



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

No. 272 – JUNE 2017

EDITORIAL

Naval Wargames Weekend in July. I hope you have annotated your diaries and can come along. I have attended several times now and it has always been good fun and a chance to meet Society Members, have a chat, have a beer and try a new game and/or rule set.

Naval Wargames Weekend 2017

This event will be taking place on the 8th & 9th of July from 10 am to 5 pm. The venue will be the same as usual, the Conference Room at Explosion! Museum in Gosport.

Unfortunately, this year the museum are not willing to host us for nothing so there will be an entry fee. This will be £5 for one day or £7.50 for both.

In return for this, not only do you get two days of naval war-gaming, but free entry to the museum (normally £11). We are also planning, thanks to Nick Hewitt, to have a guided tour of the reserve collection (2 buildings not normally open to the public) on Saturday only 11 o'clock to 12 noon.

Anyone wishing/willing to put on a game for the weekend please send details asap (nature of game, space required, which day(s)) to Dave Sharp (no spaces) dave (underscore) sharp @ talktalk.net (dave_sharp@talktalk.net).

Somewhere in the world, the sun is over the yardarm.

Norman Bell

Operation GAMBIT

Operation Gambit was a part of Operation Neptune, the landing phase of the invasion of northern France (Overlord) in 1944. Gambit involved two X class submarines (X20 – Lt Kenneth Hudspeth DSC RANVR, and X23 – Lt George Honour DSC RNVR) which were positioned to display navigation lights and flags to mark the extreme west and east limits of Sword Beach and Juno Beach, the easternmost British and Canadian invasion beaches.

SEA QUIZ 61. A reminder of the questions.

1. Name five RN ships named after English County towns.
2. What did USS San Jacinto 'hold up'?
3. What was the last three funnelled Cruiser in service?
4. How many Admirals flew their flag in HMS Victory during her active service?
5. In which year was the Royal Navy first supplied with Bully Beef in tins?

AND the answers:

As always with one of the 'name x ships with the names of y', more than the following listed crop up. The Victory answer was immense, as so many Admirals flew their flags in her, and there's her further role to consider. Lots of comment on that one. A big question too!

1. Salisbury, Warwick, Maidstone, Chester, Derby, Lancaster, Brecon, York, Nottingham...plenty of others.
2. It was the steamer Trent in 1861, with Confederate agents aboard.
3. In the mid 1950's HMS Cumberland. There was some argument as the Soviet fleet had Krasnyi Krim.
4. There were 15! Including Keppel, Howe, Hood and Nelson.
5. It was in 1813.

May saw the launch of the China's second indigenous aircraft carrier, the CV-17 / 001A (also known as the Shandong), to commemorate the 68th anniversary of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN).

Here is Sea Quiz 62.

One or two interesting questions this time. A few I hadn't encountered, and nothing argued over in the 'Letters' page either!

1. Who was the last Lord High Admiral?
2. Who commanded the Russian Black Sea Fleet in August 1915?
3. What was 'Operation Judgement'?
4. When is a warship said to be moored?
5. How many sieges of Gibraltar were there?

Good Luck
Rob Morgan



NORFOLK (April 14, 2017) The aircraft carrier Pre-Commissioning Unit (PCU) Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) pulls into Naval Station Norfolk for the first time.

How many rule sets does someone have to produce before they can be described as "prolific"? An adjective that surely applies to David Manley. On the internet I keep coming across his name – in a good way. He has done it again. "Cannon, Cross and Crescent" are a quick playing set of Renaissance naval rules covering the period 1450 to 1600 which allow small and medium sized games with 30 ships a side or more to be completed in a couple of hours or less. They have been written with 1/1200 models such as those from Navwar and Langton in mind, but could be used with larger or smaller models with appropriate changes in ranges and movement. Bookkeeping is minimal, using simple markers to indicate ship damage and crew casualties. Data for

20 different broad ship types is included, from brigantines and galiots up to large Lanternas and Galleons.

"Cannon, Cross and Crescent" is available from Wargame Vault for £5.00

<http://www.wargamevault.com/product/210543/Cannon-Cross-and-Crescent--LFG004>

MV Sycamore - the Royal Australian Navy's new Multi-Role Aviation Training Vessel (MATV) has successfully completed sea trials and will shortly be on her way to Sydney. She will be a fantastic edition to the RAN and be an excellent benchmark vessel for the new OPV's to be built in Adelaide and Perth. Sycamore, based on Damen's OPV 2300 design and named after the RAN's first helicopter, will provide a training platform for all possible helicopter-related operations, such as helicopter deck landings and take off, helicopter (in-flight) refuelling operations and air traffic control. In addition, Damen's versatile design means she will also be able to undertake torpedo and mine recovery operations, navigation training, dive support, Officer Sea Familiarisation, target towing and consort duties as well as unmanned aerial vehicle support.

