



August 2020

NEWSLETTER

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Happy Guild Anniversary, Guild Members!



From **The Rime of the Ancient Mariner** (text of 1834) by Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

**“O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
’Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—”**

Perhaps a similar sentiment can be found to the Ancient Mariner’s after he returned from his harrowing voyage south of the line to a wedding party? The Guild looks forward to again meeting aboard the *Berkeley* with our own goodly company when this troublesome pandemic time passes!

From The Quarterdeck

by the Guild Master

What’s special about August 17th? That’s the day of our founding in 1971 by Russ Merrill and Bob Wright. This year we celebrate 49 years as the San Diego Ship Modelers Guild: congratulations to all Members, past and present.

While we won’t be meeting as usual to acknowledge our anniversary, I would like to invite each Member to start considering how we might celebrate our 50th Anniversary a year from now.

On behalf of your Officers, I can say that we think our Guild should commemorate next year’s golden anniversary in a style befitting 50 years: we look forward to your ideas and suggestions... think big!

Fair winds and following seas,

Alex Roel



The San Diego Ship Modelers Guild is affiliated with and supports the Maritime Museum of San Diego
1492 N. Harbor Drive, San Diego, CA 92101

14 JULY 2020 GUILD MEETING: CANCELLED

In the absence of a meeting in July, the newsletter will be composed of offerings from Guild members and pictures of projects and sundry topics. **Participate and connect with the Guild by sending pictures or anything else you have to share to the Editor at newsletter@sdshipmodelersguild.org.** The following are Officer reports for the Guild.

Purser's Report: Purser Jon Sanford is on vacation (without the purse!) and hopefully enjoying himself.

Guild Master Alex Roel reports: "The Nautical Research Guild recently announced the relaunch of their completely redesigned [website](#)... now is a good time to explore (or revisit) this valuable resource.

Our Guild is one of six [Chartered Chapters](#) of the NRG. As a Chartered Chapter, we display a specialized version of the NRG's logo on both our website and newsletter. We also enjoy a featured listing on the NRG's [Modeling Clubs](#) page and more significantly, our Guild is able to take advantage of the other benefits of being a Chartered Chapter.

Several Members of our Guild also belong to the NRG: in fact, our own **Mike Lonnecker** is an NRG Director. The Officers of YOUR Guild encourage you to consider becoming a part of THEIR Guild."



Breaking News by Anonymous: A road trip for Members is in the works!

Presentations Chair Ed Torrence is "dotting the I's and crossing the T's" on an



agreement with Naval Base Point Loma's Model Shop to tour their facility at a future date. See last month's July SDSMG newsletter page 2 article about this site. This should prove to be an interesting opportunity to fully understand the Navy's use of brass models and their modeling fabrication techniques. Naval Base credentialing requirements and a date to follow...



On The Web by Web Master Alex Roel: First Mate Ed Torrence's suggestion for a primer to assist first-time users of our website led to the creation of the new [Explore!](#) page recently. This page also has a sequential checklist of useful pages for new model shipcrafters.

Recently updated is our [About our Mastheads](#) page that describes the various graphic elements of our website masthead and the newsletter's new companion masthead.

Community Build Sails On by the Community Build Leader is on hiatus until meetings resume.

August 2020

Next Meeting scheduled for 11 August, Cancelled. Notice: SDSMG Officers will email an announcement when Meetings resume: **until that time please consider all upcoming meetings cancelled.**

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Next Community Build Meeting Scheduled for 8 August, Cancelled

**17 August
Guild Anniversary,
49 Years Young!**

~~Presentations and Museum Model of the Month Programs~~ have been suspended until Guild Meetings are resumed but they ongoing with this offering from **Former-Guild Master Pete Jaquith**.

