



San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild

1306 N. Harbor Drive

San Diego, CA 92101

December 1996

NEWSLETTER

Volume 20; Number 12



***** IN MEMORIAM *****

VIC CROSBY

1916-1996

(see inside)

HOLIDAY PARTY NIGHT

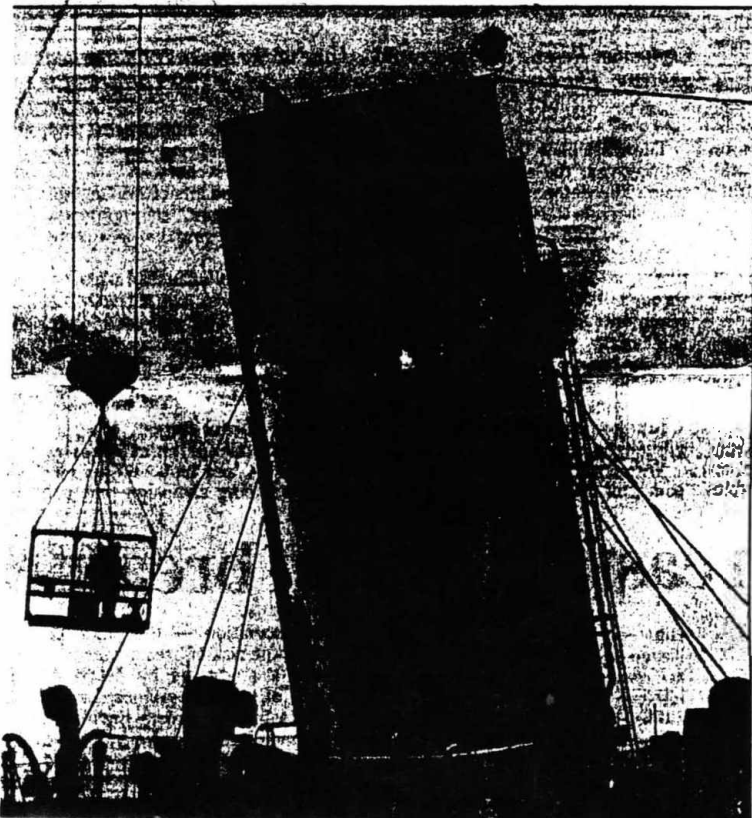
December 19, 1996 7:00 PM

STAR OF INDIA "Tween Decks

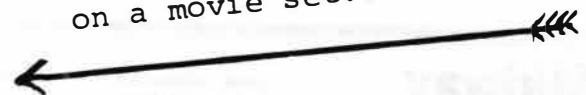
Plan your dinner for before or after the meeting, but bring that special person in your life who puts up with your hobby. A bar will be available.



Leave your models home, but bring them to our January meeting.

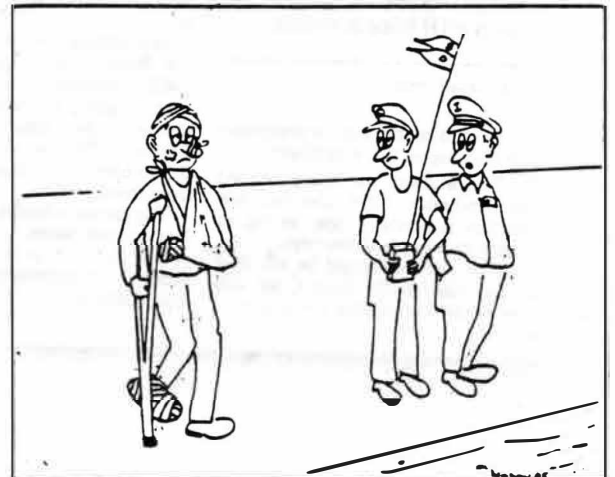


GREAT SCOTT!!! Is this real??
Two men in the basket are, and
so is the one on top this stack.
The stack is one of four "fakes"
on a movie set...see inside.



SHOW & TELL

by Nilson



"IT HAPPENED AT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY
HE INSISTED ON DRINKING CROSBY'S SHIP-
IN-A-BOTTLE"

VIC CROSBY
1916-1996

It was with great sadness that your editor learned of the death of long-time member, Vic Crosby, on Tuesday evening, Dec. 2 in Renton, Washington. Vic died peacefully in his sleep from an apparent combination of pneumonia and congestive heart failure. He had been in a nursing home for the past couple of years and suffered from poor health.

