



SAN DIEGO SHIP MODELERS' GUILD

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



GUILD MEETING REPORT 10 March 2010

Guildmaster Bill Grolz called the meeting to order at 1905. Twenty-one persons were present. There were no new members or guests but an old member returned after a prolonged absence. Richard Strange was present and he indicated it was his intention to attend more often. Welcome back!

Purser's Report: Balance as of 31 January 2010 was \$<redacted>. Subsequent expenditures included \$<redacted> for renewal of "Ships in Scale" magazine subscription and \$<redacted> for the newsletter. Income included \$<redacted> in dues and interest. Balance as of 28 February 2010 was \$<redacted>.

Old Business:

- Family Day at the Museum. Robert Riddoch reported that upcoming Family Days would be 09 May, 12 September and 30 December. These are days when the Guild could provide volunteers to provide model making mentoring to children. Robert indicated he planned on working 09 May and requested one volunteer to work with him.

- San Diego County Fair. This year, the San Diego County Fair runs from 11 June until 05 July, with the first three Mondays being closed. This year's theme is "Taste the Fun".

--The Fair is open 11-6 weekdays and 10-6 weekends. Boothworkers are requested to be on station at least a half hour before the fair opens. If you are unable to work the shift currently scheduled, contact Bill Grolz, Ron Hollod or Robert Hewitt.

--Tickets and parking passes will be provided at a later date. Chuck Seiler requested that the tickets and passes be picked up beforehand and distributed at the May meeting. The arrival of tickets/passes last year by mail was last minute and was the cause of great woe resulting in unwarranted wailing and gnashing of teeth in the case of some first weekend boothworkers.

--Applications for model entry into the Design in Wood are still available in the model shop. Applications must be submitted by 30 April and models must be delivered to the Fair by 30 June. Judging is open to scratch and modified kit-built models.

- Election. Pursuant to Guild By-Laws, an election of Guild officers was conducted from nominations made during the February meeting. Surprisingly, all incumbents squeaked by in a landslide. No ACORN associates were noted in the area. Guild Officers for 2010 are:

- Guild Website. Bill Grolz reported that he spoke to Kevin Sheehan regarding the Guild piggybacking onto the Museum website. The Guild currently has an information page that needs to be updated and would like to include more, such as adding the newsletter. This looks do-able but will get more details in the future.

New Business:

- The Ventura Maritime Museum is having an Expo and sale at the Museum 01-31 MAY 2010. They are inviting Guild members to display models and to provide models for sale. The VMM will charge 15% on the sale of any model. If interested, contact Bill Connelly (805) 984-6260.

- Rich Durham reported that the International Plastic Model Society (IPMS) will be holding a show/swap meet and contest 05 June 2010 at the San Diego Air and Space Museum Annex, Gillespie Field, El Cajon.

--Ships would be in 2 categories: 1/451 and smaller, 1/450 and larger.

--Cost to enter the swap meet/show area is \$3.00. This is the same weekend as the Air Show at Gillespie Field. Air show events are easily seen from Museum Annex location.

OFFICERS



Guild Master
Bill Grolz

First Mate
Chuck Seiler

Purser
Ron Hollod

Editor
Katherine Pogue

Log Keeper
Bob McPhail

Newsletter Distribution
Robert Hewitt

Write-Ups
Dave Dana

Photographs
John Wickman

Established in 1972
by BOB WRIGHT
& RUSS MERRILL



SHOW AND TELL

March 2010

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FAIR AMERICAN **Don Dressel**

Don Dressel's masterful Fair American has been installed in its case and is now fully rigged and the anchors have been installed. The rigging, decoration, and guns were all made from scratch. A wide variety of woods - box, pear, rose and more enhance the ship's beauty. Don constructed the case from mahogany and plexiglass and mounted the model inside on a marble stand. There is lots of conjecture as to what brig this actually was. There were 12 - 14 brigs at the time that were called Fair American. This configuration of the ship is based on a model in the Rogers Collection at Annapolis. At 90' she was small, she flies the North Carolina flag and there was indeed a Fair American in the North Carolina Navy at the time of the American revolution.



