San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild

1306 N. Harbor Drive San Diego, CA 92101

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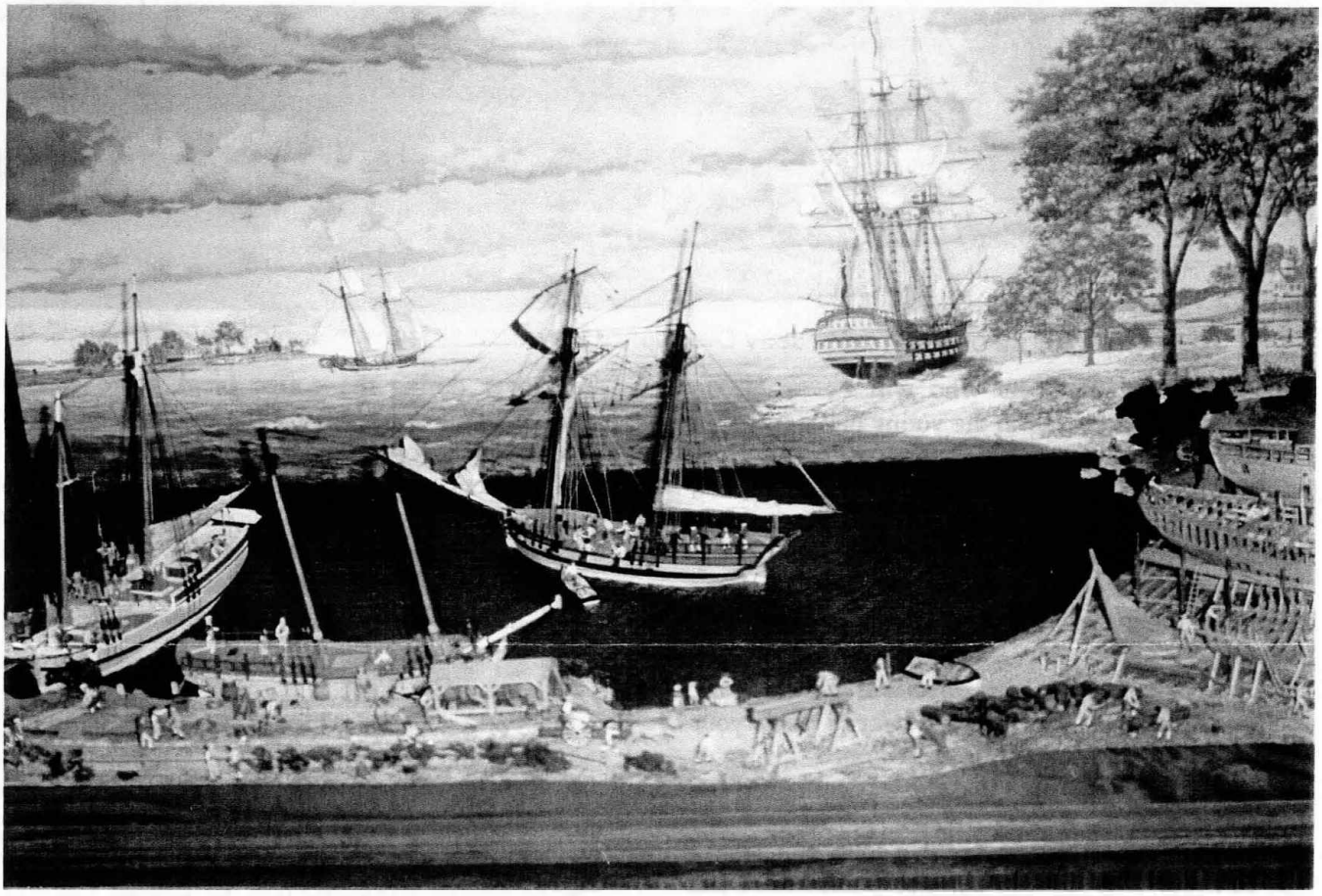


THIS IS HAROLD M. HAHN'S FAMOUS DIORAMA OF A COLONIAL SHIPYARD at the Mariner's Museum in Newport News, Va., as shown in a photo made by Guild Member Robert Hewitt during a recent visit. Pictured, left to right, are an unidentified trading schooner, the often-modeled schooner *Sultana* on the dock in the foreground, *Sir Edward Hawke* in the center of the bay, and *Chaleur* and *Halifax* on the stocks to the right. The two ships in the background are painted and not identified.

The Rewards of a Meeting on a Cool Rainy Evening

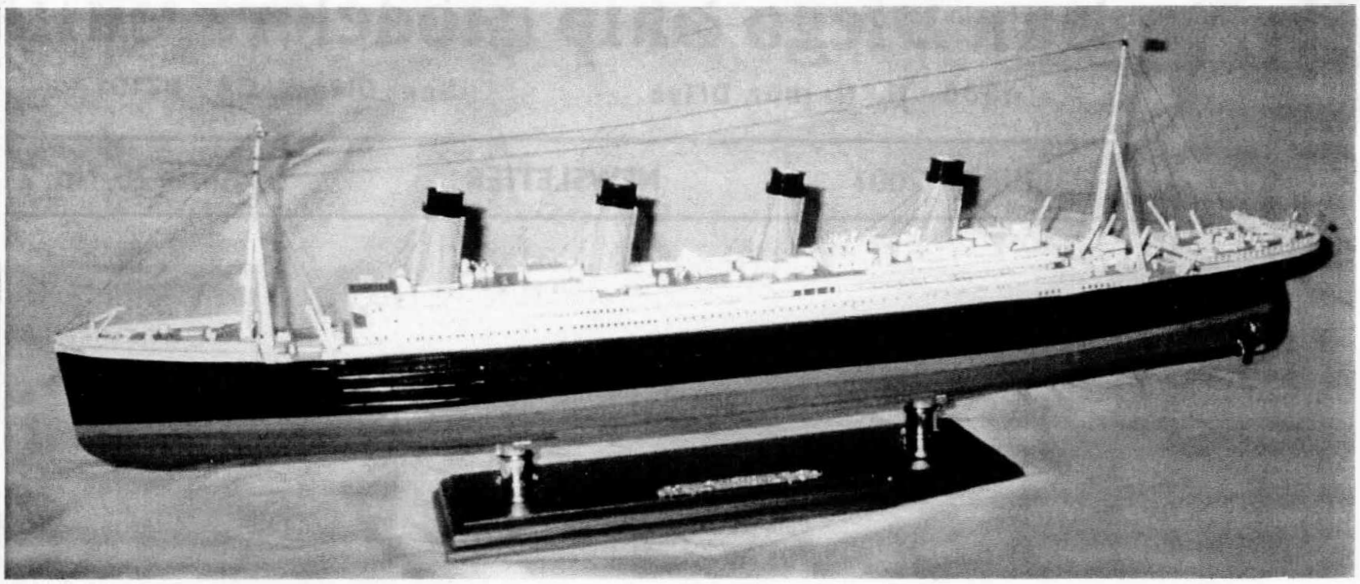
The January meeting took place on a cool rainy evening on the Orlop deck of the Star of India with the picturesque *Hawaiian Chieftain* and the *Lady Washington* docked next to the Berkeley. The striking sight which greeted the guild members as they arrived was an enormous stack of rolled up blueprints donated by **Bob Graham,** in addition to many other goodies he and others brought to benefit the club.