Several years ago, Vic and his wife, Alleen moved back to the Seattle area to be closer to their two sons, Jerry and Lee, and their families. Vic had been quite active in our guild and the Maritime Museum for more than twenty years.

No services were being planned. His final wishes were to be cremated and have his ashes scattered by air over Camano Island in Puget Sound. A card expressing our condolences in the name of the Guild has been sent to his family and we further express our deepest sympathy.

This newsletter is humbly dedicated to his memory.

Midway faces choppy seas on way here

By Anthony Millican, STAFF WRITER

The aircraft carrier Midway was able to launch air strikes during the Vietnam and gulf wars, but the warship might have more difficulty getting berthed along the San Diego waterfront.

Port commissioners voted 5-0 yesterday to approve the concept of using the decommissioned carrier as a floating museum. The ship would be docked adjacent to Navy Pier, near North Harbor Drive and F Street.

The nonprofit San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum envisions a tourist attraction that would attract 780,000 visitors in its first year.

However, commissioners attached conditions to the \$11 million project. Among those are requirements that the museum pay for an environmental impact report as well as obtain approval of the State Lands Commission, Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Several commissioners said they were concerned about the adequacy of the project's parking plan and its impact on future development of the Embarcadero.

Alan Uke, founder and president of the San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum, said he was undaunted by the obstacles.

"During the Midway's history, it was known as the Midway Magic because it always got its missions accomplished," Uke said after the meeting. "I would expect the Midway would pull through its challenges and . . . succeed on this next mission as a successful naval museum."

Uke likened the project to the proverbial "journey of a thousand miles."

"We're now within 50 miles of (completing) the 1,000-mile journey," Uke said. "We've overcome much more difficult obstacles than the parking issue."

The project had the strong support of port commis-

sioner Paul Speer, a retired Navy admiral who has flown from the carrier.

One notable opponent is Bob Wilson, an owner of the Fish Market restaurants, whose patrons' harbor view would be obscured by the ship. Wilson told commissioners the museum would not generate much business for the restaurant.

"They will not be patrons of the Fish Market," Wilson said. "It would be nice if they were. But the people don't come dressed for that, under that circumstance. Secondly, our pricing would not allow them to be our guests, although we'd be happy to have them."

The carrier is longer than three football fields lined up end zone to end zone. But its height posed the most concern to port officials, some of whom compared the

See MIDWAY on Page B-2

Midway

Restaurateur complains
ship will block views

Continued from B-1

project to constructing a seven-story building on the waterfront.

The Midway was commissioned in September 1945. Uke said the carrier is nowhere near as big as more recently built carriers.

The museum would be the first of its kind on the West Coast and generate \$8.7 million a year in rev-

enue, supporters said. There are carrier museums already in existence in Corpus Christi, Texas, New York City and Charleston Harbor, S.C.

The Midway took its name from the World War II battle in June 1942, a turning point in the Pacific War. Starting in 1965, the carrier served three combat cruises in Vietnam. During Desert Storm, 3,300 combat missions were flown from the carrier.

The carrier's final home port was North Island Naval Air Station. The carrier is now in mothballs with other decommissioned Navy vessels in Bremerton, Wash.



"Where do you keep your boat in the winter, Arnie?"

Notes From Last Meeting

I thought I was attending one of the last meetings of the last man's club--eight loyal and stalwart members braved the heavy winter rain to hear the "word" from president Tom Taylor who opened the meeting promptly at 7:00 p.m. Our speaker for the evening failed to "run the rapids" so it was a duke's mixture of ideas, announcements, and questions, all of it, however, relevant to the main subject at hand--ship models.

Availability of hardwoods for building shipmodels.--Someone broached this subject and it was stated that holly and boxwood, both excellent for the purpose, now run about \$3.00 per pound. Another said that per-simmon, a darkish wood, is very good and carves as well as boxwood. Ebony seems to be running about \$23 to \$27 per board foot.

Upcoming fun/work party on Dec. 7th. was discussed, at which sails for the tacking and wearing maneuvers of models of the STAR would be worked on. Also, Navy aircraft, to be supplied to one of the museum's carrier models, still required considerable masking, decal and paint work. The "usual suspects" were thought to be rounded up. And in connection with these pursuits, does anyone have some old-fashioned linen drafting material? It is to be used for experimental sails on future display models. Come to the next meeting and broadcast your news freely.