CHESAPEAKE 17 KAYAK **Christina Pogue**

This neat little model is Christina Pogue's first completed ship model, made from a Midwest products kit in 1:12 scale. The prototype Chesapeake 17 Sea Kayak is produced by



Chesapeake Light Craft for construction by amateur builders. It is a high performance boat, combining the crisp handling and good looks of the hard-chined, V-bottomed West Greenland style hull design with the long waterline and high volume of modern expedition sea kayaks. Christina liked the wood work and putting on the accessories. She should be ready for some rigging now!

HMS PRINCE OF WALES **Rich Durham**

A Tamiya scale 1:350 KGV Class battleship completed kit was shown by Rich Durham.

rich added super details to the kit - metal barrels, photo-etch and rigging detail. He replaced some mast pieces with stainless steel tubing and bronze rod. Taking some damage in the process, HMS Prince of Wales



successfully prevented the the infamous German battleship DMS Bismark from escaping the North Sea in 1940. Later, she carried Winston Churchill to a secret war planning meeting with US President Franklin Roosevelt. She then deployed to the Far East to impress and deter the Japanese from attacking Malaysia and the East Indies, which they did anyway, the same day they attacked Pearl Harbor. While trying to disrupt Japanese invasion landings, the Prince of Wales was shadowed and on December 12, 1941 Japanese torpedo bombers attacked and sunk her off Singapore. She was the first ship sunk at sea by an aircraft.

CHARLES W. MORGAN **Royce Privett**

More Progress on the Charles W. Morgan by Royce Privett. The famous 351 ton whaler built in 1841 was originally built full ship-rigged, but shortly after the Civil War she was modified to become a double topsail bark. She's now, at the Mystic Seaport, a beautifully restored monument to the men who built and sailed her. Since last shown in February Royce has completed chains for lashing down the anchor with the anchor lashed down, and placed the mooring chocks. He's finished the crew's head, forecastle companionway, fore hatch, main hatch, and try works. He removed the Starboard bulwarks where the blubber cutting stage will go and added sheathing blocks.



1803 ARMED LAUNCH **Jon Sanford**

Jon Sanford is building an armed Launch from a poor quality Mantua kit he bought on sale. The British Royal Navy used this type in 1803 in coastal patrols, escort services, and, in war, as landing craft and as attack ships against enemies in distress, or anchored. These ships were armed with naval guns of different calibre and type, in the bow cannon or carronade, and in the stern two more light small cannons to be aimed by hand.

This appears to be a plank on frame model, but actually is triple planks on a false frame - three layers of planks laid on precut bulkheads, which were removed, and false ribs added to simulate the frame. Most wood fittings must be made from scratch for many wood and metal fittings were not in the kit. Jon is trying to find missing parts. A member suggested that Model Expo has many parts at no charge, but makes no response to an order. The parts might eventually show up.



"HIGGINS" BOAT **John B. Sauvajot**

This is a "Higgins" boat or landing barge, of which over 8,000 were built in World War II to ferry troops through surf from transport ships to shore beaches and return for another load of troops and vehicles. These typically carried 31 assault troops and their equipment and were armed with 30 calibre machine guns. John B. Sauvajot's scale 1:35 model is made from a Lindberg LCVP kit #7414. It will be part of

a diorama depicting US troops landing on D-Day (June 6, 1944) at Omaha Beach, Normandy, France. John has partially hand made troops and crew, to show the men in action on the beach and in the craft. He plans a Sherman tank stuck in the sand. The marking on the LCVP depict the LCVP coming from the USS Bayfield (APA-33) which was at Omaha Beach for the first wave of assault troops and rangers. John's report stimulated interesting discussion of "Higgins" boats - made of wood built for one use, but Us and French forces still used some original boats in Vietnam. Andy Powers described using a Higgins boat to rescue Peace Corps hostages taken by rebels in South East Asia.



BLUENOSE **Andy Powers**

"Not much progress," Andy Powers said of his nice Bluenose Model Shipways kit a-building. He is starting the rigging, but ran out of triangular deadeyes because he broke some trying to file grooves. Royce Privett offered some replacements. Andy finished the ship's dory in natural oil, rather than painting it gray. He scratch made oars for the dory by shaping a 1/4 inch dowel, holding it in a Dremel tool, and sanding the shaft.