We had a couple of visitors on board, **Daniel Stensrud**, who brought a couple of his models to show and tell. Welcome to **Dale Zehner** who is getting started ship modeling and decided to join up at the end of the meeting.

According to our purser, **Bob McPhail,** we are financially in good shape with a current balance of $/redacted/. The expected membership fees for 2001 should see us through to the end of the year.

All last year's officers were re-nominated for 2001 and there will be an official vote at the next

Missed this one (I SO did Bill Forbis)



To get things right on this model, Jerry Deschenes viewed a video of "Titanic" seven times

meeting. Guild members who will be unable to attend are asked to mail in the voting ballot included on the final page of this issue.

Phil Luther and **Don Bienvenue** astutely noted that although the address page of the newsletter states that the meeting time is at 7:30, we usually start at 7:00 pm, so the editorial staff will alter the meeting times to read "6:30pm social, 7pm meeting."

Does anyone have the directions to build the Latina kit *Harvey*? If so, **K.C. Edwards** needs your help; he just sold the aforementioned kit to a customer who discovered that the box contained the information for the *Bluenose II*.

Robert Hewitt announced that he is organizing the Del Mar Fair sign-up list and all members are invited to get involved. **Ernie Andrew** commented that he recommended the experience as an enjoyable one. The Fair this year will run from June 15 through July 4. In addition to finding volunteers to man the San Diego Ship Modeler's Guild booth, Robert is looking for help setting up the booth. He is hoping to sign up three people for each weekend day.

Bob Graham brought a dozen or so collections of excellent SMA "Ship Modeling Handy Hints" by Don Dressel which sold out for $4 with $1 going to the club and $3 going to recoup the cost of printing.

Bob Crawford made coffee and **Ernie Andrew** brought chocolate chip cookies.

In the interest of minimizing the storage of all the guild's new donations, **Dick Strange** made the excellent suggestion to auction off a few of the blueprints. So, after everyone had a chance to look them over during the coffee break there was an impromptu auction, expertly run by Dick, and some beautiful plans found loving homes for just a song.

The auction brought in $/redacted/ for the Guild and a hysterical moment when after losing **to Ed White** in a bidding war over the blueprints for *La Couronne* (a French Vessel from 1636), **Robert Hewitt** asked Ed if he could "borrow" the plans to photocopy them.

Show and Tell

One of our visitors, **Daniel Stensrud,** started off the show and tell portion of the meeting with his colorful rowboat built from scratch according to the directions found in "How to Build a Rowboat" by Steve Rogers, a book he checked out from the public library. Daniel recounted how he created this little beauty out of pine during a trip to New Orleans, employing razor blades, a little saw and lots of Band-Aids. He used an upside-down drawer as a work bench in his hotel room.

The Guild members passed this rowboat around so that we could each inspect it. In addition to the rowboat, Daniel showed off his balsa *Swampscot Dory* which he admits he is pleased with. This model was also inspired by a book, Gardener's "The Dory Book." Daniel delighted in revealing that the realistic sail actually was the triangular bandage from an old first-aid kit. As further demonstration of his innovative flair, he explained how he slices up sticky-back foam into little disposable paintbrushes which he adheres to his index finger. In fact, the dory was painted this way.

Robert Hewitt brought a colorful photo he took at the Newport News Maritime Museum of a

miniature diorama created by Harold Hahn (see page 1.) The *Sultana* and the *Sir Edward Hawke* are featured in the diorama which inspired Robert to create a model of the *Sir Edward Hawke*.

At the moment he is making a basswood solid hull version but ultimately plans to construct a tiny admiralty style model. The current project, in progress, has a hull which splits in half lengthways and a single keel-kingplank piece which also can be removed. A paper checkerboard floor for the salon was created on the computer, but, the rest of the model is wood. Robert promised to have this one finished for the next meeting and it will be photographed at that time.

He admitted encountering difficulty in trying to bend ebony for the wale and settled for sculpting the entire wale out of a larger piece of ebony, **Bob Graham** suggested using holly wood, which apparently is easier to bend, then staining it with black India ink to look like ebony.

Jerry Deschenes addressed the Guild with a hearty wish for a Happy New Year, then showed us his finished model of the *Titanic*. This model was made from a Japanese kit given to him for free by K.C.Edwards. Jerry's modeling skills were challenged by the fact that the plans and directions for the kit were missing, so he had what amounts to an elaborate 3-D puzzle. In order to figure out what the finished model should look like, Jerry rented a video of "Titanic" and watched it six or seven times. It is amusing that the model looks thoroughly complete despite Jerry's admission that there were lots of left over mystery pieces.

The kit did not require painting and the hull looks really sharp with its three colors. The most difficult part of the model was setting up the funnels (which incidentally, Jerry painted yellow, the only part he did paint).

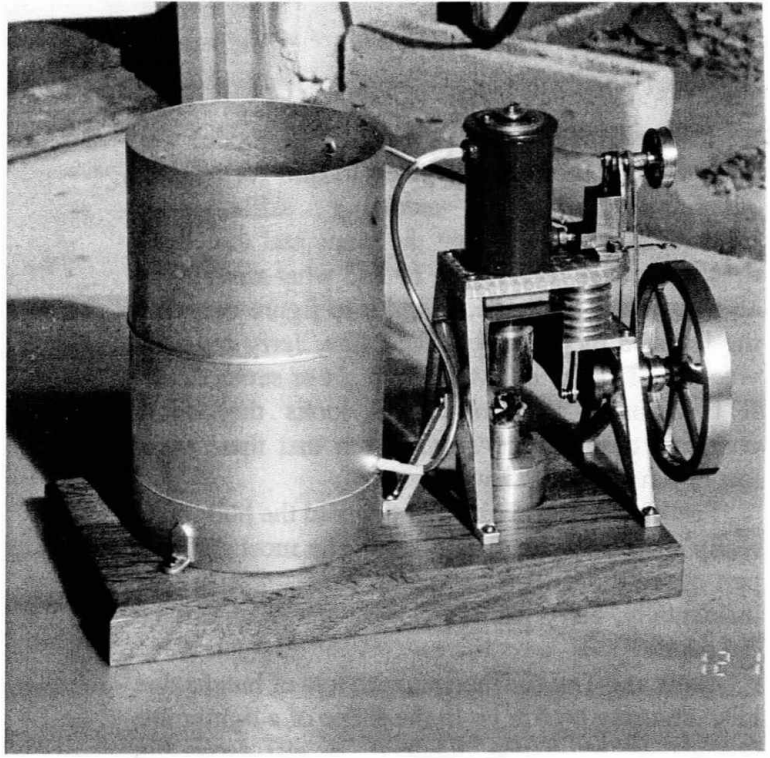
Show and Tell finished up with lots of laughs due to an amusing cookie jar in the shape of a lighthouse brought in by **Ernie Andrew**, a gift from his daughter. It emits a blaring fog horn alarm when ever the jar is opened — making it impossible to sneak any cookies without alerting the household and possibly the neighbors.

