



# San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild

1492 N. Harbor Drive

San Diego, CA 92101

JUNE 2006

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XXX, NO. 6

## OFFICERS

### **Guild Master**

Robert Hewitt  
phone redacted

### **First Mate**

K.C. Edwards  
phone redacted

### **Purser**

Ron Hollod  
phone redacted

### **Editor**

Bob Crawford  
phone redacted  
address redacted

### **Log Keeper**

Bob McPhail  
phone redacted

### **Newsletter**

### **Distribution**

Bob Wright  
Robert Hewitt

Established in

1972 by

Bob Wright and  
Russ Merrill

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



## **May 10, 2006 Minutes by Bob McPhail**

Robert Hewitt opened the meeting. Because there were no guests or new members he then gave the purser's report due to the absence of Ron Hollod. The balance as of 31 March was \$<redacted>. With expenses (including \$500 for the model shop renovation) and income (membership renewals), the balance as of April 24 was \$<redacted>. Bob Crawford then gave the editor's report. It was noted that K.C. Edwards had triple by pass surgery. He is doing well but still in the hospital.

For the Nautical Research Guild Conference, there was a meeting planned for May 16. Any one interested in helping at the conference should contact Robert Hewitt. Vendors will be on the orlop deck of the STAR. All models will be on the tween decks of the STAR and main deck of Berkeley.

Robert Hewitt discussed the San Diego County Fair. Twenty model applications have been submitted for the Design In Wood Contest. There are still a few spots open for volunteering at the booth. Three people are requested for each day (hours 9am – 6 pm). Dates of the fair are June 10<sup>th</sup> thru July 4<sup>th</sup>. The fair will be closed on Mondays (June 12, 19, 26). Tickets and parking passes will be passed out to all volunteers as soon as received. There is a possibility of getting a form letter from the Fair which may or may not included tickets and passes. It has not been determined yet what vessel will be available for the "thank you" cruise.

The model shop renovation is ongoing. Sliding windows have been installed. Ron Render has started to organize the parts bin. Storage boxes are needed. It was voted on and passed to provide \$200 to complete the renovation.

In the area of new business, Chari Wessel has been working as a volunteer on the ROSE (SURPRISE) - being refitted for a sail in October. She mentioned that the foremast shrouds have been finished and work will start on the mainmast.

PIRATES OF THE PACIFIC, the new exhibit will open on May 27. Volunteers are requested for this exhibit.

The replica of the yacht AMERICA is now home ported in San Diego. It is available for private charter (\$6,500 per cruise)

## Auction



Thanks to all of the bidders at the May meeting, we collected a total of \$70.00 for all of the leftover models and kits that were in the shop. A week after our meeting, **Ron Render** donated \$93.00 for the model of *CYANNE*. He purchased it at the meeting for \$7.00 and then promptly sold it to an unknown buyer. Ron gets the “salesman of the month” award. Too bad Joe Vallejo can’t sell models like Ron! At left, guild members, look over model ships auctioned for bargain prices. Books and parts also went on the block. Several ships drew no bids, but the model shop now has some more space and the guild has more cash

## Bill Luther – current projects

Bill Luther enthusiastically explained the reasons he has not been to the last several meetings - his current 12” to 1 foot scale projects.

First was the *Andrea Doria* – not the sunken liner, but the small merchant brigantine of war, famous as the first American ship to receive a salute from a foreign power. A small protectorate of the Dutch Empire in the Dutch West Indies made forbidden British supplies available to America, and honored the ship that came to get them. The island country is now wants to build a replica of the *Andrea Doria*, a job for which Bill is bidding.

Next Bill enthused about a ½ scale Disneyesque “Adventure Galleon” (a euphemism for Pirate Ship replica) for the Make-A-Wish foundation. Make-A-Wish discovered that celebrities will more readily join kids for a day on the water where they can avoid press and paparazzi. The galleon is very specially designed so that sick and physically challenged kids can enjoy the “pirate ship” experience. It will accommodate wheelchairs, includes lifts, wide heads, hand grabs and other aids. It will not sail, but looks great, and the cannons “Go BANG!”