THROUGH THE LUBBERS' HOLE

by **Robert Hewitt**

John Paul Jones sailed *Ranger* and her prize to Brest on May 8, 1778. His crew was sulkier than ever and Jones had to again pay them off out of his own pocket. He also had to deal with prisoners and the bureaucracy of paper work on the prizes, all in French.

During this time no commission was given to him and he wrote countless letters to Franklin and others. He was pleading for a worthy command, and became quite irritated. The war was happening without him.

In November a big East Indian ship, designed to carry heavy guns was an option to him. Finally in February 1779, he obtained command of her. The ship, *Duc de Duras*, was 178 feet stem to stern, with a beam of 39 feet. She had an honorable career of transporting goods and passengers to and from China. Louis XVI purchased the ship specifically for use as an American warship.

Jones quickly changed the name to *Bonhomme Richard* in honor of his patron and mentor, Benjamin Franklin.

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Franklin's "Poor Richard's Almanac" had just been translated into French and was very popular.

Ships of the East Indian companies of France were built to a rigid set of specifications. The French ships of this period were at their zenith and outclassed the British. They were narrower and had a pronounced knuckle at the waterline and below forming two distinct bilge chines.

Jones must have enjoyed *Richard's* great cabin. There was a spacious drawing room and dining room bathed in light from large wrap-around windows that opened into a balcony enclosed by gold balustrade and carvings. The decks were veneered with parquet. His private sleeping cabin adjoined to starboard.

Generations of historians have exaggerated somewhat her condition as tired, leaky and rotten. She was fourteen years old when she came to Jones. This was ripe middle age for a ship of that time. Unquestionably she contained rot. Most ships of that time were overbuilt and they all had some rot, which was dealt with until it could no longer be repaired, and the ship was then disposed of.

Richard's log records that she leaked especially when she was working hard to weather. Again, all ships leaked when working to weather, without causing undo alarm. That is what pumps were for.

Her sailing qualities were not what Jones had hoped for. She liked a good wind and sailed best with lots of it. In favorable circumstances *Richard* was capable of logging ten knots.

In light airs she was a clunker. Captain Landais of *Alliance* noted in his log that in a smooth sea he needed only topsails to keep up with *Richard* under full sail. The inability to sail in light airs was to be the death of her.

Jones also needed guns and was able to obtain a main battery of twenty-eight twelve-pounders. He also obtained six eighteen-pounders, which he mounted aft in the lower deck. The forward five gunports were unarmed and at some point caulked closed.

The entire fitting out was completed in June 1779. *Bonhomme Richard's* crew consisted of three hundred and eighty officers and men. A squadron was formed with four other ships. *Alliance*, *Pallas*, *Le Cerf*, and *La Vengeance*.

Alliance, a new thirty-six gun American built frigate was under a French captain, Pierre Landais. History records Landais as being clinically insane. *Pallas* was a French thirty-two-gun frigate captained by Dennis Cottineau. *Le Cerf* was a large cutter of sixteen guns with a six pound shot. She had a crew of one hundred and fifty seven men. *La Vengeance*, was a brigantine with twelve four-pound guns and a crew of sixty-six.

The squadron sailed on June 12 and *Richard* and *Alliance* had a nighttime collision. Returning to Lorient, a new bowsprit for *Richard* and a new mizzenmast for *Alliance* were fitted.

At last, on August 14, 1779 the squadron sailed to the North Sea where they were to raid the British Isles. On August 23, a small prize was taken off the southwest coast of Ireland. That evening they were becalmed without steerage.

Jones sent seven men in a boat to tow the ship's stem around in hopes of catching a favorable wind. This was a mistake. The sailors who volunteered were all Irish. With their Fair Isle in sight through the evening haze they slipped their line and pulled for home. Another boat was sent chasing, but

they were captured on shore. More importantly was that the enemy was alerted to the squadron's presence and force. On the whole, it was not a particularly auspicious beginning.

After losing two boats and their crews, Jones finally caught favorable winds and headed north, teaming up with the rest of his fleet. From September 1st to the 14th, 1779, they were able to capture six ships. Jones again wanted to raid English soil, this time at Leith, Edinburgh's seaport. His thought was to hold the town ransom in threat of burning it to the ground.