After the meeting was closed, the remaining plans were hastily inventoried (see list in this issue) and stored along with several other donated items on a workbench on the Orlop deck, with the permission of **Bob Crawford**. Taken home for safekeeping was an exceptional donation by **Bob Graham**. This precision-tooled drawplate, like many others that Bob creates, would normally sell for $50 and will be raffled off at a future meeting. *—Jacki Jones*

Swampscot Dory and cookie-jar lighthouse

The following plans, donated by **Bob Graham** are available for a donation to the Guild. They were inventoried hastily after the January meeting so there is no detailed information available regarding the plans here. Anyone wishing to learn more can look over the plans at the next meeting or call Jacki Jones (858)581-2376.

Exploratore 1862 Paddlewheel
Viola Whaling Brig
Elsie fishing Schooner
Gjoa Arctic Explorer
Katy of Norfolk
Sovereign of the Seas
(3) San Mateo Galleon Lusci
(2) Galleon Espanol 1607 Lusci
Endeavour Mantua
Galeonew Veneto
San Felipe
Flying Fish
Berlin 1675
74
Aeropiccola Indiscret
1696 German Ship
Grand Bank Schooner
Yacht Mary
La Couronne French Vessel 1636
Monitor
Newsboy (Bark)
Gertrude L.Thebaub Bank Fisherman1929



Great Demo Coming Up

The model engine pictured above might remind you of a steam engine but in fact it's something quite different. It's a "Stirling engine" (to use the name of its inventor) or "hot air engine" (to roughly describe how it works}.

Several of these engines and a number of other small steam and gasoline engines will be demonstrated at the Guild meeting on Feb. 14 by their ingenious builder, Art Howarth of San Diego, who retired after a career in the Air Force and Navy and turned himself into a skilled miniature-making machinist.

The Stirling engine (invented by the Rev. Robert Stirling of the Church of Scotland in 1816) works by the simple application of heat from any source, including the sun. Its essential structure is like that of a reciprocating steam engine—a cylinder, a piston and a crankshaft.

The heat makes a "pocket" of air in the cylinder expand and push the piston to turn the crank. The same pocket of air is then quickly cooled, causing it to contract, become a partial vacuum and pull the piston back to its original position.

That may sound baffling or even impossible, but in practice, using another cylinder and piston, the pocket of air can be heated, cooled and exchanged so rapidly that a Stirling engine can develop nearly 1,000 rpm. Note that the pocket of air is totally enclosed, not taken from or expelled into the surrounding air.

Art will explain everything, and bring two books that tell how to build Stirling models. His workshop, the garage of his house in Allied Gardens, displays dozens of other small engines he has built, plus his 12" by 36" Enco gear lathe and his muscular Grizzly press/milling machine.

Art was brought up on a farm in Kansas, where he got used to working with his hands. He piloted bombers in the late '40s, once walking away from a B-29 crash. Moving as a civilian into electronics and communication, he served for many years with the Navy in Hawaii and here.

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To enlighten members who may be interested in building resin models, which is the subject of articles in last month's issue and this one, **Fred Fraas** will bring the resin model of a destroyer that he is working on.

He will also bring eight copies of the wonderful videotape, made by Maritime Museum docent John Johnson, showing museum models and Guild activities such as the 1999 Nautical Research Guild exhibition. They will be on sale for $10, the proceeds going to the museum.

(Fred also pointed out that when we said in the January issue that the $70 take from the December raffle was divided 80% for the club and 20% for the winner, we got it just exactly backwards. The club got $14 and the winner, Dick Strange, got $56. Remember that next time you buy a raffle ticket.)

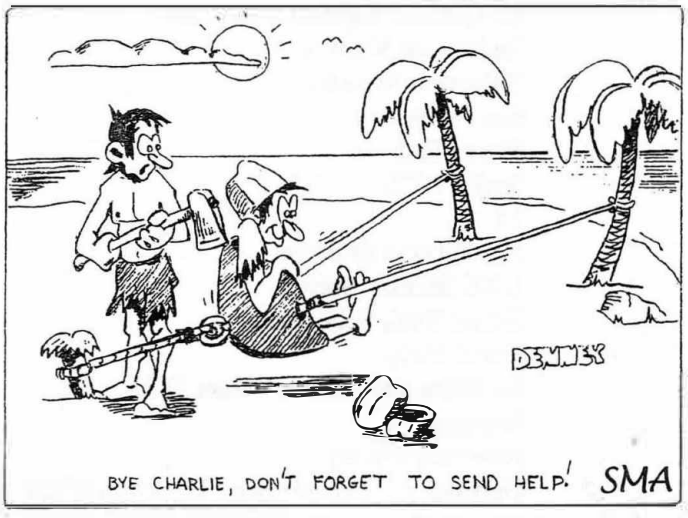
Dues are due, and even overdue. You can bring $20 to the next meeting, or send a check to Purser Bob McPhail at

/redacted/

February

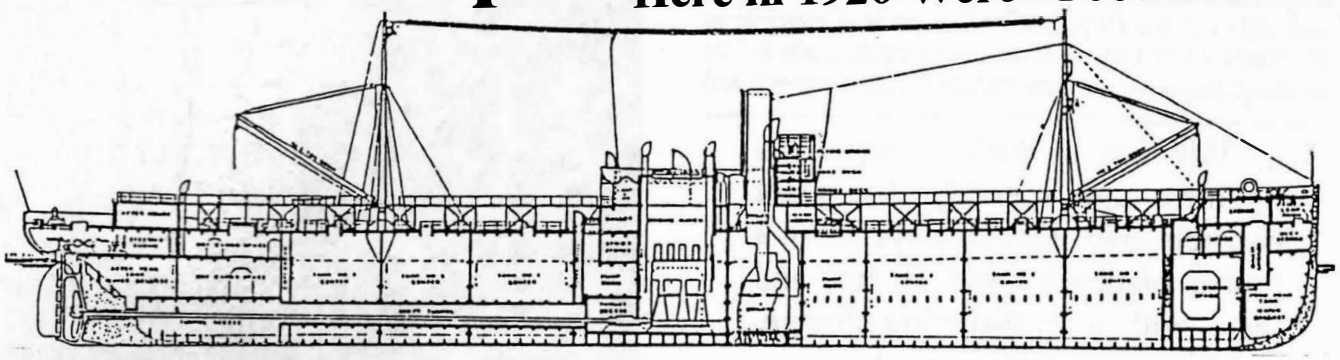
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

Next Meeting



At deadline the Newsletter learned with sorrow of the death of Robert Hewitt's mother in Buffalo, N.Y., where Robert went the next day. His fellow Guild members extend to Robert their heartfelt condolences.