COMMODORE to be drafted? A regatta commodore is sorely needed for the regatta to be held the third week in June. RC members are urged to accept this challenge in order to experience some of life's greatest moments. I'm a static modeler.

Guild Logos and human figures to scale of whatever model is being displayed have been suggested in order to make models on view more highly relevant. Let's discuss it some more.

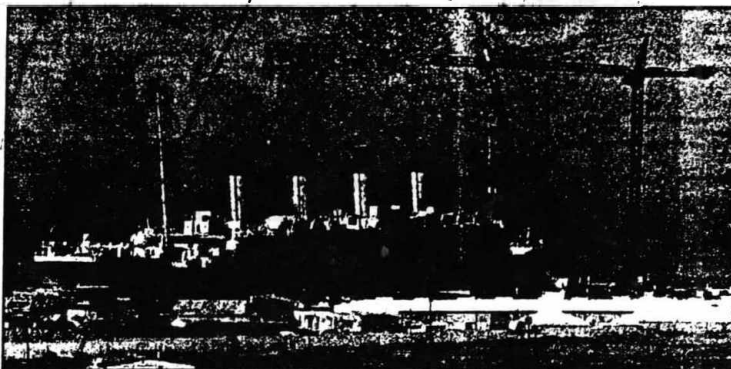
Fleet Submarine model builder is being sought. Please contact Bob Crawford if you, or someone you know, is a "fleet" nut. Also, inquiry about a SANTA MARIA model for possible sale has been received. If you have one, perhaps it is saleable.

MEMBERS present described models they are working on. When weather improves and attendance is better, perhaps some will bring their work to meetings.

There was good participation at the meeting among the few who showed and we hope to do it again next month. Ass't Ed.

A TITANIC IMAGE

A replica of the Titanic, built for a new film about the ill-fated ship, provides a startling backdrop along the toll road just south of Rosarito Beach. Below, workers dangle as they work on one of the ship's



from San Diego Union-Tribune Dec. 10, 1996
Ed.Note: This location is just south of the border, in Mexico.
(More on this next month. Also a report on the Dec. 7 Pearl Harbor Day TF96 regatta at Santee Lakes. It was impressive.)

REMEMBERING VIC CROSBY

by Fred Fraas

He was a member of our Guild from it's very beginning. He was selected as our very first "Modeler-of-the-Month in early 1981. He was one of the first members to serve on the Steering Committee. He brought more models to our monthly meetings than anyone else, before or since, and they were all in bottles. He was the first and only SDSMG member to ever be awarded a LIFETIME membership. He was Vic Crosby, and he was my good friend for more than twenty years.

There was almost no limit in what Vic could put inside a bottle. He probably built over 300 ships-in-bottles; the vast majority of which are on permanent display aboard the Star of India. They also appear in most maritime museums on the West Coast and in the homes of his special friends. While his first love was ships and the sea, he was also a licensed private pilot who owned his own plane in earlier years and enjoyed flying gliders in his later years. With this background, he enjoyed putting vintage aircraft in bottles as well. He built cars, buildings, bridges, churches and even a triple expansion steam engine model (with moving parts), and placed them neatly in bottles. A favorite which always drew smiles was a "Popeye-the-sailor man" modeler sitting inside a bottle, pulling on strings attached to a model brig, bark (or whatever) stuck half-way inside the bottles neck.

I first met Vic at the Model Yacht Pond in the early '70s, and we soon became close friends. At that time Vic and his wife, Alleen lived nearby in a condo complex in Pacific Beach. The vast number of ships in bottles which he scattered everywhere impressed me. I was also impressed by the size of his "work bench," a small table no larger than a card table, and since I had recently finished a work bench 20 feet long in my garage, I thought how little one actually needs. Some months latter, Vic presented me with a Mariner-class cargo ship, a miniature replica of 1/10th scale scratch-built R/C electric model and I wanted to return the favor, somehow. So I built two pine book shelves and painted them to match their interior walls. Each had 6" x 36" shelves spaced to accomodate his bottles. The units were about 7 feet high. Placed side by side, they were able to hold most of the models he had in his place, in a central display. Vic was delighted, but it wasn't many more years when he still needed more display area.