On September 16th, he was slowly beating up the Firth of Forth toward Leith. Word was out that Jones was on the loose again, and all the ports in the area were arming themselves for his attack.

A local proprietor sent out a small cutter, armed, but without gunpowder, to find a Royal Navy frigate patrolling in the area. He needed powder and also needed to alert the captain of the frigate *Romney* of Jones' presence. He was not able to find the frigate but found another British warship. The *Bonhomme Richard* under British colors with English speaking officers and Royal Navy style uniforms.

The captain unknowingly gave Jones a full report of the towns' arming against the pirate Jones. After giving the captain a cask of powder and thanking him for the information, Jones sent him on his way, to the delight and merriment of his crew. The next day a severe westerly gale blew and drove *Richard* all the way to the North Sea. Jones abandoned the project, as the element of surprise had been lost.

Jones sailed south, taking two more prizes. On September 23rd, he spotted a large convoy of forty-one merchant ships. Firing a gun to signal a chase to his fleet, *Richard* set studding sails and royals and cleared for action.

Captain Richard Pearson of H.M.S. *Serapis* saw Jones at about the same time. He ordered the convoy north, and headed south to engage Jones at about 2:30 that afternoon. *Serapis*, a new but obsolete forty-four gun fifth rate ship was still faster and better armed than RICHARD was. At 7:15 the two ships were within musket shot of each other and the wind died to a whisper, the worst possible circumstance for the heavy sailing *Richard*.

Jones planed to get as close as possible to *Serapis* and identified himself as *Princess Royal*, an actual British East Indianman with some similarity to *Richard*. He stalled as long as he could and finally hauled the British colors down and raised the American flag.

A lone musket popped from *Richard's* top, and both ships fired their broadsides into one another. *Serapis* fired double shots into *Richard's* hull. *Richard* fired double bar shot at SERAPIS' rigging to neutralize its sailing advantage.

The two ships sailed in a parallel course and fired again. One of the eighteen pounders in *Richard's* lower gun deck burst and killed or wounded thirty men. When Jones learned of this, he ordered the deck abandoned. He would fight as a frigate.

Serapis, on the lee side was blanketed and lost way, then as *Richard* pulled ahead she crossed *Richard's* stern firing a broadside into it. *Richard* was too sluggish to respond and took another broadside in her elegant stern galleries. A dozen iron balls traveled the length of her decks spraying splinters, killing men and erupted through the bow of Jones' ship. *Serapis* was able to back her sails and fire two more broadsides into *Richard*.

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At 7:45 Jones's position was awful at best. He had suffered heavy casualties while inflicting few. His gamble at crippling *Serapis'* rigging failed, as the Englishman still outsailed him. There was nothing to prevent SERAPIS from standing off and cutting *Richard* to pieces.

Pearson instead tried another maneuver. Drawing ahead he made a turn across *Richard's* bow. Jones drove his jibboom into the mainmast in hopes of boarding with his still formidable force of Marines. The boarding party was beaten back and Jones was still taking fire he could not return. He backed his sails and wrenched free.

Again sailing parallel, *Serapis'* sailing advantage was finally lost and Jones pulled across her bow and caught the enemy's bowsprit aft and hung up in *Richard's* mizzen. Jones personally seized *Serapis'* jibstay and tied it to his mizenmast. She was finally caught.

Drifting along, *Serapis* stern swung around with unopened gunports toward *Richard*. Jones ordered his men to the tops and they fired down on the decks of *Serapis*. The entire British crew was ordered below.

Alliance suddenly appeared and fired a broadside into both ships. She turned and fired again killing men in both ships. Mad Landis sailed off again as mysteriously as he had arrived.

Richard's carpenter, inspecting the hold found five feet of water. Taking two warrant officers with him to find Jones, they could not locate him in the smoke and chaos. They assumed he was dead and began yelling: "Quarters! Quarters! Our ship is sinking". Jones appeared out of the smoke and threw a pistol at them, decking one. "Have you struck?" called Pearson, "Do you call for quarters?" Jones replied: "No, I'll sink, but I'm dammed if I'll strike!" or something like that. It has evolved in history to: "I have not yet begun to fight"! The firing from both sides again renewed with fury.

