



JULY 2025

32°43'N



117°10'W

Vol LIII, No 7

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Community Build

Our Future

1971. Apollo 15 lands on the moon. Jim Morrison of the Doors dies. Nixon visits China. The first microprocessor is introduced.

Much has happened in the 54 years since the Guild's founding but all these years later our Members still meet monthly to celebrate, commiserate, and perpetuate a shared interest in the art of model shipcrafting. Over the years our membership rolls have swelled and waned, County Fairs have come and gone, and together we weathered a global pandemic: we're still here.

What does our Guild's future hold? Who's to say?



Maybe it's you and me. Continuing to welcome, mentor, and celebrate our younger shipcrafters strengthens our Guild and paves the path for the future of model shipcrafting and our Guild.

Alex



MMSD Supporter

San Diego Ship Modelers Guild
1492 North Harbor Drive, San Diego CA, USA 92101
sdshipmodelersguild.org

founded 1971 by Bob Wright and Russ Merrill



NRG Chapter Club

Freedom my friends. Freedom.

As we all know, the Fourth of July celebrates America's independence from the tyranny imposed on the Colonies in the 1770s. Freedoms established for all Americans by the Constitution that followed are the envy of the world. Happy Independence Day to all!

In 1775, America's war for independence also established two great Naval legacies – the United States Navy and the United States Marine Corps (any service that was founded in a tavern is okay in my book – Semper Fi!) Consider for a moment the boldness required of the Colonial Navy and privateers to sail out and confront the most dominant naval force the world had ever known! Engagement would likely lead to a quick death in battle or a slow death on a prison ship. The stakes were high, but the cause was clearly compelling.



In This Issue

- [Our Future](#)
-  [From the Quarterdeck](#)
-  [Planking Puzzler](#)
-  [NOT A Sea Shanty](#)
-  [Last Meeting](#)
-  [Show and Tell](#)
-  [Flotsam and Jetsam](#)
-  [Rocks and Shoals](#)
-  [Dockyard Resources](#)
-  [Home Port](#)
-  [The Bitter End](#)

For me, tales from the American Revolution and the subsequent conflict, the War of 1812, add an extra dimension to my love of wooden ship models. When I see an American Navy ship from 1775 or 1812, I don't see just the symmetry of the rigging or the sleek form of the hull – I see the plucky audacity of the sailors who brought these ships to life. The tales are legion: WASP. HORNET. FAIR AMERICAN. WASHINGTON. RATTLESNAKE. ENTERPRISE. NIAGARA. LYNX. CONSTITUTION.

(I trust that folks who love and build the Royal Navy see the same depth – the Royal Navy established so many of the naval traditions we embrace today, and they spared no expense in putting to sea the finest navy the world had seen up until that time.

So I get it. *Still not drinking tea, though.*) ☠️

Researching the history of a model project is one of my favorite aspects of modeling. The knowledge adds connection to a model. It creates inspiration and gives life to your project. Viking warships? Modern container ships? Greek yachts? You have the freedom to pursue the topics that interest you! Learn about them and learn from them. And then share those "sea stories" with the rest of us.



I hope you find inspiration in your builds and see more than just the wood or plastic form. Have a wonderful Independence Day and a productive month of July – both in ship modeling *and* in exercising the freedoms that were bestowed upon us through great sacrifice.

Be free, and be well.

Steve



Shortly after planking the deck of my circa 1815 DALLAS revenue cutter I came across a [build log in Model Ship World](#) (see entries #12-15) that gave me pause. The log is by Phil Roach, a Former Director of the Nautical Research Guild, and coincidentally the section I was reading discussed planking the deck of the DALLAS.

Phil makes two interesting arguments in this section, the first being that the Artisanía Latina kit does not in fact represent the DALLAS but another (so far unknown) heavy cutter of that time weighing 79 tons. His (and others') research appears to confirm that the actual DALLAS was a smaller cutter of only 51 tons.

The second argument, and the one that really caught my interest was about the decking plan as diagrammed in the kit. Phil contends that American ships built prior to 1820 had curved and tapered deck planking as opposed to Artisanía Latina's deck plan, which details a straight-laid deck with a rigid pattern of planking and butt joints.