<http://image-store.slidesharecdn.com/738e9b7a-1a0c-48e9-a4a4-9d5372626ce6-original.jpeg>



This photo of the NWS Riverine Wargame at "Salute", was taken by Drew Jarman.

<http://drewjarman.blogspot.co.uk/2017/04/salute-2017-some-pictures.html>

Salute has come and gone again. Time and tide wait for no man. There will be a game convention near you soon. Try and attend.

A single sentence in Rob Morgan's appeal for pictures ("...although this casting has no super detailing or delicate 'bits' this is what we used to wargame with, and found them perfectly acceptable") in the last *All Guns Blazing* caught my eye, and encouraged me to offer some thoughts on model quality today.

I come from the era where, if you intended to wargame in any period other than World War II or modern, you had to build your own models. As a result wargames models tended to be more like recognition models than like today's models that offer exquisite detail in 1:2400 or something smaller. I think we lose something as we get more detailed with more beautiful representations of warships.

What do we lose? I grew up at Virginia Beach (Virginia, USA) on the ocean front. It was a great place to ship watch, everything from coastal mine planters to battleships and aircraft carriers, as they steamed out to sea or in to port at Norfolk Naval Base. With my bare eyes, I could see (1) it was a ship, (2) it was grey, (3) and the general class of ship. With my trusty World War II vintage spyglass I could discern class, pennant number, read flag hoists, and see some few details. Could I see the level of detail in modern wargaming ship models? Not really. A ship at a distance is a silhouette that challenges recognition skills for the opposing commander as the first step in determining who you are facing.

As we play games with detailed models and compressed ranges and names of ships on their bases and agreed upon scenarios with ship lists known by both sides, we lose the problem that bedeviled more than one commander at sea in both World Wars and for many years before. Who is that, and what threat do they present, is a critical question at the moment of contact. We have *Janes* in large measure because of this recognition and assessment problem.

Obviously, if you want to refight a known battle, you know the enemy's fleet composition. But if you want to stretch your mental muscles as a fleet commander, I think there is something to be said for less detailed models that try your recognition skills and the fog of war of an opponent who does not tell you what he or she is putting on the table.

Walter G Green III

JUNE..... a month for *BIG* fleet actions!

Flaming June opens with an array of large naval encounters. In 1666 it was only the first day of the 'Four Days' battle, 40 British ships against 85 Dutch, Albermarle against de Ruyter, continuing on the following day, which back in 1653 saw Monck fighting Tromp - 105 ships against 104 (That would fill a table top), both of these battles continued on the 2nd June, and on the third. In 1665, the Duke of York and Prince Rupert fought one of the lesser known Dutch Admirals, van Wassenaer off Lowestoft, 109 ships against 103. June was one hell of a month in Anglo-Dutch sea wars, on the 4th as well as it being the final day of the 'Four Days' it was the chance of Rupert, in conjunction with the French (hm?) to fight de Ruyter off Schooneveld in 1673.

Of course in terms of warships involved even these vast encounters fade into insignificance compared with the events of the 6th June in 1944. Has anyone ever counted the number of ships, big and small, involved? By the 12th it's back to the old enemy, the Dutch, and their remarkably successful foray into the Medway under van Ghent. On 17th June its Rooke, supported by the Dutch in passage with the huge Smyrna convoy which takes on 80 French ships off Lagos, and three days later, Anson took the Spanish treasure galleon in the Philippines, and became hugely rich. On the same day another of those unsatisfactory encounters against the French Admiral Suffren off the Indian coast, 18 ships against 15, and an indecisive French victory, as Admiral Hughes withdrew. It's on the 22nd that the Earl of Pembroke was defeated off La Rochelle in 1372, by a well handled Castilian force, one of the most interesting medieval sea-fights, but not as interesting as Sluys in 1340, on the 24th! There's a Napoleonic encounter too, Bridport against Villaret-Joyeuse with about forty ships involved off Brittany in 1795, a Royal Navy victory of the smaller sort. On the 26th in 1746, Commodore Peyton with six men o'war fought nine French off Madras, with no result apart from his own recall!

