



# San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild

1492 N. Harbor Drive

San Diego, CA 92101

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NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 27, NO.7



**Guild Members Chowing Down the Goodies at Our Annual Party on the *Star of India***

## **The Guild's 32<sup>nd</sup> Birthday Party a Big Smash**

A great time was had by all at our well-attended annual party on the beautiful *Star of India*. It was a lovely evening with all the colorful sailboats returning to the marina and we were able to watch the golden sunset through the rigging of the Californian. We are all grateful to those who spent the time planning the party and making it all happen. **Vick Ford** and **Robert Hewitt** picked up the scrumptious party platters and the sodas at Costco. **Bob Graham** brought in his barbequed chicken and shared the recipe for his special marinade. Lots of guild members brought in their specialties, for example, we had homemade Baklava, special heirloom-recipe baked beans and cookies! Let us not forget to thank **Robert Hewitt** for working behind the scenes, reserving the main deck! Two hours passed quickly but the memories of the pleasant company, animated conversations and a superb buffet-picnic dinner linger on.



Our leader, Guildmaster **Don Bienvenue** welcomes the guildmembers to the annual party

### Fair Volunteers to go on the *Medea* Cruise

If there are any San Diego county fair tickets left over, please bring them to the next meeting or bring them with you on the cruise. As a reminder the cruise is Tuesday, August 26, from 11 am to 2:00 pm. Please arrive by 11:00 am. The *Medea* is 99 years old.

### Don't miss the auction at the next meeting!

The auction will be conducted immediately after the coffee break at the next meeting. We have two major items to consider.

(a) Model kit of the "Flying Fish 1860" by Corel, Scale 1:50, plank on bulkhead construction (bulkheads are precut). Kit appears to be complete with instruction book and sewn sails. Kit estimated value is \$100. Bidding will start at \$50.00.

(b) Signed and numbered print (320 out of 850) "Mr. Lincoln's Navy Yard 1863" by Tom Freeman. Value on the secondary market estimated at \$140.00. Bidding will start at \$70.00.



NOW I'LL SOLDER THE HINGE TO THE RUDDER AND SHE'S ALL FINISHED!







July 18, 2003

Dear fellow San Diego Ship Modeler's Guild Member,

This year, believe it or not, I have the honor and pleasure of serving time behind bars for "Jerry's Kids" to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association. I need your help to raise the dough to bail me out of jail (you can also pay to keep me in!).

Right now you are probably saying to yourself that I deserve this and that you knew the authorities would catch up with me. I would like to include the Star of India Volunteer Crew on my list of contributors who are helping me to raise my "bail" of \$2100. The Star of India Volunteer Crew donation of \$525 would help MDA continue the fight against muscular dystrophy and send one child to camp. I am also asking the Museum Board of Directors, Museum Employees, and the Star of India Volunteer Crew to each provide 1 campership each. I hope you will help.

The San Diego / Imperial County Muscular Dystrophy Association serves local clients with neuromuscular disease by providing a free clinic at Children's Hospital, assistance with the purchase and repair of wheelchairs and braces, free area support groups, and a special camp for Jerry's Kids" each summer. MDA also funds research grants here in San Diego County to help find the causes and cures for the 40+ neuromuscular diseases which affect people of all ages.

I sincerely hope that you will take this opportunity to support MDA. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. On behalf of the families which MDA serves, Thank you!

Warmest regards,

Bob Crawford

Jailbird Extraordinaire





# Kit News

by Chuck Seiler

**The fine print.** This article does not constitute endorsement of any products or services by either the San Diego Ship Modeler's Guild or the San Diego Maritime Museum. The author is not affiliated with the company or companies mentioned in this article except as a customer.

**Kit-bashing-**(1) Deriding and thoroughly bad-mouthing a kit you are not fond of. Usually a really crappy kit. (2) Making modifications to one degree or another to a kit so that the finished product is different than what is on the box. While the "crappy kit" is the primary reason for the first action, there are many good reasons for the second. This is what we will focus on this episode.

