



SAN DIEGO¹ SHIP MODELERS' GUILD

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NEWSLETTER

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



GUILD MEETING REPORT

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Bill Grolz opened the meeting. There were no guests or new members. The editor of the newsletter had no report. Any questions or comments should be sent to: <redacted>. The purser's report was read by Ron Hollod. The balance as of 30 April 2010 was \$<redacted>.

Kevin Sheehan, the museum liaison provided an update on Museum activities. The Museum will hold its first festival of sail on Labor Day weekend. Volunteers are requested for this event. Sign up sheets will be provided on the BERKELEY. The Museum also plans to sell some of the items that the museum can no longer use. Keel laying of SAN SALVADOR will be September 29 at Spanish Landing. For a future exhibit, Dr. Sheehan would like Indian water and/or sailing craft. The Family Day "modeling" event was canceled due to a lack of volunteers. Tentative date for the next event will be in September. An ongoing "field day" of the model shop is ongoing. Items will be sorted and either kept or discarded. There was some discussion about the meeting place for the Guild meetings. The date (second Wednesday of each month) will remain the same but the location (due to other events) may change. It is recommended that members contact the Museum for updates prior to the meeting.

The San Diego County Fair was discussed. The fair will be open June 11 and close July 5. Hours will be 1100 – 1800 for booth staffing Monday to Friday and 1000 to 1800 on weekends. Tickets and badges (as needed) will be mailed out prior to the fair. If you are unable to make an assigned day, please contact Robert Hewitt, Ron Hollod, or Bill Grolz. Chuck Seiler will make up some posters of models completed by Guild members for the Fair booth.

Tony Bunch mentioned that the drawings for USS SAN DIEGO are not that good. He is trying to get better plans. Meanwhile, the hull of SAN DIEGO is in Tony's shop.

The annual birthday party is scheduled for the AUGUST meeting. The JULY meeting will discuss this event. For the JULY meeting, there will also be an auction. Members are requested to bring in a model (under construction or complete) for the JULY meeting.

Chari Wessel, lead gunner on CALIFORNIAN, reports that recently she completed three qualifications. She is now also qualified as: a near costal mate, inland master, and an operator of an uninspected passenger vessel of 100 tons or less.

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

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SS SAVANNAH **Bob McPhail**

This kit was a 'ship in a bottle' quick construction kit. The plastic parts were painted appropriate colors. Rigging line was not part of the kit. The kit was probably made in the 1950s since it appears to have been in a 'very old' looking box. *Savannah* was a 'hybrid' sailing ship/side wheel steamer built in 1818. She was the first steam ship to cross the Atlantic. However, only a small part of the voyage was actually steam powered. *Savannah* was not a commercial success and was converted back into a sailing ship. She wrecked at Long Island in 1821.



LE TONNOT **Bob Duncan**

The corvette *Le Tonnot*, a late 18th century French privateer, was particularly representative of generally small fast merchant vessels which carried a large area of sail and were highly armed with small calibre guns. Unlike "pirate" ships, these privateer vessels flew their national flag. The fragmentary nature of the historical information available does not allow a complete history of *Le Tonnot*. Her name, appropriate to her purpose, translates as "Thunderer." Several sailing ships of this period bore the same name (for example, the much more famous 80-gunner which was sunk at Abukir in 1798).



CHARLES W. MORGAN **Royce Privett**

Since last shown in March, quite a bit has been accomplished. Port and starboard lashing rails and pin rails, copper cooling tank, scrap hopper, work bench with vise, chicken coop under the work bench, main mast fife rail, bilge pumps, steerage companionway, fluke chain bitt, belly chain bitt, head chain bitt, deck house and berth, vegetable bin, and skylight. During her 80 years and 37 voyages, *Charles W. Morgan* caught and processed more whales than any other whaling ship in history. Built in 1841 at Hillman Brothers Shipyard on the Acushnet River in New Bedford, MA. She was registered at 351 tons. The *Morgan* was originally built as a full-rigged ship, but shortly after the Civil War she was modified to become a double topsail barque. Her whaling days came to an end in 1921 with the decline in whale oil prices. Purchased for Mystic Seaport in 1941, she's now a beautifully restored monument to the men who built and sailed her.



HMS AGAMEMNON **Robert Hewitt**

The model was completed on April 10th, two hundred and twenty nine years after the actual launching. This was quite by accident. The model is the third hull since starting on February of 2008. The first hull of boxwood, split while cutting the gun ports. The second was discarded due to being out of scale. All of the sails and yards were salvaged from the second ship. All of the masts and tops were re-made. The ship is fully rigged with all of the lines covered in "rigging Period Ships" by Lennarth Peterson, or at least a representative piece of wire of the real line.