Concrete Ships? They Sound Clunky, But Two Built Here in 1920 Were 'Good Sea Boats'



Cuyamaca and *San Pasqual* were "three-islanders," with a profile resembling the steel Hog Islander freighters of the same period.

***Robert Eberhardt**, a degreed public historian, oceanographer and longtime member of the San Diego Ship Modelers Guild, has given this newsletter a copy of his article, "Concrete Shipbuilding in San Diego," published in the "Journal of San Diego History" in Spring 1995. It's far too long to reprint here, but Bob agreed to let the newsletter have a shot at summarizing this fascinating tale.*

Not too many San Diegans know that their city holds an important place in the history of the seemingly impossible task of building large cargo ships out of reinforced concrete. Essentially, it's the story of two steamers, the *Cuyamaca* and the *San Pasqual*, launched here in June 1920, with stress on the *Cuyamaca*.

At 7,500 tons, the ships were the biggest-to-that-time culmination of the short world history of concrete vessels *(see box)*. "They were meant to become part of the 'bridge of ships' that would carry supplies and soldiers to Europe" in World War I, writes Eberhardt. The closest predecessor of the type was the 300-foot *Faith*, launched at Redwood City in March 1918.

The American need for new ships in 1917 was seen as so desperate that the new United States Shipping Board set a goal of 1,200 ships in 1918. That goal rationalized the choice of concrete construction, though many objections were raised (would salt water or engine vibration damage concrete hulls? would torpedoes pulverize them?) Given the shortage of steel and shipbuilding timber compared with the abundance of cheap sand, lime and gravel, the U.S.S.B. deemed it vital to experiment with concrete.

The Emergency Fleet Corporation let its San Diego contract on June 3, 1918 for two 7,500-ton concrete cargo ships—soon changed to "tankers." (Six other concrete ships would be built in Mobile, Oakland, Jacksonville and Wilmington, N.C.). "The city had never seen an engineering project of such magnitude," writes Eberhardt.

The war ended on Nov. 11, 1918, but the project proceeded apace. As the site for a new shipyard, the San Diego Common Council leased 99 acres of land and water at the harbor end of 32nd Street. Soon the site had machine and foundry shops, bending and shearing sheds, cement and chandlery storage, a mold loft and a restaurant.

"The tankers discussed here can be likened to a 50-story watertight building lying on its side in deep water," says Eberhardt. "The basic configuration of any ship . . . is that of a box, pointed at one end and rounded at the other. A cover is placed on the top with hatches and ladder at intervals to provide access."

The process of casting a concrete ship, which began on May 28, 1919, was just what you'd expect, something akin to casting an iron cooking pot. The enormous mold (the ship was 435 feet long} consisted of Oregon pine forms, rigid but relatively light because the ship's sides were only 4" thick. (The bottom was 5" and the decks only 3"). The lumber used measured 1,200,000 board feet.

Inside the form was an "embedded net" of carbon steel reinforcing bars on 4" centers, which had been snaked in after the form was finished—a tricky job involving extremely accurate measurement and precise bending. The rebars weighed 1,500 tons in all, somewhat undercutting the basic argument for the concrete ship.

A scaffold across the top supported a centerline dolly

CHRONOLOGY

1849	Concrete skiff made in France.
1859	Concrete barges launched in Netherlands for canal use.
1909	Freighter barge put in service from Frankfort-am- Main.
7 Sep 1916	Congress creates U. S. Shipping Board.
Feb 1917	Staff assembled for concrete ship design.
20 Apr 1917	USSB contracts for first concrete ship.
2 Aug 1917	*Namsenfiord*, first sea-going freighter, launched.
1 Jan 1918	Concrete Ship Section established.
18 Mar 1918	*Faith* launched.
3 Jun 1918	USSB contracts with Scofield Engineering Company, Philadelphia, to build ship-yard, channel, and vessels in San Diego.
12 Jul 1918	Common Council cedes land to USSB.
28 May 1919	First concrete poured in San Diego.
12 Jun 1920	*Cuyamaca* launched.
28 Jun 1920	*San Pasqual* launched.
15 Feb 1921	USSB yard transferred to Navy Department.
12 Apr 1921	Concrete Ship Program canceled. (In World War II, concrete barges and small naval oil tankers were built in National City. The record does not indicate whether the technology of the earlier building program was utilized.)

with a hopper that was filled with wet concrete from bottom-dump buckets lifted by a crane. Moving fore and aft on rails, the dolly deposited its load through chutes on each side into the form, 2,800 cubic yards of concrete in all. The mix was 1-to-2 cement-to-aggregate, made lighter by using exceptionally fine-ground Portland cement and

> "Moving with wondrous lightness and speedily, the giant concrete ship slid sideways down a timber platform about 25 feet and then, with a soul-stirring plunge, met the water of the bay."

adding some clay slurry. Rather than tamping the concrete, the crews employed air hammers to generate vibration.

The stern was fitted with a massive iron casting to accommodate the drive shaft, propeller and rudder. To save time, the 1,750-hp triple-expansion steam engine was installed before *Cuyamaca*'s launch. The decks above the bridge deck, and the deckhouses, were built of wood.

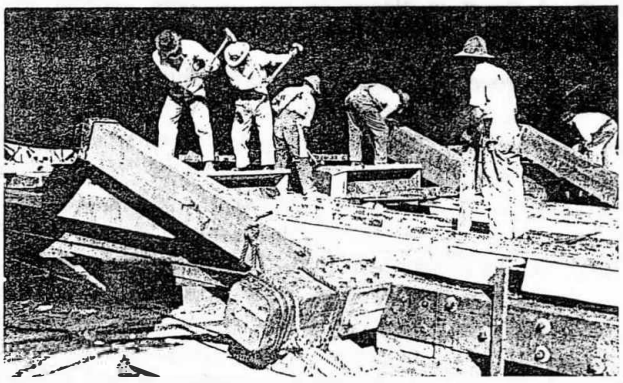
The ship was to be side-launched rather than end-launched as was the custom. "Stresses are believed to be kinder to the hull when launch is to the side," says Eberhardt. That meant that she was resting in a vertical position on wooden blocks set on a platform that slanted at about ¾" to the foot toward the basin.

The next step was to remove the blocks.