Pete moved from the San Diego area some years ago and sends his best wishes to the Guild. An accomplished and notable ship modeler, he reports after taking a few years off working on 1:1 scale shipbuilding projects, he is back into ship modeling. His current build is the 14 Gun Brig *Fair American* and he has sent the Guild a few pictures and a description of his project in progress including a few pictures after completion of the head framing, which he reports is an interesting mini-project in itself. First though, several Guild members have been asking about building display cases so the following is an article by **Pete** discussing how he addressed the topic for one of his models.

Making Ship Model Display Cases

By Peter E. Jaquith

The following techniques were utilized in the fabrication of a display case for my Armed Virginia Sloop, circa 1768. The case includes a mahogany base with formed frame rails, and a fabricated Plexiglass case. The display case is illustrated below: **Armed Virginia Sloop, Circa 1768**



Materials used in fabricating the subject display case included the following:

- (a) 3/4" mahogany plywood for baseboard (obtained from a local cabinet shop –3/8" or 1/2" plywood would be adequate)
- (b) 3/4" x 1 1/2" mahogany for base frame rails (local hardwood supplier)
- (c) 1/4" x 1 1/2" popular for corner reinforcement and glue blocks (Home Depot)
- (d) Dark Mahogany gel stain and Clear Satin gel varnish (Bartley Collection)
- (e) 1/4" wide peel and stick felt strip (Rockler Woodworking and Hardware)
- (f) 1/4" Plexiglass case (local Plexiglass fabricator)
- (g) Plaque (local trophy shop)
- (h) Pedestals (Bluejacket Ship Crafters)

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Making Ship Model Display Cases continued:

Special tools utilized in fabricating the display case included the following:

- (a) Table saw
- (b) Router table
- (c) Miter saw

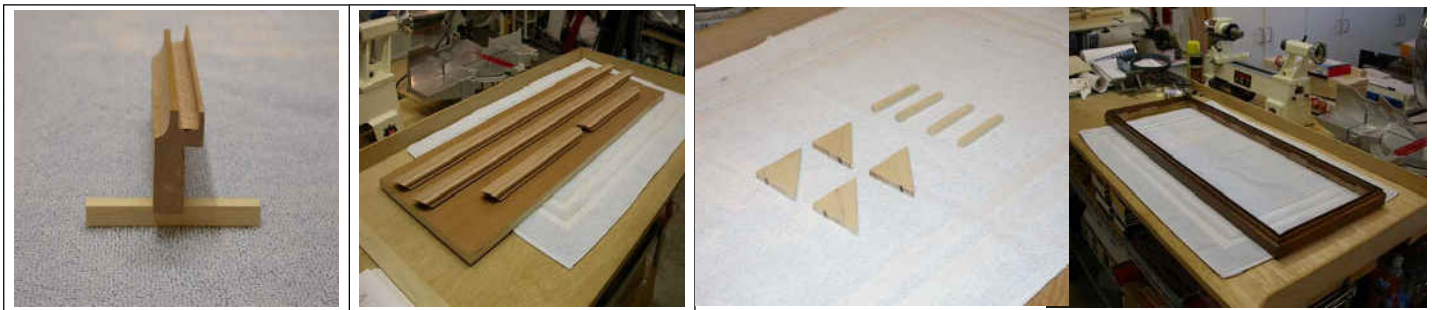
I chose mahogany with a dark mahogany finish as it fit my home décor and provided a good contrast with the model's tallow colored underbody. Alternative base materials might include walnut, cherry, maple, or oak with finish to suit your personal preference.

The 3/4" plywood baseboard was cut to size using a table saw (note that I cut the base board to 4 1/2" in length and 4 1/2" in width over the model dimensions). The 3/4" x 1 1/2" base frame rails were fabricated using a table saw (for the 1/4" x 1" recess) and a router table (for the 5/16" wide x 1/4" deep slot and the 1/4" wide x 3/8" deep cove) as illustrated in Figure 1. The frame rail ends were cut to length using a miter saw with the lengths taken from the baseboard. The corner reinforcement and glue blocks were fabricated from 1/4" x 1 1/2" poplar. The fabricated base components are shown in Figures 2 and 3. Note that for those modelers without access to a table saw and router table, a local cabinet shop may be willing to perform the base fabrication.