The carved tupolo sea base was primed, painted and varnished using Floquil oil paints. Because of the paints thinness, the sea carving and the wave peaks were kept sharp. The ships boats are being towed, with lines lashed to the thwarts. There is also a spring line attached to the lee side of the ship. The boats are a Longboat, Pinnace, Skif and a jollywatt. The sailor in the longboat is holding on to the rail as a wave washes up on the starboard side. It was noted that the spritsail yard should be hauled over like the rest of the yards even though it was not carrying a sail. I have my doubts as there would be no reason for this. I would appreciate any information on this sent to 2hewitt@cox.net .

The signal flags on the main mast are a red pennant over 5; which is Nelsons favorite signal "engage the enemy more closely". From "Flags for Ship Modelers and Marine Artists" by Percival Marshall; this is an Admirals signal and Nelson was not an Admiral when he commanded Agamemnon. A bit of poetic license was taken in this. The tupolo sea was made, and then the glass case made to fit the sea. The glass case was made at Karl's Glass in La Mesa. A cardboard cutout was made of the case and was used to fit the picture frame molding made by CT Arts and Crafts of Orange Ca. The brass plack was made by Southwest trophy on Park Boulevard. This model took nine months and ten days.

THROUGH THE LUBBERS' HOLE

Cairo: The Details by Robert Hewitt

The late Fred Frass was one of the premier modelers in our guild. His work can be seen at the Aerospace Museum in Balboa Park. His model of the U.S.S. YORKTOWN (CV-10) is over nine feet long. He also built models which were displayed at the first NRG conference here and at the SMA conferences on the Queen Mary. The USS GEARING (DD-710) was the first of one hundred and five ships. The USS FARRAGUT (DLG-6) was the first of ten guided-missile destroyers built from the keel up. He also built the SS UNITED VICTORY which was the first of four hundred and fifty seven victory ships built by the Oregon Shipbuilding Company in Portland, Oregon. One of Fred's desires was to build a "first of" a famous ship. The Cairo, one of the first river gunboats of the Civil War, fits into this category. While researching this ship, I found that it was a first, but not the first built.



CAIRO MODEL

CAIRO was one of seven City Class river gunboats assigned by federal contract to James B Eads and designed by

Cairo: The Details by Robert Hewitt

Samuel M. Pook. The vessels were nicknamed the "Pook Turtles". All were formally named after river ports in the Mississippi basin: Cairo, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Carondelet, Mound City, Louisville, and Pittsburg. There were two more river boats which were converted along with the new build and were considered part of the class. Of these nine boats, three were destroyed in the opening of the Mississippi. Others were sunk and salvaged over and over. The Pook Turtles remained a critical service for the Union fleet in the river war on the Mississippi.

The "turtles" were ironclad gunboats derived from the common American steamer. They were flat-bottomed with a knuckle bilge. There were three keels and two rudders. There was a sloped casement battery just inches above the waterline. The paddlewheel was enclosed inside the casement. The rounded top of the wheel casing is visible on top of the casement. The 175 foot hull was divided into seven watertight compartments. The beam was 51 feet 2 inches; displacement, 888 tons; armament; six 32 pound shot, three 64 pound shot, three 42 pound shot, and one 12 pound shot. There were five coal-fired tube boilers thirty-six inches diameter x twenty-four feet long. A two-cylinder engine, 22 inch bore x 72 inch stroke driving a 22 foot diameter paddle wheel. The fuel consumption was .885 tons per hour (1,770 pounds). The maximum speed was six knots per hour. The crew was 175 sailors and officers. The 1861 cost was \$ 101,808.00. The propulsion system is the only known original western rivers type steamboat engine in existence today. When raised, Smithsonian experts reported that the rubber hoses were in like-new condition after one-hundred and two years of submersion.

To power their machinery, the Cairo and her sister ships carried five saucer-shaped coal-fired tube boilers. A transverse steam drum mounted above the aft end of the boilers acted as a manifold, distributing steam to the two main engines and the auxiliary engine. The furnace gasses were piped up a pair of lofty stacks aligned with the forward end of the boiler room. The auxiliary engine, known as the "doctor", fed steam to the capstans, pumps, a silt filter, and other machinery around the boat. The classic walking-beam engine was ruined during salvage. The hull broke apart at the places of least rigidity; the boiler room and the paddle wheel race.

The salvaged engines were completely researched and restored by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) which published diagrams, photos, and full specifications which are available online.

