



San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild

1306 N. Harbor Drive

San Diego, CA 92101

OCTOBER 1995

NEWSLETTER

Volume 19, Number 10

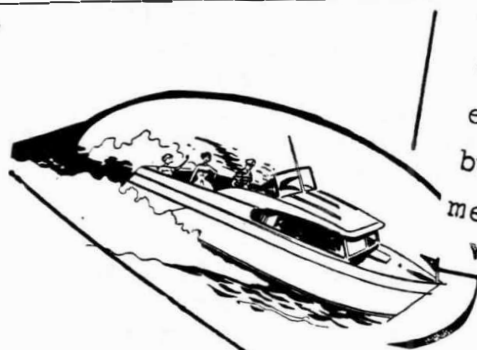
Canada's Newest Tall Ship

On 23 September, Canada's newest tall ship will begin to take shape in Victoria's Inner Harbour when the frames of a 130-ft replica of the fishing schooner *Robertson II* are raised on the Victoria BC waterfront. For the past twelve months, the crew at the S.A.L.T.S. (Sail and Life Training Society) Heritage Shipyard has been busy cutting and bolting together the hundreds of pieces of wood that make up the backbone, stem, stern and 63 frames of the ship. This will be the third and largest wooden vessel built by S.A.L.T.S. which constructed the

92-ft brigantine *Spirit of Chemainus* in 1985 and the 111-ft *Pacific Swift* in 1986. The *Pacific Swift* and the now-retiring original *Robertson II*, built in

1940, take 1,300 young men and women to sea every year.

Project manager Tony Anderson estimates that one frame can be raised



Come by bus, come by plane, even on foot or horseback, but plan to be at the next meeting!!!

| OCTOBER | | | | | | |
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San Diego Maritime Museum

SHIP MODELER NEWS

Museum modelers Jack Klein and Joe Bompensiero took home honors at the recent Del Mar Fair for their handiwork. Bompensiero took First Prize in Models at the Design of Woods Exhibit, sponsored by the San Diego Fine Woodworkers Association. He won over more than a dozen other modelers with his model of the Royal Yacht *Caroline*.

Klein won Honorable Mention for his model of the *Kingfisher*, a British sloop of war. Also participating in support of the Maritime Museum and the San Diego Ship Modelers Guild were Chuck Hill, Suzanne Levonian, Doug McFarland, Ed White, John Fluck, K.C. Edwards, and Tony DeFeo.

Klein, it should be noted, has also been selected "Modeler of the Quarter for Fall 1995" as designated by the San Diego Ship Modelers Guild. He is presently working on the *Raleigh*, a Continental frigate of 1776, a project he anticipates will take nearly 3,000 hours to complete. Among his other



Jack Klein, "Modeler of the Quarter-Fall 1995" and his model of the *Hannah*. Photo by Joseph Dittler.

models are the *Hannah*, *Wappan von Hamburg*, and *San Salvador*. The latter was a cooperative project with modelers Joe Bompensiero and Bob Crawford.

In other news from the Model Shop, Chuck Hill is nearing completion of his model *Curry Sark*. He is in the final stages of completing the ship's rigging. The model is expected to be completed this month. Chuck, a retired school teacher, has been working on the model for more than four years.

Suzanne Levonian is nearing completion of restoration of her father's model of Henry Hudson's *Half Moon*. Because of her desire to restore and complete her late father's model, she has become a regular contributor in the Maritime Museum Model Shop.

San Diego Maritime Museum

Joe Bompensiero, Master Model Builder, and his latest creation, a model of this country's first aircraft carrier, *Langley*. Photos by Joseph Dittler.

LANGLEY MODEL COMPLETE



Joe Bompensiero has reason to smile these days. He has just finished his six-foot model of the US Navy's first aircraft carrier, *Langley*. The project took him 3,000 hours to complete, and was celebrated September 21 on the ferryboat *Berkeley* by museum employees, family, and friends.

The friends included survivors of the *Langley*, fellow ship modelers, and representatives of the US Navy. The event was a fitting salute to Joe's work, and memories of *Langley* were kept alive by all in attendance.