At 10 p.m. *Alliance* again appeared and fired another broadside into both ships, vanishing again into the smoke. One of Jones' topmen, a Scot named Bill Hamilton crawled out on the main yard and lobbed a grenade into the main hatch of *Serapis* touching off a box of powder cartridges, killing or wounding some fifty men. It was the end.

The explosion caused by Bill Hamilton was enough for Captain Pearson and he lowered the British flag. All of the guns became silent. A boarding party entered *Serapis* and some British sailors that were unaware of the surrender started a small skirmish. This was quickly dealt with and Pearson was taken to Jones aboard *Richard*.

Pearson presented his sword to Jones who invited him to his cabin for a glass of wine. The two of them stood in the smoldering wreck of what was once an elegant cabin. One deck below had been completely shot away and it was amazing that the quarterdeck did not collapse. Fires burned unchecked. There were bodies lying everywhere. The pumps on both ships were running.

The battle had lasted for three and half-hours. Now the real work began. The fires were brought under control. The two ships were wrenched free causing *Serapis* to lose her mainmast, taking with it the mizzen topmast and the foretopgallant mast.

Jones gathered up the rest of his fleet and put all of their crews working to save the two ships. In the case of

Bonhomme Richard it was a futile attempt as everyone but Jones perceived. He had his exhausted crew working through the night and the following day. As dawn broke the remaining fires were finally extinguished.

Richard's hull barely floated, but her rigging was in good enough condition to set sail. With *Alliance* towing *Serapis* they headed for Holland. All that day there was the steady clanking of the pumps punctuated by the splash of bodies dropped over the side as the wounded perished.

By evening the barometer had begun to fall. As the breeze picked up, all of the wounded were transferred from *Richard*. Efforts to save her became efforts to evacuate her. The following Sunday morning by 9 a.m. the pumps fell silent and the last boat pulled away from her. Jones, realizing he still had personnel possessions on board ordered midshipman Fanning to make a last trip to recover his papers and money.

Approaching slowly, Fanning saw water pouring into her side and ordered the boat away. As they cleared, *Richard* listed to port. Her head settled and she sank bow first. Jones watched her sink from the deck of *Serapis*.

It took the squadron eight days to travel the two hundred miles to Holland. After arriving in neutral Holland, Jones found that the British blockaded him. He had to deal with the prisoners and the selling of the prizes. Pearson at that time became sulky and aloof.

Later, back in England Pearson was court-martialed for loosing his ship. He was exonerated as he did save the convoy. He was also knighted. Hearing of this, Jones made his famous quip, "Next time we meet, I'll make a lord of him".

The ships were all put under the French flag and were allowed to stay in neutral waters. On November 12, 1779, *Alliance* was given to Jones, and that day he was told to leave. He reluctantly took command of a dirty, ill cared for ship. He also transferred the remaining crew from *Richard* and there was bad blood between the men due to the firing on *Richard* during the battle.

The Dutch sailed six ships of the line into the harbor and anchored within gunshot of *Alliance*. Jones held his position, careening and cleaning *Alliance*.

On December 27, the wind came up hard and blew the blockading British fleet off shore. Jones slipped his cable at 11 a.m. and raced southwest. The fifty-two-ship blockade fleet made an attempt to catch him.

Jones added all the sail he could. There was some concern that they would carry away a mast. Jones reply was "We will either carry this sail or drag it." He rounded Ushant, captured an English brig and headed to Lorient. Jones went through his usual modifications to *Alliance*, cutting down spars, rearranging ballast and all of the other alterations that he deemed necessary. Years later, Captain John Barry commented that Jones made *Alliance* the fastest ship in the navy.

This time on land Jones found himself the toast of the capital in Paris. He was invited everywhere, decorated by Louis XVI with the Order of Merit, and was presented with a gold sword. The ladies of Paris adored him. His stay became prolonged.

Landis returned to Lorient, and with some scheming with Arthur Lee, Ben Franklin's archrival, took over command of *Alliance*. Jones seemed relieved to see the last of the fine, fast frigate with its unhappy crew.



SAN DIEGO SHIP MODELERS' GUILD



The next meeting will be
Wednesday, 14 April 2010
aboard the Berkeley at 7:00pm



A pelican hitching a ride on the *Californian*.