On part of the planking issue I was out of luck, having straight-laid the entire deck already and not used curved and tapered deck planking to follow the curve of the gunwales. However, the positioning of butt joints *was* something I could consider: the uniform deck planking laid out with butt joints appearing in an unrelenting pattern from bow to stern.

Phil points out that the uniform layout as presented in the kit is non-sensical because several of the butt joints are superfluous (his diagram notes use stronger language.) These extra butt joints, though adhering to the decking pattern, don't really make sense where relatively short runs of decking are interrupted by cabins, hatches, and grates. Simply put: a carpenter or shipwright would likely use a single plank wherever the opportunity exists.

Example 1: On the kit's deck plan there are **two 6' runs** of planking aft of the deckhouse that are both cut into 4' and 2' pieces. An **additional 15' run** is similarly bisected into 4' and 11' pieces. Phil contends that each of these three pair should be replaced with single planks (see Figure 1.)

Example 2: Amidship **three 26' runs** butt join 25' and 1' pieces between the deckhouse and the 'midships hatch. Again, three single planks would suffice and make more sense from a shipwright's point of view.

Example 3: And finally, in the bow another **three runs of 30'** planks from the 'midships hatch to the bow would eliminate a hodge podge of unnecessarily butt joined pieces.

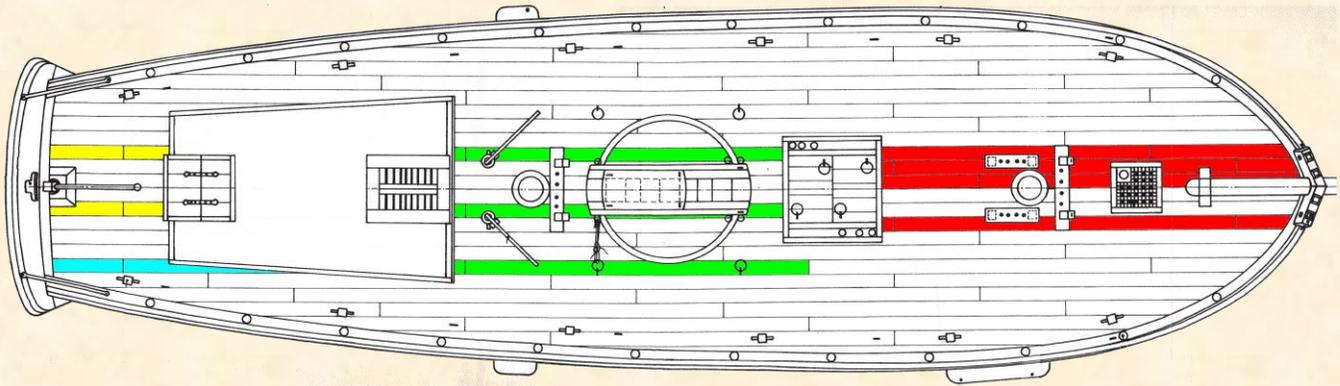


Figure 1 — DALLAS deck plan

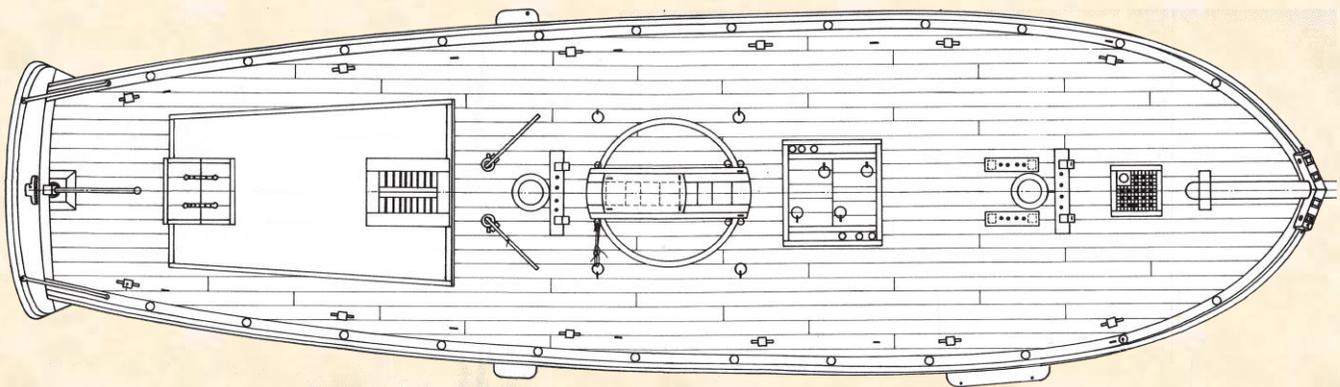


Figure 2 — DALLAS deck plan (revised)

Phil's hypothesis makes sense from a carpentry standpoint and eliminates twelve butt joints, which would also reduce the amount of potential leakage. In his build log, Phil discusses in detail the availability of longer lengths of wood in North America at that time as compared to the forests of the Old World.

