



The Horizon

For Friends of the Colonial Seaport Foundation

Winter 2009

“Jack Tarr’s” Diary of a *Luna* Work Day

Preserving Colonial America's Maritime Heritage

Colonial Seaport Foundation, Inc.

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It's once again Sunday morning, and just like nearly every Sunday morning for a year now, I am headed for *Luna's* hidden work-site near Deltaville. It's an hour drive on small country roads past farms, historic homes, and beautiful open land and forest. I like to get to the "farm," as we call it, a little early, to get the coffee ready, woodstove lit, and open the workshop for the day ahead.

Everyone else arrives around 9 a.m., and thankfully someone usually shows up with something for breakfast. After chit-chat over coffee the work begins. Most of us already know what we have to do, and we pick-up where we left off. Today Ben, Dutch, Anne and Larry continue working in their frames - a time consuming project requiring many trips back and forth from the boat to the woodshop for trimming and test fitting. Anne's never done this sort of thing before so we help her when needed, but leave her to do most of the work. She is getting pretty good with power tools, and when making her plywood frame template she handled the jig-saw with relative ease.

When it came time to make the actual frame she was cutting the 2" thick white oak on our massive band saw like a pro.

Once I completed replacing the frames on the transom it was time to start designing the new shape *Luna* would sport—that of a Bermuda Sloop. Our shipwright Chip created the design from pictures and historical data and we needed to build a full size mock-up. Starting with nothing more than sticks, strings, and clamps we begin taking measurements and setting angles from all over *Luna's* aft section. Thankfully the lines and measurements were almost perfect so a life size cardboard and plywood model was created fairly easily.

The only question remaining was whether our "ultimate authority" on period correctness would approve.

We put the finishing touches on the mock-up first thing in the morning before he arrived, "he" being John "Quartermaster" Glass, the director and head honcho for the Colonial Seaport Foundation. We covered the mock-up with a canvas tarp to make for a grand unveiling. Once he was at the site, Dutch, Grace and I guided him to the perfect viewpoint for his first glimpse of the new transom. With a flourish Chip removed the cover, and much to our enjoyment, John called it both spectacular and perfect!

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Photo by Steve "Jack Tarr" Madsen

*This mock-up lets you imagine how *Luna's* aft section will look when the work is completed.*

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Next we needed to decide what window style to use, and John chose three smaller windows as they were the most period correct. Now it's up to Chip to take exact measurements and make the actual plans we'll use to build the real thing, and hopefully it will end up just like the mock-up and drawings.



Luna at sail as envisioned by shipwright John "Chip" Collamore III

Chip now turned to working on the #17 bulkhead that will separate the engine compartment from the captains quarter's and navigation station. Long Tom, the peanut-farming pirate from Emporia, made the two-hour drive up today and helped with the plywood templates that will be used to shape the bulkhead. With everyone working in the aft section today, there are extension cords and power tools being passed back and forth, and I couldn't resist the urge to play a little joke on Tom. He asked me to pass him the jigsaw,

which I did. Only problem was, I neglected to tell him it was not plugged in. The look on his face was priceless as he kept squeezing the trigger with no resulting action from the machine! Thankfully he's a good sport, not to mention he knows he'll get me back sometime in the future.

Lunchtime rolls around and Susie Collamore stops by with a steaming pot of pea soup and fresh baked bread which was a welcome sight on a chilly, rainy day. After

a short lunch break, the Quartermaster is once again laboring away in the forward section, replacing yet another frame. I take some photos of the unbelievable "destruction" involved in removing one of those frame sections.

The rest of my workday is spent shaping and fitting the oak framing that will go on the old transom to replace the deteriorated wood. What we thought would be a simple job became a major project when we saw that the original wood underneath was turning to dust. That meant

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To learn more about the Colonial Seaport Foundation and how you can support this exciting project, please visit www.colonialseaport.org



Laura "Madam Grace" Noel doesn't let frigid winter temps or skinned knuckles slow her work down!

An Incident at Hampton's Marker 20

Blackbeard's Crew raided the popular Hampton restaurant Marker 20 to benefit the CSF on February 25. John Glass led a team from the Foundation who were on hand all afternoon to distribute information and educate patrons about the exciting and challenging mission of the CSF and the *Luna* project. Pernell Taylor provided an excellent handmade scale model of the *Luna's* rigging, and a

power point presentation on the Foundation was played on the restaurant's overhead monitor.