Bill is also bidding to build a replacement for the *Argus*, the 100 year old, worn out Newport Beach sail training ship.

## Opium Smugglers By Dave Dana

Ron Render is building an opium smuggler. This small speedy ship and others like it ran in and out estuaries along the coast of China in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Even while the Chinese tried to stop it, the opium trade remained fabulously profitable. British and American trading firms ignored the Chinese efforts, trading the drug openly if they could or boldly and often violently smuggling it to Chinese outlaws.

In 1839, Chinese Commissioner Lin, charged with stopping the illicit trade, wrote to Queen Victoria: “... there is a class of evil foreigner that makes opium and brings it for sale, tempting fools to destroy themselves, merely to reap profit. ... [W]e have decided to inflict very severe penalties on opium dealers and opium smokers, in order to put a stop forever to the propagation of this vice.... So long as you do not take it your selves, but continue to make it and to tempt the people of China to buy it, you will be showing yourselves careful of your own lives, but careless of the lives of other people, indifferent in your greed for gain and to the harm you do to others; such conduct is repugnant to human feeling and at variance with the Way of Heaven....Any foreign ships that in the future arrive with opium on board will be set fire to, and any other goods that they are carrying will inevitably be burned along with the opium. You will then not only fail to make any profit out of us, but ruin yourselves into the bargain...Do not say that you have not been warned in time.”

This was the business in which Ron’s ship operated – violent, risky, and still very profitable.

**Don Ferguson – HMS *Surprise*.**

Don Ferguson gave an update on progress with his plastic *Surprise*, which he is making as authentically accurate as possible. This month he found the plastic sails poor imitations of the real thing and is experimenting with paper. Using the plastic sails as molds, he has soaked tissue paper in coffee, spray sealers, water, just about anything short of Coca Cola. Rejecting some as wrinkled, or inadequately billowed, or having poorly detailed reefing, and using the KISS principal, he has settled on a satisfying combination and completed two fore sails.



**Ed Trasoras – USS *Constitution***

The *Constitution* now needs a copper bottom. Ed Trasoras has tried using copper sheet pieces that were suggested at last month's meeting. He had problems, and got more suggestions: lay and glue the sheet in strips and then cut apart, use a tool made from old pocket watch gear to simulate nails, try the copper sheet machine in the model shop, and don't give up!



**Bill Norris – *Sovereign of the Seas***

This grand *Sovereign of the Seas* is made from scratch, all the wood cut from large lumber pieces. Bill Norris has the main deck laid, but is very early in the process. The hull is planked with holly, and pegged with 0.07mm mahogany trenails. All this precise wood shaping and assembling will become the beautiful ship once launched in 1637, had a glorious career, and burned during a re-building at the dock in 1694.



**John Wickman – “Pinky”**

John Wickman's 1/48 scale “Pinky” is being scratch built from plans John bought from Marine Model Company in 1953. This is a 17<sup>th</sup> century New England fishing vessel – named “Pinky” for the “pinked” stern – that is, pointed, making a double ended ship. A few of these were fitted with cannon and became privateers during the War of 1812. John wants to model it as a privateer and has sketched his plan for the cannon. He copied the ship plans onto label paper to use as forms for the plywood deck, keel and frames, then cut the parts out on a scroll saw.



## Don Dressel – USS *Illinois*



Don Dressel is building this resin model of the USS *Illinois*, one of the sixteen battleships in Teddy Roosevelt's "Great White Fleet" that cruised around the world 1907-1909. This may be a sample for an up-coming Maritime Museum display. A scale 1/350 Commodore Series kit, this model could be a basis for making four of the battleships, another model kit exemplifies other ship of the fleet. Don says that resin kits come with no plans and the tiny parts are not identified. He ordered plans from the Smithsonian. The USS *Illinois*, and many of the others were famous only for being part of the "Great White Fleet" tour which raised the prestige of the United States and its Navy. Actually it was a wonder that they completed the tour,

because most were poorly built, top heavy, came close to sinking, and were obsolete by World War I when the British came out with the Dreadnaught.