I was sold: using a 90% solution of isopropyl alcohol it was a relatively easy matter to soak and pry up the planks in question and replace each set with single, clean runs of planking (below photo shows aft and 'midships replanked.)





The Downeaster ALEXA

Listen to it on  YouTube

Well, I'm on the Downeaster ALEXA
And I'm cruising through Block Island Sound
I have charted a course to the Vineyard
But tonight I am Nantucket bound

We took on diesel back in Montauk yesterday
And left this morning from the bell in Gardiner's Bay
Like all the locals here I've had to sell my home
Too proud to leave I've worked my fingers to the bone

So I could own my Downeaster ALEXA
And I go where the ocean is deep
There are giants out there in the canyons
And a good captain can't fall asleep

I got bills to pay and children who need clothes
I know there's fish out there but where, God only knows
They say these waters aren't what they used to be
But I got people back on land who count on me

So if you see my Downeaster ALEXA
And if you work with the rod and the reel
Tell my wife I am trolling Atlantis
And I still have my hands on the wheel

Now I drive my Downeaster ALEXA
More and more miles from shore every year
Since they told me I can't sell no stripers
And there's no luck in swordfishing here

I was a bayman like my father was before
Can't make a living as a bayman anymore
There ain't much future for a man who works the sea
But there ain't no island left for islanders like me

Yay-yay-yay-o, yay-yay-yay-o, yay-yay-yay-o, yay-yay-yay-o



Last Meeting



Our June Guild meeting was attended by 21 Members¹ and 3 guests²; all Officers were present. 1 new Member³ joined the Guild.



At 6:00pm our Powder Monkey Karl Zingheim rang the bell to signal the start of the second dog watch.



The June meeting opened with Guild Master Steve Miller alerting Members of the NRG's upcoming [2025 Photographic Ship Model Review and Juried Competition](#). Guild photographer Chris Sullivan has indicated that will be submitting two entries.



Steve then raised the issue of the International Plastic Modeler Society's 25th Expo here at Gillespie Field recently. *TSDW* Editor Alex Roel represented the Guild and took photos while noting the event's layout and organization and possibilities for future Guild participation. Steve asked for a volunteer to be the Guild's first Expo Coordinator (counterpart to the Fair Coordinator) and work with IPMS to see how the Guild might participate in next year's Expo:



photos by Alex Roel

Karl Zingheim stepped up. Karl is a long-time member of IPMS (San Diego) and has participated in previous IPMS Expos.



¹ Arroyo, Clauson, Florio, Hairston, Jones, N. Lee, T. Lee, Lonacker, MacMaster, McKinley, Miller, Nagatani, Pizzuto, Roel, Sellen, Scheet, Seiler, Walsh, Yotter, Yumoto, Zingheim

² Andrew McKinley, Jim Paulson, Shelley Paulson

³ Paul Jeuris

Steve reminded those present to renew their membership in the Nautical Research Guild, or, if not NRG members yet, to join this year.



The Officer's reports included a brief outline of newly-instituted transparent accounting by Purser John Walsh and then Fair Coordinator Steve Scheet's report that on the eve of the opening of the 2025 San Diego County Fair the Guild's booth and improvements are completed and fully staffed for the duration.



Business concluded, the Guild Master then called for the refreshment break, which was immediately followed by Alex Roel's presentation entitled "Maritime England: unexpected finds."

Maritime England: unexpected finds

The presentation was a light-hearted look at Alex's trip last Summer to England to take in a few Shakespeare plays in London and Stratford-upon-Avon. During the two-week trip Alex unexpectedly came across several (twelve) "finds" of a nautical or maritime nature that upon reflection he thought might make an interesting travelog.

