



Newsletter of the Midwest Model Shipwrights ♦

www.midwestmodelshipwrights.com ♦

April, 2022

• Scuttlebutt •



Online registration is currently open for the Midwestern Model Ships and Boats Contest, which will be held in-person at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum on May 13th-15th. Information on lodging options with special rates for modelers is also available, along with a full schedule for the contest on the museum website.



Please go to www.wisconsinmaritime.org/programs to register and gather more information on the contest. If you have questions regarding registration you may contact Emily Shedal at eshedal@wisconsinmaritime.org or (920) 684-0218 ext.117.

• Crossing the Bar •

It is with deep sadness and a profound sense of loss that we report the passing of our shipmate, Ralph Sykes. Ralph was a remarkable person. In spite of the fact that he suffered from Parkinson's Disease, he persisted in building model ships. Along with his brother Bob, he rarely missed a meeting, and enjoyed showcasing his work, and studying other models.



Although a quiet man, Ralph had a sense of humor, and was quick to "mix it up" with fellow members. We bid our shipmate, Ralph Sykes, farewell. May his seas be calm, and the wind always at his back. He will be missed.

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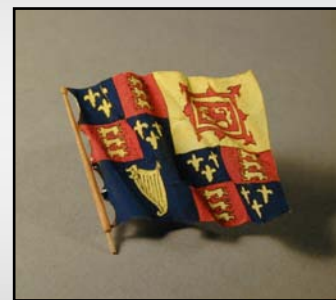
jpdesign@mindspring.com

April Meeting Notice

Making Flags

By
Gus Agustin

If you had to name one presentation that is synonymous with the Midwest Model Shipwrights, it would be Gus Agustin's talk on making flags. It has been over 30 years since Gus first explained his technique at the old Ship Chandler in Mount Prospect. Since then it has been presented at Manitowoc, NRG Conferences, Chicago Tri-Club shows and the Rope's Annual Exhibition in Tokyo, Japan.



Other modelers have been able to create procedures that produce very nice flags, but arguably, Gus' method has remained one of the most popular. This is one you don't want to miss!

Proceedings will begin on Wednesday, April 20th, at 7:00 PM CST, but you will be able to log on as early as 6:30 PM, and join us for a round table discussion.

• April NRG Workshop •

The NRG will be presenting another Virtual Workshop on April 23, 2022, at 10:30 AM Central Time. If you want to give presentations, but you don't know how, or if you have experience but would like to improve, this workshop will prove helpful. "From Slide Deck to Presentation", presented in two segments, will help you take your presentations to the next level.

The first part of the program will cover 'How to Make a Presentation.' This part presents aspects of, setting objectives, visual thinking and building slides. That discussion will be followed by a second part which will use Power-Point. Presented by Robert Chenoweth, the session will cover software basics and hacks for the novice and the advanced user.

The NRG is offering this virtual workshop to all members of NRG Chapter Clubs. The Chapter Club members who are NRG members will be able to register as usual. The Chapter's non-NRG members will need to have their names and emails sent to Kurt Van Dahm at nrgdirec-tor1@gmail.com or nrghomeoffice@gmail.com.

• Copper Plate Coloration •

By Bob Filipowski

Bob Filipowski opened his presentation on copper plate coloration by stating: "Probably, no other aspect of our hobby provides us with as much latitude as the appearance of copper plating on our models. Copper, by its very nature will react to its environment." Bob went on to discuss some of the different applications used by modelers.



Probably, the most popular application is the copper foil with adhesive backing. Many modelers leave the surface shiny, and allow it to develop its patina naturally. They often rub oil from their hands and face onto the plates to accelerate the process.

Filipowski then went on to discuss chemical applications. The most sought after coloration using this process is pale green verdigris. On real ships this phenomenon occurred only after the vessels had been in salt water for a while and then put in dry dock. The copper plates reacted to the fresh air and salty residue. Built by Ken Thomsen, *CW Morgan* in the above photo reacted to a solution of Aluminum Chloride and Copper Sulfate, which was applied to each plate with a cotton swab prior to gluing them to the hull.



If simulating verdigris intrigues you, there is a product on the market that might work. *Patina-It* by A-West is available from Walthers, a company that specializes in model railroad supplies. Bob tested the product on a piece of brass, and the results were acceptable, although a fixative, such as Dullcote, was required.



The next most popular means of imparting a patina on copper plates involves the use of heat. There are a number of factors that can determine the level of coloration. Vary any one of them and you will get different results. They include the following:

The means by which plates are heated.

The degree of heat.

The length of time that plates are subjected to heat.

The means by which the plates are cooled.

Whether the plates are left unfinished or sealed.

Level of oxidation on the plates.

Whether they are exposed to oil from your hands.