Joe is already working on his next project. You just can't keep a good modeler down. Special thanks to the Curator of Ship Models, Bob Crawford, for making this event possible.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR SEPTEMBER MEETING: (notes by Fred Fraas)

Our September meeting was a real "triple-header" in all respects. The formal dedication of the museum's newest ship model, USS LANGLEY (CV-1) was held aboard Berkeley from 5:30 -7:00PM and a tour of Medea's engine room was held after an abbreviated members meeting. These two special events pretty much over-shadowed our regular meeting. We'll attempt to cover the former two perhaps at the expense of the latter.

The LANGLEY model dedication coincided with a reunion of former crewmembers also held in San Diego that week. This group of older ex-sailors were the honored guests. One of their number had the distinction of serving aboard the USS JUPITER, which was then a collier before she was converted into our first aircraft carrier. This delightful gent was very spry and handsome for his age; a mere 101 years old.

Before the model was unveiled, the previous hour was spent socializing with the invited guests while sipping various wines and nibbling cheese, crackers and other assorted goodies. These were provided by the Maritime Museum.

Museum Director Ray Ashley led off the program by summarizing the historical importance of ship models going back as far as those found in ancient Egyptian pyramids. He covered the manner in which the British used dockyard (Admiralty) models prior to and during construction of ships of the Royal Navy. The uniqueness of prisoner-of-war models built during the Napoleonic wars was covered. In recent years the use of fiber optics has revealed the extraordinary detail of some of these models. It appears evident that as decks and areas were completed on the actual ship, they were covered-up by the next deck on the model. It's safe to say no one has seen these hidden features for a couple hundred years. Ray further gave a half dozen or more examples of the place of ship models in today's world, before introducing the next speaker, RADM. McGinn.

RADM. Dennis McGinn, Commander, Carrier Group ONE, gave a timely review of Langley's place in the history of naval aviation. He covered some of the milestones which ended with her loss in battle in 1942. About six or seven survivors of this sinking later posed for a picture.

About 6:30, the large black cloth covering the plexiglass model case was pulled off and the seemed to be a muffled hush and "uhhs and ahhs" were heard as everyone saw the model for the first time. Model Builder Joe Bompensiero was called forward and presented a beautiful custom-designed plaque by the Maritime Museum honoring his some 3,000 hours of volunteer work in completing this model.

As Guildmaster Jim Hawkins was out-of-town on vacation, First Mate Doug McFarland conducted a shortened regular business meeting. "show & Tell" was limited to Russ Lloyd showing his completed Gloucester schooner (in a bottle.) --We then adjourned to the engine room of the Media where Bob Crawford described the various characteristics of this steam plant. He operated the engine in both forward and back evolutions and answered questions. We certainly thank you, Bob, for your time and effort.

1996 Western Ship Model Conference and Exhibit

SHIP MODELS!! SHIP MODELS!! SHIP MODELS!!

Hundreds of Ship Models!

Radio Controlled and Classic Wood Models!

News Release: After its highly successful 1994 Conference on-board the Queen Mary, the Ship Modelers Association received many calls and inquiries about the possibility of holding another conference. The Association will be presenting its second **Western Ship Model Conference and Exhibit** on the RMS Queen Mary in Long Beach, California on March 22, 23, and 24, 1996.



There will be over 200 ship models on exhibit, and prominent speakers will address topics of interest to model builders, nautical enthusiasts, and researchers. Workshops will be held on subjects such as rope making for modelers, numerically controlled machining of model parts, and carving of miniature decorations.

If you would like to register for the conference, or just want to see the models, please write or call:

Lloyd V. Warner
2083 Reynosa Dr.
Torrance, CA 90501
(310)326-5177

Hosted by:

SHIP MODELERS
Association



Saturday, October 14, 1995: (Special to SD Ship Modelers Guild)

It was reported today that our Guild, led by Guildmaster Jim Hawkins, "invaded" the Tri-City-Park near Fullerton and represented our club at the Maritime Modelers of L.A. gathering there. Our club was well-featured at the regatta, with Dave Manley's taking both first Place Pleasure Craft and Military awards. His "BIGTIME" (approx 80' yacht) and "U.S.S. SAN DIEGO" WWII GL-AA-53 did the tricks.

Fred Fraas was awarded 2nd. place for his Liberty, "JEREMIAH OBRIEN". Bob Willis, also of our club, won 2nd. and 3rd. places with a Chris Craft 32-footer (approx.), and another with a kit yacht model.

Our seven club representatives included Bob O'Brien, Ernie Andrews and Lou Johnson, and won five awards among them. Bob won a small RC sailboat kit complete with radio at the ticket stub raffle.

