



SAN DIEGO SHIP MODELERS' GUILD

FEBRUARY 2010

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XXXIV No. 2

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



GUILD MEETING REPORT 1 2 J a n u a r y 2 0 1 0

Meeting called to order at 1905 by the Guild Master Bill Grolz who welcomed new members and guests. Lew Hill from Boston was visiting for the winter and Andy Powell had a guest Norm Corwin.

There was no Editor's Report.

Purser's report was given by Ron Hollod. Balance as of 31 December 2009 was \$<redacted>. He also reminded the Guild that dues (\$20.00) are payable for the year 2010 and must be paid by 31 March 2010.

Kevin Shean provided an update on the next family day which will be on 7 February 2010 from 1100 to 1500. He has volunteers to help at this session.

Bill Grolz will bring up the idea of a committee to plan and schedule modelers to help on the family days at the next meeting.

Nominations of Officers for the club will be held at the February meeting with elections at the March meeting.

San Diego County Fair:

Opening day 11 June, closing day 5 July.

A sign up sheet was passed around so members could schedule at least two days. It will be passed around again at the February meeting and until all spaces are filled.

Fair hours are Monday -Friday 1100-1800, weekends 1000-1800.

If you sign up and can't make it call someone to take your place.

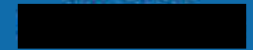
Entry deadline will be 30 April at 1700. Entry forms are on the website SDfair.com

Remember, if you sign up to help set up and take down please be sure you are there or make arrangements for someone to take your place.

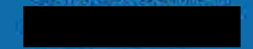
OFFICERS



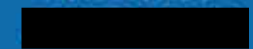
Guild Master
Bill Grolz



First Mate
Chuck Seiler



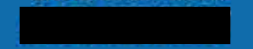
Purser
Ron Hollod



Editor
Katherine Pogue



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Robert Hewitt

Write-Ups
Dave Dana

Photographs
John Wickman

Established in 1972
by BOB WRIGHT
& RUSS MERRILL



BLUENOSE Gary Seaton

The original *Bluenose*, launched in 1921, was the creation of noted yacht designer William Roue of Halifax, Nova Scotia. The best features of *Bluenose* came from his successful yacht designs incorporating the typical salt banker schooner of the period. She had the spoon bow profile, originally designed by Crowninshield of Boston. Smith & Rhuland shipyards in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, were the builders. Lunenburg Foundry, experienced building ships since the early 1700s, supplied much of her heavy gear, anchors, windlass, etc., while other

items of equipment such as deadeyes, blocks, sails and rigging came from manufacturers and merchants in the town. These craftsmen had a long experience with and to this day are well respected for their craft.

When the vessel was being framed up, Captain Angus Walters, her owner, and George Rhuland, a principal of the company, noted her forward sheer was rather flat and a change was made. This last minute change added eighteen inches to the height of her bow thus giving her more headroom in the fo'c's'le and a drier deck forward. This was quite a change from most salt bankers that perhaps did nothing to increase her speed; yet to this day, many people think this change had that effect. However, the change gave her a profile a much "rakish" look that distinguished her from other fishing vessels of her type. Other than this, *Bluenose* was a standard fishing vessel inside and out.

Gary Seaton has well modeled this famous ship's sleek designs. He has looked to Bob Hunt's practicum for guidance. He had problems paring down the deck planking, and asked members for help. Several privately offered suggestions.



USS CONSTITUTION Bob Riddock

The Naval Act of 1794 provided for the construction of four ships carrying forty-four guns each, and two ships carrying thirty-six guns each. *Constitution* was the third of the forty-four gun frigates to be completed, and President George Washington gave her the name. The original keel was laid down on November 1, 1794 at Edmund Hartt's shipyard in Boston under the supervision of Captain Samuel Nicholson and naval constructor George Claghorn. Primary materials used in her construction were white pine, longleaf pine, white oak, and, most importantly, southern live oak, from St. Simons, Georgia. Southern live oak, a particularly dense wood, can weigh up to 75 lb per cubic foot. *Constitution's* hull was built 21 inches thick in an era when 18 inches was common. Her length between perpendiculars was 175 ft, with a 204 ft. length overall and a width of 45 ft 2 in. Paul Revere forged the copper bolts and breasthooks. The copper sheathing installed to prevent shipworm was imported from England.

Bob Riddock has framed up the 1:76 scale Model Shipways kit. He did not say whether he used the same woods that framed the original "Old Ironsides." He also follows the Hunt's practicum. He is planking the lower gun ports, and, if he were to do it again he would make a second deck, not using the kit's fake gunports. He commented on the large four-foot hull his tedious work has created. He admitted knocking off the stem and stern turning the model and was promptly invited into the "Broken Bowsprit Club" amid jokes about it happening to others, and helpful suggestions to prevent damage again, such as "Don't turn it!"