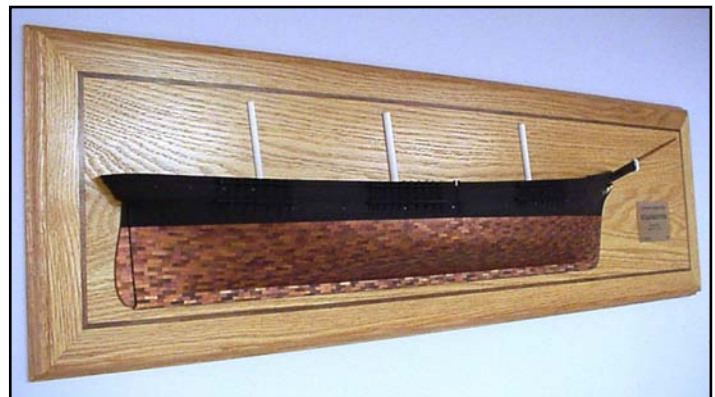
Bob didn't hold back. He showed the membership examples of plates that were absolute failures. His first effort involved wrapping the plates in aluminum foil, and placing them over a stove burner. The net result was a black powdery substance on the plates' surface that in some cases was permanent. The plates were useless.

Bob then discussed his preferred method, heating the plates individually. They were placed on an aluminum plate and cooked over a stove burner. As they reached the desired patina, they were dumped in a container of water or placed on a surface where they could air cool. Each of



these methods produced a different effect.

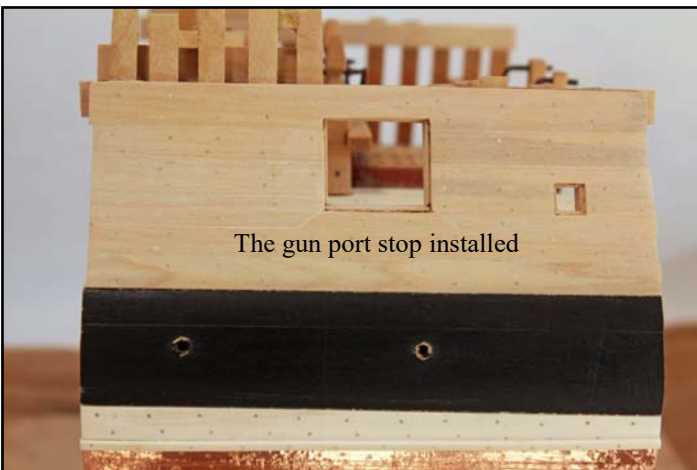
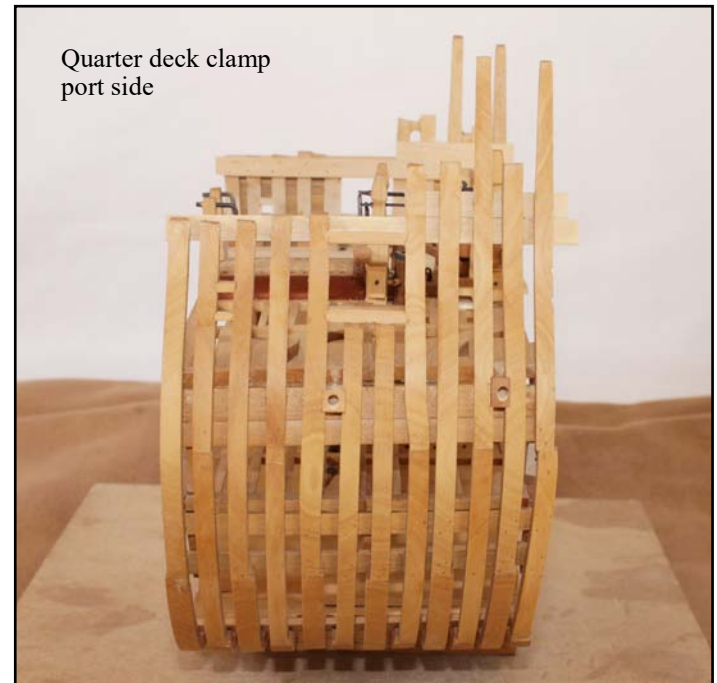
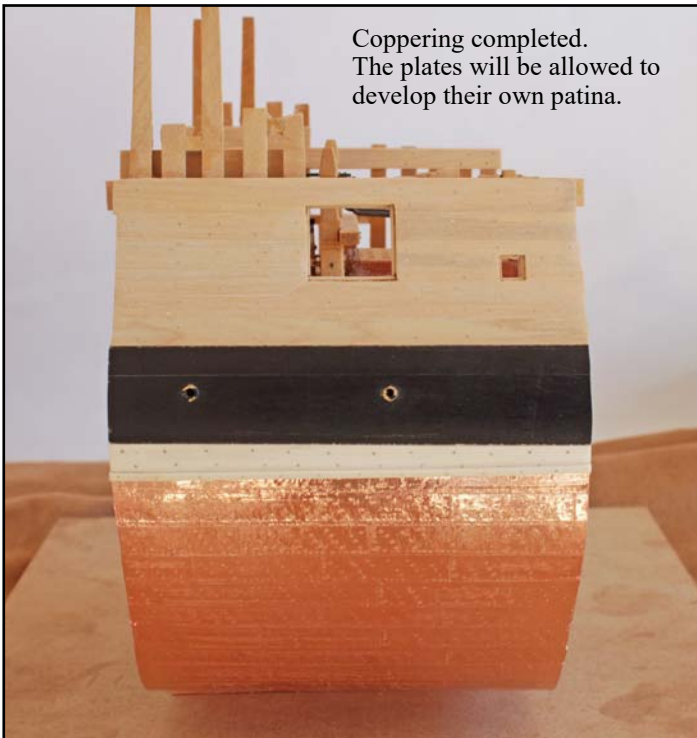
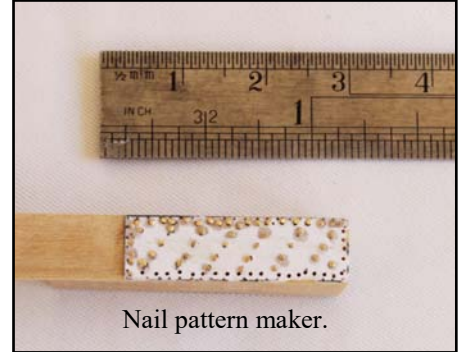
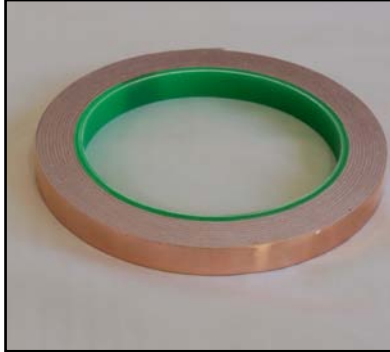
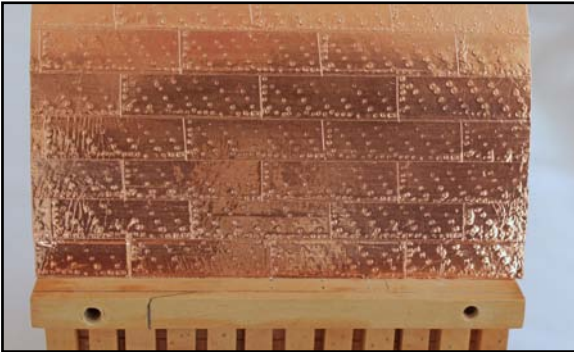
The glue used to attach the plates was "PLIOBOND", a contact cement that will not corrode copper. Prior to using, it was diluted to a milk-like consistency with MEK. Two coats were applied to the hull, and one coat to the plate before it was mounted.