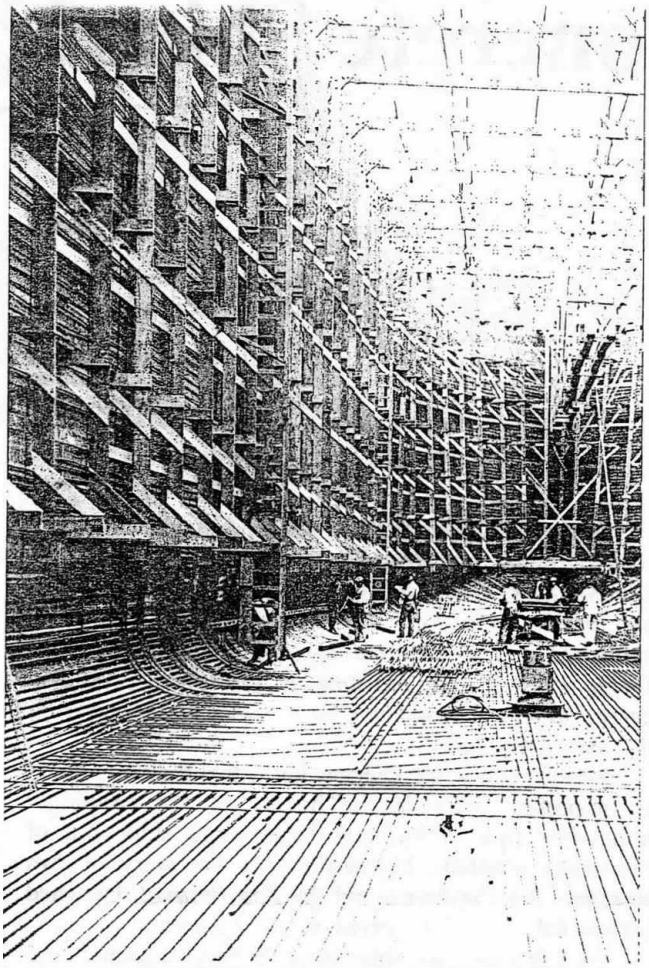
"The ship could not move as blocking was removed because 'dog shores' and 'launch keys' (release devices) were placed at intervals from bow to stern," Eberhardt writes. "These contrivances were set fast and controlled by manila lines anchored to deadmen anchored inboard of the ways.

"On command of the launch master, the lines were simultaneously severed with a broad axe, the dog shores kicked, and the released hull slid down the ways.

Moving with wondrous lightness and speedily, the giant concrete ship slid sideways down a timber platform about 25 feet and then, with a soul-stirring plunge, met the water of the bay *(wrote the San Diego Sun)*.



The diagonal timbers are "dog shores" that keep the massive hull from sliding into the basin until launch time.



Workers snake reinforcing bars into the wooden forms of the future tanker. Sides are 4" thick.

"Always an awesome sight," Eberhardt comments. The ship heeled as much as 21 degrees from the vertical when she hit the water, making an enormous splash. Steaming trials held early in July demonstrated that she could steam at 10.5 knots without interruption for eight hours.

Many shipping experts had worried that concrete ships might roll dangerously in heavy weather, but in practice the rolling only seemed slower and more ponderous. In the end the consensus was that they were "good sea boats."

Cuyamaca went into the oil trade and piled up a respectable career that wound up in 1927. "The record thereafter is murky," Eberhardt reports. "*Cuyamaca* may have ended either as part of a breakwater in British Columbia or a hulk in New Orleans, and *San Pasqual* is believed to have become a coal barge in San Francisco Bay. There is no clear evidence." The shipyard where the two were built became a Navy Fleet Destroyer Repair Base.

BUILDING RESIN SHIP MODELS (2)

Getting started — assembling the proper tools

By Charlie Parker

Washington Ship Model Society

Before you start on your first resin-hull ship model, you will need to assemble a proper tool kit. Undoubtedly, you'll need several new tools, including some you can buy and some you will have to make. Here's a representative list:

A. Knives and saws:

(a.) X-acto knives with #11 blades, lots of them!
(b.) Chisel point blades in several sizes.
(c.) Saw blade and a large size razor saw.
(d.) Single edge razor blades.
(e.) Glass or metal cutting block.
(f.) Several good shears, scissors.

B. Files and sandpapers:

(a.) Needle files.
(b.) 100, 400, 600, 1200 grit wet and dry sandpaper.
(c.) Assorted sanding blocks (drawing in Part 1).

C. Pliers, nippers, and tweezers:

(a.) Tweezers in assorted shapes.
(b.) A good, small nipper.
(c.) Needle nose, flat blade and round blade pliers.
(d.) Regular pliers.

D. Clamps and tape:

(a.) Assorted small and large size clamps (metal screw).
(b.) Masking tape, scotch tape to hold parts together.
(c.) Low-tack painting tape.
(d.) A small vise.

E. Rulers, dividers:

(a.) Murphy rules for ship scales. You can make hand made ones.
(b.) Metal rulers. Curves, squares and circles.
(c.) Drafting tools—dividers, compass.

F. Drills and drill bits:

(a.) Small hand held drill; adjustable/changeable chucks.
(b.) Assorted drill bits.

G. Glues, putty and fillers:

(a.) White glue.
(b.) Super glue, several viscosities and accelerator.
(c.) Auto body putty, green stuff, Milliput, Evercoat glaze coat #417

H. Solvents, paint:

(a.) Good quality model paint and primer. (You may have to use the latter with some resins.)

(b) Acetone, lacquer thinner, Dio-Sol solvent, methyl ethyl ketone, denatured alcohol, decal set.

I. Paint Brushes:

(a) A good selection of high quality brushes.

(b) A good airbrush and compressor. Don't be cheap here; if yo shell out the money for a good heavy duty compressor ($100-200), it will last a lifetime.

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J. Power tools:

(a) Dremel drill (an essential modeling tool) with assorted bits, drills, grinders, cutters and polishers.
(b) Disk and belt sander.
(c) Drill press.
(d) Band saw.

Building the kit

Lets get set up to build the kit. I know real men don't need instructions, but open the box and read the instructions anyway. If there is a parts list, check it to make sure everything is included. If there is no list, go through the assembly sequence to determine if all the parts are provided. If something is missing, don't start the kit until you have contacted the manufacturer to get the missing or damaged parts. Some manufacturers are easy to deal with others are not!

Look at the steps recommended for assembling the kit and divide the kit up to follow those steps. Small divided plastic boxes are great for separating parts and keeping them safe. Also, think about what you want the finished model to look like, and think ahead to include new steps in the assembly sequence. How to rig the model, for example, may not be covered in the assembly steps of the instructions. Because of this you may need to plan to bore holes or adjust or add scratch-built fittings to install the rigging the way you want it to be.

You will also need to mount your hull to work on it. Some modelers don't do this, but it will make construction much easier and you are less likely to damage work you have completed if your hull is on a solid base.

Working with resin

Fixing warped and bent parts: Heat affects resin. Resin parts can be heated and will become soft and pliable so they can be bent and shaped. The size of the part determines the amount of heat required. Small hulls, 10 inches and less, can be heated in an oven for 2-5 minutes at 350-400 degrees F and will become very flexible. Larger pieces take longer, 5-10 minutes. They will discolor (no problem) and/or burn (problem). It is also better to use an electric oven versus gas. *Do not use a microwave; some resins are metal-based.* Also, remember you will need gloves to handle hot parts.