After gluing up the base frame rails, I chose to stain and finish the base subassemblies at this point (prior to final assembly), see Figure 4. After staining, varnishing, and rubbing down the finish, the base was assembled as illustrated in Figures 5 and 6. Peel and stick felt tape was fitted to the bottom of the 5/16" x 1/4" slot in-order-to provide a dust tight seating for the Plexiglass case.

The Plexiglass case was purchased from a local Plexiglass fabricator with the size taken directly from the fabricated base. The model was mounted on brass pedestals, and the plaque was purchased at a local trophy shop. The plaque, corner details, and the completed case are illustrated in Figures 7 and 8.

Fabrication of the ship model display case is illustrated in the following photographs:



**Figure 1, Base Frame Rail Cross Section; Figure 2, Baseboard & Frame Rails;
Figure 3, Corner Reinforcing & Glue Blocks; Figure 4, Base Frame Subassembly**

Continued next page

Making Ship Model Display Cases continued:



Figure 5, Base Assembly – Top View; Figure 6, Base Assembly – Bottom View;
Figure 7, Plaque & Corner Details; Figure 8, Completed Display Case

14 Gun Brig *Fair American*, circa 1780

By Pete Jaquith

The pictures display **Pete's** progress with his project.

Article updated July 26, 2020:

The 14 Gun Brig *Fair American*, circa 1780 is based on Model No. 60 of the Henry Huddleston Rodgers ship model collection at the U.S. Naval



Academy Museum, Annapolis, Maryland.

Due to the number of vessels named *Fair American* that participated in the American Revolution and the amount of conflicting data pertaining to these names, it has not been possible to identify the specific vessel the model represents. However, the model is representative of many of the small ships used as privateers during the American War of Independence. The brig *Fair American* had a length of 68' 0", beam of 24' 0", depth of 8' 0", and tonnage of 130 tons.

The model is based on the Model Shipways *Fair American* kit developed by Erik A. Ronnberg, Jr. and updated by Ben Lankford. Additional research was conducted using Steel's Elements of Mastmaking,

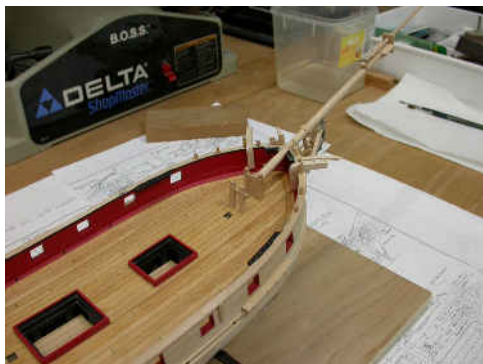


Sailmaking, and Rigging (1794) and by examining the original *Fair American* model at the U.S. Naval Academy. The model is plank on bulkhead construction at 1/4" to the foot scale (1:48) with single planking and scratch-built details/fittings. Paint colors are based on examination of the original Model No. 60 and contemporary practice.



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14 Gun Brig *Fair American* continued:



Planned enhancements to the Model Shipways kit include: (a) main deck planking will incorporate hooked scarphs outboard; (b) quarter deck planking will utilize curved/tapered planks; (c) cannons/carriages will be from Kingshouse Cannons and the Lumberyard; (d) the stern lantern will be from Caldercraft Scale Ship Models; (e) proportional linen rigging line will be from Bluejacket Ship Crafters and Warner Woods West; and, (f) rigging blocks will be from Warner Woods West.