• Ships on Deck •

Echo Cross Section by Toni Levine

Photos by Toni Levine

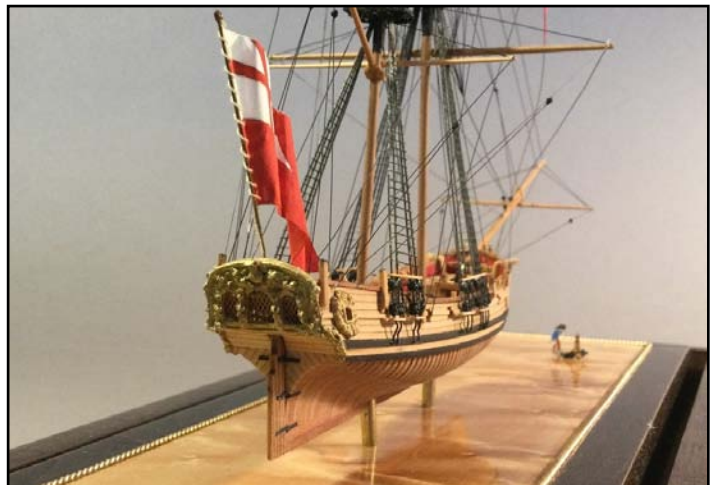


● Ships on Deck ●

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Speedwell 1752 by Gus Agustin

