



SAN DIEGO SHIP MODELERS' GUILD 1

MARCH 2009

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XXXIII No. 3

GUILD MEETING REPORT 11 FEBRUARY 2009

Bill Grolz opened the meeting. A new member, Sam Giovinazzi, was introduced. The editor of the newsletter, Katherine Pogue indicated that some emails are "undeliverable". She asked individuals who did not get a newsletter should send her an email. Emails should be sent to <redacted>.

The pursers report was read by Ron Hollod. The balance as of 31 January 2009 was \$<redacted>. Ron mentioned that yearly dues are now being collected (\$20.00 per year or \$27.00 if you also want a nametag). Ron requested that dues be paid no later than the March meeting.

Kevin Seehan of the San Diego Maritime Museum presented a banner for the modeler's guild. Kevin mentioned that Bob Crawford is organizing a showing of miniature ship models. This will be similar to the exhibit done a few years ago. Dates of the exhibit are September 7, 2009 thru May 31, 2010. Some thirty models have been identified including ones by Lloyd McCaffery. There will be no ships in bottles.

A judge has been identified for the ship model competition at the San Diego County Fair this year. It will be Dr. Ray Ashley.

The San Diego County Fair was discussed. The fair will be open Friday, June 12 and close Sunday, July 5. Hours will be 1100 – 1800 for booth staffing. The fair will also open at 1100. If you are interested in submitting a model for the fair, the submission date of the application is no later than May 1. Also, if you are working several days at the fair, contact Bill Grolz for information about special badging.

Bob McPhail briefly discussed the SAN SALVADOR Project. The cases for the models should be completed soon.

Nominations for the Guild leadership are now open. Nominations include: Guidmaster – Bill Grolz, First Mate – Chuck Seiler, Purser – Ron Hollod, Editor -- Katherine Pogue, and Logkeeper – Bob McPhail. If you would like to place a nomination this will be done at the March meeting. Voting will also take place at the March meeting.

There was an auction held of unwanted material from the model shop. Proceeds were collected by the purser.

Chari Wessel described a new exhibit on the STAR OF INDIA. Typical daily life of a sailor is depicted.

Other news included the discovery of HMS VICTORY (1726 – 1744) in the English Channel.

OFFICERS

Acting Guild Master
Bill Grolz

First Mate
Bill Grolz

phone redacted

Purser
Ron Hollod
phone redacted

Editor
Katherine Pogue
phone redacted

Log Keeper
Bob McPhail
phone redacted

**Newsletter
Distribution**
Robert Hewitt

Established in 1972
by
Bob Wright
and
Russ Merrill

The San Diego Ship
Modelers' Guild is
affiliated with and
supports the Maritime
Museum of San Diego.



We may soon have a reenactment of Revolutionary War naval warfare. Members have been building 18th Century British warships. To counter this instinct, other members are building American privateers and gun-boats. The latest in this brewing battle to be shown to the members appeared at our February meeting are:

HMS Peregrine

This "little" British Sixth Rate ship HMS Peregrine sailed as a part of the infamous King George III's fleet in the early 1700s. Her 18 – 20 small caliber guns qualified her for the low level rating, but the good King George chose a unit of this type for himself in 1749 and had its internal furnishings radically transformed into the famous royal yacht Caroline. Alan Good's first rate model of a sixth rate ship in 1:96 scale from a Corel kit is nearing completion. Alan says that the Italian directions in "not the best" translation left a lot to be desired. He substituted rigging lines from his own supplies to replace the kit-supplied string. The plan's drawings were first rate.



MS Armed Virginia Sloop

Since we last saw his Armed Virginia Sloop's hull in October last year, Bob Riddock has installed the masts and rigging. American privateers of this type helped harass British shipping before and during the Revolutionary War. Bob is tackling a Model Shipways 1:48 scale work as his first attempt at a wooden model. He started building in 2003 using the Bob Hunt practicum.

Rattlesnake

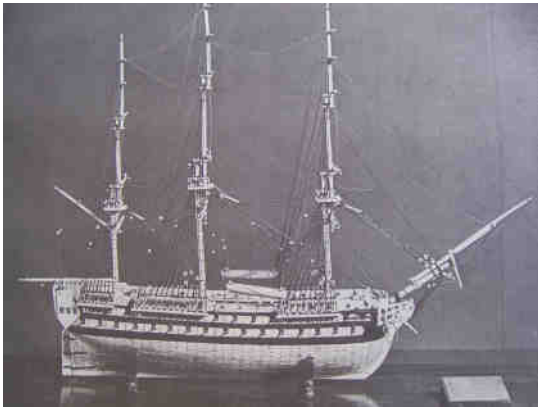
Enhancing the spate of 18th Century privateers to have recently hit the Guild, Royce Privett showed us his Rattlesnake, the 1780 American ship that seriously angered the British. Only 89 feet of deck space carried 85 men and twenty six-pounder guns. Sought "at all costs" by the mightiest navy then afloat, she gave her last full measure of devotion in 1783 after three years of formidable captures and daring escapes. She wound up captured and enslaved in the Royal Navy. (My apologies for mixing metaphors with different wars). "All costs" to the Brits included well over a million dollars (pounds?) of goods - in today's dollars maybe several billions - who knows? Since we last saw Royce's Rattlesnake, she has grown shrouds and stays on the mizzen mast, stays for the jib, fore and mainmasts, spirit sail yards, bobstay, inner and outer guy pendants, and lifts and braces for all yard arms.