Among the finds were a hotel reception desk built into a fully-coppered ship's hull, a "Star of India" aboard CUTTY SARK, a mammoth-sized (scale unknown) outdoor ship-in-a-bottle model, and, on a side trip to Bermuda the world's smallest (32") drawbridge.



photos by Alex Roel



At 7:47pm the Powder Monkey rang the ship's bell twice and brought the second dog watch and our June meeting to a close.



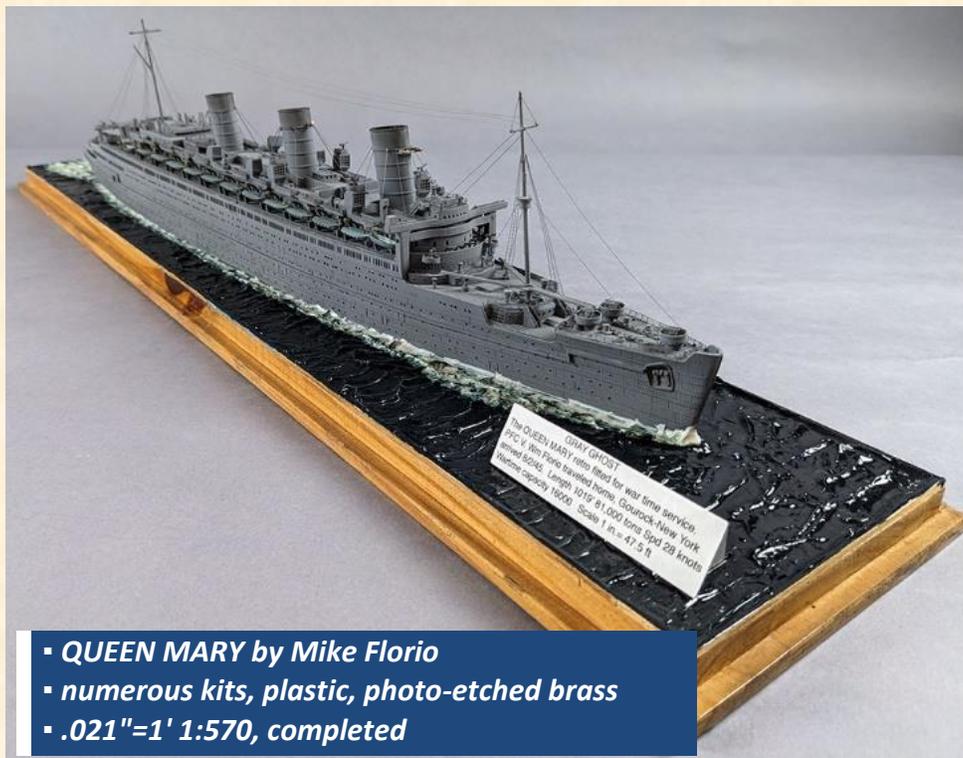
Steve Miller appointed himself as the lead-off hitter for Show and Tell and displayed his latest work on PRINCE, comprised mostly of the addition of a second anchor and hawser.

- PRINCE DE NEUFCHATEL by Steve Miller
- Constructo kit, plank-on-bulkhead, wood
- 13/64" ≈ 1' 1:58, under construction



Mike Florio brought in a sentimental waterline kit bash depicting QUEEN MARY in the "Gray Ghost" livery she wore as a troop carrier during WWII. Mike's Father

was one of thousands of troops QUEEN MARY ferried from Europe to New York after VE Day. She carried 14,000+ troops per crossing (her normal complement including crew was about 3,000.)



