



SEPTEMBER 2025 32°43'N 117°10'W Vol LIII, No 9

GUILD OFFICERS

[Steve Miller](#)

Guild Master

[Steve Scheet](#)

First Mate

[John Walsh](#)

Purser

[Karl Zingheim](#)

Log Keeper

[Alex Roel](#)

Newsletter Editor

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

[John Walsh](#)

Web Master

[Chris Sullivan](#)

Photographer

[John Walsh](#)

Presentations

[Jon Sanford](#)

Model Shop

[Isaac Wills](#)

Youth Coordinator

[Steve Scheet](#)

Fair Coordinator

[John Walsh](#)

Community Build

54 YEARS AFLOAT



54 YEARS STRONG



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

Happy Birthday to the Guild.

August marks the Guild's 54th year of bringing model shipwrights together in San Diego. Thanks to all of the Members for carrying on this honorable tradition and making the Guild what it is today. And thank you all for being the people I want to see on the second Tuesday of every month – *Huzzah!*

History and tradition are the watchwords of Maritime cultures. I am proud of our Guild's history and traditions, to be sure. The flag and Pledge of Allegiance to start the meetings. Interacting with the public at the County Fair every year. A free and open annual election of Guild officers by the membership. The culture of sharing that has persisted since long before

I became a Member. The wonderful newsletter that has been regularly published since 1977! The Commander John "Chris" Mathews Award, "exemplifying steady

and selfless service" (Member of the Year award, since 2003). These things continue because we all value the art of model shipbuilding. Let's hold the helm to our present bearing.

If you are not incorporating history and tradition into your model building, may I suggest you are missing an entertaining facet of our culture? Installing the last plank to close up the hull? Historically that was called the "Whiskey Plank" – after installation the workers celebrated with a drink of whiskey. (Our younger members and abstainers can

choose another enjoyable drink of choice!) When stepping the masts or laying the keel, it was not unheard of to place two coins under the mast – if anything



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terrible befell the crew at sea they were assured to have payment for the ferryman to take them to "the other side". Consider hiding a couple coins (minted in the year you closed the hull) inside your next build to honor that tradition - no one but you needs to know they're there!

Finally, give prominence to the "launch" of your model by waiting 'til last to raise her flags and "fly the colors". (For bonus points, run up the colors up for the first time at a Guild meeting, so we can all help you celebrate your achievement!)

This month, we celebrate the Guild; the legend of Bob Wright, Russ Merrill and Ken Reynard; and finally the joy of sharing this delightful art together.

Happy Birthday folks.

STEVE



JAMES PITT
1945 - 2025

Member, First Mate, Guild Master... friend



Throw Me A Line!

Ask many a sailor what *“that **rope**”* does and you’re likely to get a salty look and an impromptu lecture about *“we don’t have ropes on board a vessel!”*

All right, then, what is it? It’s a line.

Huh?

Once a rope is brought on board a sailing vessel it becomes known as a **line**. Okay, fine, it’s a line.

Except when it’s in use.

What?

Once a line is put to use on board a sailing vessel it becomes known by that specific use, such as a **halyard** used to haul the yard aloft, or a **brace** used to brace a yard from moving.

Fine, fine, I’ve got it now!

But... having said all that:
you will **still** find seven kinds of **ropes**
aboard a vessel, and here they are:

- ⚓ a bell rope
- ⚓ a boat rope
- ⚓ a tow rope
- ⚓ a foot rope
- ⚓ a man rope
- ⚓ a top rope
- ⚓ a heel rope

So, **NOW** who’s right? ☠





Rolling Down To Old Maui

Listen to it on
 YouTube

It's damn tough life full toil and strife we whaler men undergo
And we don't give a damn when gales are done how hard the winds did blow!
For we're homeward bound from the Arctic grounds
With a good ship taut and free
And we won't give a damn when we drink our rum with the girls of old Maui

Rolling down to old Maui, me boys, rolling down to old Maui
We're homeward bound from the Arctic grounds
Rolling down to old Maui

Once more we sail with the northerly gale to the ice and wind and rain
Them coconut fronds, them tropical shores, we soon shall see again
For six hellish months we passed away on the cold Kamchatka Sea
But now we're bound from Arctic grounds, rolling down to old Maui

CHORUS

Once more we sail with the northerly gale, towards our island home
Our whaling done, are mainmast sprung, and we ain't got far to roam
Our stuns'l booms is carried away what care we for that sound
A living gale is after us, thank God, we're homeward bound

CHORUS

How soft the breeze through the island trees now the ice is far astern
Them native maids, them tropical glades is awaiting our return
Even now their big brown eyes look out hoping some fine day to see
Our baggy sails running for the gales, rolling down to old Maui

CHORUS x 2



Last Meeting



The August Guild meeting was attended by 22 Members¹ and 4 guests²; all Officers were present. 2 new Members³ joined the Guild.



