



# San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild

1492 N. Harbor Drive

San Diego, CA 92101

AUGUST 2004

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XXVIII, NO. 8

## OFFICERS

**Guild Master**  
Robert Hewitt  
phone redacted

**First Mate**  
K.C. Edwards  
phone redacted

**Purser**  
Ron Hollod  
phone redacted

**Editor**  
Chuck Seiler  
phone redacted  
address redacted

**Log Keeper**  
Bob McPhail  
phone redacted

**Newsletter Distribution**  
Bob Wright  
Robert Hewitt

## Minutes for 14 July 2004 Meeting

By Bob McPhail

**Robert Hewitt** opened the meeting and asked if there were any guests or new members. **Jess Tatum** is retired and indicated he wants to build models. The purser, **Ron Hollod** provided a report. The current balance of funds as of July 4 is \$<redacted>. **Chuck Seiler** discussed the newsletter. He indicated that it is possible to send the newsletter via email. He intends to send the newsletter via email to members with an email user ID (approximately half the membership) and also send a hard copy. Chuck will appreciate all feedback. He is also preparing a new directory of membership (in conjunction with Purser **Ron Hollod**).

**Robert Hewitt** thanked all members who worked in the booth at the fair and asked for feedback. He would like all unused tickets turned in to him as soon as possible. It was proposed that a "Pass Down the Line" (booklet/memo/board????) be used in the future. This could contain information such as: sign up sheets, questions/issues, "what if scenarios", information on items to pass out, help in moving models and equipment at the end of the day, etc. It was noted that parking permit passes may be issued next year.

The annual party was discussed. It will be held the second Wednesday of August (AUGUST 11) (on the STAR of INDIA) and will be pot luck with some dishes bought. Members can bring guests. It will start at 6:30 PM. Set up will be at 6:15PM. Contact **John Wickman** if you would like to bring something. To date, the following items have been volunteered:

ED WHITE- COOKIES/DESSERT

RON HOLLLOD-MAIN DISH HAM

ED TRASORAS-SPAGHETTI

DOUGLAS YUMOTO-DESERT AND 1 OR 2 TURKISH DISHES

JACKIE JONES-POTATO SALAD

BOB GRAHAM -CHICKEN

JOHN WICKMAN--PLATES, NAPKINS, ETC.

ERNIE ANDREW-DESSERT

RICHARD STRANGE-FRUIT TRAY

DAVE DANA-SALAD

DON BIENVENUE-SODA

ROBERT HEWITT-BAKED BEANS.

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



## MINUTES- Continued

After the break, a round table discussion was held on ratlines and deadeyes. During the discussion, a comment was made about getting a portable microphone/amplifier. **Ed Trisoras, Lyle Starkweather, and Don Dressel** volunteered to check on sources and availability.

## SHOW and TELL



**Dick Roos' NONESUCH.** Dick brought this model back in February and again in June. A lot of progress has been made. This model was previously listed as HMS HALIFAX.  
Photo by **John Wickman**



**Chuck Peabody's CUTTY SARK.** Deck complete. First plank on.

Photo by **John Wickman**

**Wally Caballa** brought his model of the SWIFT but no photos are available

Glasgow 1"=20ft. By **Robert Hewitt**

The hull is 90% completed and work has started on the masts. Each yard is made and the foot ropes are attached. The yards are attached to the masts with .006" copper wire. The sails are then glued to the yards. The sails have the reinforcing strips and the reef lines attached. Since no sail plans exist of the *Glasgow*, I am using the rigging plan of the *Blandford*, a twenty gun ship of the same period. The *Blandford* rigging is from the Anatomy of the Ship Series by **Peter Goodwin**. All of the rigging that can be attached off of the ship is done next. The mast is placed in a square block of wood and it can be position to allow gravity to aid in placing the painted wire rigging. The rigging blocks are shavings of pear or boxwood sandwiched over .004 blackened brass wire. The blackening medium I used is Aluminum Black by Birchwood Casey, a tip from **Paul Payne** of SMA in Los Angeles. It works just as well on brass and copper. Aluminum Black may be purchased a most gun stores. The glue is

also blackened with water soluble dye. When dry, the wood is trimmed to size. The smallest blocks are .010 to .012 wide. At this point only the foremast is rigged.