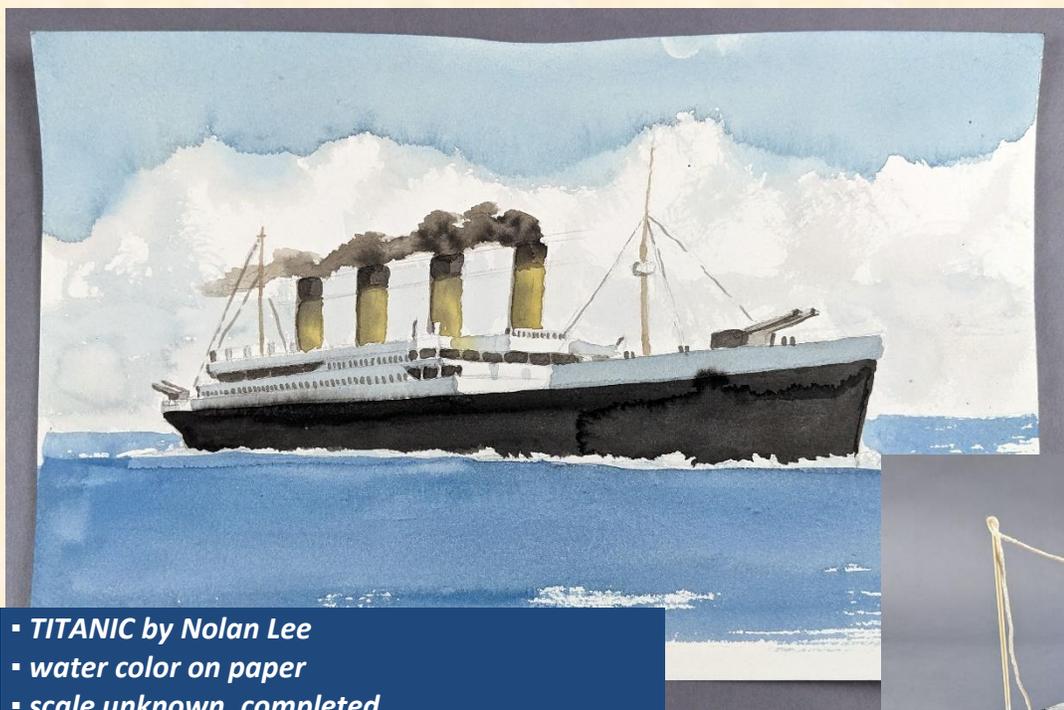
- QUEEN MARY by Mike Florio
- numerous kits, plastic, photo-etched brass
- .021" = 1' 1:570, completed



Niko McKinley brought in a pair of TITANIC models that he recently built, including this LEGO version.

- *TITANIC(s) by Niko McKinley*
- *LEGO and other kit, plastic*
- *scales unknown, completed*

Nolan Lee and **Trystan Lee** may very well be the Guild's first Father and Son team to display their works together at Show and Tell. Trystan appeared with a newly built and rigged TITANIC made of cardboard and paper. At Trystan's request his Father produced a water color of Trystan's model (complete with fanciful fore gun.)



- *TITANIC by Nolan Lee*
- *water color on paper*
- *scale unknown, completed*

- *TITANIC by Tristan Lee*
- *scratch build, paper, cardboard, string*
- *scale unknown, completed*



Member **Jakob Nagatani** brought back his 3D-printed CONSTELLATION. Jakob has been working up a color scheme and has begun painting the hull and gun ports.



- *CONSTELLATION* by Jakob Nagatani
- Turner Miniatures, 3D-printed file, plastic
- 1/64"≈1' 1:700, under construction

Karl Zingheim brought in a tale of woe to Show and Tell by relating the story of a fellow modeler who decided to “go all in” in an unfamiliar area of modeling (in this case photo-etched brass.)

This included purchasing kits, extensive photo-etched brass part sheets, and several books for researching the build. Unfortunately, our unknown modeler found that working with photo-etched brass was somewhat uncompromising and he gave up the ghost and abandoned the entire project, moving back to more familiar forms of modeling.

Karl’s advice: “Take it slow before going all-in!”

Karl brought in several of the modeler’s research books which were given away freely to Members of the Guild.



Flotsam and Jetsam

“Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition!”

Lieutenant Howell Maurice Forgy, USS NEW ORLEANS, 1941

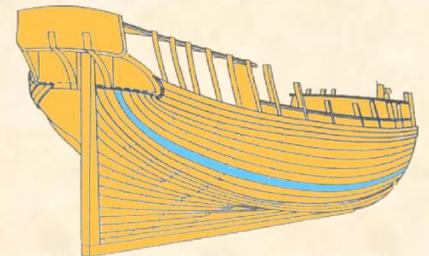
Museum Model Shop – utilize, support, volunteer



All Guild Members are welcome to work in the Museum Model Shop aboard the BERKELEY. Besides having five dedicated work stations, the Model Shop is also the home to the Guild's model shipcrafting library, tools, and a large inventory of building supplies. By volunteering time in the Model Shop our presence benefits the MMSD by affording their patrons the opportunity to see our craft in action and up close. Contact Model Shop Chair [Jon Sanford](#) for more information on how you can participate.