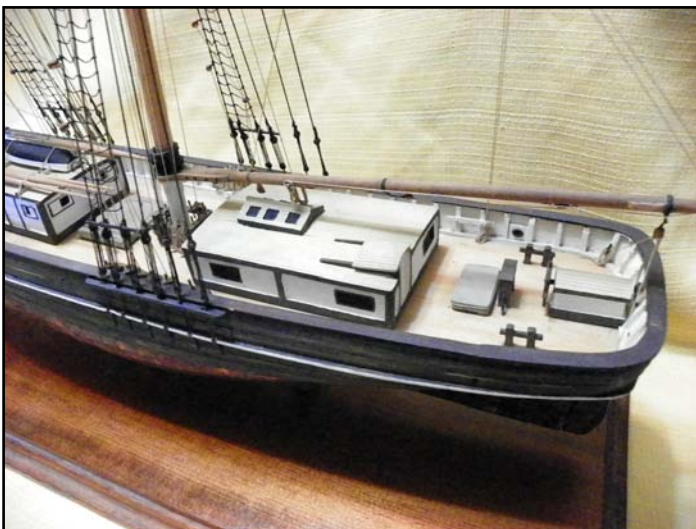
Photos by Gus Agustin



● **Ships on Deck** ●
Continued

Newsboy by Don Purney

Photos by Don Purney



● Ships on Deck ●

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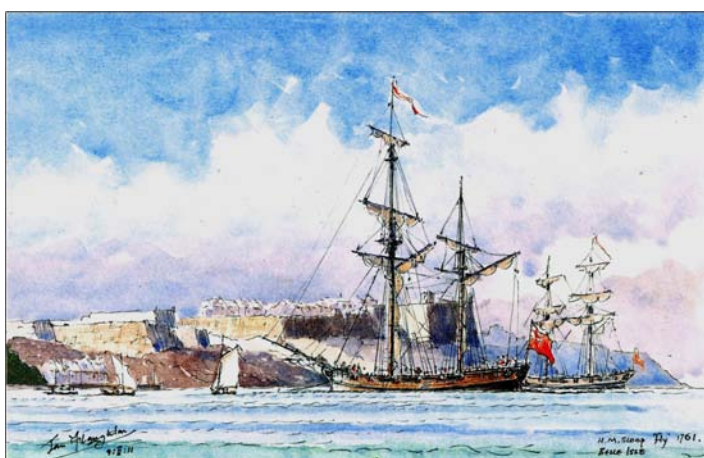
Mid-eighteenth Century Sloops of War by Ian McLaughlan

Sketches by Ian McLaughlan

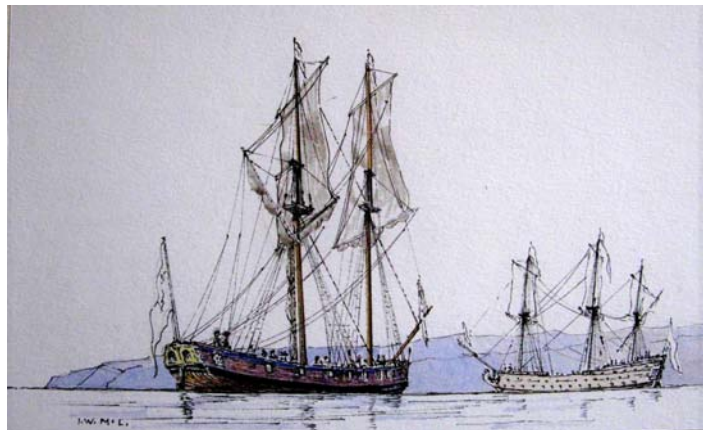
From about 1750 onwards, the sailing sloop of war started to use three masts. At first this was done by adding a mizzen mast to the brig rig which meant that the main and mizzen tended to be very close together. However, the picture here of HM



Sloop *Beaver* at Boston in the late 1760s shows a sloop that was designed to carry three masts.



Nevertheless, the ketch rig of two masts continued to remain popular as shown in the picture of HM Sloop *Fly* at Belle Isle off the French Brittany coast in 1762, during the Seven Years War.



At an earlier point, HM Sloop *Tryall*, one of Anson's ships on his historic circumnavigation, whilst having a brig rig, had a main that was shorter than her foremast. This was caused by storm damage. Some think that this shortening was the reason why she managed to round Cape Horn into the Pacific, whilst other small vessels failed to do so. On arrival at Juan Fernandez in the Southeast Pacific, she had only four men left standing to manage her sails and steer.



Finally the picture of HM Sloops *Speedwell* and *Cruizer* show two different rigs applied to the same hull form: Ketch on the left and Snow on the right!."

● Ships on Deck ●

Continued

HMS *Diamond* by Norio Uriu

Photos by Norio Uriu of the Rope, Tokyo, Japan

HMS *Diamond* is a scratch-built model of an English Top-sail Schooner Gunboat, circa 1812. This 1/48 scale model will be displayed at the Rope's 47th Annual Exhibition in early April.



The figure was originally a 1/48 scale Tamiya German soldier.