Why kit-bash? There are many reasons. We kit builders all kitbash from time to time for one reason or another; a piece was lost so we had to make a new one; the plans did not match the pieces so you improvise (and probably engage in both definitions of the term) or we don't like the color on the box, so we change it. Three of the biggest reasons for kitbashing are (1) we wish to turn the kit into something other than what it was designed as (2) the kit is not historically correct, or (3) we want to improve upon the materials provided.

Making a kit into something it is not is a reason for bashing. I have a kit of the USS ENTERPRISE in its 1799 schooner rig. I would like, however, to build it as a brig (to which it was converted in 1811) because I like the look. This will require research and plan/instruction modification; not only will the masts, yards and rigging be different, the deck arrangements will have to be different in order to accommodate the rig change. Ironically, since the kit is based on a SWAG rather than accurate historic plans, the conversion may be more accurate than the original...although of a different ship. In this case I will be using plans from the brig LEXINGTON, built around the same time as well as data from Chappelle's *The History of the American Sailing Navy* and other sources. In this case it may not be 100% accurate, but it will be close enough for my mantlepiece.

A variation of this theme is making a model of a ship based on a popular movie or book(s). The Patrick O'Brian novels have been popular for many years, as were the Hornblower novels. The upcoming movie has raised this interest further. Unfortunately, the model

industry is slow to keep pace with demand. Chari Wessel (our resident Aubreyologist) is interested in making the frigate SURPRISE, the ship featured in numerous POB novels and in the upcoming movie. This correspondent has also heard that Bill Luther plans on building the SOPHIE, Captain Aubrey's first ship (presumably not in a 12"=1ft scale). Both plan to bash an existing kit to get the result. Both will be more complicated than my ENTERPRISE experiment because more extensive bashing may be required. Unlike my ENTERPRISE, they have to locate a suitable replacement kit, but like the ENTERPRISE, both must rely on some research to get a reasonably accurate product.

Since SURPRISE was an actual ship in the Royal Navy, there is adequate documentation for it. The next question comes to mind, how much expense and effort do you want to put in on this? Chari could go to the National Maritime Museum in London and get plans for the SURPRISE, resize them for the scale of the kit she is working, modify them to conform to the Patrick O'Brian SURPRISE and proceed from there. Fittings and deck furniture would all be made or modified based either on the plans or details picked up from the book. A little TOO MUCH effort, you say? Fine. By using descriptions from the book, draught information found on-line and many fine references on construction, fitting and rigging of ship/frigates of that period (many of these references are in our library), Chari can come up with a mighty fine model which is more historically accurate than many of the models on the market today.

SOPHIE was not a real ship but POB gives us sufficient detail in his book that we have a tremendous advantage. All Bill needs to do now is search the archival records to find a ship of the same rig, same period and same or approximate dimensions. Once he has some suitable candidates, he can either go the NMM route or look at closer sources, such as Taubman's Plan Service. Using the references outlined above, as well as his considerable modeling skills, we will have another candidate for the Patrick O'Brian wing of the museum.

Another reason to bash is because you do not like the quality of the kit material or you would like to improve upon technique. This could be as simple as replacing some of the crappy wood used for planking with something better all the way to rebuilding portions of the vessel (such as stem piece or transom, or rabbeting the hull prior to installing planking) or incorporating more realistic planking. The desired result is to end up with a better quality or more realistic model. Wood replacement would be a one for one deal (where you can



## KITNEWS: Kitbashing- Continued

get this wood will be covered at a later date). More substantial renovations will require more in depth research. Many of us attempt to undertake this on our own. More and more, however, there are an increased number of resources to help. For instance, *Ship's In Scale* magazine regularly includes articles about building various kits. They often include tips on how to improve on the kit one way or another.

I recently discovered another forum for kitbash assistance. It is admittedly much pricier, but if you seriously want to get into kitbashing, this is excellent. A gent named Bob Hunt has established what he calls "The College of Model Shipbuilding" which discusses various ways of building and bashing models. This can be found at


<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ShipModelingCollege>.