## Don Dressel – HMS *Grasshopper*

The HMS *Grasshopper* was a British Brig which was captured by the Dutch in about 1806, who renamed it *Irene*, by which name it is also known. Don Dressel and a group from the Guild made this beautiful model some years ago from scratch as a club project. Don credits himself with  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the work and finishing the project. It is planked on one side, open frame on the other. Box, par martin, walnut, holly pear, and lemon woods were used, and the carronades are turned from brass stock. John Warner made the large cherry wood case.



## Don Dressel – Pirate Brig

This typical "pirate" brig of the late 1700s was scratch built by Don Dressel on a solid poplar hull using basswood for planking the outer hull. Wales are ebony; the deck boxwood; quarter badges and stern carved from pear. Gold leafing and ivory figurehead add elegance. The holly and mahogany ship's boat, bloodwood interior bulkheads, carved box, pear, and apple figures are on the deck. Masts and spars are of lemonwood and the linen rigging for drafting linen sails are based on the book "Irene."

## Dave Dana – *Dr. Franklin*

In 1852 Dave Dana's great-great-grandmother steamed up the Upper Mississippi river on the *Dr. Franklin*, a river steamer built in Wheeling in 1848, and used for years carrying soldiers, immigrants, Indians, and supplies to the frontier. Dave is designing the scratch built model  $\frac{3}{32}$  to 1 inch scale. Research revealed no plans, no photos, and another *Dr. Franklin* on the river at the same time. Using hull dimensions in Peterson's *Steamboating on the Upper Mississippi*, plans for the much larger *Buckeye State*, and photos and drawings of steamers of the same era Dave made a card model to set the basic proportions, and has begun making the main deck and its large machinery and paddlewheel structures from small pieces of wood, wire and salvaged parts.



## Gus Agustin - Susan Cconstant 1605



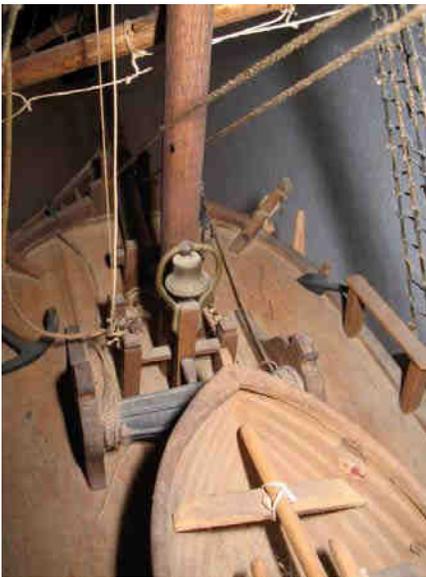
Gus' model is one of two that he is entering in the San Diego County fair for the Design in Wood competition. This model has over 2,700 tree nails installed. He's not giving out any secrets on how he does this. The primary wood used on the model is cherry. The wales and cat heads are made from ebony. The sails are made from Kleenex tissue. The fancy scroll work is gesso formed to the shape by hand using a needle. All of the designs are then painted with gold acrylic paints. Fine netting is used to make the hatch grating. The masts are made from boxwood. The flags are painted on Kleenex tissue, crumpled up and the stretched as shown. Gus makes his own cases using burl wood for the base. The acrylic case cover is finished off with brass angle

## Gus Agustin - Stuart Royal Yacht C. 1674

The second model entered by Gus shows unbelievable detail at this scale. The model follows all of the description above. Stuart yachts are a favorite of Gus, he has made at least four to date.



## Jacki Jones - HMS Bounty



Jacki Jones brought in a model of the famous HMS Bounty that was crafted by her dad, Jim Dick, who is a member of the Guild living in the San Luis Obispo area. Jim started the scratch model in the 40's using plans he obtained through friends. As with all scratch modelers, he was very resourceful in adapting materials to employ in the project and relied on his extensive experience in building model aircraft since his childhood. He had the brass guns turned in the metal shop at North American Aviation, where he worked most of his life. The model was built at 1/4 inch to the foot scale, using a plank on bulkhead construction. The picture on the right shows some of the detail work on the Windlass and the ships bell. Jacki obtained valuable advice from other members of the

guild on a strategy to clean and re-rig the model, which has suffered from some "cat" damage over the years. Jacki and her dad plan to construct a Plexiglas case when the model is restored. She is going to bring it along to future meetings so that we can follow her progress in the restoration project.