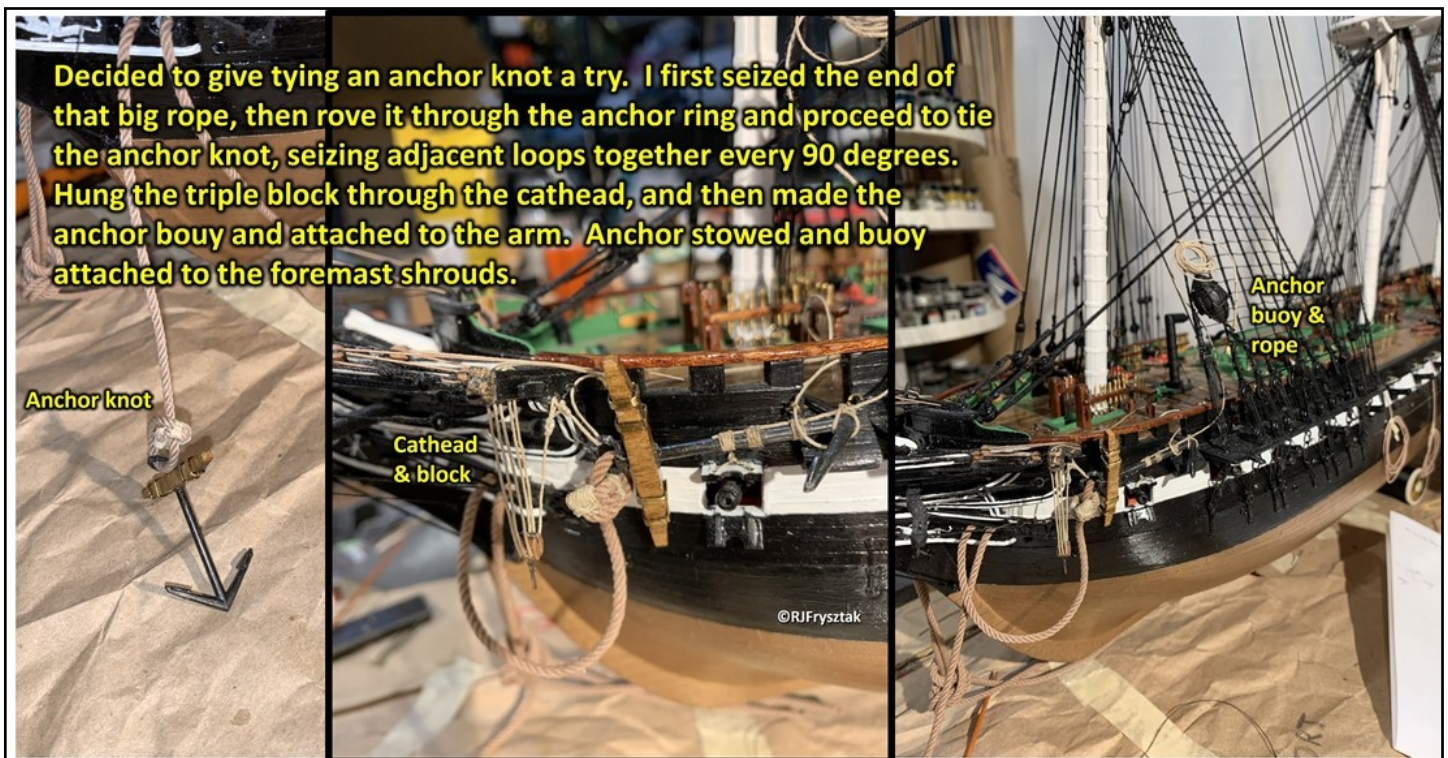
"Ships on Deck", continued on Page 8

● Ships on Deck ●

Continued

USS Constitution by Bob Fryszak

Photos by Bob Fryszak

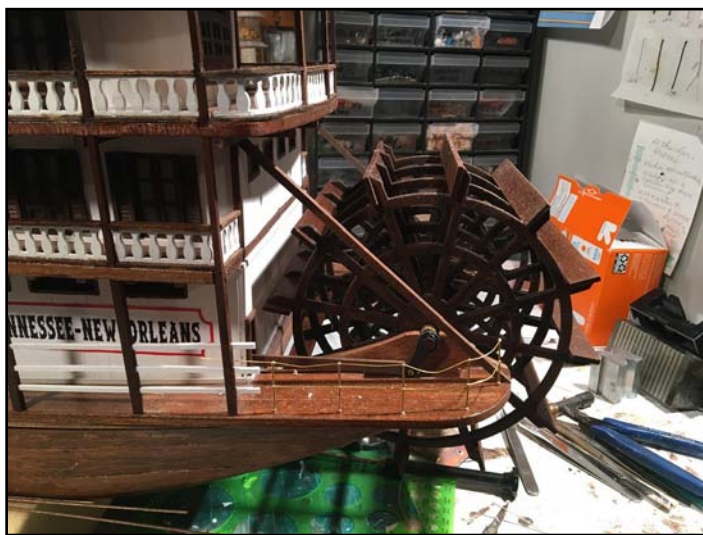
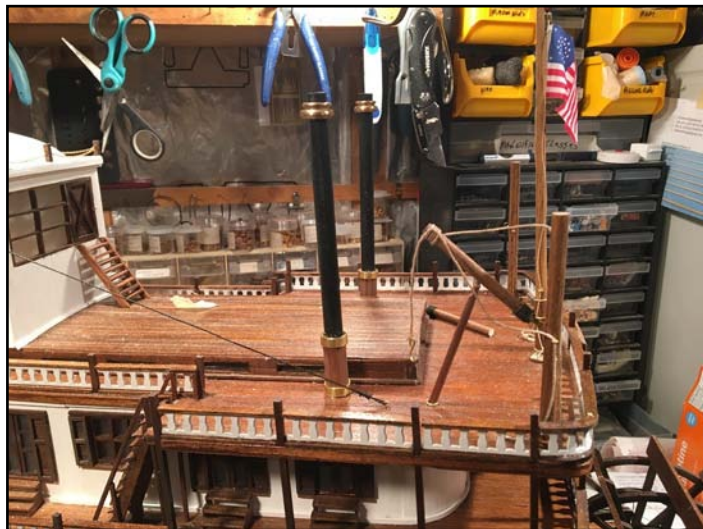