Powder Monkey Karl Zingheim rang the bell at exactly 6:00pm to signal the start of the meeting and the second dog watch.



The August meeting opened with Guild Master Steve Miller marking the observance of the Guild's 54th year of existence.



Steve then notified the Members of the recent passing of long-time Guild Member James Pitt, former First Mate, and Guild Master. A condolence card is being sent to the family on behalf of the Guild.



The "2025 Something Nautical-in-a-Bottle Challenge" was again announced, with a December meeting deadline. The Guild is providing free corks that will fit the mandatory 13.7 ounce Starbucks Frappaccino bottle, along with sticky-backed clear rubber discs that can be used to stabilize the bottle for display.



Officers' reports followed and the only one of note was Purser John Walsh apprising the Members of the Guild's bank balance and that itemized details are always available during meeting breaks until John starts publishing them online on the Guild website's [Sea Locker](#) in the near future.



Guild Photographer (and part-time US Navy bosun) Chris Sullivan earned his keep by capturing a rare moment of the Officers actually at work...



all photos by Chris Sullivan and Alex Roel

¹ Clausson, Dressel, Florio, Hairston, Hite, Jones, Lawrie, N. Lee, T. Lee, Miller, Pizzuto, Roel, Sellen, Scheet, Seiler, Sullivan, Tamayo, Walsh, Wessel, Wills, Yotter, Zingheim

² David Clark, Cati Kohnen, Niko Kohnen, Julian Roel

³ Shannon Li-Karins, Nicholas Li-Karins

The Guild Master then presided over a round-robin style distribution of the generous donation of model kits by John and Lisa DeGour to the Guild. John's diverse warship interests and keen eye provided a treasure trove of interesting and high-quality kits, offered gratis to those Members simply promising to give a kit a good home.



Steve presided over the ensuing feeding frenzy with a firm hand and resolved the handful of skirmishes with the time-honored tradition of “Rock, Paper, Scissors.” Combatants Isaac Wills and Mike Florio squared off only *after* Isaac had to explain the rules to Mike... Mike won.



Karl Zingheim v Chris Sullivan



Mike Florio v Isaac Wills

After new homes had been found for nearly all the kits, Steve then ceded the floor to Chari Wessel who requested Parley.



An appreciative Guild gathers on BERKELEY's aft deck



Julian Roel and Isaac Wills



Trystan Lee kicks off Show and Tell

Parley

"I invoke the right of parley.

If an adversary demands parley, you can do them no harm..."

Elizabeth Swann Turner

Parley was invoked three times this meeting:

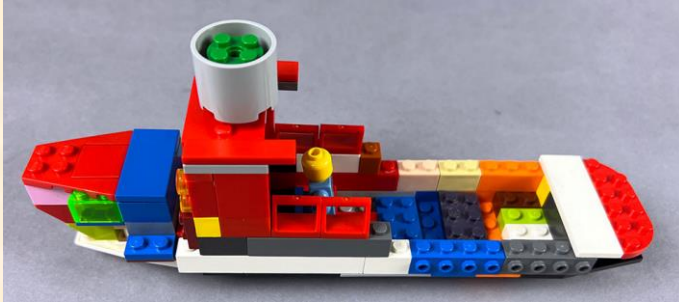
- 1) *Rigging Line.* Chari Wessel brought up the problem of making a realistic catenary curve in a hanging line. Her situation was that her lines were already rigged... Steve Miller demonstrated how he created a catenary line by swabbing the line with a 50/50 solution of white glue and water and then placing one or more small clamps on the line to weigh it down by gravity naturally until it dried...
- 2) *Piracy.* Mike Hite raised the issue of model kit piracy and to what lengths a modeler should go to avoid aiding piracy in our craft. This raised a couple of scenarios including 1) a kit clearly documented as having been pirated and 2) a non-pirated (in public domain) kit offered by a company also known to offer pirated kits. Several Members chimed in on this sometimes confusing and divisive topic...
- 3) *Rope Coils.* Steve Miller floated a couple of questions: 1) was it necessary to have a rope coil at every line tied off to a belaying pin and 2) could the coil be added after the line is tied off (not one continuous line.) John Walsh (among others) stepped up noting that yes, the standing end must be of sufficient length to be able to be usable and perform its various working functions, thus an ample length of coil is required. General consensus seemed to allow that "adding" a separate(d) coil to the belayed line is fairly standard practice (and will be invisible in most every instance.)