All of our members were very impressed with the way in which the regatta was conducted. The trophies, also, were "first-class", the designations photo-etched on walnut plaques.

(Thanks to Fred Fraas for the 'phoned report).

A reception Friday aboard the old sailing ship Balclutha will honor Karl Kortum, founder of the San Francisco maritime museum

Tribute to Guardian Of Seafaring History

Founder of museum to be honored

*By Carl Nolte
Chronicle Staff Writer*

There will be a reception Friday aboard the old sailing ship Balclutha to honor the life and times of Karl Kortum, the man who founded what is now the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park.

Kortum, who is 78 and ailing, retired this summer from his post as the curator of the park, but his monument is at the foot of the famous Hyde Street hill at the edge of the bay.

The park at the end of the street, the cable car turntable, the museum and the pier where the largest floating collection of historic ships in the world are berthed are all his vision.

The reception will be held aboard the 109-year-old Balclutha, always the apple of Kortum's eye. More than 40 years ago, Kortum led a movement that rescued the Balclutha from the Sausalito mud flats and made the ship the centerpiece of his idea for a monument to San Francisco's maritime heritage.

"Where others saw a bedraggled wreck, he saw a thing of high purpose and enduring beauty," wrote Walter Cronkite, the famous broadcaster, when Kortum was presented with one of his many awards three years ago. Cronkite, who admires old ships and those who save them, called Kortum "the nation's leader" in the field.

Frank Carr, chairman of the World Ship Trust in London,



called Kortum "the world's leading exponent and expert on historic craft preservation" and a "genius."

"Without Karl Kortum," writes the historian Nancy Olmsted in a new book, "San Francisco's maritime past would be another myth in the storybook of legends... there would be little tangible evi- (OVER)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1995

dence of the first century of the city's dominant position as an internationally known seaport."

Kortum himself has almost become a legend on the waterfront, a throwback to the tough old days, a man whose strong opinions and fierce devotion to what he sees as his duty has led him to bitter battles with some people who were his friends and many who were his enemies.

Anything fake always drove Kortum into a fury — he once denounced a replica of HMS Bounty as "Ye Olde Tourist Trappe." Anything bureaucratic was worse. He called the superintendent of the San Francisco Maritime National Park and his advisers, nominally his superiors, "a bunch of bums."

He was charged once with insubordination by the Park Service, and in later years his forceful views on the best way to save the ships from rot were ignored. Even in his retirement, Kortum is like an old lion in winter, like a prophet denouncing the uncaring heathens.

"I am bitter," he said last week. He feels that the ships are not being taken care of properly, and plans for the Hyde Street Pier are all wrong. "Things," he said, "have never been worse."

But that is the sour Kortum talking. The other Kortum remembers the sea and ships in their glory. "I am a seafaring man," he says, "I loved every day I spent at sea."

The feeling isn't just for old men who remember the past. "I want to share it, so that other generations can respond the way I do," he said, "There is always the undercurrent of people who feel it, really feel it."

Kortum was raised in Petaluma and grew up on a chicken ranch. The chicken feed always came by boat, up the winding Petaluma Creek, and that led to the salt water of the bay, and then to the Golden Gate and the Pacific.

As a boy he was a Sea Scout, and as a young man he sailed as an able seaman aboard the sailing vessel Kaiulani from Gray's Harbor, Ore., to Tasmania the long way, around Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope. The trip took 127 days in 1941 and 1942, and it was the last voyage of an American windjammer around Cape Horn, the end of an era.

He was an officer on steamships during World War II and afterward took two more last voyages: the final trip of the sailing schooner C. A. Thayer, Seattle to San Francisco, in 1957, and the transatlantic voyage of the paddle wheel tug Eppleton Hall from England to San Francisco in 1970. Former Chronicle editor Scott Newhall was the skipper; Kortum was the chief mate.

In between, Kortum was ashore, working on his idea for a San Francisco maritime museum. He convinced Newhall that the plan was sound, persuaded the city to set up the museum in the Aquatic Park boathouse, then thought of as a civic white elephant, and got himself appointed director at a salary of \$425 a month. He and his wife, Jean, were so poor that they lived in a garage.

But Kortum was happy; he and his allies, including Dave Nelson, a consultant, conceived the idea of a grander park, with more ships. He obtained the C. A. Thayer, the Wa-

pama, an old steam schooner, the Alma, a hay schooner, and the Hyde Street Pier.