THROUGH THE LUBBER'S HOLE

BY ROBERT HEWITT

Bone Ship Models



Ship models of bone were made by sailors captured in battle by the Royal Navy. They were built from 1775 to 1825. The prison population was mostly French, but there were some Dutch and American. The prisoners were first kept in floating hulks, mostly three deck ships. Some ships would hold as many as 1200 men. To occupy their time, some prisoners began to make trinkets. This was encouraged by prison officials and groups were formed so that knowledge and skill were passed on to others. Because of the overcrowding the building of permanent prisons ashore was begun. The first new prison was opened at Norman Cross in 1796. By 1814 an additional eight prisons were operational.

Conditions were much better than afloat, and four or five prisoners shared a

cell that was eight feet by seven feet. At first some of the guards and prison officials acted as agents. Later, the prisoners were allowed to sell their wares at the prison gates. Officer prisoners were given considerable freedom and were allowed to leave the prisons during specific hours and days. This helped them to gather materials and most importantly, make sales. Ship models of all types were popular with the British and did not compete with the local crafts and tradesmen. The American prisoners were not as content with their lot as compared to other nationalities. Most of their time was spent trying to escape or torment their British captors. The Americans built only American ship models, which were of little interest to the average Britisher. For these reasons few were made and fewer have survived.



The general method of construction was to apply carved pieces of bone over a wooden hull. This helped save material. The ration of beef and mutton provided the bone to do the modeling. The bone was immersed in wet clay which would make it more pliable and easier to fit the pieces to the shape of the hull. On occasion prisoners were able to barter ivory, brass and other materials for cannons and other more decorative pieces.

Tools such as bow drills, shaves and planes were fabricated from small pieces of metal and other materials prisoners were allowed to have. Nails and pieces of broken glass were also used. Plans were not available and the models were created from memory along with guidance from professional sailors. Most models bore English names but more nearly resembled the French warships on which the Frenchmen served.

Those interested in learning a craft were given assignments according to their ability. Some prepared the wooden hull. Others fitted the carved bone to the hull. The more talented would carve the furniture, decorations and trim. The masting and

rigging was taken by another group of artisans. At the height of the Napoleonic Wars the methods used by the prisoners could be considered assembly-line techniques. The number of models turned out reached mass-production proportions for that time. The prisoners were allowed to trade freely, and owning a ship model was within reach of a great many Britons.

The medium of bone has fared well and numerous ship models survive today in their original condition after two-hundred years. Today bone prisoner-of-war models may be seen in most maritime museums in Europe and the U.S. Their value has increased many fold, but more important is the memory of the men and the environment in which they lived and worked. They serve as a lasting tribute to those of us who are united through the fraternity of the sea.



Perception of Color by Chuck Seiler

I am often reminded that shipmodeling lends itself to a wide range of creative expression. It can be a hobby, it can be a craft or it can be art. Once you get the basics down, you can fine tune the details, like size of the blocks, style and color of rigging, even color itself; not just 'which is the correct color' but what is the correct SHADE. In a recent post on the Seaways Shipmodeling List (SSL) **Wiley from Dallas** asked about the proper way to represent color at a distance in order to give the model proper scale.

Fred Hocker from the WASA Museum responded: "Scale color" comes up in modelling fora on a regular basis, especially among aircraft modellers. It derives from the practice that painters of landscapes use to show distance. Objects farther away look lighter in color due to diffraction and absorption of light by dust in the air, as well as the air itself. This allows painters to give an illusion of depth on a two-dimensional surface.

"The same effect can be used on models to make them appear farther away, and thus more "real" and less like a model - it fools the eye into interpreting what it sees as a large object 48 meters away instead of a 1:48 scale object one meter away. Adding a slight amount of light gray or white to the color is the usual method.

"There is also the matter of scale perception of color. A small area of a color will look more intense than a large area of the same color, which is what gives models a toy-like appearance in some cases. By toning down the color with a little gray, it looks more "realistic," even if it is technically inaccurate. This is related to the phenomenon of rigging sizes - if you use accurately-sized thread in rigging a scale model, it tends to look too small. Some model builders deliberately use slightly overscale rigging to make it look correct. Just one of the paradoxes of working at scale.