Following Parley, the Guild Master called for the refreshment break (which this month featured our 54th Birthday cake along with cherry and apple pies) and was then immediately succeeded by [Show and Tell](#).

At 7:51pm the Powder Monkey rang the ship's bell, bringing our August meeting to a close.



Trystan Lee jumped up and led off Show and Tell with his latest LEGO builds, a pleasure boat and an Alaskan fishing boat he christened DEADLIEST CATCH after the popular reality show.



- *DEADLIEST CATCH by Trystan Lee*
- *LEGO kit and scratch build*
- *scale unknown, completed*



Chuck Seiler unveiled his newest build, and one he is intending on entering in the Design in Wood competition at the 2026 San Diego County Fair. Ladies and gentlemen... the gauntlet has been thrown down!



Chuck's build is a knarr, a Viking merchant cargo ship capable of long sea voyages. Chuck is going to fashion this clinker-style knarr to resemble one of the circa 1030 [Skuldelev ships](#), excavated off the coast of Denmark that commenced in 1962.

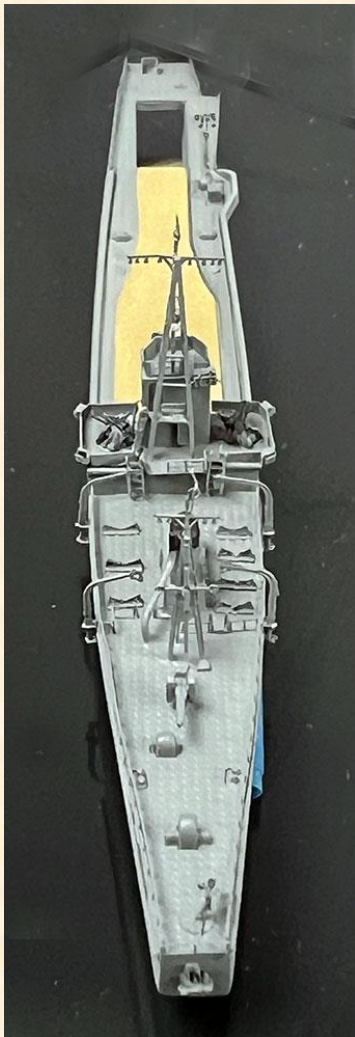


- *KNARR by Chuck Seiler*
- *Dusek kit, wood*
- *11/32" ≈ 1' 1:35, under construction*

Mike Florio shared another of his scale dioramas, this one depicting a US Navy LCM(3) LANDING CRAFT, circa 1944, disembarking troops and a tank at Normandy.

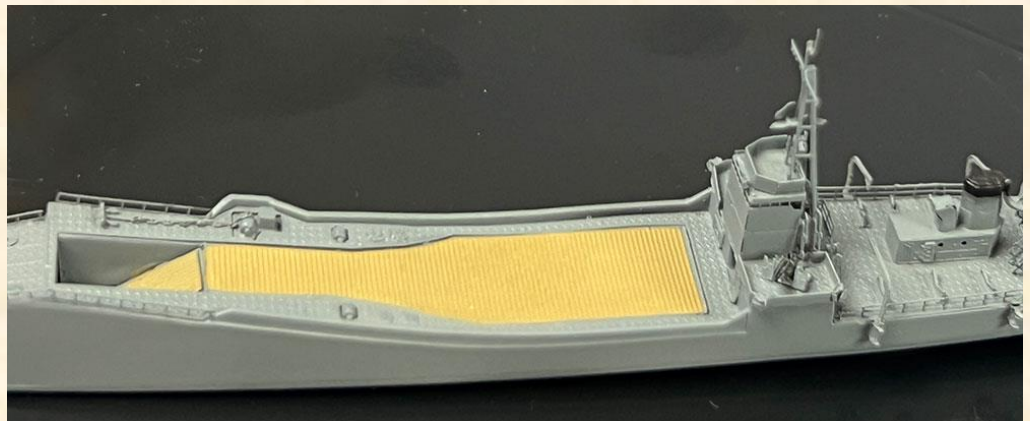


- *LANDING CRAFT (LCM(3)) by Mike Florio*
- *unknown kit, plastic*
- *3/16"=1' 1:72, completed*



Chris Sullivan followed up Mike's American LANDING CRAFT with his own circa 1944 Imperial Japanese Navy (No. 101-Class) LANDING SHIP. This is another of Chris' waterline builds and will feature support boats and tanks, primarily of plastic with detailing in photo-etched brass.