Kortum immersed himself and the staff in the past, talking to old sailors, trying to save the past like something preserved in salt. David Hull, who ran the museum library, said of those years, "working for Karl was like living in the 19th century. . . it was a cultural shock to come home to the 20th century every evening."

At first, the state ran the place as a sort of super museum, but then the collection was given to the National Park Service as part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area; later it became a separate national park.

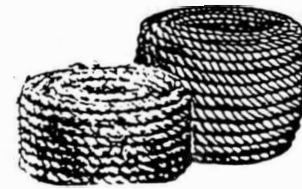
Only the federal government had enough money to maintain the collection of ships and artifacts. The maxim that a ship is a hole in the water into which one pours money is doubly true when the ship is very old. But Kortum could not get along with the Park Service. Nobody could, he and his allies say. The feud went on for years, and nobody won.

Kortum was always on the lookout for old ships; he rescued ships that have become part of museums in New York and Galveston,

among other places. He received many honors for his work, among them the American Ship Trust Award.

By the spring of this year it was clear that Kortum's stamina — but not his determination — had waned. His health went bad and he left the job he had loved.

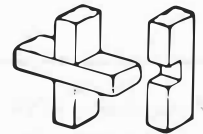
"When I heard you had retired," Andy Nesdall, a historian, wrote Kortum, "it seemed like the end of an era. The institution you founded and whose growth you nursed is a legacy which will inspire and endure for many generations."



HOW TO WORK WITH TOOLS AND WOOD



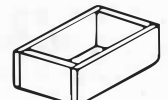
HALF LAP



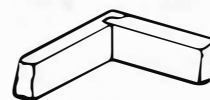
CROSS LAP



TONGUE & GROOVE



BUTT



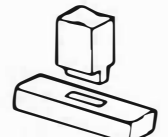
DADO & RABBET



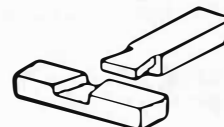
DADO TONGUE AND RABBET



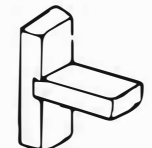
THRU MORTISE TENON



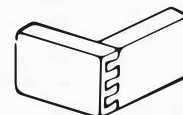
STUB MORTISE TENON



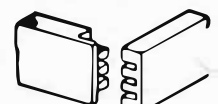
LAP DOVETAIL



DOVETAIL DADO



LAP DOVETAIL OR HALF BLIND DOVETAIL



STOPPED LAP DOVETAIL

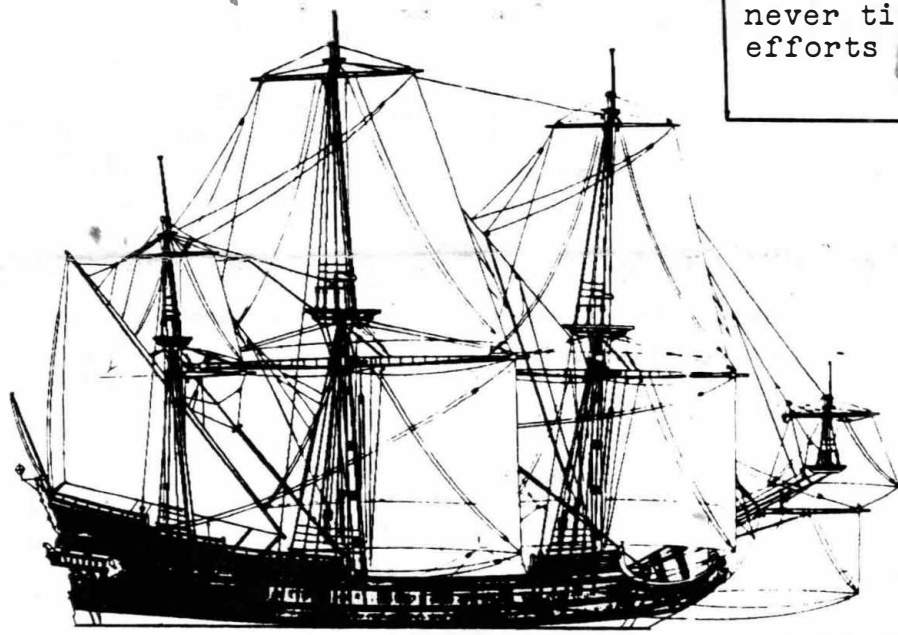
WASHINGTON (ED)

I trust modelers will excuse me for "digressing" a bit in the inclusion of this article on Karl Kortum in our ship-modeling rag. Karl is news to any ship-modeler, for through his efforts, worldwide, of helping save historic ships, even our model shop on the STAR is partly one of the results of his efforts. He worked with Jerry MacMullen, Alan Villiers, "Smilin' Jack Dickerhoff, rigger, and others to see that the old EUTERPE was not scrapped.