During early 1862, Cairo served in operations on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, assisting in the occupation of Clarksburg, Tennessee, bombarding and occupying Fort Pillow, and fighting in the battles of Plum Point and Memphis. After experience in action, captains of the gunboat fleet concurred that their armor was not thick enough at 2 ½ inches and the crew was kept busy adding thicknesses of railroad iron as time allowed, almost until the day she was sunk.

When Memphis was captured, the ironclad squadron was transferred to the Vicksburg theatre, where General Ulysses S. Grant had launched his famous offensive to encircle the stubborn forces. During mid-March, five of the Pook ironclads took part in the hazardous Black Bayou expedition. The ships



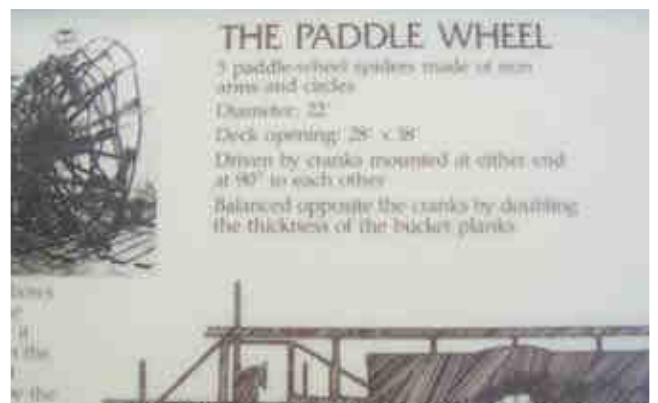
CAIRO



CAIRO RUDDER



CAIRO WHEEL



CAIRO PADDLE WHEEL

were under fire and confronting Confederate obstructions every yard of a forty-mile inland voyage behind enemy lines. None of the ironclads were lost, but their attempt to flank Vicksburg was a failure. Arriving above Vicksburg at Helena, Arkansas, Cairo's crew was engaged in suppressing smuggling across the river, salvaging coal from a sunken barge, and supervising river traffic which included steady flows of Confederate prisoners bound to Vicksburg for exchange with Union prisoners heading upstream.

It was in this campaign that Cairo met her doom. Her commander, LTC Thomas Seifridge, was designated to lead a thrust up the Yazoo, a tributary of the Mississippi that empties into the main river just northwest of Vicksburg. The purpose of the mission was to clear the river of torpedoes. Seifridge was given specific instructions to let trained men disable the treacherous devices. On December 12, 1862, the flotilla entered the mine infested portion of the Yazoo, some sixteen miles from the river's mouth. Unbeknownst to the Yanks, the stretch of river they were about to invade was the principal proving ground for black powder mines in the Confederacy, and was staffed by the leading experts in the craft. As the Union fleet inched into their territory, the Southern soldiers were watching from dugouts along the levee, ready to explode the mines manually. LTC Seifridge, impatient with the slow pace of operations, ordered the Cairo forward. As she swept along near the bank, the Rebel watchers activated electric triggers that exploded two mines under her hull, blowing huge holes in the bow. Seifridge turned her bow toward the bank, but it was clear Cairo was in trouble. The remainder of the squadron hastened to assist, taking off the men in a rushed evacuation. The Cairo rapidly settled and sank in thirty-six feet of muddy river water, her bow nudging the east bank of the river. In seven minutes, all that could be seen was the tops of the twin twenty-eight foot smokestacks and two flagstaffs still poking above the water. No one was killed in the incident. The Cairo became the first warship ever sunk by a "torpedo" or underwater mine. This is the "first" that reminded me of our guild member, the late Fred Frass, however, first-built is preferable to first sunk.

No attempt was made to refloat Cairo. The Yanks pulled down the smokestacks and flagstaffs before departing the scene to discourage the confederates from salvaging the guns. With the passing of crewmen and witnesses, the location of the wreck eventually was forgotten. It was through dedicated research in the 1960's that the wreck was discovered; beautifully preserved by the cool blue clay river mud with a treasure trove of historic artifacts. The wreck was raised in 1964 and was broken into three pieces. The pieces were stabilized and reassembled in Ingalls Shipyard in Pascagoula, on the Gulf Coast. Title was passed to the National Parks Service and Cairo is now on display at the Vicksburg National Military Park



CAIRO ENGINE



CAIRO BOILERS



CAIRO GUN



CAIRO GUN PORT



CAIRO
ARMOR



SAN DIEGO
SHIP MODELERS' GUILD



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The next meeting will be
Wednesday, 9 June 2010
aboard the Berkeley at 7:00pm



Visiting steam yacht *Cangarda*, steaming in San Diego Bay