the miniature BILLINGS (Model kit people) Village in Denmark.

If you happen to notice some better typing within these pages it's not my fault...thanks to Bill Kelley-Flemings better half. Aurora came to my rescue by typing some of his notes which some time appear to me as a secret code.

As a subscriber to WOOD magazine I often find bits of info that may be of interest to modelers...we all use basswood at one time or another but what do you know about it. With the kind permission of the Meredith Corporation I have reprinted this article on the last page.

The long awaited guild roster has been put together and made a part of this issue. If no phone number appears it's because none was listed on the application. I don't think I transposed any numbers but I missed an "H" which can be found after Z...sorry Gordon. Also notice Joe Hash dosen't have an

address as he is in route to NTS Great Lakes..it will be forthcoming.

More about Bill Benson, Master modeler can be found on pgs 2 &4, also a reprint of our first cartoon appearing in this newsletter.

Obituaries

Cmdr. Bill Benson

Retired Navy Cmdr. William D. "Bill" Benson, nationally known model-ship builder, died at Scripps Memorial Hospital on Friday following a heart attack.

A memorial service will be at 10 a.m. Thursday in Our Mother of Confidence Catholic Church in University City. Cmdr. Benson and his family had lived in University City for 21 years.

Cremation is planned, with ashes to be scattered at sea.

About 20 of the more than 600 models of famous ships created or restored by Cmdr. Benson are on display at the Maritime Museum or aboard the Star of India and the ferryboat Berkeley.

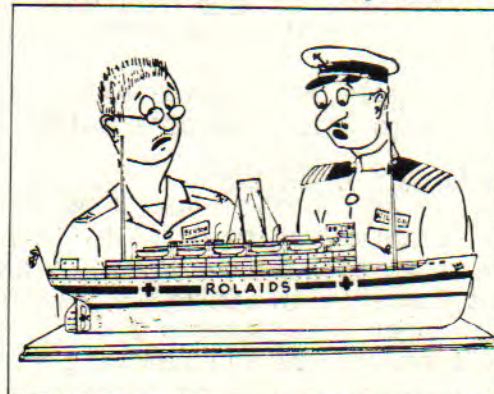
Born in Washington, D.C., Cmdr. Benson took his engineering degree in 1945 from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, N.Y., and transferred to the Navy in 1946. That same year, he and Mary Elizabeth Huston were married in Washington.

Cmdr. Benson also is survived by his mother, Ruth Lois Benson of Maryland; a daughter, Kathleen Benson Jones of La Jolla; three sons, Richard Huston Benson of Carlsbad, Bill Benson II of Julian and Thomas H. Benson of San Diego; four grandchildren; two sisters, Mary Benson of Colorado and Carol Benson of Pennsylvania; and a brother, Robert Benson of Sarasota, Fla.

The family suggests that memorial contributions in Cmdr. Benson's name be sent to the San Diego Maritime Museum.

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

SHOW & TELL by Nilson



THAT'S A BEAUTIFUL MODEL OF A HOSPITAL SHIP, BENSON, BUT THAT'S NOT THE WAY TO SPELL "RELIEF."



BY BILL KELLY-FLEMING

As reported last month, National Maritime Week will be from May 17-25 with many activities. As of press time here is a summary:

- Friday, May 16- Guild meets on BERKELEY.
- Saturday, May 17- STARDANCER at Cruise Terminal.
- Festival on Broadway Pier
- Sunday, May 18- PEGUSUS at Cruise Terminal.
- Monday, May 19- NIEUW AMSTERDAM at Cruise Terminal.
- Tuesday, May 20- AZURE SEAS at Cruise Terminal.
- BLUENOSE tentatively due at Broadway Pier.
- Sunday, May 25- sailing of STAR OF INDIA.

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"Wrap me up in me oilskins and jumpers
 No more on the docks I'll be seen.
 But tell me old shipmates
 I'm taking a trip mates
 I'll see you someday on Fiddler's Green."

chorus of Fiddler's Green
 a shanty by John Connoly

According to seafaring folk legends, Fiddler's Green is where seafarers go when they don't go to hell. It is heard tell that it is a fantasy land of fair breezes, dolphins, mermaids, and all that is enjoyable upon the seas. On Friday, April 25, late in the afternoon, our good friend and mentor, Bill Benson went on to Fiddler's Green. A goodly number of us (some 20 by my count) attended the Requiem Mass to say farewell, pray for Bill, and remember the gift of his life.