● Ships on Deck ●

Continued

Mississippi Circa 1870 by Keith Zeilenga

Photos by Keith Zeilenga



● Ships on Deck ●

Continued

Half Moon Circa 1607 by Ray Kroschel

Photos by Ray Kroschel



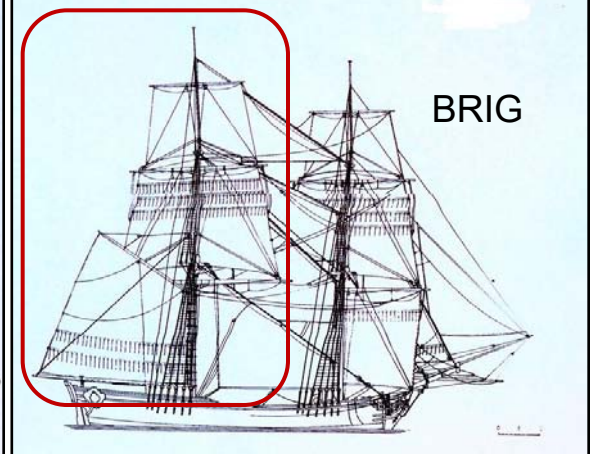
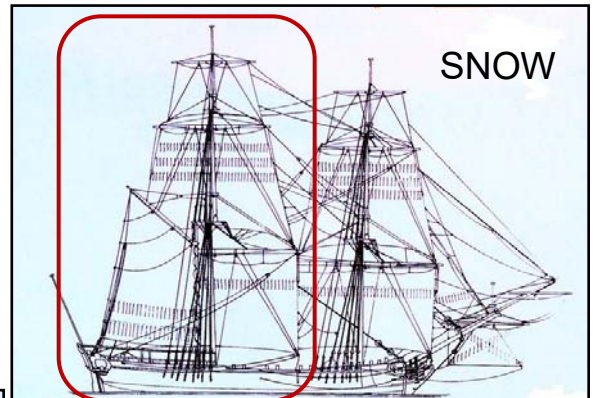
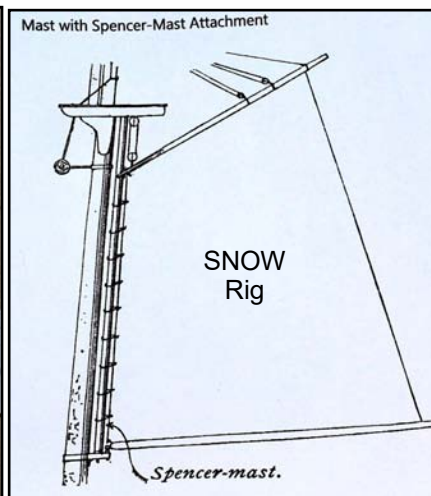
• Ships on Deck •

Continued

Valkyrie by Sam Parent

Photos by Sam Parent

Attached are some photos of Sam's new project. He's doing a kit bash of the Model Shipways "Fair American," which he has always liked. However, he wanted to do something different. Sam hasn't seen many models rigged as Snows, so from here on out his "Fair American" will become the "Valkyrie." Sam is going to convert the kit from a 16 gun "Brig" rig to a 12 gun "Snow." He also wants to do some fancy work on the transom and quarter galleries starting with the fish scales that he added to the lower transom. Parent was inspired by the quarter galleries on Patrick Sand's *Syren*. Sam is using old business cards to create the effect.