The month ends with another massed battle, Beachy Head 1690, 66 Anglo-Dutch sail commanded by Torrington and Evertsen fought against 73 French under Admiral Tourville, and a bit of a mess. Torrington was court-martialled for letting the French get away! I suspect the only way to effectively wargame these big Anglo-Dutch sea-fights would be in 1/2400th using Tumbling Dice models, but even then.....!

Rob Morgan.

<http://www.wargaming.co/index.htm>

<http://www.wargaming.co/recreation/naval.htm> Two Websites of interest for NWS Members. The History of Wargaming Project contains books and rules and is well worth a visit.

US Pacific Fleet Support.

.....More new models arrive!

The 1/3000th scale fleet train available for the wargamers WWII US Navy continues to grow with Mick Yarrow's release of five more useful support ship models allowing some twenty further units-class numbers in brackets (1)-in all to be added to the table top.....

3376...USS Kenneth Whiting... seaplane tender. (1)

3378... USS General John Pope. Transport. (11)

3380...George Clymer...Transport (3)

3381...USS Vulcan...Repair Ship (4)

3382..USS Euryale ...Sub Repair Tender. (1)

The Seaplane Tender is particularly attractive I think, with a moulded seaplane aft. These models are perfect for campaign and for 'Kamikaze' games too. I'm not too sure about the uses of any of this group of support vessels in the Atlantic and the European theatres, or elsewhere, but I'm sure someone will know.

A further thought crossed my mind, did any of these ships serve on and appear offshore in the Korean conflict?

Rob Morgan.



'Sails of Glory.'

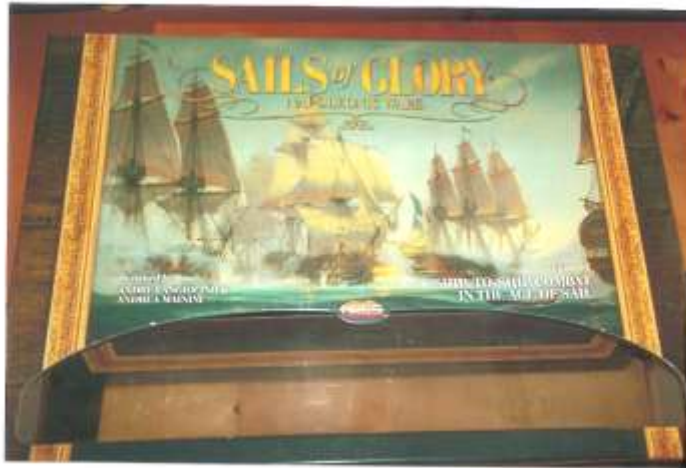
This isn't of course a review, but the other day I had the chance to examine the 'Sails of Glory' game ship models of Steve and Jay Button, the Ledbury wargamers. It was the first time I've seen the actual 1/1000th models outside the four in the 'Starter Pack' packaging in a games store, in a glass cabinet or away from a 'demo' table top. The game looks fine, though it really does seem to be 'ship-to-ship combat' rather than fleet combat in the Bonaparte era, and a little before. It's inclined towards the board-gamer rather than the traditional wargamer obviously, and I don't think I could easily come to terms with the gun deck high bases. Don't look right somehow. It works well and makes for a fairly speedy game, but is better suited to the 'Hornblower' small Squadron action or single ship encounters. This is, in part, due to the cost of the ships. HMS Victory at around £25, and a '74' at £17, sloops and frigates a little cheaper. So, to game 'Calder's Action' might cost....!!!

There are over forty models available, mainly Royal Navy and French, with a few American and Spanish vessels coming on line. They are neatly made, and in 1/1000th, solid enough, metal and a little plastic, the hulls are delightful (the attachment to the sea-base is by a peg) and nicely painted. There's potential for conversion to other nations of course, and even pirate vessels. I liked them, but wouldn't go 'overboard' for this game. More expensive, and far less elegant models than Rod Langton's magnificent 1/1200ths which leads me to comment...I wonder if you could successfully game this with my old 'Fleetline' 1/1200ths, or my 'Tritons'? The box art for the starter set (£50-60 approximately) and a few of the models are shown here.....the French 'Unite with red/yellow side strakes; a group consisting of HMS Bellona alongside the French 'Commerce de Bordeaux' and 'Embuscade' and a closer view of HMS Defence. This close-up shows the drawbacks of the moulding.