Bill's contribution to our craft is immeasurable. He was indeed a Master Modeler, setting standards to which all of us aspire and teaching us the fine points of ship modeling. He was always willing to help anyone with a solution to a modeling problem. His legacy to us is to build models of fine details and with accuracy to scale.

In October 1981, I wrote a feature on Bill as our "Modeler of the Month." It is reproduced here as our tribute to our departed mate. Bill, may you have eternal fair winds and following seas on Fiddler's Green.

LOGKEEPER'S LOG

Last month I reported on some changes due to Bill Benson's failing health. With his passing there will be additional developments and opportunities related to the model shop. Tentatively, Bob Crawford will be supervising the shop, and I will volunteer to assist him as much as possible. Bob has several good ideas to continue what Bill has started and to promote our craft. Hopefully, Bob will be at our next meeting to share and discuss with us some of the ideas. He would like to see members volunteer to come down to the shop on a regular basis to work on models in order to have someone there to answer questions about modeling for museum visitors. I myself will probably be in the shop two days a week. Hopefully, in the process some of the work on museum models can be accomplished. The shop has become a center for modelers, and the Guild, with our files, catalogue collection, and my copies of three model magazines now located within the shop.

Some suggestions have been made as to a fitting memorial to Bill. It is to early to put them in print, but there will be sufficient opportunity for the involvement of the Guild.

Finally, in regards Bill's passing, a large spray of flowers with a ribbon reading "San Diego Ship Modeler's Guild" was prominent at the Memorial Service.

LOG OF APRIL MEETING

31 were present as we met aboard the STAR OF INDIA. Plans for the June Regatta are well underway as reported by Albert L'heureux. Bill Kelly-Fleming updated the Guild on the model shop in the BERKELEY becoming more of a center for the Guild and for modelers (see comments in LOGKEEPER'S LOG).

Roger Smith gave a short presentation on converting servos for miniature models. Key elements are (1) removing screws from casing. (2) removing unwanted gear, but NOT the last gears off the motor drive shaft, and (3) using surgical tubing or aircraft fuel line for drive chain.

Roger Smith: USS PAUL JONES (DD230)- a flush deck destroyer in 1/96 scale, scratch built from plastic, cardboard, and brass. This will be an R/C model, necessitating light construction materials. The prototype was built in Carnie, N.J. in 1919. Along with three other WWI era DD's the PAUL JONES attacked the Japanese off Balikpapan for the first naval victory of the USN in WWII. These worn out DD were credited with five ships sunk, although a Dutch sub witnessed 13 go down.

Royce Privett: SMUGGLER - a Gloucester fishing schooner of 1877. Built of a solid hull for a Bluejacket kit, this beautiful display model is now finished. Royce has done another excellent job of which he should be extremely proud.

R. J. Hallbach: a 3/4" bore x 3/4" atroke, twin cylinder, double acting steam engine suitable for 4' to 7' ship models. It is a Stuart-Turner D-10 model steam engine with feed water pump and reversing gear. Has "scratch" steel connecting rods and added lubrication features.