Vic used bottles of many sizes and shapes. If he found a bottle that offered a particular challenge, he would come up with something to put inside. He preferred to use rectangular bottles available in brands like Boodles Gin or Johnnie Walker Red Label Scotch. For smaller models he liked 50ml used by Beefeater or triangular Haig & Haig "Pinch bottles." A few years later I built two matching smaller cases which were about 10" wide and perhaps 30" tall. These highlighted his smaller models very nicely. Vic had an aversion to round bottles except for larger models requiring a gallon jug (or bigger.) He was especially particular about distortions in glass and he eliminated the need for resting cradles by not using round bottles in the first place.

Soon after getting better acquainted with Vic, he started talking about building a radio-controlled ship in a bottle. I thought at that time he was crazy, but soon realized he was dead serious. Eventually he did build what might have been the world's first R/C ship in a bottle.

He built a handsome tuna seiner placing it in a gallon jug. For power, he built an external unit which he suspended beneath the master jug. He installed just enough ballast for the bottle (jug) to float half in and half out of the water. While it didn't win any races, it did work and pond spectators were amazed. Subsequently, it was placed on permanent display aboard the "Star."

Another unique feature about Vic's models in bottles was that each one had a completely different closure stuck in the bottles' neck. Other modelers might be content to make an ornamental turk's head to be placed on the neck of the bottle. Not Vic. While he did turk's heads, he would come up with different kinds of puzzle stoppers leaving the observer to wonder how he got the "plug" in the neck of the bottle in the first place. If he used a bottle with a decanter type cap, he would put something inside of that, such as a lighthouse or smaller ship model or setting to complement the larger bottle display. A most unique bottle was one with about a 36" neck; a wine bottle with a round shallow base. It looked more like a small floor lamp yet Vic placed models in its' base. He also placed two sailing craft in the eye of a needle which could only be seen through a magnifying glass.

In the early '80's, Vic asked me to photograph his entire collection which he had in his home. As I recall, we used about six rolls of film and I was able to get some marvelous pictures especially through telephoto lens. While these filled a couple albums, the negatives came in very handy a few years later.

In 1982, the Maritime Museum hosted the first ever, international exhibit of ships-in-bottles. This was held aboard the Star of India from 1 August to 30 September. Over 100 bottles were displayed by visitors from Japan, East and West Germany, Italy, Canada, France, Denmark and the U.S. There were 63 models brought from Japan by nine or ten modelers, each with a 35mm camera. As they started to photograph Vic's models with obvious enthusiasm, I got Vic's permission to offer his collection of negatives, which they subsequently took back to Japan. The head of their delegation later sent me two modeling books which were virtually impossible to buy here in the States. --A few years later Vic attended their exhibit held in Kyoto if memory serves..

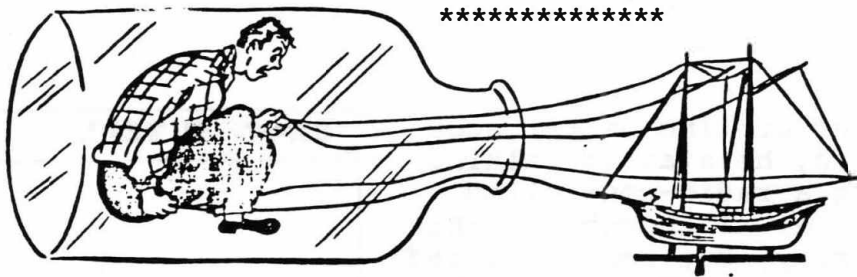
In summary, I can only say that if there is a special place in the heavens above for ship modelers, I believe Vic will have a chair at the head table. R.I.P., MY FRIEND.

SHOW & TELL

by Nilson



"VIC CROSBY WOULD LIKE TO SHARE A UNIQUE PROBLEM WITH US TONIGHT"



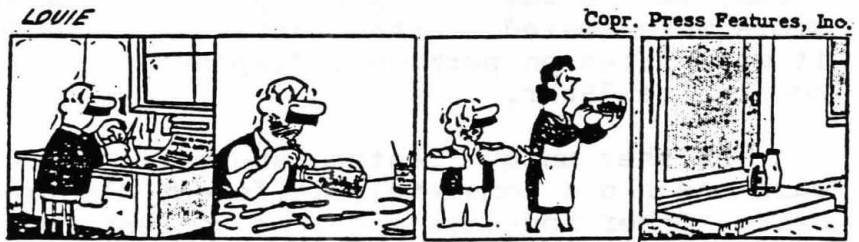
"1984" -- Vic CROSBY decides to build larger-scale models.