# Ship Model Insurance and Consignment Protection

By Gene Larson – former NRG chairman

The topic of insurance for ship models seems to resound in club meetings periodically, especially when there is the anticipation of a club exhibit. The insurance question is very complex, and this report does not claim to cover all the potential issues involved in insuring a model, however, hopefully this report will stimulate thinking about most of the things that need to be addressed. Some model builders do not desire to insure their models, and that is fine and their choice.

First, and above all, do not assume that a model is covered by insurance because you have a policy such as home owner coverage, or because an exhibit host states that there is insurance on the models. Ask as many questions you can possibly think of about the insurance. This article will hopefully start that thinking process.

## Model Value

This is a very large issue about which very little will be said here. The true current value of a model is the amount a certified/licensed appraiser places on it. Do not assume that a similar model which sold for \$20,000 built by Mr. Joe Professional with a national reputation, makes your model worth an equal amount. Your model might have even higher quality, but you also have to have a documented record for your reputation. Also, do not assume that a model's value is the sum of the cost of the parts (kit or scratch) plus the number of hours you spent times a "reasonable" rate. Even minimum wage does not enter the picture. Expect to be disappointed. Build the model for enjoyment of the task and the subsequent viewing, and place the given insurance value on it.

## Insurance

A typical insurance company will provide a rider or a separate policy to cover collectibles. There might be a blanket coverage of \$10,000 (\$75 per year). This covers unscheduled items up to a value of \$2,000 each. The coverage is only for listed perils such as wind and water from a storm, earthquake, fire and vandals. There is a deductible such as \$100 on each claim. If you bump the model and it crashes it is not covered. The coverage is for anywhere in your possession; home, office, exhibit. There is a question on whether there is coverage if the model is being transported to an exhibit by a friend in his van and there is an accident. Ask your insurance company.

Models over \$2,000 value in this example must be listed separately. Under this condition breakage, which was not covered above, is covered. If the total value exceeds the \$10,000 then additional insurance is necessary for an additional fee. There is also a standard deductible for this coverage.

R. Michael Wall of the American Marine Model Gallery in Salem, Massachusetts, states in an e-mail: "[For a] homeowner's coverage [policy]; a value is usually developed by the homeowner in agreement with the insurance company. During this process a cap value is derived, and pending the appropriate homeowner coverages for normal perils (fire, theft, vandalism), each item so specified would be covered under that cap value. I would estimate that models specified having a value of \$1,000-\$3,000 is probably the maximum amount a general homeowner insurance company would provide for such an itemized object." He goes on to state: "A Fine Art Policy (stand alone/independent policy) is the normal insurance instrument which can insure particular objects for the homeowner. These are generally separate policies which are or can be amendments to the homeowner coverage. They would normally call for a formal appraisal of the model, and expand the peril types of coverage (models in transit or out of the care/custody of the homeowner). Under this type of insurance coverage, the homeowner can obviously (based on appraisal) specify the exact amount of coverage desired for a model. Another option in this realm is known as "agreed amount" coverage, which could insure a model, for example, beyond an appraised value, i.e. appraised value of \$10,000 yet due to sentimental attachment the homeowner feels its value is \$20,000 - the insurance company would provide coverage for that itemized piece at the \$20,000 level, and this value/coverage would be reflected in the premium. Under this circumstance, should the model be lost, the insurance company would pay the full cash value."

## **Appraisal**

Under both types of coverage above there must be an appraisal by a certified/licensed appraiser which the insurance company will accept. The appraisal usually does not have to be submitted to the insurance company for the blanket coverage. It is submitted at the time a claim is made for loss or damage. For the higher value models over \$2,000 the

appraisal is required at the time of application for the insurance. Usually the appraisal consists of a detailed description of the model with photos included for additional proof. Check with the insurance company prior to having the appraisal done about their requirements for the content. Expect a good appraisal to be expensive, but avoid appraisers who charge a percentage of the value of the model. This is not proper.

