

• founded by ARTHUR 'LEN'TUCKER •

Officer of the Watch

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Society of Model Shipwrights Website- <www.modelshipwrights.org> or www.cadcraft.net/sms

May 28th 2010 - Workshop evening including "Sailmaking"

2010 Programme Dates and Events

- June 25th "Attention to detail" in model making with focus on painting
July 16th Annual Regatta at Orpington boating lake (*note change of date*)
July 30th "Steam and paddle drives"
AUGUST 14th *Biennial Exhibition at Petts Wood*
August 27th Biennial exhibition Review and member's models
AUGUST 28th *Exhibition at Ripley Arts Centre*
September 24th Models from kits, with talk on coppering by Tony Newell and Brian Shreeve
October 29th Ship's cargo handling equipment in the 19th and 20th centuries; talk & slides
November 26th Christmas celebrations and members' models

And a reminder that Members' models, irrespective of state of construction, are welcomed at all meetings.



BIENNIAL EXHIBITION : COMPETITION TROPHIES

Trophies awarded at the 2008 SMS Exhibition should be returned to Hon Sec Peter Rogers or Trophy Keeper Brian Shreeve no later than the end of July 2010. Any trophy holder who will not be able to bring their trophy to either the next June or July meeting should please contact Brian by telephone (01932 341012) or by e-mail (bjshreeve@ntlworld.com) to arrange return by post or other means.



Librarian Geoff Fenn now has a landline telephone number : 0208 853 8249

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES – APRIL MEETING

Our April meeting concentrated on a presentation by John Dibden, one of our Members, on his experiences aboard HMS London at the time of the Yangtse Incident. Some members' models were also discussed.

Regatta - Would you please note that we have amended the date of the regatta to 16th JULY.

Log - I have been asked by our Editor to encourage you to contribute to the Log and try to get more interactive type of content. Please respond to items or send in any articles you find of interest which require comment or advice. In this way it is hoped The Log can be representative of Members interests.

Maritime Museum Greenwich -From the 1st May, and for the first time ever, an exhibition of Toy Boats brings together an array of Victorian and Edwardian toy boats, launched, sailed and sunk by children and adults from 1850 onwards. An excuse to take out the grandchildren perhaps?

Pond - The pond is now fully operational and the sailing season is underway with some fine weather of late.

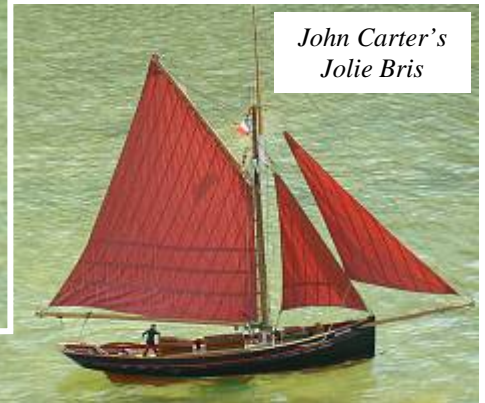
The road works near the entrance are now complete and the pond can be accessed in the normal way. I have taken a few photographs of early season sailing if you need convincing!



Ron Thornton's Hull trawler



Peter Rogers' Lowstoft trawler



John Carter's Jolie Bris

Philip Baggaley spoke on his progress with his 1:1250 scale model of the Japanese battleship *Kongo*. It was actually built as a battle cruiser but subsequently up rated. Built in 1912 it had a long life and was finally sunk by the Americans in 1944. Philip has been working on the model for three years, which is very complicated in part due to 10 levels of superstructure and may require a similar period to complete. I have tried to give the photo some scale by including a 20p piece.



John Wheeler brought along his 'Botter'. Following advice from Members at last month's meeting he had tried several suggestions for painting accurate minute triangles in different colours. Whilst the suggestion of computer reduction had worked he did not like the idea of anything 'stuck on'. He did try however one suggestion which was to get the dominant colour correct as this would strike the eye, and worry less about the others. This has worked well and the colour pieces he brought along looked very fine indeed. John expressed his gratitude for Members suggestions not only for the painting tips but also from a previous session on rib alignment.