MODELING CARTOONS:

The cartoon above was the first of many reprinted over nearly twenty years in our newsletter, appearing in the Nov. 1977 issue. Vic had a keen sense of humor and always appreciated these very much. Others below appeared in issues as indicated. Past Guildmaster Roy T. Nilson used Vic as his subject in three of his original cartoons he drew up in the '85-'86 time frame.



Nov. 1977



Dec. 1977



Dec. 1977

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By BIL KEANE

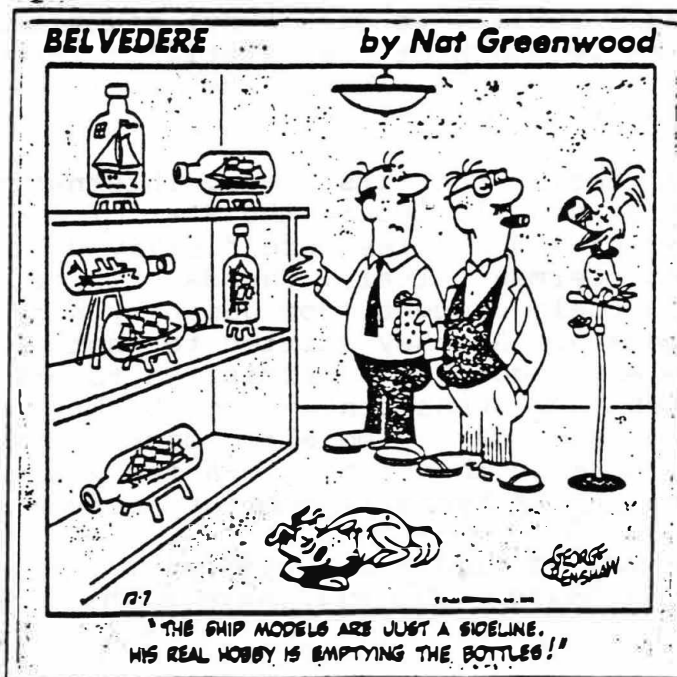


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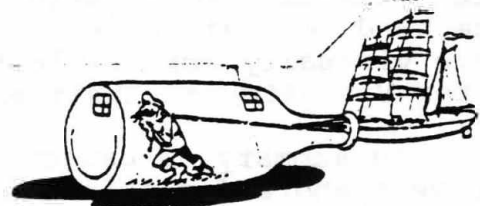
Copyright 1977
The Register and Tribune
Syndicate, Inc.

"Will you buy me a bottle of boat, Mommy?"

Febr. 1978



May 1978



Febr. 1978

FEBRUARY MODELER OF THE MONTH

****VIC CROSBY****

One of the most facinating aspects of ship modeling is the ship in the bottle. We are fortunate in our guild to have one of the masters of the craft -- our first Modeler of the Month, Vic Crosby. Indeed many of us look forward each month to admiring his latest creation.

Vic hails from Seattle , Washington where he spent his younger years. In 1933, at the age of 19, he got a life-boat ticket and went to sea. In 1946 he joined the merchant marine and was a member of the Sailor's Union Pacific. Vic says he didn't like passenger ships and all their white paint. The old frieghters with their more casual life-style suited him just fine. He would usually sail on merchantmen in the winter months and spend the summers in the commercial fisheries in Alaska. After getting married he went into business, from which he retired about 15 years ago. Some of his shipmates would make ships-in-the-bottle on the cruises, and once in port would give them to a bartender for a few drinks, or perhaps give them to a woman friend. Intrigued by the craft, Vic also started to make the models. Once he settled down on land he started making the larger madels. After retiring and moving with his wife into an apartment, he no longer had room for the big models, so he returned to making ships in the bottle. He gave his bigger shaps to his two grown and married sons.