## **Exhibit Insurance**

There are two ways to go for coverage at exhibits. Use your own insurance as described above, making sure your company will cover all the risks you desire. Do this in advance to be sure you have the coverage. Some companies will not insure collectibles in an "open to the public" location.

The second is to obtain coverage specifically for the exhibit. This may not be easy to accomplish, or the cost might be prohibitive. In some cases the "host" of the exhibit; bank, office building, conference, etc., will claim to have insurance. All you need to do is provide them with a value (even if it is guessed at by the owner). They probably will not ask if there is an appraisal. This sounds too good to be true, and probably is. Do not accept on faith the assurance of the host that there is coverage. They are not being dishonest, but really do not understand the type of coverage required. Challenge with

questions and a trial claim to the insurance company providing the host with the insurance. This should be done well in advance of the exhibit, and since you will probably be surprised with the response, be prepared to look for insurance elsewhere.

For a group exhibit an insurance company must be found that will provide the desired coverage, and it must be absolutely clear what is required to process a claim (appraisal, proof of loss, etc.).

## **Limitations**

Some insurance companies reserve the right to have a model repaired, and usually by someone other than the builder. The owner receives no cash for the model. This negates the ability to claim the model was built by "me". This also negates the possibility of entering the model in a contest, as the builder should/must certify he/she is the only one to have worked on the model. Also, in a complete loss the insurance company can choose to replace the model with a like kind. Again, the owner can not claim building the model, and refusal could mean no cash either. These questions must be cleared up at time of contracting for the insurance. Additional premiums might be required to get it the way the owner wants.

## **In Transit Insurance**

As stated above, be sure that you have insurance coverage any time you transport your model. Another concern is to check with the moving company when you are moving your household to a new location. Without the proper insurance in this case you will probably be left with next to nothing in compensation if the model is damaged or lost. The insurance provided by the movers might cover repair, but in the case of total loss the company probably has the right to replace the model with a similar model, or they might pay a minimum amount base upon the weight of the item (ie. \$1.00 per pound). Dana McCalip states that he has heard of one case where "All the moving company (who said the models were covered) wanted to do was to furnish the owner materials to build another model."

OR

Forget all of the above for an exhibit and take the risk. This is probably not wise but it is highly unlikely there will be theft, vandalism, or breakage. The risk is fire, flood, earthquake, and other natural disasters. However, be sure that all club members are aware of this. Coverage at home is essential for valued models.

## The Golden Rules

- At exhibits place all models in cases which are large enough to require some effort to move.
- Have club monitors in the exhibit room during the open hours if at all possible.
- Always test the insurance company with a mock claim to see what is needed.



# Web News

by Chuck Seiler

## SOLID HULL v POB MODELS A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE Part 2

Several months ago there was a discussion on the Seaways List on the pros and cons of solid hull models versus plank on bulkhead. This prompted a response from **Marc Mosco** of Model Shipways.

In Part 1, Marc was discussing the history of kits and their development from solid hull types to plank-on-bulkhead types and the apparent phase out of solid hulls. In Part 2, he talks about a resurgence.

About a year ago, after ridding Model Expo of all hobby products not related to ship modeling I started looking at the assets that we bought from Model Shipways nearly 20 years ago and realized that half or more of the kits that we owned were not in production. We quickly brought back the *Phantom*, *Taurus* and *Sultana* and found that we couldn't make them fast enough. We had found a wood carver in the Dominican Republic that made us agonize over deliveries. Consequently, we recently bought a magnificent Italian six spindle carving machine, which will be in operation within a few weeks. The strong demand for the

three kits that went back into production made us realize that with a little bit of effort we could improve the solid hull kits substantially as there was an existing unrealized market for them. Rather than convert these kits to POB we asked **Ben Lankford** to come out of retirement and clean up these old kits by doing first class instruction booklets with building tips, remake the masters for the fittings and make certain that the kits were more complete than they had ever been. All this is happening and it is exciting. Shortly you'll see the *Dispatch 9*, *Harriet Lane*, *Dapper Tom* and later in the year, *Newsboy*, *Katy*, *Kate Cory* and many, many more in the next few years.