To straighten hulls, you need to heat them on a flat surface and build a mold to hold them in the shape you want to achieve when they cool. They will significantly expand when heated, and you must take this into consideration when

building a mold.

Another way of fixing bent or warped hulls is the cut-and-fill method. You may have to cut a hull into several parts to fix bends and warps, and you may also have to use screws to hold the hull when joining it to the upper part of the ship. Hulls can also be split to fix fit problems in berth. Some small parts can be fixed in a similar manner. As an example, a bent gun tub can be heated and then bent back into the proper shape. Thin pieces of resin such as gun tubs or shielding that have broken off can be reattached with super glue. Parts such as masts, gun tubes and the like generally are not easy to fix by the heating and bending method and usually require rebuilding in another medium (brass, wood, or plastic).

Gluing parts together

The following are some basic rules to follow on gluing. Remember you are working with a model made of several very dissimilar materials. They expand and contract at different rates and this will affect the types of glues you want to use.

1. Hulls need to be glued with super glues (ACC), or epoxies. Screws and pins can also be used to set and strengthen hull joints and ensure alignment.

2. Resin-to-resin parts are best glued with super glues or epoxy. Depending on the time needed to fit the part, different viscosity super glues or epoxy can be used. To increase the speed of the setting, you can use an accelerator. Pinning parts can help achieve a proper fit and strength.

3. Super glue or epoxy should also be used for attaching white metal or brass to resin or other metal parts.

4. Brass to brass parts can be super glued or soldered.

5. Photo-etched parts can be attached with super glue, epoxy, or white glue to resin or white metal, but super glue seems to works best with other brass parts. Photo-etched parts can also be attached with clear gloss paint as a binder.

6. Rigging wire (metal, brass, steel etc.) needs to be attached with super glue; paper with white glue or clear gloss or super glue; monofilament, silk thread, thread with super glue or white glue; plastic with super glue or white glue.

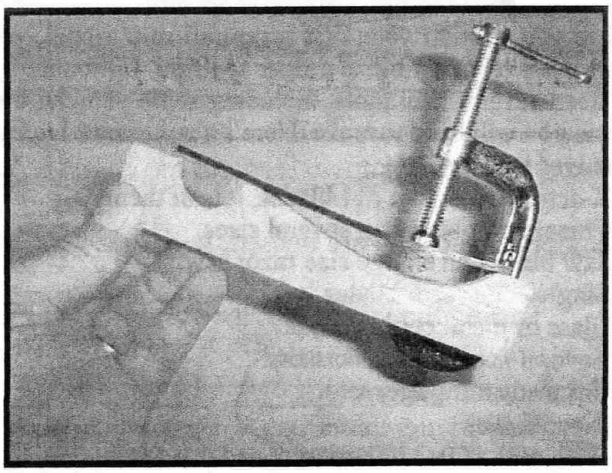
Sanding and filling

Resin is like wood, it may require a great deal of sanding and filling to get a good fit and finish. You need to become a master sander to build really great resin models. First take your time and, when doing detail work and finishing, stick to hand sanding. Grinders and power sanders are great for removing large and small pours, but they can make a mess or destroy a part really fast.

Don't be afraid to sand. Practice on an old plastic kit or piece of wood and learn how different grits will cut and polish. Also learn how to get a glass-smooth finish by wet sanding.

(Editor's note: Part three of this article will continue on the topic of finishing the hull.)

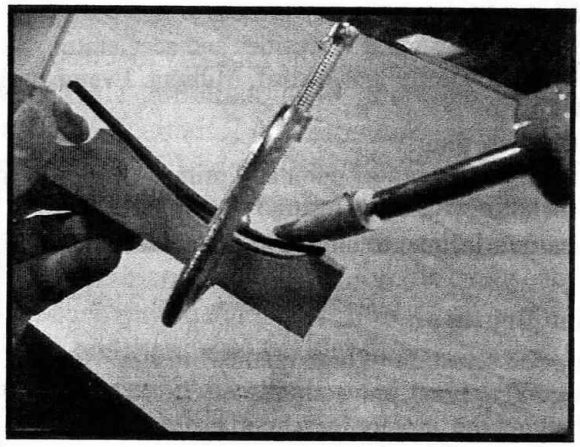
A Neat Trick for Bending Planking by Heat Alone



These pictures, from "Scuttlebutt, the official newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Shipwrights," show how John Rose uses simple heat from a soldering iron to bend wood, in this case ebony planking at the bow and stern of his model.

The bending jig is sawed approximately to the curve of one of the planks. The C-clamp applies a little pressure, then the soldering iron heats the wood. When the wood gives and the C-clamp loosens, it is moved along the curve and tightened a few turns. A little at a time, the plank takes the shape of the jig. "The trick is to find just the right amount of time to heat the plank to get a slight bend and not a crease," writes Rose in a long article full of details.

But doesn't wood have to be steamed, or at least moistened with hot water, to be bent? "I have bent planks that were presoaked in water and ones that are dry," says Rose. "The wet planks will bend a little quicker but the dry planks bend a little smoother."



Sea Sleuth

By Capt. Al A. Adams

The voice on the phone . . . it was Dr. John L. Johnson,. Soft-spoken and to the point.

"My boat has been stolen from the marina at Newport. Will you charter a plane and find it? It has been ten days since I was on board."

"Howdy John, I am on my way to John Wayne Airport. Will you call the charter service there and schedule a flight? Over and out."

This kind of assignment is interesting. It can draw upon a wide range of potentials. Who?, What? and also Where? Where would the perpetrator go with a 40-foot sloop? Why? and How? often come into the equation. Can they sail? Will they head for Mexico? The open sea? Or go north? Moss Landing, above Monterey, was the hideout destination for two previous yacht thefts I had worked on. The open sea has been usual. Several were destined for Mexico, and there abandoned in secluded coves.

Some perpetrators try to hide the vessel behind a quick coat of paint, as was done by the convicted Buck Duane Walker, now serving a life sentence in prison. That occurred out in Mid Pacific at the uninhabited little island of Palmyra. It was after the commission of the robbery of the fine San Diego yacht *Sea Wind* from Palmyra, the murder of its owners, Malcolm and Eleanor Graham, and the unintentional sinking of Walker's own disreputable boat.

In that case the name of the *Sea Wind* had been changed. The boat was with a new paint job and a new crew. Buck Walker and Jennifer Stearns, being either naïve or bold, sailed the yacht back some 1,200 miles and, in broad daylight, into the port of Honolulu. It was from there that the Grahams had departed only months before.

Guild Member Capt. Adams is the author of "Hay Culebra! No Te Muevas!," the story of a yacht with a broken tiller in a howling storm that appeared in the November issue of this Newsletter. He has many more yarns up his sleeve and we will print them from time to time.