- *LANDING SHIP (No. 101-Class) by Chris Sullivan*
- *Tamiya kit, plastic, photo-etched brass*
- *0.017"=1' 1:700, under construction*



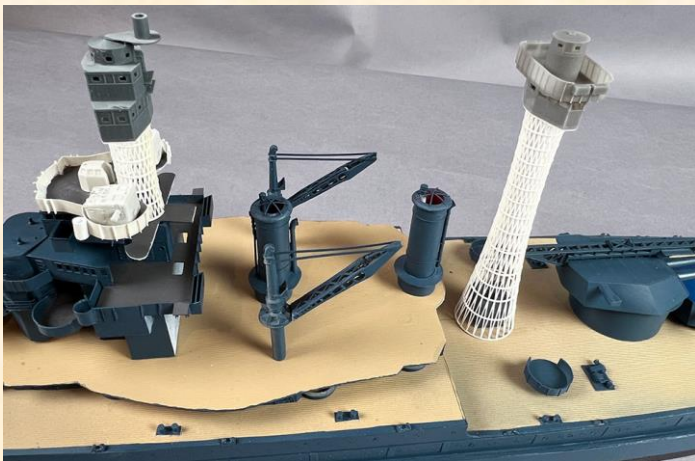
Guild Master **Steve Miller** showed off the current status of PRINCE, now masted and with the standing rigging completed on the bow sprit. Steve also used the footropes of the spritsail yard to demonstrate how he makes catenary curves utilizing gravity and clamps as brought up in [Parley](#) earlier in the meeting.



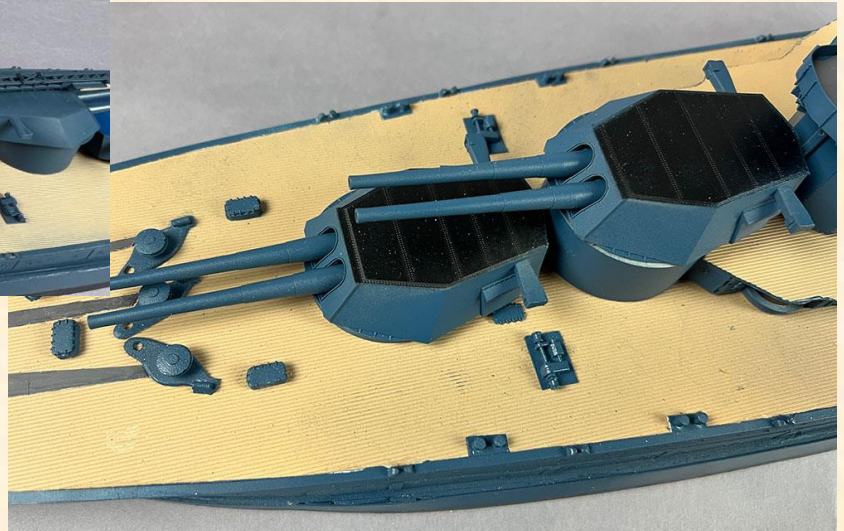
- *PRINCE DE NEUFCHATEL* by Steve Miller
- Constructo kit, plank-on-bulkhead, wood
- 13/64" ≈ 1' 1:58, under construction



Karl Zingheim displayed his vision of an upcoming Pearl Harbor diorama featuring USS MARYLAND moored alongside the bombed and capsized USS OKLAHOMA post attack. Karl is in the process of kit bashing, starting with MARYLAND and some specially ordered third-party 3D-printed cage masts.



- *MARYLAND* by Karl Zingheim
- unknown kit, plastic
- unknown scale, under construction



Don Dressel closed out Show and Tell with his circa 1939 battleship **NEW JERSEY** (more cage masts!) which was bombed and sunk at Pearl Harbor, then raised and refitted to fight at Leyte Gulf.