For those who wish to go further, he has established a number of practica he calls his curriculum (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate). Each features a number of lessons (or chapters) showcasing various skill levels, modeling techniques in general and levels of bashing. Each focus on a specific ship model, but the information can be used on any model...to a degree. Some require purchase of additional plans, some require purchase of additional wood. Currently kits include Model Shipways ARMED VIRGINIA SLOOP (freshman), Model Shipways Constitution (sophomore), Mamoli RATTLESNAKE (junior-although Model Shipways RATTLESNAKE will also work) and Mantua/Panart kit, HMS VICTORY (senior). The Kammerlander kit DUKE WILLIAM will be used in the future as an alternate Freshman course.

I have embarked on the Junior course RATTLESNAKE. In this course, the art of kitbashing is presented. The course presents two methods of construction; out of the box construction or kitbashed construction. With emphasis on kitbashing, the model takes on an entirely new look and method of construction. The modeler is shown how to turn the kit into what might appear to some as a scratchbuilt model. Upper framework is replaced with real frames taken from the Hahn plans. Exotic woods are used to plank the model such as boxwood, ebony, swiss pear and holly. The lower hull is planked in a split fashion using holly below the waterline and boxwood above. The kit's metal decorations are replaced with hand carved decorations. Help is provided through the excellent book on motor tool carving by fellow modeler Bill Short. Blocks are replaced with more realistic looking blocks and the rig is enhanced with sails as well. Completion of this course will give the modeler the skills and experience to improve any kit on the market by utilizing research and accurate alternative plans. For more information, check out the following link-

<http://www.lauckstreetshipyard.com/collegecourse.htm>.

Kitbashing is part of a natural progression starting with plastic models and culminating in scratch-built admiralty models. It gives us an opportunity to take our existing skills and limited kit resources and make something truly special.

Next month, a look at some not so well known model companies. Until then, go forth and model. 



### Ships of Patrick O'Brian

Bill Luther's SOPHIE at far right.

Chari Wessel's SURPRISE second from left.

The 74 gun ship BELLONA is between SOPHIE and SURPRISE. There is a BELLONA kit...any takers?

The ship on the far left appears to be a Hewitt creation, but it is the 50 gun ship LEOPARD, a notoriously slow 'cow', bringing up the rear. The SERAPIS could be used for this bashed model.



A Yarn by our own Howie Franklin

## Double Knock Down

*This really did happen.....*

This is one of many stories and adventures of a private yacht named "Salty Spray". The "Salty Spray" is a semi-replica of the famous "Spray" that Joshua Slocum sailed single handed around the world at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The original "Spray" was made of wood and measured 37'9" x 14' with a 4' draft. The "Salty Spray" is a steel hull version and measured 40' x 14'4" with a 4'2" draft. If you count the Bow Sprit and Bumpkin, she measured 50' overall. She is a Gaff rigged Ketch with a main cabin forward, a center wheel house and a large aft cabin.

At the time of this incident, the vessel was half way through her construction. Though her rigging was complete, the boat had not been fully ballasted. We had been sailing her through-out the summer and I was pleased with her performance.

It was August 19, 1978 and we left our home dock for a day of relaxation and companionship on beautiful Lake Simcoe, which is located just 40 miles north of Toronto, Ontario. The weather was hot and humid with visibility at 3-4 miles with a summer haze. We numbered twelve, plus one little white dog, and were out for a day of sailing and swimming. There wasn't much wind, so we decided to anchor close to a point of land where the water was warmer and go for a dip.

We were all enjoying the sun when we heard the ominous rumble of thunder to the west. It was time to collect everyone from the water and head for home. At this point of time, we had four sails up, but decided to be cautious with a storm approaching and drop the Main Sail. The wind was very light, so we motor-sailed her towards home. It started to rain and within just a few minutes the rain shower changed to a down-pour and everyone on board sought cover.

In a matter of minutes, we were in the center of a thunderstorm with lightening and gale force winds. Suddenly the wind seemed to come down from above and I realized too late that we

were trapped below a micro-cell thundercloud with the Gib, Staysail and Mizzen sails still up. The visibility was less than 50 feet in the rain and the wind was clocking close to 80 knots. The "Salty Spray" was knocked down on her port side. She lay on her beam ends and we lost two persons over-board. Slowly she started to recover to about 45°, but the wind pushed her over again on her beam ends. This time it was I and another crew member that went overboard. I held on to the rail of the boat as she began to recover and roll back up, which allowed me to climb into the cockpit and begin to regain control.