24 GUN XEBEC John Sauvajot

In 1750 the Royal French Admiralty Board authorized the construction of two "chebecs" named the *le Requin* (the Shark) and *l'Indescrete*. They were armed with 24 guns of various sizes. They carried lateen sails on three masts and could also be propelled by long oars. The lateen sails looked large in relation to the 250 (continued)

24 GUN XEBEC **John Sauvajot** (continued)

foot ship of 600 tons. Vessels with high stems and low forecastles used by the "Barbary Pirates" in the Mediterranean Sea inspired the design. The pirates used these for raiding, the French for defense and supply. The name "Xebec" is of Catalan and Arabic origins.

John Sauvajot obtained plans from the National Maritime Museum in Paris. These were drawn based on a model xebec on display in the museum which was built in the 18th Century and is believed to represent one of the vessels built in 1750. John built this scale 1:75 half hull from scratch, using clear pine. To seal the pine wood, he coated the bare wood with a redwood sealer, which he felt worked better than pine patch. The hull is finished with Humbrol oil-based enamels. The final 5 coats of 'varnish' were of Future acrylic floor finish.



CHARLES W MORGAN **Royce Privett**

The famous whaler *Charles W. Morgan* has been beautifully restored and since 1941 has served at the Mystic Seaport in Connecticut as a monument to the men who built and sailed her. She (isn't Charles a 'he'?) was built in 1841 at Hillman Brothers Shipyard on the Acushnet River in New Bedford Massachusetts, not far from her present home. She was registered at 351 tons and originally full ship-rigged, but shortly after the Civil War she was modified to become a double topsail bark. On 37 voyages over 80 years

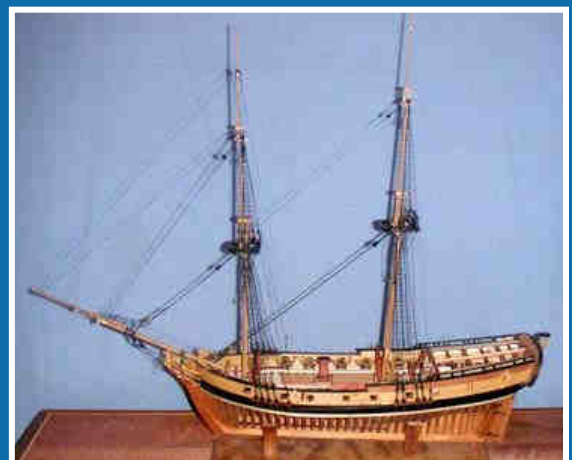


she caught and processed more whales than any other whaling ship in history. To anyone who feels concern for endangered species and ocean ecology, this is a record of which it would be hard to be proud. To those who appreciate the life, skills, and courage of seafaring men, the record is remarkable. The *Morgan's* whaling days ended in 1921 with the decline in whale oil prices.

Royce Privett's beautiful model, last seen in its bare boned, open hulled state, has had completed the hull planking, copper plating, and decking. Royce has installed cheek knees and timber heads, brest hook with pin rails in the bow, and the bow sprit with Bees. The anchor deck is partially done - the main stays will go through holes in the anchor deck and attach to eye bolts in the deck. Royce will next finish a workable rudder. This plan spurred a discussion of the "shinkicker" steering arrangement, and various methods rotating drums, tillers, and other contraptions to work the rudder.

FAIR AMERICAN **Don Dressel**

We see the progress every week. The *Fair American*, **Don Dressel's** American warship model is on its final reach toward completion. Careful research into a ship that cannot be identified - because three *Fair Americans* sailed for revolutionary American colonies - informs Don's detailed work, 50% kit and 50% scratch. The masts are installed, the standing rigging almost complete - only the main topgallant shrouds and backstay are yet to be installed. The topmast had been set high above its fid, causing it to drop, leaving the shrouds loose. So Don cut the shrouds off, eschewed his preferred practice, and, gulp, glued the mast in place. The topmast rigging needed to be replaced. He plans to do basic running rigging, without some details such as clews and other fine details which may clutter the overall look. (continued)



FAIR AMERICAN **Don Dressel** (continued)

Don opined that the "More Rope" type of model ship's line looked very good with right and left twists, but is impractical because it tends to stretch, unravels when cut, and is hard to work.

SCHOONER EAGLE **Peter Jaquith**

The topsail schooner *Eagle* and her sistership *Arrowsic* were built in Arrowsic Island on the Kennebec River, Maine, near the present shipbuilding city of Bath, in 1847 for the lumber and ice trade by builder Samuel Pattee. The *Eagle* had a length of 81' 7", beam of 22' 8", depth of 7' 10", and tonnage of 140 tons. During the mid-19th century small schooners of this sort were widely employed in the East Coast trade; their schooner rigs an easy adaption to the prevailing westerly winds and economy in crew size.