Squared Away – understanding nautical terms

A **STRAKE** is a series of one or more joined planks along the horizontal length of the hull. They are named (GARBOARD, BROAD, SHEER, etc.) according to their location on the hull.



Around the Scuttlebutt – latest Guild news



FAIR VOLUNTEERS: Guild Booth shifts at the Fair are from 11am to 6pm; please remember to arrive 15 minutes early. You can [check your shift dates here](#); contact Fair Coordinator [Steve Scheet](#) with any questions.



The International Plastic Modeler Society's (San Diego chapter) 25th Expo was held at Gillespie Field and the Guild's Newsletter Editor made a site visit to note the layout and competition categories of the event. The bottom line: the IPMS has plastic shipbuilding categories for competition and may also be adding a wood shipbuilding category, however, at this event there was an absolute dearth of shipbuilding models, displays, and entrants. Thus, opportunity knocks for our styrene builders. As noted earlier, the Guild Master has appointed Karl Zingheim as our Expo Coordinator who will liaise between the Guild and IPMS San Diego with an eye on the Guild's participation at next year's event.



Summer travel options to the Embarcadero (see our [map](#)):

- ☞ Arrive early (5pm) and enjoy the Guild’s social hour aboard the BERKELEY and/or help set up before the meeting
- ☞ Embarcadero public parking lots (metered pay stations)
- ☞ North Harbor Drive street parking in front of the San Diego County Administration building (parking meters)
- ☞ MTS trolley (Blue or Green Line / County Center Station); 0.2 mile walk
- ☞ AMTRAK train (Santa Fe Depot); 0.3 mile walk
- ☞ USS MIDWAY public parking lot; 0.5 mile walk
- ☞ Tuna Harbor public parking lot; 0.6 mile walk
- ☞ Uber / Lyft / taxi
- ☞ Car pool

On The Horizon



JUN 11 - JUL 6	11am - 6pm	San Diego County Fair (booth volunteering)	Del Mar Fairgrounds / Design In Wood
JUL 1	6pm	Officers Meeting	online
JUL 8	4pm	Community Build Meeting	BERKELEY
JUL 8	6pm	Guild Meeting	BERKELEY
JUL 8	noon - 8pm	SDCF model entry (pick-up)	Del Mar Fairgrounds
JUL 11	9am	SDCF booth take-down	Del Mar Fairgrounds
JUL 29	–	<i>The Second Dog Watch</i>	Website, email
AUG 5	6pm	Officers Meeting	online
AUG 12	4pm	Community Build Meeting	BERKELEY
AUG 12	6pm	Guild (Birthday) Meeting	BERKELEY w/cake
AUG 26	–	<i>The Second Dog Watch</i>	Website, email
SEP 2	6pm	Officers Meeting	online
SEP 9	4pm	Community Build Meeting	BERKELEY
SEP 9	6pm	Guild (Anniversary) Meeting	BERKELEY w/pot luck
SEP 30	–	<i>The Second Dog Watch</i>	Website, email
OCT 7	6pm	Officers Meeting	online
OCT 14	4pm	Community Build Meeting	BERKELEY
OCT 14	6pm	Guild Meeting	BERKELEY

Resolving one's mistakes in model shipcrafting can be a challenge. I'm sure each of us have felt the satisfaction of completing a build — only to falter a bit upon finding out sometime later that “those blocks are not quite to scale” or “those belaying pins are nice, but they weren't in common use for another fifty years.”

What to do when facing a situation like that? That's a personal choice for the model shipcrafter, of course. In some cases a mistake can be rectified, in others we may choose (or have) to learn to live with our error as it is.

A personal example arose while acting as your Newsletter Editor. When I christened the Newsletter ***The Second Dog Watch*** I realized that the masthead graphic would need modification as well. *And that's when I saw it.* Do you?



Displaying a flag or a pennant on a model without sails gives the modeler carte blanche: the flag can be shown flying in any manner since it is likely the only indicator of wind direction.

However, displaying the same flag on a model *carrying sails* is a different situation: the wind direction affecting the set of the sails is likely to have a similar effect on that flag or pennant.