As the evening progressed, pirates from Blackbeard's Crew commenced the raid, interacting with customers, singing chanties, and performing random acts of piracy. Pirate Pete DeVleig and wench Ann Jacob skillfully manned the bar, collecting tips as donations toward

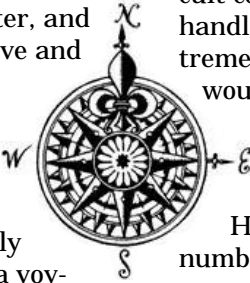
the Foundation. In addition, Marker 20 owner Carlyle Bland generously donated 10% of the days sales to the Foundation.

We are grateful to Carlyle and the Marker 20 staff for their support and for allowing the pirates of Blackbeard's Crew to plunder their fine establishment for a good cause. ❄️

Our Living History:

Hardtack: That's One Tough Cookie!

Hardtack is the impenetrable stuff of myth and legend. Basically a simple type of unleavened cracker or biscuit, it was made from flour, water, and salt. Inexpensive and long-lasting, it was used for sustenance in the absence of perishable foods, commonly during long sea voyages and military campaigns before the era of canned goods. A typical sailor might eat a pound of hardtack a day as part of his regular rations. The name derives from the British sailor's slang for food, "tack," but it is known by other names such as ship's biscuit, pilot bread, sea biscuit, or the less appetizing "dog biscuits,"



"tooth dullers," or "sheet iron."

Because it was so dense and dry, properly stored and transported ship's biscuit could survive rough handling and endure extremes of temperature. It would keep for years as long as it was protected from dampness.

Hardtack was eaten a number of ways; it could be covered with jam, butter, fat, or anything spreadable and eaten like bread. However, it was often so hard that it is was impossible to chew and sailors had to be more creative. To soften it, it was frequently dunked in brine, coffee, or some other liquid. It could be crushed by pounding with a pistol butt or stone and mixed with bacon grease to form a mush, or crumbled and cooked into a skillet meal. If a sailor was fortunate enough to have access to

milk or molasses, one or both could be mixed in as well. Over time, ship's biscuit could become infested with weevils or worms; it was common for sailors to tap their biscuit on the tabletop to knock out as many weevils as possible before eating it.

Hardtack is still made and eaten in parts of today's world, primarily as rations for expeditions or emergency storage, or by historical reenactors. "Crown Biscuit," a cross between an unsalted cracker and hardtack, was manufactured by Nabisco as recently as 2008. ❁

You can become a member of the Foundation for as little as \$35 and help the CSF preserve America's colonial maritime heritage! Visit our website at www.colonialexport.org



Tough, durable, and sometimes inedible, hardtack could be cut into rounds or squares and baked up to four times to ensure that it was completely free of moisture.

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complete replacement of 3 frame pieces on each side and the framing going across the back, but at least now it's done!

Our day typically ends around 4:00 or 5:00 p.m., picking up all the tools and debris and putting it all in its place—tools in the barn, trash in the cans, and wood scraps in the burn pile, then sweep out the workshop and it's time to head home. We say our good-byes and off we go until next Sunday, when we'll get together and do it all again!
—Steve Madsen ❁



Photo by Laura "Madam Grace" Noel

Pernell "Bos'un" Taylor knows what difficult—and dirty—work it is to scrape out the ship's bilge.



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Upcoming Events and Happenings

Join us at one of these fun events and learn more about the Colonial Seaport Foundation and colonial American maritime history.

For an updated list of Blackbeard's Crew events and appearances, visit blackbeardscrew.org.

April 25, 2009
Oxford Days,
Oxford, MD: *living history, pirate encampment, scallawag school, and more.*

May 15-16, 2009
Elizabeth City,
NC: *Blackbeard's Crew Plunders the Museum of the Albemarle BBQ dinner, pirate camp, living history, family activities.*

And don't miss our signature event, June 5-7, 2009: 10th Annual Hampton Blackbeard Pirate Festival. Pirate Ball, encampment with

over 100 pirates, sea battles, cannon fire, pirate trial, historical reenactments, and more. Blackbeardpiratefestival.com



When fully refitted, Luna will resemble The Michigan Maritime Museums' sloop Friends Good Will, shown above.