**Robert Hewitt's GLASGOW**  
Photo by **John Wickman**

## MAKING PERFECT ROPE COILS

By Dave Dana

I've often admired those precise coils of rope we sometimes see on model ship decks, so round, so flat, so evenly turned - so perfect that no full sized ordinary seaman could possibly have done them. When I realized that the lines on the tackles for setting the cannons on my *Roter Lowe* galleon had to be long enough to let the gun recoil, I had to make coils - or let the lines flap dangerously about the deck. The rigging thread wouldn't sit still long enough to make a second turn. If I did get several turns, they weren't even, or overlapped, or promptly fell apart. There wasn't enough room on the model deck for fingers; tweezers really don't coil rope. Moving a gluey coil from bench to deck destroyed any semblance of a shipshape neatness.



After some frustrating efforts, I hit upon this method:

Put scotch tape - double stick or folded sticky side up - on the bench top. Using a round tool with a flat, or close to flat end, stick the end of the line to the tape. I used the end of an Xacto knife; a new wood pencil eraser should work, too. Then press the tool on the stuck end to hold it down. Wind the line around and around itself just under the tool. Rock the tool carefully as you wind, so that its pressure sticks the line to the tape as you go around. Peek as curiosity strikes you, to see how it's going. Back up to fix any blemish, tap down the line to stick it, and continue. Do as many turns as you want, leave a loose end. A nice round coil should then be stuck to the tape. If there are imperfections - most frequently a bit off round - remember a sailor shanghaied out of a bar, or well satisfied with his ration of grog, is not likely to do a better job. While the line is still stuck to the tape, slather the coil with diluted Elmer's white glue. When the glue dries, lift the coil off the tape. Carefully! Sliding narrow tweezers slowly between the coil and tape worked for me. Glue the coil on the deck, and secure the loose end at the block. Admire.

## JULY ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION IS HUGE SUCCESS

July's Roundtable discussion involving DEADEYES and RATLINES appeared to be very popular. It is one of those subjects that we all seem to have problems with-one way or another. There were plenty of questions, plenty of suggestions and lots of input from the veterans in the group.

I am unable to report every detail of the discussion. It is one of those things you had to be there for. Here are some of the things I took away from it.

--Deadeye spacing for typical 18<sup>th</sup> century sailing ships is three deadeye diameters for shrouds and

four for stays. This increases in later years. Check your plans to be sure.

-- Shrouds should be affixed to the mast before deadeyes are 'laced'.

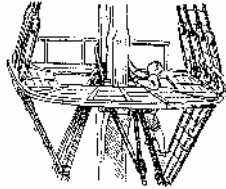
--Ratlines are 14 to 16 scale inches apart and should always be parallel.

--Ratlines should be tied so that there is neither slack nor tension on the line. Once the clove-hitch is tightened up, you will have sufficient dip in the lines to be realistic.

--Riverboats generally have neither deadeyes nor ratlines....and that's the way I like it.      ♪♦

# THRU THE LUBBERS HOLE

By Robert Hewitt  
“Eggs and Bacon”



After passing his examinations on April 8, 1777, Horatio Nelson was commissioned as second lieutenant on the 32-gun frigate *Lowestoffe*. He served two years in the West Indies. He was then given command of the 28 gun frigate *Hinchinbrook*. He took action against the Spanish at San Juan, where he came down with dysentery and yellow fever. He convalesced in Bath and in August, 1781, he was given the 28 gun frigate *Alkbemarle* and sailed to Quebec. During the final year of the War of Independence he joined Hood's fleet off of Staten Island. Nelson's barge pulled along Hood's flagship to pay his respects.

Prince William Henry was midshipman of the watch on Hoods flagship. He later wrote that he had encountered “the merest boy of a Captain I ever beheld; and his dress was worthy of attention. He had on a full lace uniform: his unpowdered hair was tied in a Hessian tail of extra ordinary length; the old fashioned flaps of his waistcoat added to the general quaintness of his figure.” He had never before had the experience of meeting such a simultaneous combination of youth and antiquity. The two soon became friends. Prince William Henry had the honor of giving away Francis “Fanny” Nisbet when she married Nelson. He later wrote his father, King George III “I wish Nelson well and happy and that he may not repent the action he has taken.” He also added, “He is in more need of a nurse than a wife.”