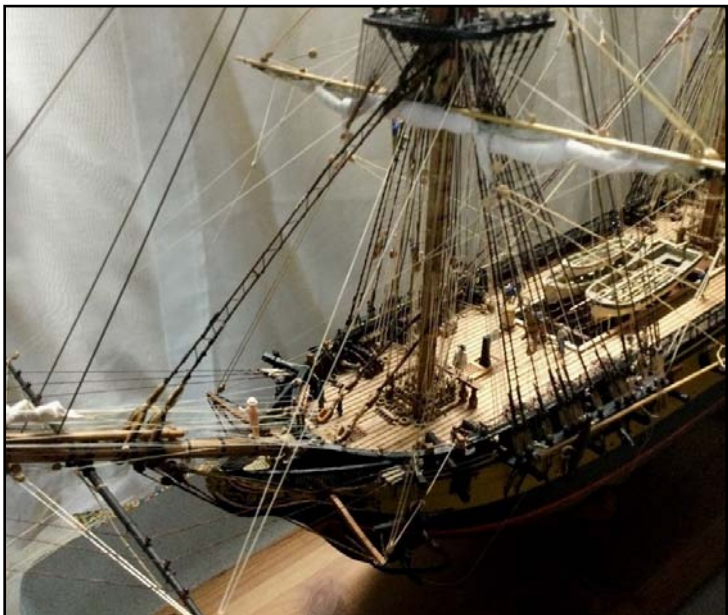


● Ships on Deck ●

Continued

USS Constitution Circa 1804 by Richard Romaniak

Photos by Richard Romaniak



This magnificent model is almost finished. All that has to be added are the bow lines and coils of rope on deck.



● Ships on Deck ●

Continued

Katy of Norfolk by Dan Pacholski

Photos by Dan Pacholski



Dan decided to replace the kit supplied mast hoops with pieces cut from brass tubing. Pacholski intends to blacken them, which should look quite nice. The pieces that came with the kit were out of scale, brittle, and broke easily. See upper left photo.

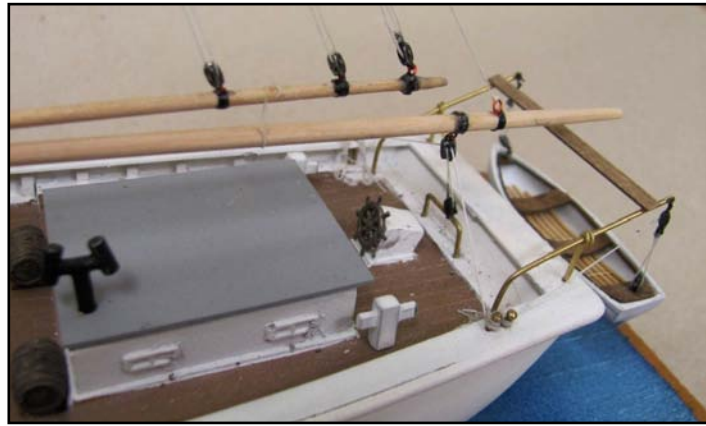
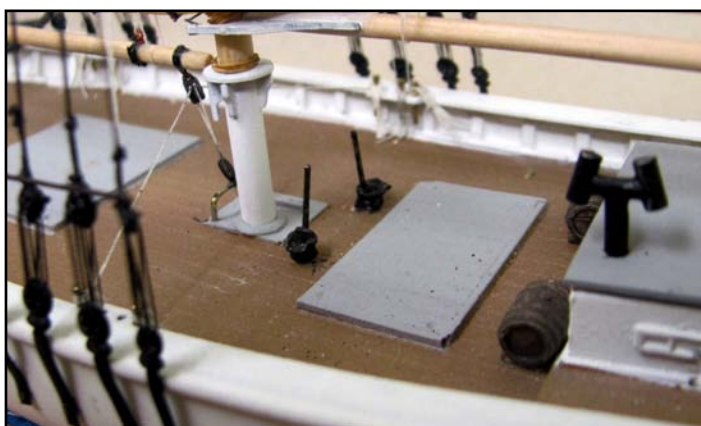
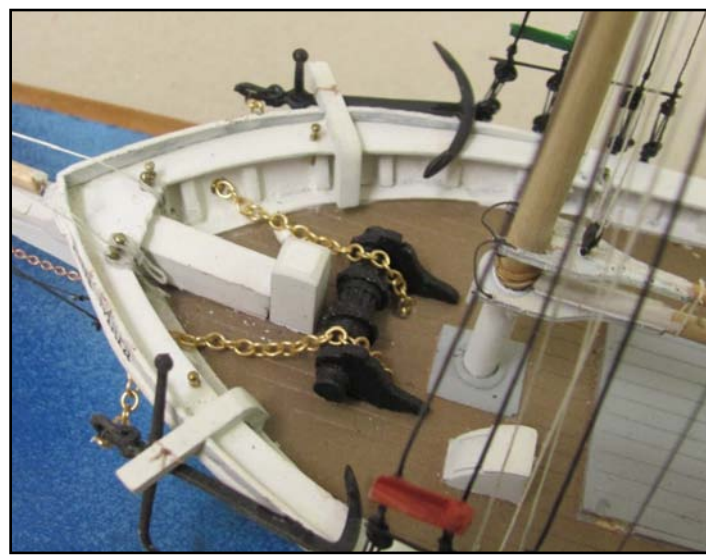
• Ships on Deck •