Peter Jaquith's model is scratch built to a scale of 3/16" to the foot (1:64) using old Model Shipways plans by William Zakambell. He is making it in his shop in New Hampshire so we could not see his excellent workmanship and elegant detail for which he is known. He sent this picture. He conducted additional research at the Maine Maritime Museum in Bath, where a large scale model of the "Arrowsic" is on display. The model is plank on solid construction, with built up bulwarks, planked decks and topsides, coppered bottom, and scratch built deck furniture/fittings. Limited commercial fittings were used where appropriate, and the rigging is proportional linen line with Warner Woods' blocks. Additional construction photos and description can be found in the "Eagle" build log located in the Dock Yard at www.drydockmodels.com.



THROUGH THE LUBBERS' HOLE

by **Robert Hewitt**

First Frigate Duel of 1812

Shortly before the war of 1812, an American and a British frigate were riding anchor in Delaware Harbor. The English ship, the thirty-eight gun *Guerricre* was commanded by James Richard Dacres. Captain Isaac Hull skippered the American frigate, *Constitution*, that had forty-four guns. The two captains happened to meet ashore in one of the local taverns. They had a heated discussion on the relative merits of their navies. As Hull finished his last tankard of ale, he said to Dacres, "you better take good care of that ship of yours in case I ever catch up with her in the *Constitution*." Dacres laughed and offered to bet a sum of money, that in the event of a conflict, Hull would come out second best. Hull replied, "I'll not bet money on the outcome, but I'll stake you to a hat that the *Constitution* comes out the winner." Both men shook hands on the wager and returned to their ships.

War between the U.S. and Great Britain was declared on June 18, 1812. The Royal Navy was at the peak of its power with two hundred and nineteen ships of the line and two hundred ninety-six frigates. The United States navy consisted of seventeen fighting ships and several gun boats and schooners. James Madison, president of the United States, was intimidated by the vast disparity of the two navies. Madison, along with his cabinet, prudently decided that all U.S. warships would remain in port.

Captain Hull was in Washington during the outbreak of war, and met with the Secretary of Navy, Paul Hamilton. He convinced Hamilton that in a fair fight, the Americans would stand a chance of victory. Hamilton and Hull arranged an audience with the president. Madison was

convinced and went against the recommendations of his cabinet, authorizing a squadron of warships to leave port. Hull took the *Constitution* out of Annapolis on July 5, intending to meet Commodore John Rogers's five-ship squadron out of New York. Rogers, however, was racing south to intercept a convoy of British merchantmen heading from the West Indies to England,

On the afternoon of July 16th, off Egg Harbor, Hull spotted four ships. All sail was made to see if they were Rogers fleet or the British. The winds were light, and as night approached, Hull maneuvered close enough to flash signals. After receiving no return signal, he determined they were the enemy.

Just before daybreak, on the 18th, two English frigates were spotted about five miles astern. They were the *Belvidera* and *Aeolus*. A large man-of-war *Africa*, and another frigate, *Shannon*, were about ten miles back. The *Shannon* was the flagship of Captain Philip Vere Broke, commander of the British Blockade of New York. The wind died after sunrise the *Constitution* would not respond to the wheel and the bow swung towards the two British frigates. Hull ordered boats to be put into the water to swing them around and pull them away from the enemy. The British did likewise and continued the chase

Finding the British gaining, Hull ordered gangs of sailors with axes to chop out the aft cabin windows. He mounted two cannons in the openings, an 18 and 24 pounder. Two additional guns were added through the ports in the quarterdeck. By seven o'clock, a stern shot was fired, but fell short. During this time *Guerricre* had taken a position

THROUGH THE LUBBERS' HOLE

by Robert Hewitt

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between *Bevidera* and *Shannon*. The English continued to close.

Lieutenant Richard Morris suggested they try kedging. Four hundred fathoms of rope were spliced and tied to small anchors. The anchors were towed to boats to the full extent of the line and dropped into the water. The cable became taut, and the crew grabbed the inboard end of the rope and ran aft with the tackle, pulling the ship forward. The British were surprised to see the American frigate dart forward. They quickly adopted the same tactics and *Belvidera* stayed close. About nine p.m. on July 18th, the two ships fired on each other. In order to lighten his ship, Hull had the men pump out 2,300 gallons of drinking water. Additional boats were added to the *Belvidera*. At 10:30 a strong breeze came up and the boats were brought in. The English ship stayed close.

At nine a.m. the next morning an American merchantman was spotted on the *Constitution's* weather beam. As soon as the British spotted her, they hoisted United States flags, hoping to decoy her. Hull immediately raised the British colors and fired a salvo. The merchant ship decided she had no business in the area and swung about, making her escape.