Vic has never sold any of his models, feeling they were never good enough for people to buy. Now his work can be seen in many West Coast maritime museums, from one in Vancouver, British Columbia, to Seattle, to San Francisco and Monterey, and even to the museum on the FALLS OF CLYDE on Honolulu. And of course, there is a marvelous display on the 'tween decks of the STAR OF INDIA.

Among his favorite ships-in-a-bottle are the plank on frames with some of the ribs exposed of the "75's" (75 gunn ships) in quart bottles, a Glouster Schooner, and the six ships of a fleet in a 5th bottle.

(cont. on next page)

Editor's Note: This was the very first of a series of several dozen modeler profiles written by Bill Kelly/Fleming in February 1981. Bill was a very active member before moving back to the Boston area. He is still a guild member. Thanks again, Bill.

Vic has always been willing to pass along a few tips. For example, instead of using a wood board to cut on, he uses a pane of glass to avoid the problems associated with the blade bending into the wood. This does mean more wear and tear on the blades, but Vic feels it is worth it to keep his sharpener active.

The ships Vic squeezes into those bottles are constructed in two to four sections using male/female joints to connect one part to the next. The only electric tools he uses are an 1/4" drill and an I.D. scribe. His most common tools are made out of filed coat hangers, paper clips, or wire which he can bend to his particular needs.

We all appreciate Vic's contributions to the guild and salute him as our February '81 Modeler of the Month.



San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild

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

VOLUME 10 NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 1986

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Ц Ъ Ы Ь Э Ю Я



Editor's Note:

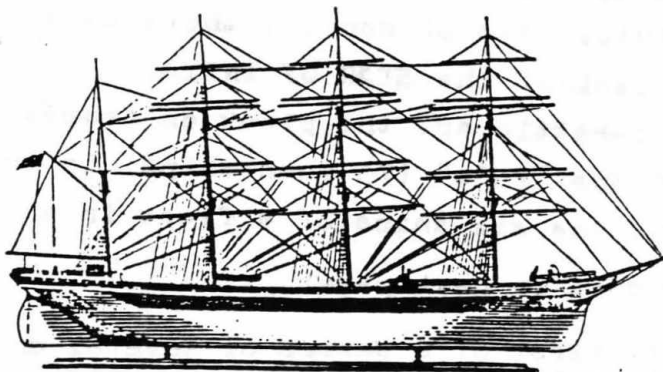
This reduced copy of our October 1986 N/L is the greatest example of Vic's generosity. This collection will exist for the enjoyment of many generations to come. Few if any maritime museums in the world can boast of a bottle collection as this, all built by one man.

For the lack of a better headline I thought I would print the rest of the Russian alphabet. It's tough to say your ABCs in that language.

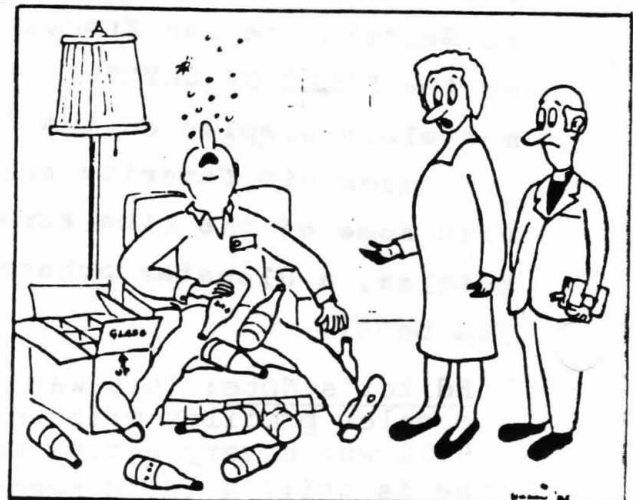
Did you know that our model in a bottle member Vic Crosby has been build-models for over 50 years. Vic is known nationally and internationally for his excellent work. I found out recently that he has donated about 160 of these prize models in-a bottle to the Maritime Museum...valued at \$200,000. Some of us are fortunate enough to own one of these one of a type. Look close at Vic's models for unbelievable detail. Some of Vic's work were on display in Japan a few years back when he was invited to a world showing of the boats in-a bottle organization. His models are also displayed in other museums in this country. If ever visiting the San Diego Aerospace museum be on the look for some of his airplane models in a bottle...hats off to you Vic.

SHOW & TELL

by Nilson



Four Mast Barque -- "California"



"NO PROBLEM PASTOR, HIS HOBBY IS SHIPS-IN-A-BOTTLE."