Continued

***Ellie Mara* by BlueJacket Ship Crafters**

Submitted by Kurt Van Dahm

Bluejacket is proud to announce an exciting new kit, the Ellie Mara, a 2-masted coastal schooner typical of the mid-1800's. With a wide beam and shallow draft, she could get very close to the shore. The kit has a cast resin hull, laser cut pieces, Britannia fittings, brass rod, and 4 sizes and colors of rigging thread. overall length is 15", and is scaled for HO (1:87) She also has a very attractive list price of \$124.00, part number K1115.



● Historic Ship Profiles ●

“There must be no Holes in our Sweeping” The 31st Canadian Minesweeping Flotilla and HMCS *Caraquet* on D-Day

Contributed by Alan O'Neill

In March 1944, of the weapons the German navy could use against the impending invasion, Allied naval planners feared mines the most. Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay, the naval commander for Operation Neptune, confided to his diary "There is no doubt that the mine is the greatest obstacle to success." If unswept, these sinister underwater weapons could not only sink



many ships and landing craft but seriously upset the intricate timing of the assault. In the largest minesweeping operation ever undertaken, 247 minesweepers were deployed to sweep ten approach lanes across the English Channel, clear the disembarkation and fire support sectors, and then sweep the final paths to the beaches. The British and Americans lacked the resources to mount this massive operation by themselves, so among the vessels contributed by other nations were sixteen *Bangor*-class minesweepers of the Royal Canadian Navy.

Ten of these vessels formed the 31st Canadian Minesweeping Flotilla under Commander A. H. G. Storrs aboard HMCS *Caraquet*. The 31st's responsibility was to sweep Approach Channel 3 into Omaha Beach. The sweepers would advance in a formation that was not unlike that used by snowplows clearing an airport runway. "*Caraquet*" led the formation with four sweepers trailing behind the group ready to replace any sister ships that fell out due to mechanical breakdowns or enemy action.

The ships advanced at 7.5 knots and cleared a lane just over a thousand meters wide. Because it was critical that the formation remain intact so that no mines would be missed, vessels were under strict orders to hold their course even if heavily engaged. Also, for fear of alerting the enemy, mines that rose to the surface were not to be exploded unless they directly imperiled other ships. According to one officer in HMCS *Georgian*, "we were to hold our course, no matter what was ahead - there must be no holes in our sweeping, as ships

loaded with troops would be following us, and would be depending on us."

The operation required precise navigation and superb seamanship. This was complicated by the demanding sea conditions. Quite apart from the poor weather, powerful tidal currents ran across the heading of the formation and, to make matters worse, that night the tidal stream was much stronger than anticipated due to the fresh westerly breeze that had been blowing for two days.

Complicating matters, the swept channel was not perfectly straight but followed a series of gentle doglegs, each requiring minor course changes. Further, when the tidal current reversed itself in the middle of the passage, the entire formation had to recover sweeps, reverse course, head up their swept channel, reverse course again, re-deploy their sweeps and resume where they had left off.

With the forward part of the *Bangors* sealed off to prevent casualties if a mine exploded, off-duty personnel spent the passage on the upper deck gathered around the funnels for warmth. They expected the night to erupt abruptly with gun flashes and tracer fire. Steaming at the head of the assault flotillas, "*Caraquet*" and the rest of the minesweepers were the most vulnerable vessels in the invasion armada, and Neptune planners thought they would be detected by the enemy, and suffer heavily for it. They predicted thirty to fifty percent casualties among the lead flotillas. Yet the night remained quiet; no mines exploded and the only outward sign of enemy activity was the anti-aircraft barrage put up over Normandy in response to Allied bombing.



About fifteen kilometers off the French coast they then began the tedious work of clearing the transport area from where soldiers would disembark from their assault ships. This task entailed steaming parallel to the shoreline, close under enemy guns. At one vulnerable moment, when making a turn about two kilometers offshore, the moon emerged from behind the clouds to expose the *Bangors* in its pale glow but after thirty excruciating seconds the moon retreated behind cover and the defenses remained mute.

The D-Day minesweeping was a tremendous success. Despite the dire predictions of Allied naval commanders, losses during the assault were insignificant. It can be said without fear of contradiction that minesweeping was the keystone of the arch for operation Neptune. Of the 261 mines swept, over 100 were swept by the Canadians.