"If you follow the logic to its absurdly rigid conclusion, you can come up with some odd things. For example, if the "rule" says that you should add 10% white to a color for every 100 feet (30 m) away that you want it to appear, what about a long object, like a ship or an airplane wing? If you are viewing a large airplane from the side, the near wingtip might be 30 meters away, but the far wingtip will be 60 meters away. Should you graduate your paint from 10% at one tip to 20% white at the other? And then what happens when you look at the model from the other side? With boats, if you are looking at the end, you have the same problem.

"With all of that said, I like a model to be accurate in scale, so I use scale size rigging, but I find paint colors straight from the tin too intense. I tend to tone down bright colors to make them look a little less intense and a little more weathered, usually by adding a few drops of light gray. Red is a little trickier to lighten without it turning pink, so I have used a medium gray there to take the edge off the brightness, or started with a duller red."

David Antscherl chimes in:

"**Fred Hocker** makes some very perceptive remarks on color and distance. However, it's more complex than even he states. With distance, certainly color appears to be paler than when close, but it also is less saturated (has less color). Adding white or grey alone to simulate this effect (called 'aerial perspective' by painters) is insufficient. One needs to consider two steps.

"First, reduce the chroma; the amount of color present. For instance if you have bright red, it needs to have less redness. Rather than adding white or grey, add a very small amount of the complimentary color to red. This is the color found on the opposite side of a color wheel. In the case of red, it happens to be green. Now, this is counter-intuitive, but it works. It reduces 'redness' without making it paler.

"Secondly, you can add white or pale grey to tint it, which means making it lighter. This is actually a slight simplification: when viewing a color at a distance through the atmosphere, red wave-lengths of light are either scattered or absorbed more readily than blue end of the spectrum: this is why distant mountains, etc, appear bluish and the daytime sky is blue. For a really distant effect, a small amount of blue also needs to be added to the mix. However, this is unlikely to be required unless working on a diorama at a very small scale."

So, now ya know!!!

(**Fred Hocker** is a marine archeologist working on the recently recovered Swedish warship WASA. **David Antscherl** has co-developed a practicum and has written related books on scratch building the plank on frame SWAN class sloop. I have found on-line forums and discussion groups such as Seaways Shipmodeling List to be a great source of information. Several of our own Guildmembers post there. For more information, research sources, go to "The Information Seaway", at <http://www.seaways.com> .

I am not associated in any way with Seaway Shipbuilding List, except as a member, nor with Ships in Scale Magazine, the WASA Museum or the SWAN practicum.

Not valid in Hawaii, Alaska, Bolivia or some parts of New Jersey. Consult your local listing.

DEL MAR FAIR

MONDAY - FRIDAY 1100-1800, WEEKENDS 1000-1800

Fair set up: Sunday, 17 May 0800 - Hollod, Riddock, Grolz, Andrew, Norris

Fair take down: Monday, 6 July 0800 - Grolz, Riddock, Hollod, Andrew

Friday, 12 June - Hollod, Andrew, Seiler

Saturday, 13 June - Hollod, Andrew, Norris

Sunday, 14 June - Andrew, Hollod, Norris

Monday, 15 June - Exhibits closed

Tuesday, 16 June - Hollod, Andrew, Wickman

Wednesday, 17 June - Grolz, Pogues

Thursday, 18 June - Hollod, Grolz, Hewitt

Friday, 19 June - McPhail, Grolz, Hollod

Saturday, 20 June - Riddock, Hollod, Grolz

Sunday, 21 June - Seiler, Hollod, Andrew

Monday, 22 June - Exhibits closed

Tuesday, 23 June - Hewitt, Hollod, Andrew

Wednesday, 24 June - Hewitt, Griffus, Dana

Thursday, 25 June - Hewitt, Andrew, Hollod

Friday, 26 June - McPhail, Griffus, Hewitt

Saturday, 27 June - Riddock, Grolz, Seiler

Sunday, 28 June - Hewitt, Grolz, Norris

Monday, 29 June - Hollod, Grolz, Render

Tuesday, 30 June - Dana, Hollod, Render

Wednesday, 1 July - Hollod, Grolz, Wickman

Thursday, 2 July - Hollod, Dana, Grolz

Friday, 3 July - Hollod, McPhail, Andrew

Saturday, 4 July - Seiler, Hollod, Andrew

Sunday, 5 July - Hollod, Norris, Andrew



SAN DIEGO SHIP MODELERS' GUILD

1492 N. Harbor Drive

San Diego, CA 92101

5

**The next meeting will be
Wednesday, 11 March 2009
aboard the *Berkeley* at 7:00 pm.**



Californian fires a shot during the 2008 November Sail.