- *NEW JERSEY* by Don Dressel
- unknown kit, plastic
- 1/32"≈1' 1:350, completed



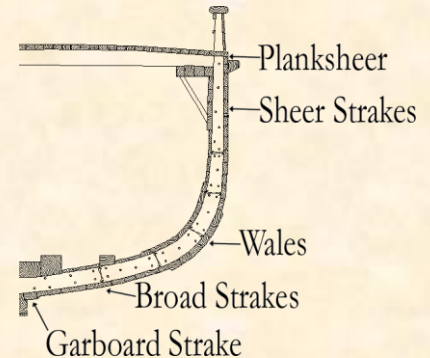
Flotsam and Jetsam

"If we couldn't laugh, we would all go insane"

Jimmy Buffett, Changes In Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes, 1977

Squared Away – understanding nautical terms

The **PLANKSHEER** is the uppermost strake of a vessel's hull, while the **SHEER STRAKES** make up most of the upper sides. The **BROAD STRAKES** are the lower strakes on the side and bottom of the hull and the **GARBOARD STRAKE** is the lowermost strake adjacent to the keel and set into the RABBIT of the KEEL.



Navigating the Website – sdshipmodelersguild.org



The Guild website's [AWARDS](#) page memorializes current and past winners of the Guild's various awards, including the "Best Scale Model Ship" award, bestowed annually by the Maritime Museum of San Diego to the best ship model of the San Diego County Fair's Design in Wood competition.

Around the Scuttlebutt – latest Guild news



The Community Build has moved their meeting start time to 5pm; this now coincides with the regular Guild Meeting's social hour and set-up time, so stop by and see how the Masting and Rigging project is faring.



Expo Chair Karl Zingheim's proposed Member field trip to Joe Frangiosa's *Nautical History Gallery & Museum* in Liberty Station is on hold as the museum is currently relocating a portion of their collection. Karl will keep the Guild advised on a probable late-Fall excursion together.



Members Phil Pizzuto and Bob Jones have been traveling to Guild meetings via AMTRAK recently; Phil from Carlsbad and Bob from Placentia (Anaheim.)



Fair Coordinator Steve Scheet reports the following volunteer contributions by Members at this year's San Diego County Fair:

 Art Arroyo	7 days	+set-up	+take-down	
 Doug Evers	1 day	+set-up	+take-down	+BOUNTY

☞ Tom Hairston 4 days +set-up +take-down +model entry
 ☞ Mike Lonnecker model entry
 ☞ Jay MacMaster 4 days +set-up +take-down
 ☞ Steve Miller 1 day
 ☞ Jakob Nagatani 3 days
 ☞ Phil Pizzuto 2 days +model entry
 ☞ Alex Roel 4 days
 ☞ Jon Sanford 6 days
 ☞ Steve Scheet 9 days +set-up +break-down +model entry
 ☞ Chuck Seiler 11 days
 ☞ Chris Sullivan 2 days
 ☞ Doug Ward model entry
 ☞ Chari Wessel 3 days
 ☞ Isaac Wills 2 days

On The Horizon

SEP 2	6pm	Officers Meeting	online
SEP 9	5pm	Community Build Meeting	BERKELEY
SEP 9	6pm	Guild Meeting 🚢 Anniversary	BERKELEY w/pizza
SEP 16	—	<i>The Second Dog Watch</i>	website, email
OCT 7	6pm	Officers Meeting	online
OCT 14	5pm	Community Build Meeting	BERKELEY
OCT 14	6pm	Guild Meeting	BERKELEY
OCT 21	—	<i>The Second Dog Watch</i>	website, email
NOV 4	6pm	Officers Meeting	online
NOV 11	5pm	Community Build Meeting	BERKELEY
NOV 11	6pm	Guild Meeting	BERKELEY
NOV 18	—	<i>The Second Dog Watch</i>	website, email
DEC 2	6pm	Officers Meeting	online
DEC 9	5pm	Community Build Meeting	BERKELEY
DEC 9	6pm	Guild Meeting 🚢 Holiday	BERKELEY w/pot luck
DEC 16	—	<i>The Second Dog Watch</i>	website, email



Easter Egg Reveal #2 by the Newsletter Editor

While editing the text and graphics for our *Roll Call* profile of Chris Sullivan in *TSDW*'s [February 2025](#) issue a single word in the text kept popping up, and...

Reveal #2: After cropping the profile photo I noticed that this left a portion of the BERKELEY's name still in frame, directly above Chris' head... once I saw this it didn't take much to bring the picture into perfect harmony with the rest of the article.

Beware the power of *PhotoShop*!



Roll Call an interview with Guild Member Chris Sullivan

1) How did you come to call San Diego home?

I'm a Boatswain in the United States Navy, and my wife Kelly and I chose orders here to San Diego, which is also Kelly's hometown.

2) Tell us a bit about your life/career path.

I am originally from New England; my family is from Massachusetts but I grew up in Connecticut

5) Of the models you've made, which is your favorite?