Finally Peter Rogers showed us further progress on his 'Manx Nobby' describing how he had made modern pulley blocks, as opposed to his norm of period types. Fortunately blocks are double and he was able to insert brass sheet as a metal core centre with shackle attachment each end. Peter asks whether anyone can suggest a better/neater method of making working blocks.



The model has radio control for rudder and Peter's message is 'get your radio installed early!'

I am holding a donated 12 volt 17 ah battery. This is a very substantial battery and is available for a small donation to Club Funds. If anyone is interested please contact me – 01689 856916.

Speaker John Dibden gave us an illuminating talk on his experiences aboard *HMS London*, a county class cruiser, on a mission to assist *Amethyst* trapped in the river Yangtse. *Amethyst*, on a peaceful mission, was fired on for no reason, lost her steering and ran aground.

John joined the Navy in February 1947 and completed nine years service. After a year's training as a boy seaman he was drafted out to *HMS London* in Singapore which led to his involvement in the Yangtse Incident. I am indebted to John who provided me with the report of Commander John Hodges, *HMS London*, 28 April 1949 and the following is taken from that report.

"I have the honour to submit the following report on the action which took place between *HMS London* and the shore batteries of the People's Liberation Army on the East Bank of the Lower Yangtse River on 21 April 1949.



HMS London

On the 20th April *HMS London* was approaching the Yangtse Entrance Lightship on passage to Shanghai to take part in the St George's Day celebrations. The quarterdeck and the waist awnings were spread and the Ship's Company were engaged in polishing bright work and rigging illuminating circuits. The weather was fine, warm and sunny and, although reports of imminent crossings of the Yangtse by the Communists had been received, these had so often been forecast and failed to materialise that there seemed no reason to suppose that the projected visit to Shanghai would not be short and festive as projected. Against this background the first report of the *Amethyst's* action and grounding arrived with startling effect.

When the lower deck had been cleared and the situation and its possible implications explained to the ship's company, the work of preparing the ship for action was started. On arrival at Woosung two Chinese Yangtse Pilots were embarked. Mr W Sudbury, a Wangpoo Pilot who has had much pre-war experience of the Yangtse, was also in the pilot boat. Feeling that in the event of any shooting the Chinese pilots might not be entirely reliable I asked Mr Sudbury to come on board. He agreed readily and cheerfully to come up river in the ship; his presence on the following day was invaluable.

London anchored for the night at Kiang Yin at 1900. Several Chinese Nationalist warships were at anchor there. The night was spent fuelling *Black Swan* and *Consort*, to whom also was rendered what aid was possible to her casualties and damage.

At 09.30 I was informed by the Flag Officer, Second in Command, Far East Station, that he intended that *London* should attempt the passage of the Yangtse to Rose Island with the object of escorting *Amethyst* down river. *Black Swan* was to proceed as far as Beaver Island only and to be prepared to give covering fire if necessary. It was perfectly clear to both the Admiral and to myself that the passage of the river against the opposition of determined and well trained shore batteries was not a feasible operation: we considered that against light and sporadic opposition it was a reasonable proposition and hoped there would be no opposition at all. It was agreed that if fire was opened on the ship she would reply in self defence with all guns.

HMS London was already prepared for action and at 10:26, after closing up at action stations, I weighed and proceeded up the river at 25 knots. Large Union Jacks had been rigged on the front and sides of the bridge and on the sides of the hangars. They flew also from the four yardarms on the foremast and two on the mainmast. This galaxy of bunting was completed by a large white flag at the foremast head and an ensign at the peak. There could be no doubt in the mind of any man familiar with the British National Flag and the usage of the White Flag as to the ship's nationality or intentions.

At 10:36 fire was opened from the North Bank in the vicinity of Liu Wei Chiang (lat 32' 1", long. 119' 59"E). The ship was hit immediately by projectiles which appeared to be of 75 mm and 105mm calibre. The firing continued for four minutes in spite of heavy and accurate fire from the whole of *London's* armament.

At 11:04 fire was opened by a battery in the vicinity of Kuo Chieng Chang. The ship was again hit, principally on the bridge superstructure and hangar and boat decks. It was evident that damage and casualties were becoming heavy and I started to consider the advisability of withdrawal. I had in mind the fact that, even if it were possible for *London* to reach *Amethyst's* position, the chances of a successful return with *Amethyst* at slow speed were almost negligible.