Quickly, the remaining crew helped get the sails lowered and I started up the diesel engine. Visibility was only a few hundred yards, and we couldn't see the three members of our party that were somewhere in the water. I made a 180°-turn and followed our wake back the way we came. My mind was frantic with wondering how the three people overboard could survive.

Meanwhile, the people in the water had found the dingy we had been towing. Luckily, it had broken free during the ordeal and was found upside-down close to where the boat first rolled on its side and the three had been thrown overboard. The nine of us on board were in great fear of death for our three overboard mates and the three hanging on to the dingy were afraid that we had gone down with the boat.

I believe the wind had flipped the dingy over and caused tremendous drag on the "Salty Spray", which prevented her from racing away in the wind.

I spotted the over turned dingy, and with great relief found our three missing mates alive and most grateful for the sight of the "Salty Spray". With many hugs and kisses, we headed for our home dock looking pretty beat-up, but happy to be alive.

We spent half of the next day cleaning up the mess inside the boat. There were nuts, bolts, screws and tools all over the cabins and several cabinets had fallen down. In keeping with the saying: "When you fall off a horse, get back on the Horse and ride again", we took the boat out for an afternoon sail that day. I felt much better knowing that the "Salty Spray" was truly a worthy little ship after taking a double knock



down.

The Sea can be a wonderful source of recreation, but it can be unmercifully unforgiving. My "Salty Spray" knock-down taught me this first hand.

**Captain HR Franklin**  
**Member of the San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild**

## Hunting the Lion

# Archaeologists search for remains of ship

Remnants would provide evidence of undocumented historical event

By TOM STUCKEY

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**ANNAPOLIS, Md.** — While British troops were attacking Washington on Aug. 24, 1814, a minor skirmish in the War of 1812 was taking place at Bodkin Point near the mouth of the Patapsco River south of Baltimore.

Writing in his journal for that day, a British Royal Marine lieutenant recorded that the HMS Menelaus, captained by Sir Peter Parker, had burned "a fine schooner named The Lion of Baltimore."

Now archaeologists are pursuing tantalizing clues that the remains of The Lion, believed to be between 85 and 100 feet long, might lie under the muddy waters of Bodkin Creek. Finding the remnants of the burned schooner would provide evidence of a previously undocumented event in the military history of the young American nation.

State archaeologists used sonar last fall to pinpoint the location of what might be the outline of a ship's hull.

"We were led to the area by several boaters who kept running into something on very shallow tides," said Steven Bilicki, an archaeologist with the Maryland Historical Trust. "We started to see something very strange. We got to go down on the site about 20 minutes and there was wood on the bottom."

But the dive was cut short because of weather, and "we were restricted from diving the rest of the year because of weather conditions," he said.

"We're going to get back there at some point this year, at least to probe with hand probes," Bilicki said, adding that the dive could be made in July or August. He also would like to use a magnetometer, which would pick up signals from cannon and other metal in a ship's hull.

Several other potential sites in the 700-square-acre Bodkin Creek watershed, which has three branches ranging from about a mile long to 2½ miles long, also could be explored as the hunt for The Lion takes shape. An earlier search ended in disappointment; the submerged wreck was the hull of a barge.

Kim Nielsen, director of the U.S. Navy Museum in Washington, said the potential discovery of The Lion comes at a fortunate time, with the nation beginning preparations for the celebration of the bicentennial of the War of 1812. As part of the celebration, the National Park Service is working to establish a Star-Spangled Banner National Historical Trail that will include sites where British and American troops engaged in battles.

Nielsen said proof that a skirmish took place in Bodkin Creek could place added importance on Hancock's Resolution, a small rock farmhouse preserved as part of the Anne Arundel County park system.

The house was patented in 1793 under the name Hancock's Resolution by Stephen Hancock Jr. It is believed the name refers to the resolution of a boundary dispute.

There is evidence, although no proof, that Hancock's Resolution was used as a signaling station during the war, and Nielsen would like to see it included on the historic trail along with the Bodkin Creek site of the sinking of The Lion.