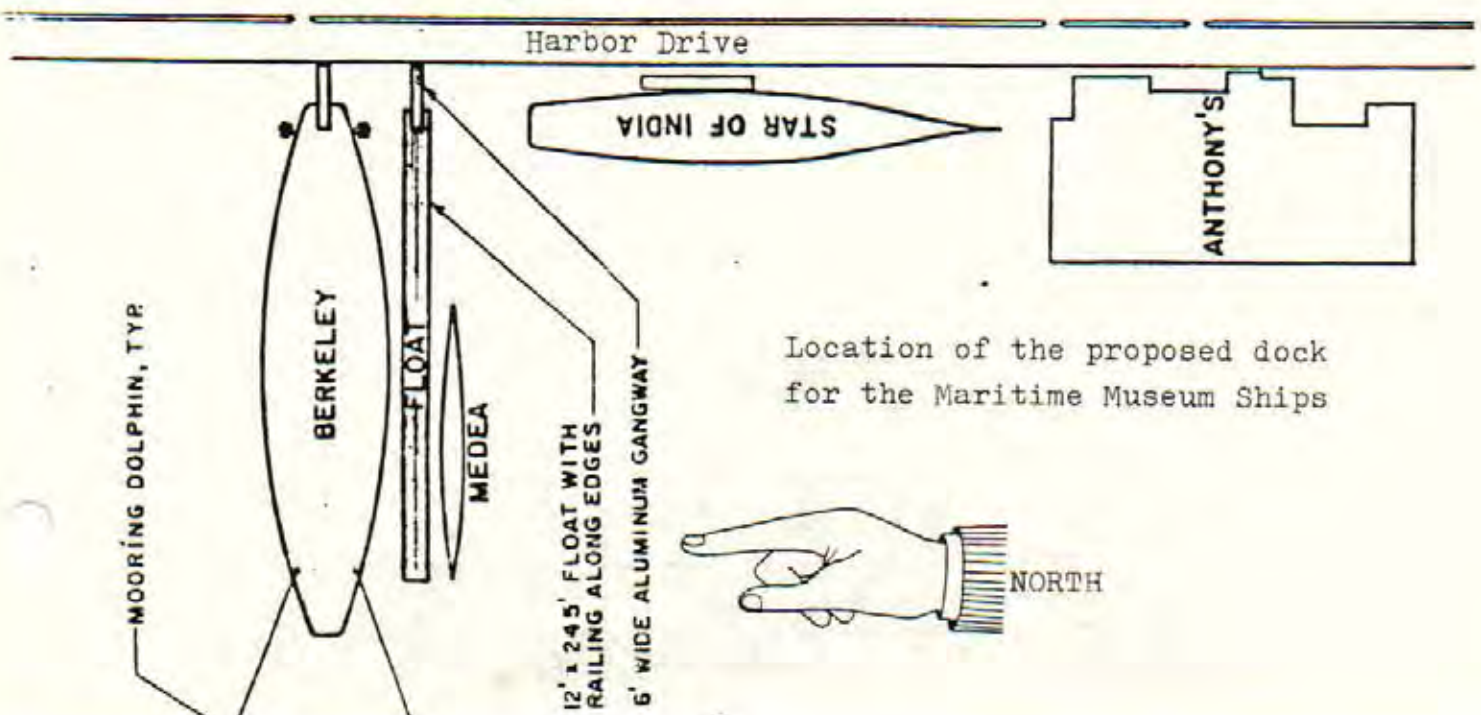
Ted Petitt: TWINNING (DD540) from plastic kit. Barrels are drilled, and torpedo tubes and gun turrets are movable.

Doug McFarland: HOTSPUR - plank on frame model in 1:60 scale from a kit, about 85% complete. HOTSPUR is the fictional vessel in C.F. Forester's third book in the "Hornblower Saga." Doug has discovered many rigging erros in the plans.

Fred Frass and Bob Crawford: Oceanographic research vessel. Scratch built of basswood and aircraft plywood. 60% complete, this is the first of six identical waterline display models for the parent company of the prototype, U.S. Oceanography of San Diego. Launched in 1963, it moors at the Adm. Kidd Club landing.

Bill Kelly-Fleming: Brig of 1800's in approkimately 1/8"=1' scale. Model was built in the 1950's in Spain. Restoration is 90% complete of all rigging. Model is totally scratch built PDF with much detail involved and excellent woodworking.

Bill Paylor: USS UNITED STATES - frigit in 1:96 scale from Revell plastic kit. This is the sister ship of the USS CONSTITUTION and after 15 months of work, Bill is now working on the rigging.



OCTOBER MODELER OF THE MONTH

* * * BILL BENSON * * *

by Bill Kelly-Fleming

When our Guild first decided to have officers, we decided to call our elected leader our Guild "Master" in keeping with the traditions of the Master of a ship and the master craftsman. Our first elected Master actually filled both traditional shoes, being a retired submarine commander, and being one many of us regard as a master modeler. In fact, through his at his former model shop, the GRAY WHALE, or through his current workshop on the BERKELEY, many of us were introduced to the Guild. Our Modeler of the Month, and Grand Prize winner in our static display contest last March CDR. BILL BENSON.