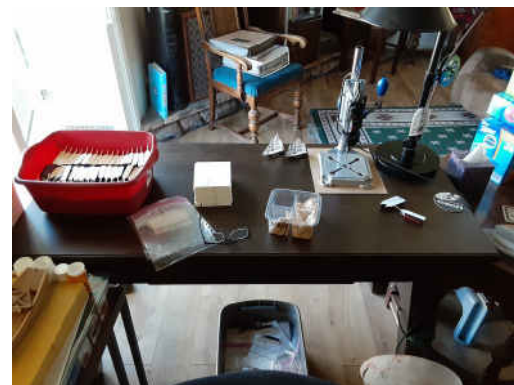
To more fully evaluate these changes, cannon port clearances, bulwark, and hull straking; a Bulwark and Deck at Side mockup was constructed from frame 2 to frame 4.8 starboard.



Show and Tell

The editor thanks those who have contributed to this edition of the newsletter.

Guild Master Alex Roel recently sent members the following message expressing many thanks to **Tom Hairston, Howard Griffus, and Jon Sanford (among others)** who have made this year's **Mini Star** project the most successful to date. "Although this year's Fair was cancelled, the Guild is more than prepared for the next Fair with more than **600 Mini Star** kits available for distribution. A change this year is that we're including an SDSMG business card in each kit as a means of increasing the Guild's visibility." **Alex** also noted "this, like everything in our Guild, does not happen without Members (you) stepping up to volunteer. So, thanks again to all who helped source, cut, paint, print, assemble, package, and transport these kits: I'm sure that **John Wickman** would be incredibly proud to know that his "baby" is in such good hands." The picture to the right shows **Tom Hairston's** work table as he selflessly completes the crafting of the **Mini Star** kits. See the hulls in the plastic tub, two completed models next to the Dremel press, and kit baggies at the ready.





HMS *Bounty* by Dr. William Brown

This model of *Bounty* is the last model superb ship modeler **Dr. William Brown** began working on before he passed on. At the time of **Dr. Brown's** passing in 2019, the Maritime Museum of San Diego's Manager of Collections, **Kevin Sheehan, Ph.D**, noted his passing with the following. "**Dr. William Brown** was an accomplished and internationally recognized ship modeler. The Museum displays many of his models – among the finest are HM Bark *Endeavour*, the *Euterpe*, the USS *Monterey* and the USS *Hartford*." **Tom Hairston** has taken on the task of completing *Bounty* after arranging with the **Brown** family to pick up the model. **Tom** reports that the project is primarily a rigging job following the completion of some minor repairs. The Guild looks forward to seeing **Tom's** progress on this worthy project.

SPIRIT OF DANA POINT, replica of a 1770's privateer schooner

Michael Hite, demonstrating a modeler's curiosity, noticed an anchor mat while visiting the Ocean Institute in Dana Point, CA. He wondered that he had never noticed an anchor with a mat on a model. Thinking it makes perfect sense, he tells that he is adding an anchor mat to his current build and asks the Guild, had anyone ever added an anchor mat to a model or is it modern? If anyone wants to chime in, feel free to contact the editor at newsletter@sdshipmodelersguild.org or any other Guild Officer.



A study of methods to secure anchors from ancient times through the Age of Sail to modern ships like the USS *Midway* (CV-41) pictured to the left could be instructive. Anchors Away!



HMS *Sharke* 1711, the English schooner, By James Pitt Kit by Sergal, 1/50 Scale



James reports his new ship project is underway and he expects to report progress on an enjoyable build. **James** has undertaken various projects during this time including a challenging 1848 Stage Coach build and the building of a Tower Pistol that he found when cleaning a family member's garage. Never be bored! (some puns are just too easy)



USS *Kansas City* (LCS-22)

by Ralph Martin

Scratch Build in progress

Scale 1:96, 1/8 in. = 1 ft.

Ralph reports he began building his model of this Independence-class littoral combat ship that is homeported at Naval Base San Diego without drawings only using photos and printed data. He later found drawings from 1:350 scale plastic kits from Trumpeter and Bronco with a decal location drawing in the back of the instruction book. The helicopter is from a kit and the drone is constructed by 3D printing!