Soon the captain was “on the beach”, given half pay and a meager allowance from William Suckling, and some money was given to Fanny from her uncle. They moved in with his father Reverend Edmond Nelson in Norfolk. In a country known for its shooting, Nelson was a bad shot. He carried his gun at full cock and fired at birds from the hip. This dangerous habit caused most of his neighbors to give him a wide berth whenever he went out bird hunting. It was also known that he shot a partridge-once.

For five years he was beached when his luck changed. In December, 1792, the sentence of death upon King Louis XIV made war a distinct possibility. On January 7, 1793, Nelson was given command of his first ship-of- the- line, the 64 gun *Agamemnon*. He was now thirty-four.

At the Admiralty their Lordships agreed to Nelson's request that no bills be posted in London asking for men for the *Agamemnon* until the name of the captain was announced. Nelson had already posted his own bills in his home town of Norfolk and sent a lieutenant and four midshipmen to recruit as many men as possible. Norfolk men, Nelson contended, were worth two of any other men.

The muster of the “Eggs and Bacon” as the *Agamemnon* was affectionately called by her crew, to Nelson's delight began to fill with a high proportion of volunteers with Norfolk and Suffolk names. Nelson took command of the ship on February 7, 1793.

The captains cabin on the *Agamemnon* was comfortable with its elegant wide row of windows giving a sweeping view of the sea. It was low ceilinged but since Nelson was a mere sparrow of a man only 5 feet 6 inches tall, it was not much of an inconvenience. It was furnished with pictures, curtains, a writing desk, bookshelves, a dining table with chairs, his swinging sleeping cot and a carpet on the deck. All of these items could be cleared for action in 6 minutes.

When that happened, the captain's gear was stored below. The bulkheads separating him from the quarterdeck were swung up and fastened to the deck head, opening up the deck from bow to stern. Nelson had been able to secure his steward from a previous ship. A sort of a sea going valet, Frank took care of his stateroom and wardrobe and served his meals. Nelson had his own galley, his own cook his own provisions, including wine, and candle lanterns to light the cabin at night. He had a charcoal brazier in lieu of a fireplace. Prone to feeling cold, he kept the brazier lit even in the Mediterranean summer. To one side there was a rack for a sword, pistols and a telescope. While the amenities were designed for service and not for show, it was comfortable enough to entertain guests in style. One of those guests was the Devine Emma Hamilton.

## Paper Sails

By Ed Trasoras

The model kit I had was 30 years old when I started to assemble it. The “English Man-O-War” was a plastic model by Revelle made in 1972. For \$10 I bought this at a church rummage sale. There were no missing parts and the little damage found was easily repaired, with the exception of the plastic sails. These had been crushed and age had cracked them to be unusable. I wanted sails and someone said make them out of tissue paper and Elmer’s glue. I had nothing to lose so I experimented and found that I could fabricate very realistic sails, which were durable, and of exceptional detail.

I decided to try and repair the plastic sails and use them as a mold. Scotch tape was used in abundance on the inside and the sails were restored to a semblance of their original shape. They were still too flimsy to work on so I filled the inside with plaster which when hard gave me a perfect mold. Now I left the plastic sail on the plaster mold for nothing would stick to it. Neither the plaster nor any of the paper or glue would adhere which was really great. I used masking tape around the edge of the mold to keep the plaster and plastic sail together.

Two dollars worth of tissue paper was all I needed. This is the same paper used to cover a balsa wood airplane. To age the sails a pot of tea was made approximately 1 to 2 quarts and one tea bag. The tissue paper was dipped into the tea for a few moments then removed and stretched out on paper towels to dry. Drying only took a couple of hours and the tissue had a light brown tint to it. A bottle of Elmer’s Glue was obtained along with a spray bottle. 1part glue to 10 parts water seemed to work the best. Four layers of tissue paper were used to make a sail. The tissue was cut larger than the mold 1 inch all around. The tissue was sprayed with the glue and water mixture then it was laid on the mold. Each layer has to be allowed to dry. The tissue will form around all protrusions and indentations...This is good for the cloth seams and reef strips were picked up on the finished sail. . The second layer was rotated 90 degrees to the first layer and this was sprayed as well as the dry first layer again. The second layer was stretched out

over the first and allowed to dry. A brown pastel pencil was used to highlight the sail seams and folds. Two more layers of tissue paper were applied to complete the sail. Pulling the corners of the tissue layer toward each clew could induce folds and ripples.