I was close to that occurrence, having sailed to Palmyra from Fiji, and was on assignment in Hawaii when the Coast Guard cutter closed in and took Jennifer under arrest. Walker was caught later, for he had swum under the Alawai Basin docks to hide. I had worked with the designer, Hugh M. Angleman, and the builders of the Grahams' *Sea Wind.*

While on the island of Palmyra I had seen the aluminum receptacle left by the U.S. Navy that later held the remains of Eleanor Graham. (For the full story of this murder mystery see the book "And the Sea Will Tell" by Vincent Bugliosi.)

On assignments such as the one for Dr. Johnson, an assistant often proves to be valuable. A person of good sea sense, observer-compiler of details and a good sailor; who better than my wife Dianne?

At the airport, the pilot and plane were ready on the tarmac. The weather was clear. The pilot was briefed as we boarded. A 40-foot Cal 40 sloop with a black hull and mast had been discovered missing from its slip. A definite time frame was not known, but it was within a ten-day span.

As for our search plan and course, I asked the pilot to fly three circular patterns out over the Catalina Channel, each circle with a radius of five miles, to arrive over the east end of Catalina. Then circle to starboard and cover the island's weather side at 500 feet above the water to the west end. Then follow the same altitude over the island's lee side back to the East end.

He understood. With three pairs of eyes and binoculars, we scanned the island's 20-plus miles of width and covered at least 8 miles from east to west while scanning the sea from the mainland to Catalina. At the east end of the island, the pilot finished his third big circle and dropped to 500 feet to fly close over the island's coves to Little Harbor and the Twin Harbors at the Isthmus.

On around the west end the throttle was eased as we looked into all the island's lee side coves, back toward Avalon. There she was, that shining black hull, North of the Casino, riding at her anchor.

I asked the pilot to fly to the Catalina Airport. We would disembark and let him return to John Wayne Airport.

Dianne and I took a taxi from the airport to Avalon, to the Captain of the Port office on the pier. After briefing the Captain, we took a shore boat to the yacht. The sliding hatch lock had been broken. A quick look through and we returned to the Captain's office.

I called Dr. Johnson to report and asked him to talk to the Captain by phone and give him permission to release the boat to me. He did so. The Captain then revealed that four fellows had come ashore from the Cal 40 with a pad of Dr. Johnson.'s checks. They peddled the boat gear and possessions. Locals became suspicious and reported to the police. The Captain told us that the four had just been

arrested and were in the Avalon jail. The puzzle was now all in place.

The Captain released the boat to me and went to the boat to inspect it. Having sailed and raced with Dr. Johnson, I was aware of the boat's complement and equipment. The compass was missing. No doubt a weekend yachtsman now owned a fine spherical compass and probably was wearing Dr. Johnson's yachting cap that had been peddled. Other items were gone, but I was curious.

I raised the main sail cover and found the sail to be well and neatly furled and gasketed as was the John's habit. The culprits probably couldn't sail, so I opened the engine compartment and checked the engine's oil dip-stick. Unbelievable. The drop of oil on the very tip of the stick was not quite the size of the smallest split pea. They had powered around for perhaps eight or ten days and had come that close to ruining the diesel engine.

It was late afternoon and fog was setting in. I hailed a shore boat and went to the gas dock to purchase eight quarts of crankcase oil. Oil in the engine, I then found the diesel tank with two gallons of fuel. Up went the sails and the anchor. Dianne and I sailed into a 10-knot wind and guided Dr. Johnson's great Cal 40 back to Newport without her compass. We tied up in her home slip at Newport—mission accomplished for Dr. Johnson.

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An odd occurrence was when a client asked me the exact opposite of the request by Dr. Johnson.

A well-known and successful person who knew how much I like adventure called and set up an appointment. Much double-talk before the message was revealed. He wanted me to steal a sizable, expensive sailing yacht and deliver it to a distant and little-traveled location in the world. I stopped him in the middle of that sentence and told him—*wrong number!* I like to sail free and clear. Thanks for your trust!

Sea Wind at Palmyra

CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH

Sailing on Board the S.S. Mauretania

From the diary of Helene Heller (1931)

My great aunt and uncle, Helene Heller (a singer) and George Riley (a comedian and singer), were vaudeville stars in New York City. Throughout their lives they sailed on passenger ships all over the world even travelling to Europe during the second world war to entertain US troops. Aunt "TeTe" kept detailed journals of all of their voyages. On this particular voyage they were engaged to entertain the passengers after dinner on a trip from New York to Curaçao, Caracas, Havana, and back to New York. *Jacki Jones*

On Board the Mauretania Nov. 21, 1931 Saturday

Up at 8 and breakfast at 9. What a glorious day - Looks like it will be plenty hot! Native boys in loincloths, practically, diving for coins. Machines waiting to carry us to Willemstad- a dusty ride through country very similar to Mexico still having that foreign look about everything. Goats galore. What a funny little town. The houses for the most part are stucco and such vivid coloring. With pink and yellow predominating. A sort of canal is lined with small sailing vessels spread with dried goat, fish, vegetables and fruit for sale. A peculiar people these. A combination of Negro, Spaniard and Dutch. Yes and even Chinese. This is really different.

The ship is out aways in the harbor as it draws so much water and the harbor is shallow so we go to land in launches and note how clear and blue is the water, being able to see the bottom of the sea.

As I said before we went to Willemstad by auto. Once arrived everyone hastens to the funny shops to buy, especially French perfumes which coming in duty and tax free are ridiculously cheap. A few prices are quoted such as:

	N.Y.	Curaçao
Caron's Sweet Pea	$25.00	$12.00
Xmas Nite	$24.50	$10.00
Guerlains Shalimar	$25.00	$7.50
L'Heure Bleu	$15.00	$4.25
Lannin My Sin	$10.00	$2.50

Believe me, it's a mad scramble but worth it. Other articles are cheap too, even tho their price has been boosted for the arrival of a ship, which is a gala affair. But after all, perfume and liquor has the play.

Then a tour of the various bars. The Mauretania crowd are hilarious. Such singing and dancing and general high jinks—finally for some unknown reason we all become patriotic and must arise and sing the Star Spangled Banner, followed by more fun.

All the bars are alike, a few tables and chairs and a Negro orchestra of four or five loud pieces. Drinks cost a quarter and up depending on the order. Beer 25 cents a pint. I've already drank barrels of it just to be a sport. Tho I do enjoy a good cocktail and have one often on board my favorite Alexander cocktail costs 31cents. Would cost a dollar in N.Y. and who knows what you get??

We go ashore with dollar bills as you get all foreign money in change and no one knows how much one is gypped in so doing. Consequently a dollar at a time and you are fairly safe!The native kids swim naked.Am I blushing?

The streets are no more than alleys composed of squalid shops and hovels for homes. Imagine seeing a synagogue in Curaçao? We nearly died.