Bill built the first of over 400 models to date when he was only nine years old. It was in Baltimore in 1933 when his older brother, who himself enjoyed modeling, gave him a kit for the H.M.S. BOUNTY. In 1972, Bill went home for his father's funeral, and at that time his mother went into a closet and pulled out that first model, somewhat damaged but still intact. Now repaired, Bill still has it on display.

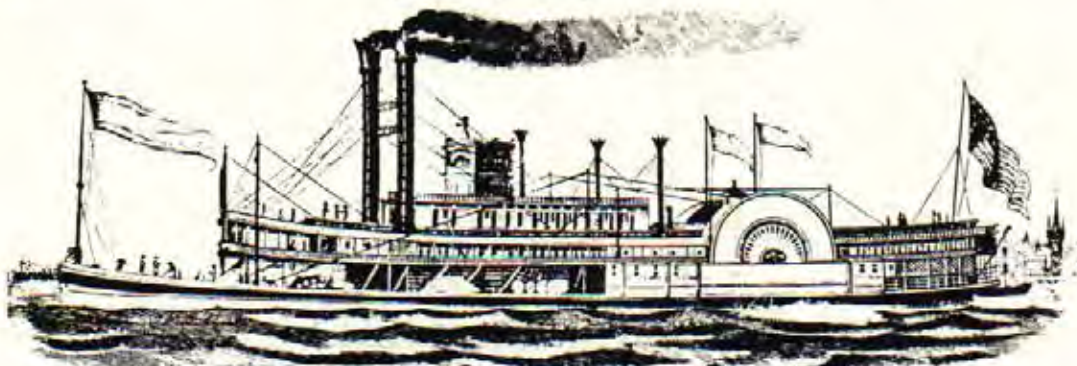
Like a shipyard's tradition of always having a ship in the ways, Bill claims to have always had a model under construction. He sold his first model at the age of eleven, which he immediately turned into an investment in more kits. Back then, the kits were essentially the same as today, except instead of paying \$17, the same kit cost 25¢, or today's \$50 kit cost \$2 then. He managed to build almost every wooden kit available in those days. He also built everything that Popular Science ran plans for in the 30's and 40's.

For the first 25 years or so of modeling, Bill's tools consisted of only a razor blade, a h and drill, and sandpaper. He bought a Dremel tool in 1973 and only in recent years has he obtained other tools. Bill now finds the Dremel tool to be his most valuable and versatile tool. With that, an X-acto knife with a #11 blade, and a twist drill, he feels a modeler can handle almost any task.

Bill was hard pressed to select his favorite models, because he "loves them all." Three he mentioned were a BLUENOSE built in his teens for a cousin's wedding, a CONSTITUTION for the Little White House in Florida, and a Grand Banks 36 yacht built recently for a good friend. His favorite type of vessel has been ferryboats he has done for the museum. He describes the now completed project as fascinating, because of the varying details on each boat. He also particularly enjoyed his recent task of restoring a 21'6" model of the QUEEN MARY on board the actual vessel in Long Beach. This fascinating model had additional challenges in the mechanics of working with something it takes eight men and a chain falls to move!

Bill prefers to work from scratch, but if a kit is available he will work from it and make the necessary modifications. Large models (2'-3' or more) are usually plank on frame, while smaller boats are usually bread and butter hulls from lifts. Fiberglass hulls will be moulded from solid (bread and butter) carved hulls. He will consider using fiberglass for a model if the prototype was a ship or yacht with a fiberglass or metal hull. However, if the prototype was wooden, then the model will be wooden as well. Bill Benson's advice to us is "To take it easy...when you make a mistake, repair it...and know when you have a problem there are plenty of Guild members ready to help you." We thank our fellow modeler and friend, Bill Benson, for all the help he continues to give each one of us.

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Today's carvers rate basswood highly, but it was probably the Iroquois Indians who first discovered this wood's adaptability to the knife. America's settlers found Indian braves carving ceremonial masks on living basswood trees, then splitting them off from the trunk for hollowing. In the process, the Indians saved the innermost bark fibers for fishnets, mats, and cord.

Basswood, also called linden in Europe and parts of the U.S., provides more than quality carving wood, however. Oil from the blossoms of a European variety are an ingredient in perfume, while in America, honey from basswood's sweet flower nectar tingles taste buds. Even the boxes used to ship honeycomb are made of basswood because it imparts neither odor nor taste.