I don't think I'd buy 'Sails of Glory', but other members of NWS may have different opinions?

Rob Morgan.





Sails of Glory ships come in a plastic bubble within a box. Retain the packaging for storage as the models have delicate masts and will not stand up to vigorous shaking in transit or handling by the very young.

A short note on a painting appears in the May 2017 issue of *'The Mariner's Mirror'*, pages 205-6. It deals with the subject of a two decked Barbary square-rigger, the 60 gun *Capitana di Tripoli* destroyed in action against the Knights of Malta's warships in June 1709. The Knights main unit a third rate, the *San Giovanni* was towed into action by five galleys. A short but interesting account, and the writer suggests that at that period even vessels as large as third rates were fitted with oars in the Mediterranean.

There's an excellent 'Galley Frigate' model in 'Tumbling Dice's' 1/2400th range, ASD 26 a two piece model, and of course the rather expensive AD21 a 1/1200th Oared Frigate from Rod Langton. The 'Dice' ship has some potential for conversion, or at least for swapping the oared base to another ship model.

Rob Morgan.



Triang Minic model of HMS Vanguard.

Photo from Steve Millar. His main interest is the 1860 to 1920 period and is a "scratch built" enthusiast.

The Welsh Royal Commission, Bangor University and the Nautical Archaeological Society are working on a project, titled "The Forgotten U-Boat War around the Welsh Coast". It will be one of the largest "battlefield" projects ever to be undertaken in Wales. The Project identifies over 170 wreck sites of warships, merchant vessels and aircraft around the coast and has chosen 14 from WW1 for detailed examination. They include wrecks of HMS Penshurst – Q Ship, naval tankers such as Derbent and coastal sailing vessels, as well as numerous U-Boats. The project will culminate in the launch of a national exhibition in the Summer of 2018.

Rob Morgan.

SIGNAL PAD!

Coming in July's AGB: Sluys and the 100 Years' War; Part 5 of Phil Dunn's NWS the early Days; Setting the sea on fire as an invasion defence. Also a sailor's diary from HMS LIZARD 1917.

JOINING THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY

If you have been lent this newsletter and would like to join the Naval Wargames Society, please follow this link to join our Society:

www.navalwargamesociety.org.

Membership secretary: simonjohnstokes@aol.com

NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2017

NWS Northern Fleet – Falkirk East Central Scotland

Kenny Thomson, 12 Craigs Way, Rumford Grange, Rumford, Stirlingshire, FK2 0EU

Tel: 01324 714248

e-mail: kenny.thomson@hotmail.com - Website: [http://falkirkwargamesclub.org.uk/](http://falkirkwargamesclub.org.uk)

Falkirk Wargames Club meets each Monday night at 7pm with a variety of games running each evening. Naval games are popular with 2 or 3 run each month. Campaign games sometimes feature in our monthly weekend sessions. Games tend to be organised week to week making a 3-month forecast here a waste of time. Please get in touch if you'd like to come along.

- Popular periods – Modern (Shipwreck), WW1 and 2 (GQ), WW2 Coastal (Action Stations), and Pre-dreadnought (P Dunn's rules)
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Devon and the West Country

Naval Wargames afternoon/evening/all day on a regular basis.

Contact Stuart Barnes Watson to arrange the details.

stuart_barnes_watson@hotmail.com

3 Clovelly Apartments, Oxford Park, Ilfracombe, DEVON, EX34 9JS

Tel: 01271 866637

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Uruguay, SCOW: Southern Cone Orientales Wargamers

• Games erupt, inquire to set one off: Bill Owen US telephone is [217-619-0202](tel:217-619-0202), Uruguay 099 834 544 WmOwen@aol.com • If Spanish speaking, email & I will get someone who speaks it better. • Soca, Canelones or in Montevideo we can arrange a "Graf Spee 3 Gun Salvo": see her 5.9" gun, anchor & rangefinder salvaged from the ship resting in the harbor, a Real English Tour conducted by British expat staff who were associated with the British Ambassador who won the post-battle diplomacy and subterfuge plus, of course, a GQ3 refight of the battle (fees for features like museum & tour). • Most of the Salvo can even be done during a cruise ship stop in MVD from a Round Cape Horn itinerary between Santiago<->Buenos Aires.

• wargamecampaign.blogspot.com