The sail did not stick to the plastic but it stuck quite well to the masking tape edges. A pair of scissors trimmed the sail to the proper shape. To create more realism the bolt line was attached to the inside edge of the sail with a small bead of pure Elmer’s Glue. I utilized a string used to make tassels for curtains or lamps. This string was also soaked in the tea stain concoction. I literally shoved the string into the glue and allowed it to set. I even formed the clews on the foot of the sail. The bolt line (head, leech & foot) was very helpful in stiffening up the sail to hold it’s shape and make it impossible to tear the tissue paper. As was the purpose on an actual sail this bolt line helped keep the rope bands from pulling out of the edge of the sail.

The Main Course was supposed to have the letters **ER** on it. A decal came with the model but it disintegrated in the water. I drew the letters on the sail and painted them with flat red enamel paint. To give the letters a sun washed out look I applied a layer of tissue paper over the letters, which worked perfectly.

Problems encountered were too much glue and the sails were brittle. Not enough glue and the tissue paper layers delaminated. This happened on one sail but was easily fixed. Just brush on the water and glue solution on the delaminated area and it soaks all the way through all layers and glues them back together. Also the sails are susceptible to water.

The tissue paper sails are extraordinarily realistic and feel like cloth. The plastic and plaster molds were the key to the realism. They were not hard to make.

Ed Trasoras



July 26, 2004

Hello everyone (alla Carl Hass),

Call it poor planning or luck of the draw, but, in honor of the Ships-in-bottles exhibit, we are planning to have people build ships-in-bottles during Family Day, October 3, 2004. I've been very fortunate to have been one of 20 people nationally to be selected to attend a workshop in Washington D.C., at the Smithsonian Institute on Collections standards and practices, a behind the scenes look at how the "Big Boys" do it starting that same day. I received my confirmation last Friday and it has thrown a monkey wrench in my ability to be present on Family day to assist in the project.

It has been my plan all along to enlist the Guilds assistance in preparing parts and pieces and supervising the project on Family Day and this situation only increases the need of your assistance. Materials are being gathered, i.e., Starbucks Frapaccino wide mouth bottles (200-300) washed and ready to go, dowels, and poplar lumber as yet to be crafted into hulls and masts. I need volunteers to come to the Berkeley on Saturday, August 14 at 9:00 AM to cut, drill, and shape hulls in preparation for the participants to paint, assemble, and putty the project on October 3. I'm hoping to set up an assembly line with available talent. At this same meeting we'll work out instructions that will be included with the "Kits".

Please let me know of your availability on August 14 and October 3, 2004 so we can make more concrete plans.

Thanks for your help.

Sincerely,

Bob Crawford  
Curator of Models





# ANNOUNCEMENTS



## WANTED: *Coffee Maker* REPLACEMENT PURSER

Purser **Robert Hewitt** reports, for personal reasons, he wishes to step down as the Guild *Coffee Maker*. While no hard deadline for stepping down was mentioned, he wishes to do this as soon as possible. He is willing to spend however much time is required getting the new *Coffee Maker* up to speed. More to follow.

### AUCTION ITEM

A model kit of the steamboat, **ROBERT E. LEE** (Scientific Models), will be auctioned at the September meeting.

## September Round Table Topic

The Round Table topic for September has not yet been determined. Send me your inputs.



### SEPTEMBER 19



Its almost here! Will you be ready?

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Articles, photos, tips and hints are appreciated. Please have newsletter inputs to me by **27 August 2004**. If you cannot get it to me on-line, call me to arrange transfer of info, I'll see you in the funny papers.

MP♦

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Chew along dotted line

Its time to update your Guild information so we can distribute a new DIRECTORY. If your info is out of date or you just want to make sure everything is correct, please make sure the following information is provided to Purser **Ron Holod** by the SEPTEMBER meeting. Hand-deliver, mail in care of the museum or email to me. REMEMBER, this month we start experimenting with emailed newsletter so be sure your email address is up to date as well.

Name

Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #

\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address(s)

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Steam Yacht MEDEA celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in August

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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8	9	10	<b>11</b>	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

AUGUST 2004

**Next meeting is Wednesday August 11th on the  
STAR of INDIA 6:30 pm**

*Don't Bring a model! Bring a pot luck dish*