On July 19th, the winds gradually increased and *Constitution* widened the gap. At 6:30 p.m. a rainsquall blew in dead ahead of *Constitution*. Hull was able to determine it was only a thin gust of rain. Since the British had matched every move, Hull resorted to a bit of clever showmanship. He sent all hands aloft to cast loose all the light sails. The British, noting the frantic haste of the Americans, promptly cut down all their own sails except storm canvas and prepared for a heavy gale.

As soon as *Constitution* entered the concealing sheet of rain, all sails were run up and the frigate raced ahead at full speed. By the time the English were aware of what was happening, *Constitution* was over twelve miles ahead. At about 8 p.m. captain Broke called off the chase and headed north to resume the blockade of New York. The *Guerrie're*, however, pulled into Halifax for repairs. The pursuit lasted for three nights and two days, sixty-six hours in all, and had to be one of the slowest chases in naval history.

Since the blockading English fleet surrounded New York, Hull set a course for Boston. After fitting out, he headed north for the Saint Lawrence River, where he seized two prizes on August 10th and 11th. On August 15th he recaptured the U.S. brig *Adeline*, taken by the British earlier that year. On August 17th, Hull overtook the U.S. privateer, *Decatur*. Her captain, William Nicholas, informed him that a large warship was in the area, Hull immediately took chase. On August 18th the warship was spotted under light sail, and seemed to be waiting for *Constitution* to overtake her.

At 4:10 the British frigate hoisted her flag. It was the *Guerrie're*, commanded by Darces. William Orne, a prisoner on the *Guerrie're* was captain of an American brig, earlier captured by Darces. *Guerrie're* opened with a broadside but all fell short. He swung his ship about and fired another broadside. In response to the attack a

couple of over-anxious sailors fired their bow guns. Hull immediately issued orders that no gun was to be fired until he gave orders. Darces kept trying to maneuver his ship to fire a broadside, but Hull zigzagged to close in. For over an hour the ships continued this tactic. The gunners were becoming anxious and wanted to return the fire, but Hull, while pacing the deck, kept denying them. Finally the two ships were in range, *Guerrie're* fired another salvo, but the shots were high and passed through *Constitution's* rigging. *Constitution* was on *Guerrie're* quarter with only forty yards separating them. "Now boys! Pour it to them", Hull screamed. The command was given with such fervor that Hull split the breeches of his uniform. Each gun had been double shotted, and *Guerrie're* spars could be heard crashing to her smoke-filled deck.

A British gunner, who watched his shot bounce off of *Constitution's* triple-planked hull shouted, "good God, her sides must be made of iron". That gave rise to the frigates nickname, "Old Ironsides". Captain Orne, on board the *Guerrie're* later wrote: "suddenly a tremendous salvo smashed into *Guerrie're* and the ship lurched and trembled as her mizzenmast was shot away" *Guerrie're's* crew tried to clear the wreckage as *Constitution* drew ahead and fired another salvo. Darces tried to bring his ship behind *Constitution* and rake her stern. Hull anticipated this move, and swung his ship to port, but *Guerrie're's* bowsprit locked in *Constitution's* rigging. Bugles from both vessels sounded "away all boarders", but heavy seas prevented either party from attempting to board.

Seven marines were stationed on each of *Constitution's* mast tops. The best marksman firing muskets while the other six loaded. Captain Darces was struck in the shoulder. When a British shot slashed through the topgallant mast of *Constitution*, the flag dropped to the deck. John Hogan, grabbed the ensign, climbed the rigging, and lashed the colors to the mast.

Suddenly the surging waves broke the vessels free, but *Guerrie're's* foremast came crashing down, taking the mainmast with it. *Guerrie're* was now a helpless hulk, but her flag flew defiantly from the stump of the mizzenmast. *Constitution* moved back a short distance and fired broadsides until the British struck her colors.

Lieutenant George Read and a prize crew were sent over to the *Guerrie're*. The lieutenant saluted the English captain and said, "Captain Hull presents his compliments, sir, and wishes to know if you have struck your flag?" Darces answered, "well I don't know, our mizzenmast is gone, our mainmast and foremast are gone- I think on the whole you might say we have struck our colors".

With thirty holes below her waterline and her decks awash, *Guerrie're* was left to sink. Darces was put aboard the first boatload of prisoners brought over to the *Constitution* and was escorted to Hull's cabin. The wounded captain painfully unclasped his sword and handed it to the victor. Hull gently pushed the blade aside and said: "No, Captain, I'll not take a sword from one who knows so well how to use it, but I will trouble you for your hat"



SAN DIEGO SHIP MODELERS' GUILD

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The next meeting will be
Wednesday, 10 February 2009
aboard the Berkeley at 7:00pm



Topmen climbing aloft on *Californian*.