As you can see, my fix was fairly easy to apply¹. Now: about my choice to run the flag halyard to the mizzen peak instead of the main mast... 

¹ Historically the flag flown on SAN SALVADOR was the “Cross of Burgundy” but the *The Second Dog Watch's* masthead depicts her flying the City of San Diego flag, a nod to our own home port.





Dockyard Resources

Model shipcrafting resources originally compiled by Guild Member and master modeler Mike Lonnecker.

- ⚓ this list appears periodically in the *The Second Dog Watch*
- ⚓ newly listed resources are highlighted in light red
- ⚓ local resources are highlighted in light green
- ⚓ forward your resource [suggestions](#)

BOOKS / FORUMS / LOGS / TUTORIALS

Company	Source For	Notes
ABE BOOKS	nautical books	some rare and out-of-print books
ANIMATED KNOTS	knot tying	animated knot compendium
CARVING ORNAMENTATION	carving tutorial	techniques, tools, materials
LAUCK STREET SHIPYARD	courses, practicums, books	modeling education aids
MODEL SHIP BUILDER	forums, build logs, plans, tips	array of information and tips
MODEL SHIP WORLD	forums, build logs, tips, info	modeling club (very informative)
MODEL WARSHIPS	forums, build logs	for the plastic ship modeler
NAUTICAL MIND	nautical books	some European books
NAUTICAL RESEARCH GUILD	quarterly magazine	modeling research group (excellent)
SEAWATCH BOOKS	modeling books	books geared to the model builder
WOODEN SHIP MODELING	photos, videos, tips	tips for building models

KITS / PLANS

Company	Source For	Notes
ADMIRALTY MODELS	plans, photoetch, kits	by David Antsherl, Greg Herbert limited product line (excellent quality)
AGES OF SAIL	kits, parts	complete line of Amati kits
BLUEJACKET SHIP CRAFTERS	kits, parts	(good quality)
LOYALHANNA DOCKYARD	kits, parts	mostly steel navy
LUMBERYARD	kits, wood, cannons	wood kits for Hahn-style scratch builds great cannon kits in 1/4" and other scales
MODEL-EXPO	kits, parts, tools	imported tools (large selection) (medium to poor quality)
SHIPWRIGHT SHOP	kits, parts, tools, accessories	line of Caldercraft kits
SYREN SHIP MODEL COMPANY	kits, blocks, fittings, rope walk, serving machine	(high quality)
UMM-USA	kits, tools, accessories, detailing	hobby shop cars, aircraft, armor, ships, subs

MATERIALS / TOOLS

Company	Source For	Notes
123 STITCH	sewing supplies	DMC cotton thread for rigging
BLICK ART MATERIALS	wood, glue, paint, paper, brushes basswood	art materials 3633 Midway Dr, San Diego CA
BYRNES MODEL MACHINES	table saws, disk sanders	(the best)
CINCINNATI SURGICAL	Swann-Morton blades, handles, hobby blades	surgical supplies (good selection)
CRAWFORD TOOL	screwdrivers, hex drivers	Wiha, Bondhus, Knipex tools
DEDECO	rotary tools, burrs, stones, cutoff wheels	cutting tools (big selection)
ePLASTICS	plexiglass, display cases, dustcovers	plastic supplies 5535 Ruffin Rd, San Diego CA
ESSLINGER	jewelry tools, parts	watchmaker
FOREDOM	rotary tools, handpieces, accessories	flexible shaft tools
FORSTER PRODUCTS	Swiv-O-Ling vise	gunsmithing tools
FROST HARDWOOD	hardwood, veneer, glue	hardwood supplier 6565 Miramar Rd, San Diego CA
GESSWEIN	hand tools, drills, burrs, finishing materials	jewelry supplies (high quality)
GRS	supplies, ring clamp system, vises, gravers, engraving tools	jewelry tools
GYROS	cutting tools, saws, sanding disk/drums	for use in rotary style machines
HOBBYLINC	cars, plane, ship kits, paints, supplies	online hobby shop
J I MORRIS	miniature fasteners	specialty hardware
JAPAN WOODWORKER	hand tools, chisels, gouges, hand planes, accessories, sharpening stones	woodworking tools
LEE VALLEY	hand tools, power tools, small planes, sharpening systems	woodworking tools (high quality)
LITTLE MACHINE SHOP	lathes, mills, tooling, parts	benchtop machinist tools (high quality) (good prices)
MALCO SAW	saw blades for table saws and modeler's table saws	blades for PROXXON and BYRNES MODEL MACHINES, carbide and high-speed steel (blades CT302012000 and CT303012000 recommended)
MARSHALL'S HARDWARE	hardware	general hardware 8423 Production Ave, San Diego CA
MICRO-MARK	modeling tools, hand tools, machine tools	mostly from China (large selection) (medium quality)
MINI TAPS	mini taps, dies, fasteners	specialty hardware
MODELER'S SAWMILL	milled wood strips, sheets	boxwood, cherry, Alaskan yellow cedar
MODEL MOTORCARS	model size nuts, bolts	motorcar kits site with miniature hardware
OTTO FREI	jewelry tools, GRS BenchMate, vises, Woolf tools, Foredom tools	good prices
PLEXIDISPLAYS	custom Plexiglas dust covers	reliable custom Plexiglas source
PRECISION SCALE MODEL ENGINEERING	parts, materials, tools	huge selection