The Flyhawk 1/700 HMS KELLY: it was a fun kit to build and came out well with the added photo-etched parts. And it is my favorite since my wife's name is Kelly.



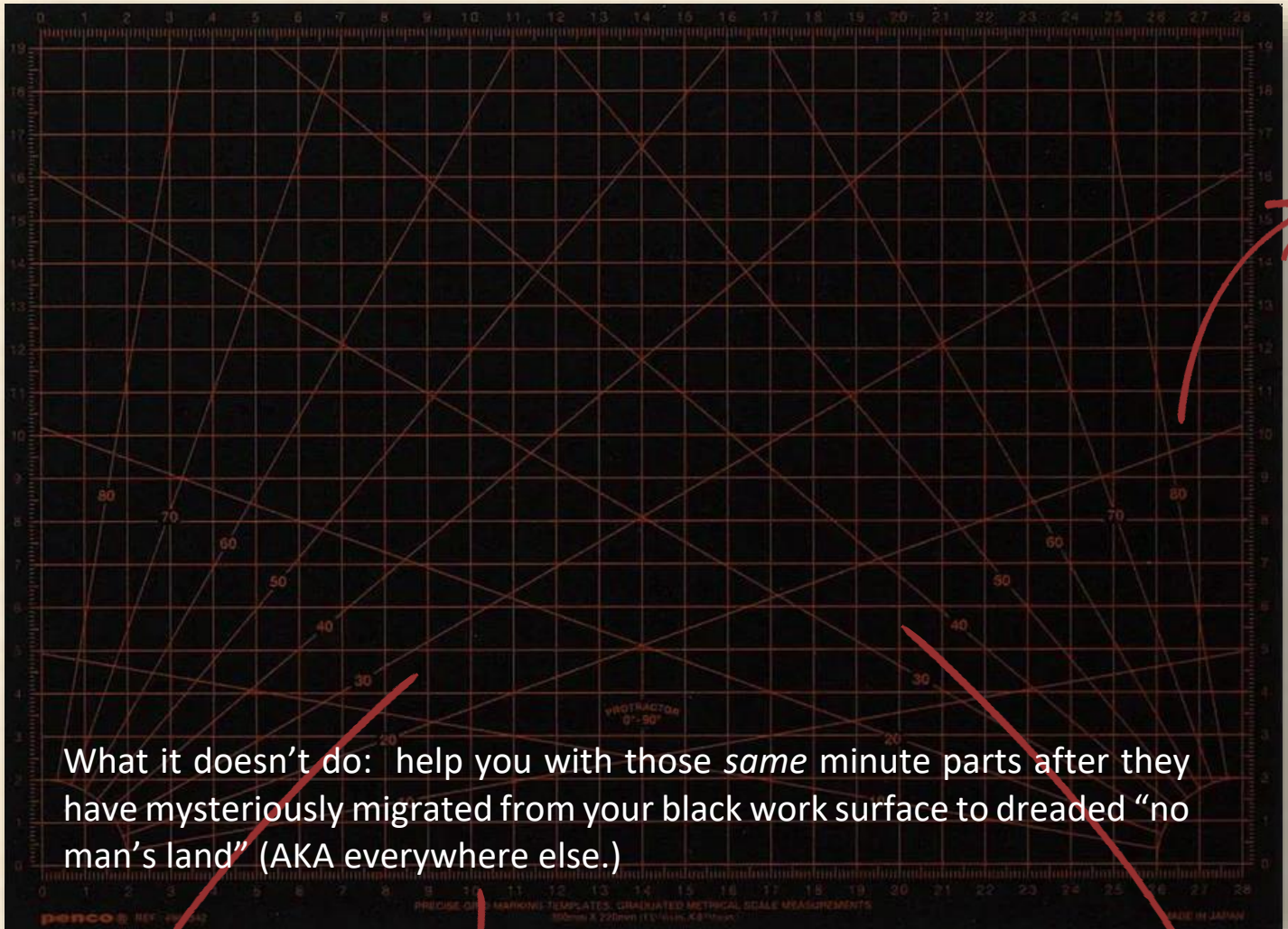
6) Describe another avocation you enjoy.

I enjoy studying history and collecting Imperial Japanese sake cups.



Black Cutting Board

Frank recommends making your life much easier by switching to a black or very dark cutting board on which to work. This simple change can help you easily see the many minute parts you're working on without having to scan all over your work surface to locate them.





San Diego Bay, April 9 2024, 7:21pm

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.)