Yes, the solid hulls do cost substantially more than laser cut POB but it is still far cheaper in the short term than converting the hulls over to POB. Everything else about these kits is just as good as any MS POB kit; you can even plank the hulls if you wish. We are excited because we have at least 20 kits which can be released over the next three to four years and know that our customers can build them faster and more easily than the POB kits they have been accustomed to.

End of sincere sales pitch... Thank you.

Marc Mosko

**So....now ya know.**

**Marc is scheduled to attend the Oct NRG Conference and may be a round table speaker.**

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## Sandy Eggo County Faire

# The Top Answers to Frequently Asked Questions at the Del Mar Faire by Chuck Seiler

It is time once again for the San Diego County (formerly Del Mar) Fair. Here we are able to set up our booth and wax wise about model shipbuilding to all who wish to wander by. Some of the newer members may be intimidated and may feel they do not have the knowledge for such a daunting task. Never fear! I bring you the answers to the most frequently asked questions we get at the Fair. Take this with you and feel free to use the answer you think most appropriate to the question asked.

1. Yes, I know where the restroom is. From the expression on your face, I'll bet you wish you did too.
2. No, this is NOT made of balsa wood.
3. No this is NOT a pirate ship (unless you are in fact building a pirate ship, then say "yes").
4. Yes it does take patience to build one of these...and desire. STOP TOUCHING THAT!!!!
5. Huh? What's that you say? Loud? The bowl makers are too loud? Sorry, I can't hear you.
6. No kid, I'm SURE its not a pirate ship (unless, of course, it is).
7. I don't know what that is. We think the builder may have been on drugs at the time. (This is describing the mystery project of the year. It changes each year, so I cannot describe it. You will know it when you see it, however.)
8. No, I don't know how they get the ship into the bottle. My job is to EMPTY the bottle. After that, I don't remember much.
9. I don't care if the guys in the bowl booth gave you something. You cannot have Hewitt's model as a sample. STOP TOUCHING THAT!!!
10. Okay! Okay, kid! You're right. It's a pirate ship! A balsa wood, Mississippi river sternwheel steam powered pirate ship! Don't you have some place else you need to be? Hey lady, doesn't he need to go to the restroom or something?

Enjoy the Fair. If you are not working it, drop by and say HI! But don't ask me if its made of balsa.

### **Warships to Workboats**

For the past three years, Warships to Workboats has been a staple online ship modelers magazine offering high quality articles in a periodical format. Through the hard work of the editorial crew, it was produced quarterly and there are eleven issues on both the Modelshipwrights and Warriorgroup web sites for downloading.

Due to the pressures of production and the very large commitment required to make this happen, we are no longer able to produce the magazine in this format. As an alternative, a small group of modelers have changed the format of Warships to Workboats to a wiki. This is a web based approach that is fast becoming a popular way to present material on the internet.

Articles will still be solicited from modelers around the world and processed by our editorial staff. Once processed, the articles will be posted on the wiki for all to see. Articles will be updated to the wiki as received and notices will be sent to the ship modeling community on a regular basis to remind people to check the wiki for new material.. In this way, the material will still be available to the modeling community.

To visit the wiki, go to: <http://modelshipwrights.wikispaces.com/>

We hope you enjoy it, the W2W staff.



# San Diego Ship Modelers' Guild

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## San Diego Ship Modelers Guild Officers

Guild Master	Robert Hewitt	<redacted>
First Mate	K.C. Edwards	<redacted>
Purser	Richard Strange	<redacted>
Editor	Bob Crawford	<redacted>
LogKeeper	Bob McPhail	<redacted>

**Next Meeting Wednesday June 14 on the Ferryboat *Berkeley*  
6:30 pm social, 7 pm Meeting**