"Militias had set up a system ... to signal back and forth across the bay and up and down the bay which way the British ships were going," said Jim Morrison, founder and president of Friends of Hancock's Resolution, which was set up to preserve the historic house. "The family story was that Hancock's Resolution was a part of that signaling system."

Hancock's Resolution fronts on Bodkin Creek near where The Lion is believed to have been sunk by the Menelaus, a 36-gun frigate used by the British to blockade the port of Baltimore.

Nielsen, who works in Washington but lives in Anne Arundel, became involved with Hancock's Resolution at a time when the Naval Historical Center was publishing the third volume in a history of the War of 1812 that dealt with the Chesapeake Bay campaign.

Included in that volume, Nielsen said, was a letter from Parker to his superior, Admiral Cochran on Tangier Island, Va. It referred to naval activi-

ty on Narrows Creek, an earlier name for Bodkin Creek, he said.

In Parker's dispatch, Nielsen said, he let his superiors know: "Things are going well, I'm blockading Baltimore and, by the way, we burned a schooner in Bodkin Creek."

Nielsen found another piece of the puzzle through an Internet search last fall. It was the journal kept by Royal Marine Lt. George Beynon, who served under Parker. Beynon's account of the skirmish confirmed the date, the

burning of an American ship and provided yet another clue: the name of the schooner.

A check of a registry of ships compiled by Lloyds of London turned up two American schooners named The Lion, one built in Massachusetts, one in Baltimore.

The U.S. Navy, which could not match the strength of the British fleet during the War of 1812, made use of privateers, privately owned ships authorized by the government to prey on British commercial shipping.

The Lion was probably one of those privateers and even might have been one of the famous Baltimore Clippers, exceptionally fast ships built in the late 1700s and early 1800s that could outrun the bigger, slower British warships.

"If, indeed, the schooner that was burned by the British in Bodkin Creek was a Baltimore Clipper, it would be extremely important from a maritime architectural point of view," Nielsen said.



ROBERTO BOREA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Archaeologists are searching for the remains of the schooner The Lion of Baltimore. The Lion, the same class of ship as The Pride of Baltimore, pictured above, is believed to have been sunk by British troops in the War of 1812 on Aug. 24, 1814.



Next Meeting Wednesday August 13 on the Berkeley  
6:30 pm social, 7 pm Meeting

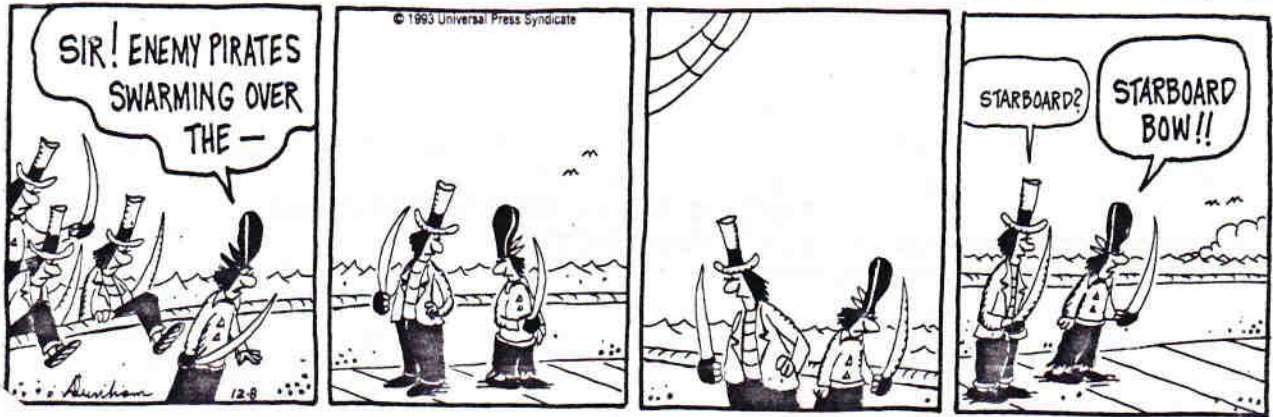
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# San Diego Ship Modelers Guild

## OVERBOARD • Chip Dunham



## Hagar the Horrible by Chris Browne