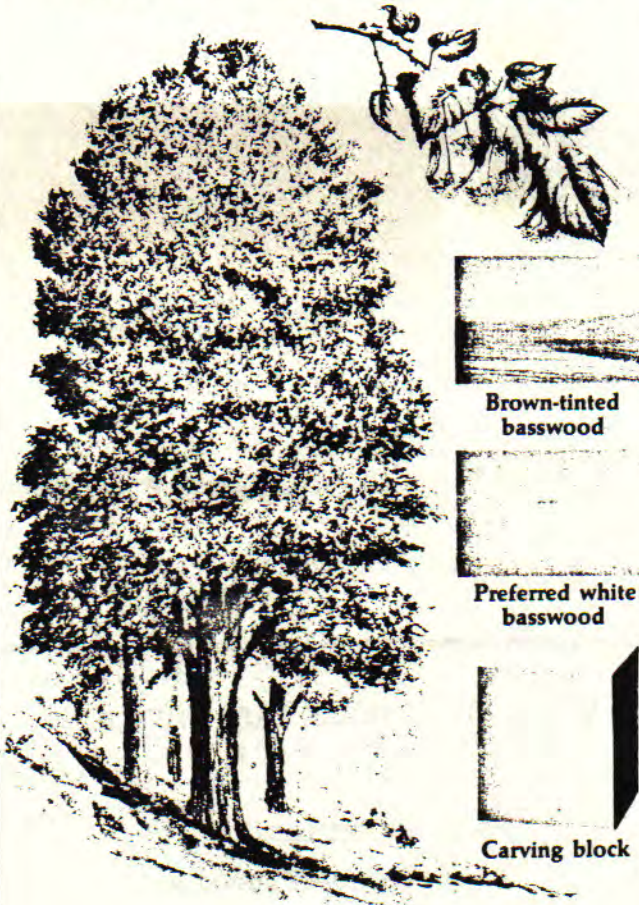
And, if you've ever picked berries in little baskets or received a free wooden yardstick from a lumberyard or hardware store, you probably unknowingly became acquainted with basswood, the source of many of these items.

Wood identification

Among the several basswood species in North America, only *Tilia americana* is commercially important and desirable for woodworking and carving. It grows from Maine to South Dakota and southward through Tennessee and northern Texas. But the Lake Superior area boasts the largest concentration of marketable timber.

BASSWOOD

"How sweet it is!" agree carvers and honeybees



Brown-tinted
basswood

Preferred white
basswood

Carving block

A symmetrical tree, basswood reaches heights of 90' and has distinctive, large, heart-shaped leaves that make it a favorite for city shade plantings. The largest trees grow in the wild, along stream banks. In June and July, white flowers decorate its branches.

Older specimens have deeply ridged, dark gray bark about 1" thick. The bark of young trees ap-

pears lighter in color, smoother, and thinner.

The wood's color ranges from white to creamy white, often containing brown when taken near the center of the tree. Sometimes the wood has bluish mineral streaks, which many find objectionable.

Light in weight at 26 lbs. per cubic foot dry, basswood has fine, consistent grain, yet you can

dent it with your fingernail. Stable when dry, it shrinks considerably during seasoning.

Working properties

As a carving wood, basswood ranks premier because it won't easily chip or break off ahead of the knife—attributes more apparent in slow-growing northern stock.

You'll have no difficulty working basswood with hand or power tools; it sands, glues, and accepts paint exceptionally well. Its fine grain and fibrous cell structure make it hard to stain.

Uses in woodworking

Because basswood holds detail without splitting or breaking, carvers find it perfect for relief work, caricatures, and other carvings with intricate cuts. While most woodworkers don't realize it, basswood can be used for drawer construction, hidden furniture parts, and as a substrate for veneering. It also turns quite well.

Parents looking for a wood easy for children to work should consider basswood, since it drills and finishes so effortlessly.

Cost and availability

Generally available at hardwood outlets and through mail order suppliers, basswood costs about \$1 less per board foot than oak.

Boards may be up to 12" wide and 12' long, but smaller sizes are more prevalent. Carving blocks come in 2" to 4" thicknesses. Veneers are rare. ●

Photographs: Hopkins Associates
Illustration: Steve Schindler