If taken seriously it is depressing for the people seem to just barely exist. Their clothing apears to be Mrs. Jones' castoffs if any and tho the outside of some homes appear decent enough with their pink paint and tile roof. Inside it is a matter of a few bare rooms, no floor covering and dilapidated chairs - of course some homes in the nice section really are lovely and must be more than comfortable inside but I'm speaking of the more or less lowly natives who are after all in the majority.

We have forgotten to eat lunch! Or was I stalling

it off feeling contempt or fear or doubt or what have you, for the native dining rooms. Especially after seeing the markets and what consists of Curaçao food stuffs?

And so we shove off at 5pm. A grand sunset - the skies aflame and we slip out of the harbor to cruise slowly on to Caracas, Venezuela. After dinner, to a movie, some bridge and to bed. Oh yes, we bought a bottle of Curaçao liqueur - 55 cents a thick red drink, sweet and stingy! No like much. Must be swell. I'm wrong - Also bought a bottle of Blackberry Brandy $2.00 and marvelous!

Nov.22 Sunday

Up at 7, breakfast at 8. Out on deck for a glorious sight quite unlike anything we've ever seen before. La Guaira lying off the starboard side. It appears to be a Mountain shooting up out of bluer that blue waters. The sun is shining brightly and the coloring of the picture is almost indescribable-

Waves lashing a smooth beach, banana, date and coconut palms, magnolia trees, bougainvillea, red tiled, white and brown buildings all melt into the soft green background of the mountain with a fort overhead.We put to shore in launches and then into waiting machines at La Guaira for a 25 mile drive over the Andes to Caracas.

Nothing much in La Guaira just a small settlement but so picturesque. The long upgrade drive thru the mts is wonderful - The roads are excellent. Climbing higher ever second and never saw so may curves- Our ship can be seen in the harbor. It looks like a peanut.

I know of nothing with which to compare the Andes. They are unlike any mts I've ever seen tho its hard to tell just why- Perhaps that's partially due to the fact that while our mts for the most part are heavily wooded, these are covered mostly with low rambling bushes of an exquisite green- Then there are great ranges of red adobe, then solid rock of various colors. But the green predominates- up we climb 4000 ft. The roadway seems ever on the edge of great canyons below. They are very steep too- No gradual drop. Just over and down! We drop 1000 feet and behold! We are in Caracas- As different from Curaçao as day and nite.

The town still is high up in the mts and is quite hilly. The streets are very narrow with high curbs and narrow walks. The houses are mostly low rambling buildings that seem to go on for ever. They all seem stuck together- The Federal Palace and National Theatre are really very lovely buildings as is the Hotel Majestic.

Being very tropical, morals are very low and girls stand in doorways openly beckoning and calling to men. Walked down two such streets. One door after the other, wide open revealing a very much dolled up bedroom with its mistress either in the doorway or the window. That there were three of us girls with as many men made little or no difference to these creatures. Found a German place for marvelous beer and lunch and then it had to rain. But we didn't seem to mind. It was so lovely. Where Curaçao was picturesque in a squalid manner, Caracas is picturesque in a very romantic manner.

We returned to la Guaira by train and such a funny one too. A little stubby pushed in engine, narrow cars with hard seats and low narrow windows with little wooden awnings to keep stones from bouncing in on you from off the mtside. Consequently you have to crouch way down in your seat in order to see out.

A beautiful trip back- Almost as lovely as by auto- mostly the same view from a different angle. It's a dangerous trip too, the tracks being so dangerously near the edge. Done purposely I'm sure to scare one to death. We see a Leper Colony from the train.

After dinner we go to movie and stroll the deck. All during the evening we could see little twinkly lights of distant Islands. We retraced a bit of the journey and passed on the other side of Curaçao.

Nov 23 Monday

Up at 11 and a light breakfast in our room. Then in our bathing suits and up on deck all day. It was glorious and are we all sun burnt? Imagine how jealous of us every one will be when we return to N.Y.? A sun burn in Dec!

Had buffet luncheon served up on deck. Just had my bath and it is 6-o-clock so I'll rest for an hour before dressing for dinner .

This was Country Fair nite and I really was looking forward to it but at dinner one of the stewards came over and asked us if we would entertain for the crew downstairs in their own quarters. And of course we said yes. They have their own bar and recreation room. About five of us went down and entertained for an hour. I wouldn't have missed it for the world. What an appreciative crowd of fellows. They ate all we did up. They just loved George and we were the hit of the evening. I shall be happy to do it again.

Then we came back up on B deck and danced a bit-some of our gang got together and as we had missed all the Country Fair doings we sneaked off into one of the lounge's and got around the piano and quietly sang. Had lots of fun and enjoyed the entire evening in a quiet way.

Now to bed. We arrive at Colón early tomorrow.

The sea has been just as calm and smooth as glass ever since our one bad day. We are however promised a rough day after we leave Havana, I've got my fingers crossed.

To be continued....

ANNOUNCEMENT

Member Directory to be Printed

A Member Directory for the San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild is in the works for April. This directory will take the shape of a 4"x 5 1/2"booklet and will contain the names, addresses, phone numbers as well as e-mail addresses of the Guild members.

Bob McPhail will provide the required data from his roster list. Please notify him if your address or telephone number has changed. If you have an e-mail address and would like it to be included in the directory please contact Jacki Jones at biochick@pacbell.net. The distribution of the directory will be limited to Guild members and anyone who would prefer not to be included need only notify us.

Any guild members wishing to sponsor the directory or advertise their business or services in the little book, should please send a business card and a donation (a check made out for $10 to the "San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild") to Jacki Jones at the same address as below for the San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild.

Ballot for the Election of the Guild Officers

San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild members who will not be attending the February meeting are requested to mark (no punching required) and send in this ballot:

Yes	No	Nominee	Office
☐	☐	Jacki Jones	Guildmaster
☐	☐	K.C. Edwards	First Mate
☐	☐	Bob McPhail	Purser

Please mail to:

Bob McPhail
c/o San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild
San Diego Maritime Museum
1306 N. Harbor Drive
San Diego CA 92101

Titanic Talk page 3

Ernie Andrew's
Lighthouse
Cookie Jar
page 2

80 Years Ago, Two 7500
Ton Ships Made of Sand,
Cement and Gravel Were
Launched in San Diego -
Did They Float?
Page 5

Fred Fraas

San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild
1306 N. Harbor Drive San Diego CA 92101

SAN DIEGO SHIP MODELERS' GUILD

Officers for 2001

Guild Master	Jacki Jones	/FaJactFar/
First Mate	K.C. Edwards	/FaJactFar/
Purser	Bob McPhail	/FaJactFar/
Newsletter Editors	Bill Forbis	/FaJactFar/
	Fred Fraas	/FaJactFar/

Founded in 1971 by Bob Wright and the late Russ Merrill

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Meetings

Second Wednesday of every month.
6:30 p.m. social, 7 p.m. meeting
held on board the ferryboat
BERKELEY.

MEMBERSHIP

Dues are $20 annually ($10 after July1).

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