H.M.S. *Ajax* (22), Battle of the River Plate

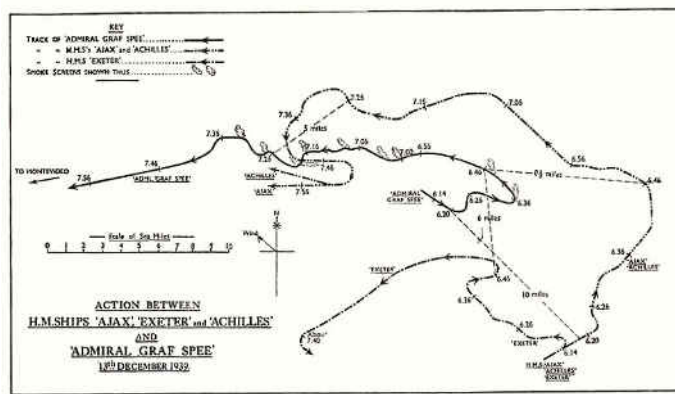
Diorama by Karl Zingheim

Scratch Built

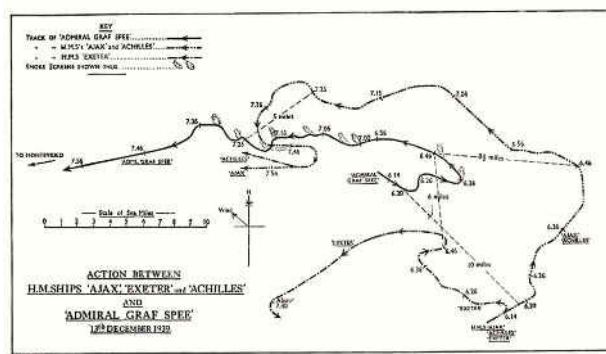
Scale 1/200

Sourcing Wikipedia, during September of 1939 and the early days of WWII, the German heavy cruiser

Admiral Graf Spee with her six 11-inch guns in two turrets could be found raiding commerce in the South Atlantic (she was also called a “pocket battleship”). In response, the British Admiralty sent multiple hunting groups to search for *Admiral Graf Spee*. One of the hunting groups comprised of three Royal Navy cruisers found and engaged their quarry off the estuary of the River Plate close to the coast of Uruguay and Argentina in South America. This became known as **Battle of the River Plate**. As background to the battle see the battle map found on this and re-copied on the next page. The map is found on Wikipedia and sourced “By British Government - From official British report into the cruise of the *Graf Spee* and Battle of the River Plate.”



Battle of the River Plate continued:



Notice how the Royal Navy battle plan had the heavy cruiser HMS *Exeter* with its six 8-inch guns and the two Royal light cruisers HMS *Ajax* and *Achilles* each armed with eight 6-inch guns took up positions to split the tactical advantage of *Graf Spee*'s superior guns. *Exeter* was heavily damaged in the engagement but *Exeter* was able to critically damage *Graf Spee*'s fuel system with an 8-inch shell. *Graf Spee* was forced into the port of Montevideo to seek repairs. The smaller Royal cruisers were moderately damaged but able to sustain pressure on the *Graf Spee* and her Captain and

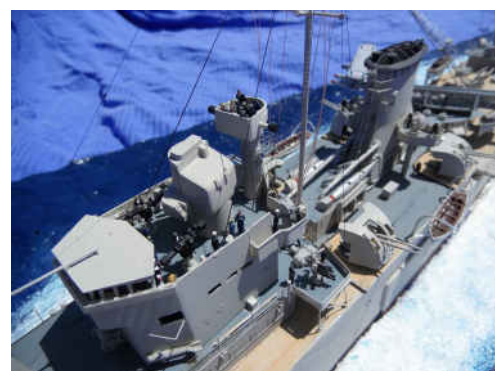
eventually *Graf Spee* was scuttled in the estuary of the River Plate.