Karl appreciated good ship models, and many are to be found in the San Francisco Maritime Museum.

I became acquainted with him

(Courtesy of SEA HISTORY GAZETTE)



Naval architect Thomas Gillmer's drawing of the Kalmar Nyckel.

Kalmar Nyckel: The Pride of Wilmington

The lines of the ship that brought the first Swedish and Finnish settlers to America, the Dutch *Kalmar Nyckel*, are being laid down in Wilmington, Delaware. The Kalmar Nyckel Foundation has contracted with shipbuilder Allen Rawl—builder of the *Susan Constant*—to build her at a shipyard at East Seventh Street in Wilmington. The keel of the 93 feet on deck, 317 (long) ton displacement replica, designed by well-known naval architect Thomas Gillmer, has already been laid, and the entire vessel is scheduled for completion by the end of 1996.

The original *Kalmar Nyckel* made her New World landing at "The Rocks," present-day Wilmington, in 1638 and the foundation's goal is to establish programs at the site that focus on the colonial beginnings of the state. Between 1995 and 1997, the economic impact of the project is estimated at \$20 million in tax revenue, sales of goods and services, wages, and tourist and visitor expenditures.

To add a novel twist to the first stages of the project, Allen Rawl writes that, because the building where the lofting is being done will eventually become the foundation's museum/social hall, the plan is "to preserve the lines, when lofting has been completed, by inking-over the penciled lines, using brightly colored marking pens, then covering the floor with tough, durable, clear finish." (KNF, 1124 E. 7th Street, Wilmington DE 19801; 302 429-7447) —KEVIN HAYDON

about 1935 or '36 when he and Harry Dring had come up from the Bay area on Harry's old Indian motorcycle to Seattle. They were looking for the old down-easter, the fullrigger ST. PAUL.

Again, in 1941, he was in town from the bark KAIULANI which was to load lumber in Aberdeen, Wash., for South Africa. He was looking for a camera at Clyeds on First Avenue. I reciprocated the visit by boarding the KAIULANI at Aberdeen on a rainy Sunday. "Why not come with us?" was his question. "Just married four months" was the answer.

But we did sail together in 1957, helping deliver the old Bendixsen schooner C. A. THAYER to San Francisco under sail.

Though not going to the museum office anymore, I'm sure Karl will never tire--or retire in his efforts to preserve old ships.