MORE KUDOS FOR VIC CROSBY:

The following news article recently appeared in the Seattle "P.I." paper. Of all the ships-in-bottles that VIC has built over the years, we believe he never made one for a U.S. President before. Special thanks to our SDSMG "spy reporter" in Seattle for sending this info.

An exquisite talent kept shipshape

Many young men went down to the sea in ships but Vic Crosby brought much of the sea and the ships back . . . in bottles.

I've seen ships-in-bottles before, but none conceived or crafted half so exquisitely as Crosby's Flotilla. He has launched fully rigged, five-masted sailing vessels in bottles. He has launched a half dozen fully rigged sailing ships in one bottle.



Jon Hahn

He's built ships in bottles big as a watermelon. And he's bottled ships smaller than the naked eye can see. The man puts more fun and imagination back into one bottle than any man might've originally sucked out of it.

"Well, I was never any good at playing cards, and this was something to do," rationalized Crosby, who's berthed uphill from the old tugs on the Kirkland waterfront. At 76, he's still bottling maritime lore at his small workbench.

The son of a seaman and longshoreman, Vic Crosby was launched in the old Hooverville area of Seattle and didn't have far to go to sea when he was graduated from Lincoln High. After years as a "deck ape" and seaman, he went on the beach and worked longshore until he retired.

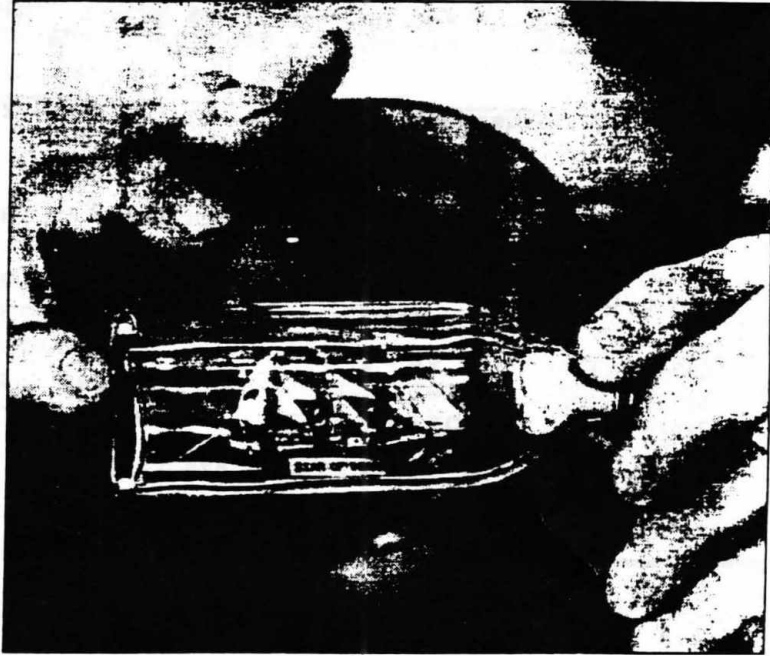
But never a retiring sort, he launched a resort at Lake Retreat and started dabbling in real estate. In his spare time, since he still wasn't much at playing cards, he bought a plane and learned to fly (not necessarily in that order). And continued to launch new projects.

Like a scale replica of the Curtiss Jenny OX-3 his father barnstormed out of the old Army airstrip at Sand Point, offering "See Seattle From the Air" rides for \$5. In a bottle.

Like the models of his 44-foot Alaskan purse seiner in separate bottles: one intact and the other a longitudinal cut-away, showing exact placement of the galley, engine, etc.

Or the old 1,500-horsepower, triple-expansion marine engine constructed inside an old Scotch bottle. An engine shaft runs through a tiny drilled hole in the bottom of the bottle to a small bronze screw. Turning the screw makes the old three-banger operate in correct sync and stroke.

Crosby, who still uses an old German pocket knife his Dad gave him, also has intricately carved or constructed wooden chains, anchors, rocking chairs and even a baseball inside bottles. Even Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" stagecoach. And each



MIKE BANTER/P-I

Vic Crosby holds one of his many ships in a bottle. This one contains the Star of India.

bottle has its own clever stopper.