The British enjoyed a strategic victory from this battle since the *Graf Spee* was one of the Kriegsmarine's few capital ships. It was reported that Hitler was enraged by this outcome and the *Graf Spee*'s commander, KzS (Captain at Sea) Hans Langsdorff committed suicide following the funeral of sailors who died in the engagement. After the war many German sailors settled permanently in various parts of Uruguay, some returning after being repatriated to Germany.

Karl tells that his diorama of the engagement on December 13, 1939 depicts *Ajax* in an early episode between the force commanded by Commodore Harwood who was aboard *Ajax* and the raider *Graf Spee*. Since no one was expecting to meet the raider that morning, the gun fight began before the spotter aircraft, a Fairey Seafox, could be put aloft. So, after the plane was readied and the pilot reported he needed to launch, *Ajax*'s Captain Woodhouse told him that he would not stop shooting just to launch the Seafox. The pilot and his observer sat inside their highly combustible aircraft and just after the guns fired, they were shot out. The brown smoke off the *Ajax*'s port stern are from *Ajax*'s guns.



Ajax is built mostly from sheet styrene, with some photoetch brass for ladders and railings.



A Great Lakes story

by Jon Sanford

Jon is on a summer adventure that has taken him to the shores of Lake Superior. Along the way he sent some pictures of typical Great Lakes fishing boats. He notes they are not very pretty, but they served the purpose. **Jon** poses a challenge: build a model of one of these boats anybody? The picture to the right is of an information plaque describing the two boat pictures. Following is a transcription of the plaque:

Cornucopia ... Bringing Home the Catch

"And gentle winds and waters near, make music to the lonely ear." – Byron

The "Ruby", the "Twin Sisters", the "Eagle", the "Liberty" – grande dames of fishing days past, rest here.

These were among 32 commercial fishing boats that harvested bounties of whitefish, lake trout, and herring out of Cornucopia's harbor when fishing was at its peak.



Sometimes called "fishing tugs", the design of these sturdy boats evolved to meet the challenges of fishing on Lake Superior.

Fully enclosed with a raised pilothouse set amidships or on a square stern, these seaworthy craft could weather the worst storms ... with lots of room for fish and a crew of four or five.

The fish tugs, and the families who fished from them, once braved the Lake to bring in the day's catch. They made Cornucopia a center for commercial fishing, a heritage that continues today.

This story begs the question, "what happened?" The sea lamprey happened. Sourced from the Great Lakes Fishing Commission, "Sea lampreys (*Petromyzon marinus*) are parasitic fish native to the Atlantic Ocean. Sea lampreys, which parasitize other fish by sucking their blood and other body fluids, have remained largely unchanged for more than 340 million years and have survived through at least four major extinction events.



"Sea lampreys are unique from many other fishes in that they do not have jaws or other bony structures, and instead possess a skeleton made of cartilage. While sea lampreys resemble eels, they are not related and are set apart by their unique mouth: a large oral sucking disk filled with sharp, horn-shaped teeth surrounding a razor sharp rasping tongue. (good grief, what a horror!)

"Sea lampreys have had an enormous, negative impact on the Great Lakes fishery, inflicting considerable damage. Before the sea lamprey invasion, Canada and the United States harvested about 15 million pounds of lake trout in the upper Great Lakes each year. By the late 1940s, sea lamprey populations had exploded. They fed on large numbers of lake trout, lake whitefish, and ciscoes—fish that were the mainstays of a thriving Great Lakes fishery. By the early 1960s, the catch had dropped dramatically, to approximately 300,000 pounds, about 2% of the previous average. During the time of highest sea lamprey abundance, up to 85% of fish that were not killed by sea lampreys were marked with sea lamprey attack wounds. The once thriving fisheries were devastated, and along with them, the hundreds of thousands of jobs related to the region's economy." (Lampreys were first observed in 1835 in Lake Ontario but blocked from the upper lakes by Niagara Falls. By the late 1800's and early 1900's canals were improved to the point that the Lamprey began to invade the upper lakes.)

The End, for this Month