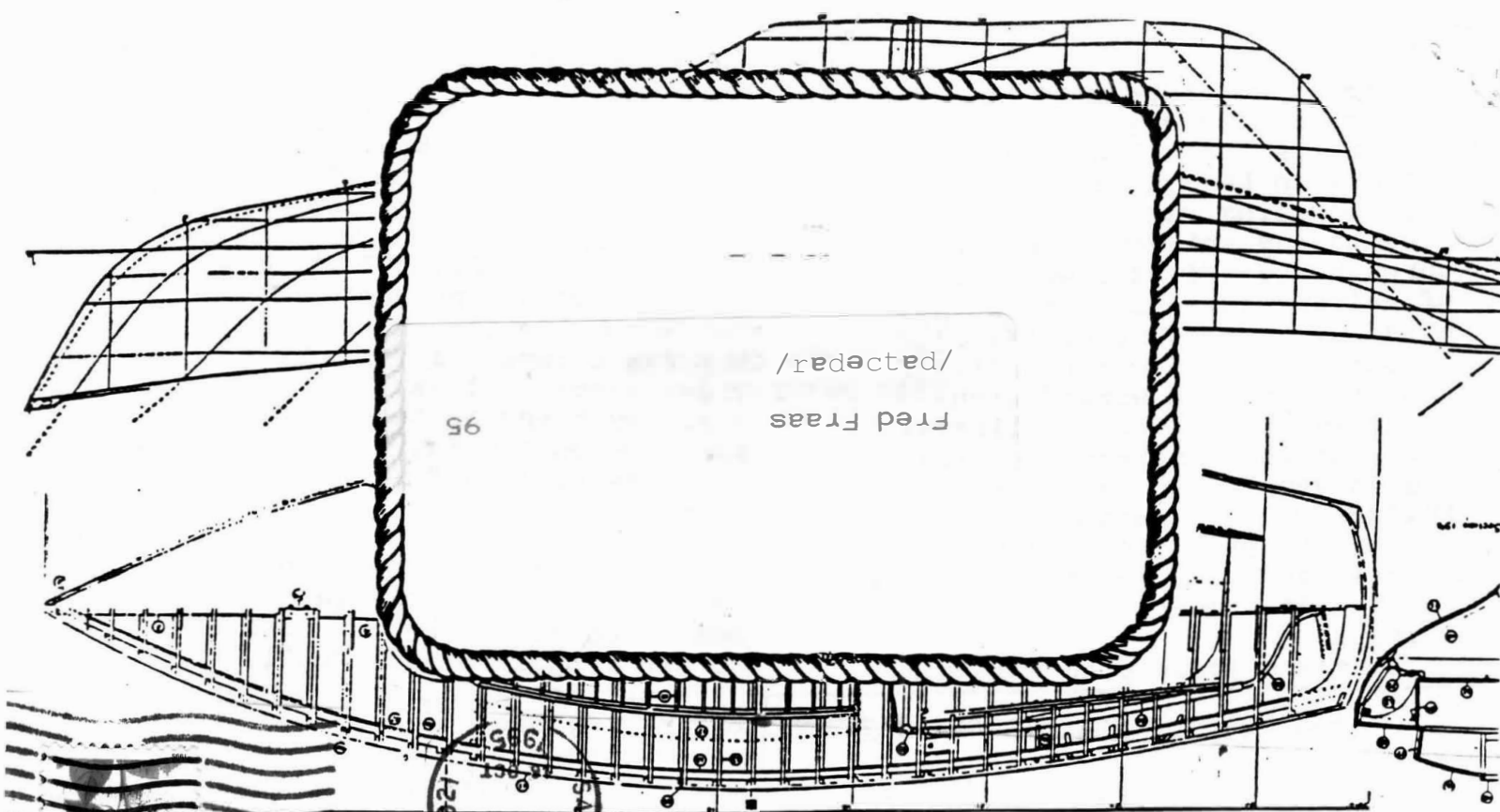
(GJ, Asst. ED)

Proposal to Save USS Cabot Gains Endorsement

A proposal to establish the carrier USS *Cabot* (CVL28) as the centerpiece of a museum of industry may save the embattled ship. The USS Cabot Association has declared its support for the proposal from the American Academy of Industry in Chicago, Illinois.

Controversy has surrounded the US World War II veteran since she was given to the United States by the Spanish government, her postwar owners. When the Association discovered that the present owners of the National Historic Landmark vessel, a veterans' organization in Kenner, Louisiana, were trying to sell her for scrap, it sounded general quarters. A fund-raising campaign was initiated and a search for a new home for the ship begun.

"Our organization stands behind the Academy 100%," says Association president Bill Anderson. "Their management and membership not only has the education, background, and plan to restore the ship, but also to create a premier museum." (USSCA, 430 Ft. Pickens Rd., Pensacola Beach FL 32561)



/redacted/
Fred Fraas

95



San Diego, California 92101
1306 North Harbor Drive
c/o Maritime Museum Assoc. of SDiego
San Diego Ship Modelers Guild

San Diego Ship Modelers Guild

Officers for 1995

Guild Master
First Mate
Purser
Logkeeper
Newsletter Editors

Jim Hawkins /redacted/
Doug McFarland /redacted/
Ed White /redacted/
(open)

Steering Committee

Fred Fraas /redacted/
Gordon Jones /redacted/
--Open to any and all interested in the welfare of the club.

Regatta Commodore

Dave Manley /redacted/

Schedule of Activities:

Membership:

Meetings -- Third Thursday of the month. 7:00PM Social, 7:30PM Meeting, held on board the ferryboat "Berkeley."

Dues are \$15 annually (\$7.50 after July 1st)

R/C Operations -- Saturday mornings at the Model Yacht Pond. (Mission Bay)

We strongly encourage all to join the San Diego Maritime Museum as an expression of appreciation for the facilities they provide for our benefit.

Annual Regatta -- Third weekend in June.