But the ships . . . the ships suck you into the bottle and hold your imagination. Some, like the old steam schooner Texada, have lines trailing outside the bottle necks so you can operate the cargo boom. In another bottle, lines let you tack the cadet-training ship Christiana Radich to port or starboard.

In another, a hand-carved merchant seaman *inside a bottle* is heaving on the rigging of a partially constructed bottle ship and pulling it to him.

Where once rippled a fifth of Scotch, a half-dozen British men-of-war. "Hornblower's Flotilla," sail under full rigging into the Baltic to bottle up Napoleon's forces. In another, three five-masters: Prussen, France II and Copenhagen, sail toward the neck of a miniature bottle. In still another, six crewmen work in the rigging of a Yangtze River junk.

There's "a good 70 or 80 hours" in each of the single-ship bottles, Crosby says. He's made more than he can remember. "I used to give them to girlfriends in different ports, and it never failed that when I returned to

that port, she'd be married!" So he made more carvings and ships-in-bottles.

In one, a fully rigged, tiny Flying Cloud is sailing toward the bottle neck where, inside a small vial stopper, is an even smaller, fully rigged sailing ship. "Well, THAT has gotta be the smallest ship I've ever seen!"

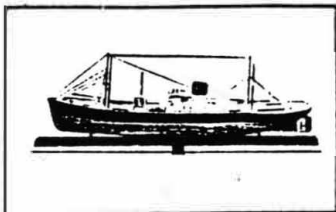
The words weren't quite out when Crosby held up a "just-you-wait" finger and disappeared, returning with a tiny bottle. There was nothing in it but a fancy carved wooden stopper and, on closer inspection, a sailmaker's sewing needle. Crosby handed me a jeweler's eyeglass and said: "Look in the eye of the needle."

There, in a space barely big enough for your boss's heart, were two, fully rigged sailing ships.

Crosby's latest venture, still on the ways, is a tiny USS Constitution. When the frigate is rigged and in its tiny bottle, Crosby plans to send it to that guy in Washington, D.C., who's currently trying to put a trillion-dollar debt into a billion-dollar bottle.

■ Jon Hahn is a staff columnist who writes three times a week in the P-I.

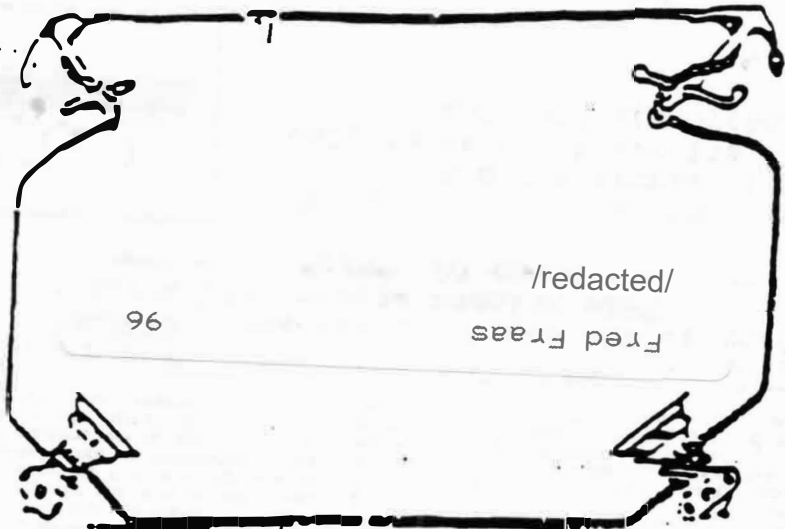
EDITOR'S NOTE: Over the years Vic was interviewed by many news media people. The reprint above was written in 1992 and appeared in our March 1993 Newsletter.



"Wouldst thou, - so the helmsman answered
Learn the secret of the sea?
Only those who brave its dangers
Comprehend its mystery!"

.....Longfellow





Season's
Greetings
★

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

San Diego Ship Modelers Guild
 Officers for 1996

Guild Master	Tom Taylor	/redacted/
First Mate	Jack Klein	/redacted/
Purser	Ed White	/redacted/
Logkeeper	(open)	
N'letter Editors	Fred Fraas	/redacted/
	Gordon Jones	/redacted/
Regatta Commodore	Dave Manley	/redacted/

Schedule of Activities:

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

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

Annual Regatta -- Third weekend in June.

Membership:

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

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