PROXXON	power hand tools, machine tools	specialty modeling tools (big selection) some machines used to be Preac
RIO GRANDE	jewelry supplies, files, pliers	Swiss, German, USA made (high quality)
ROCKLER	hand tools, power tools, wood, finishing	woodworking supplies 8199 Clairemont Mesa Blvd, San Diego CA
ROPES OF SCALE	scale rope and threads of various sizes	cotton, polyester (high quality)
SHERLINE MACHINES	table top lathes, mills, accessories	woodworking machines (good quality) excellent variety of accessories 3235 Executive Ridge, Vista CA
SILVER SUPPLIES	silver solder	jewelry supplies
SWANN-MORTON	scalpels, blades	(the best)
TAIG LATHE	table top lathes, mills, accessories	uses Sherline accessories similar in size to Sherline but more robust (excellent quality)
TH&H	domestic wood, trim, finishing	wood supplies 8849 Complex Dr, San Diego CA
THUNDERBIRD SUPPLY	tools, metal, beads, solutions	craft supply
TRIVERS	drills, end mills	machine shop tools
UTOPIA TOOLS	jewelry tools, hobby supplies	wide range
WELD FABULOUS	Smith little torch	welding supplies
WOOD DATABASE	wood information, color, hardness	wood compendium



photos by Alex Roel

In a bit of long overdue housekeeping, 2022 and 2023 Members of the Year Jay MacMaster and Tom Hairston received their personal home awards from former Guild Master John Walsh.





San Diego Bay, March 12 2024, 7:08pm

Thanks to our sponsor, the Maritime Museum of San Diego, the San Diego Ship Modelers Guild is fortunate to call not only San Diego Bay our home, but also the steam ferry BERKELEY, part of the Museum's fleet tied up on San Diego's Embarcadero.





The Bitter End

Our Founders

The Guild was founded in 1971 by Bob Wright and Russ Merrill in collaboration with Ken Reynard, Captain of the barque STAR OF INDIA.

Mission Statement



The [San Diego Ship Modelers Guild](#) is dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the craft of building scale ship models and to providing a forum for the exchange of ideas, information, skills, and techniques.

Maritime Museum of San Diego



The Guild encourages all Members to join and maintain an annual membership in the [Maritime Museum of San Diego](#). As our sponsor, the MMSD provides the Guild space aboard the steam ferry BERKELEY to hold monthly meetings; allows us to work in, store supplies, and maintain the Museum Model Shop; and annually awards Guild entrants ribbons and cash prizes for the Design In Wood competition at the San Diego County Fair.

Nautical Research Guild



The Guild also encourages all Members to join and maintain an annual membership in the [Nautical Research Guild](#). As a chartered Chapter Club, the NRG accords certain benefits, privileges, and protections to our Guild.

Piracy in Model Shipcrafting

Although there is no single, agreed-upon definition of what constitutes "piracy", the use of another's intellectual or physical property without recompense is the basis for any working definition. Unfortunately, this is an issue that affects our craft: be scrupulous and avoid purchasing pirated kits or materials.



Back Issues

Back issues of *The Second Dog Watch* are accessible via the [Newsletter Archive](#) which has digital copies dating back to Volume I, Issue 1 (May 1977.)