

Ship's Log

Tampa Bay Ship Model Society

Meeting of September 23rd, 2025

[TampaBayShipModelSociety.org](https://tampabayshipmodelsociety.org)

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Meetings

are held at **10:30 a.m.** on the fourth Tuesday of each month except December (none).

Location

is the lower level of Trinity Lutheran Church, 411-5th St. N., St. Petersburg. From I-275, Exit at I-375 East to second exit (4th Ave. N.). Proceed to traffic light at 5th St. N., turning left. Church is on right. Parking is to the left of the church.

Objectives

This Society is an organization of model builders, historians and artists who encourage the construction of nautical models, creation of marine art, and research in maritime history, at every level of expertise, through the exchange of ideas and presentations.

Membership

There is no charge to attend meetings, and all interested parties are invited. Annual dues of \$12 are payable in **January**.

Presentations

Members and guests are encouraged to bring in or send projects current and past, plans, modeling problems or maritime-related items of interest for discussion, or inclusion in the monthly *Ship's Log*.

Next Meeting
Tuesday, Oct. 28, 10:30 a.m.

The meeting was opened by the president, **Steve Sobieralski**, with a moment of silence in memory of club treasurer, long-time member, fellow modeler and friend **George Hecht**, who recently crossed the bar. A photo of George's truly impressive "cave" was passed around for all to marvel at, and a few reminiscences were shared.

Ed Brut handed over some club treasury documents, which he had received from George's wife Jane, to Steve. Steve will review these and contact the Pinellas Federal Credit Union, where George established the club account, to ascertain how we will be able to access it. Steve asked the members present (and hereby asks any who weren't) to consider volunteering for the position of treasurer.

The club welcomed visitor **Tom Hartline**. Tom is known to some of us as a Pelikan Club member who specializes in exquisite scratch-built models of space craft. He is a former naval officer, helicopter pilot, current NASA employee, and has embarked on his first wooden ship model.

Sec/Ed requested members present to take a look at the club website: (<https://tampabayshipmodelsociety.org>). Specifically, he requests that any current members who wish to have models displayed in the Gallery section please send him photos. Many of the photos currently displayed are from inactive or deceased members. There's no limit to the number of photos that can be displayed, so please send them on. JPEG is good. Please name the file subject ship and your initials or I.D.)

The meeting then moved on to "Show & Tell." >>>>>





Vic Lehner: Displayed components of a *Royal Caroline* kit. "Recently I bought a kit of the *Royal Yacht Caroline*". Scale is 1:30 and when built she will be L-1390mm, H-253, E-275mm. It will be my largest undertaking to date (oh what have I done to myself).

The kit construction is a plank-on-bulkhead as are all model kits for this ship. I did find one on the internet that was scratch built as a plank on frame and none as a cutaway.

Since I have enough information in books and blueprints on the inter rooms and compartments on the ship, I decided to make mine more interesting as a cutaway. So, I have abandoned the plans in the kit to build the hull as a plank-on-bulkhead and instead will scratch build the hull to look as a plank-on-frame.

The port side will be fully planked and the starboard side will be a large cutaway showing all the details of the inside rooms and compartments. Frame construction will be similar to the other plank-on-frame ships I have built in the past.

All the carvings and deck details provided in the kit will be used on the outside of the hull as well as on the deck. They are excellent in detail and carved out of boxwood, walnut and pear. Hopefully when done it will be my unique version of the *Caroline*



The kit "*The Royal Caroline*" was produced by LU HAI QING KONG, and I bought it on Ebay, from CROWN HOBBY WORLD. The instructions are mostly in Chinese and with some in English."





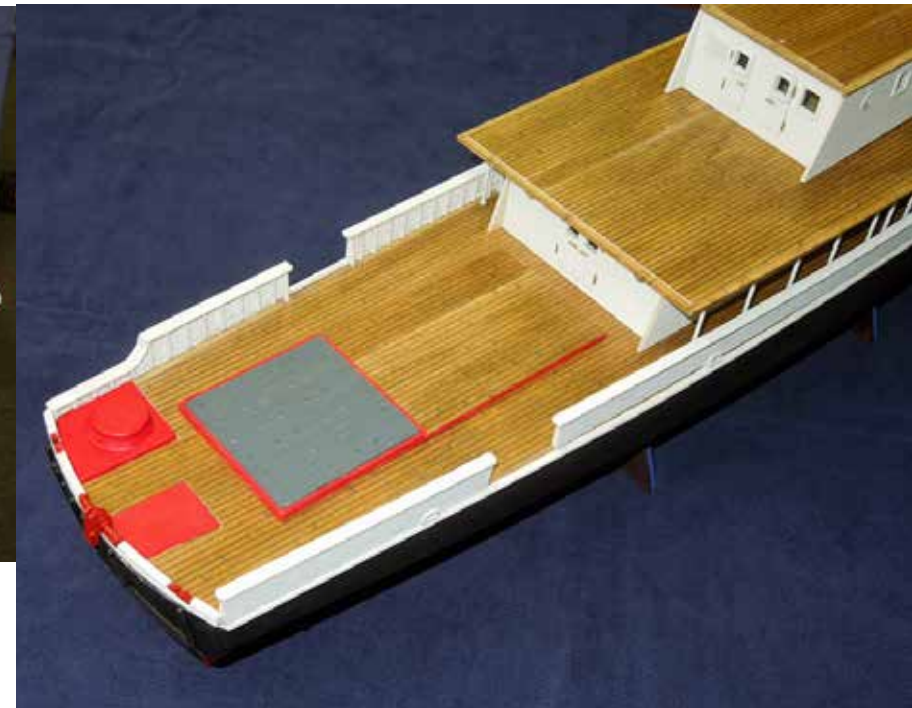
As well as the ship's boat, Vic decided to complete the cask and guns for his *Royal Caroline*.



This image from Vic



Howard Howe: "Since last meeting, I have completed and painted the transom area assembly of Calypso. I also planked the second and third level decks. I used the 4" x 24" sheet decking with 1/8" wide deck planks. I stain the planking with a semi-transparent walnut stain. Then I line the space between planks with a #2 pencil and applied a polyurethane satin sealer. The sheet planking is then cut to fit the size of the kit die cut deck areas and bonded with "Canopy Glue". The second level cabin and the wheel house were next on my assembly list. I used the thin veneer wood from the kit for the wheel house exterior structure and George Hecht was right! This would have been better application for plastic use and less cussing!!! For lighting, I purchased the Evan Designs 3V chip lights. The cabin red and green running lights and an interior blue light are installed. The other cabins and exterior lights will be installed as assembly sequence permits. Currently, I am in the process of locating the cabin interior light routing and location of terminals and switches to provide access for RC operation or light capability on a timer at home.





Another bathtub water test has been performed for ballast needs, and one of my 2.5 pound dive weights has met the requirement. A secure removable location for it has been established along with the removable 7.2 V NiCd battery.

The next step after completing the light wiring, will be to prepare the forward deck for accessories and the wheel house before bonding it in place on the plastic hull. After bonding the deck there will be no internal forward hull access. Hopefully, I can start some of the pretty detail work soon!

(Sec/Ed) Howard did not mention that he just had an article published in the SSMA Journal on building his Grand Banks, Restless. SSMA = Scale Ship Modelers Association of North America, which, nowhere in its title or cover page mentions R/C, while that is in the mission of the organization.



These images from Howard



Guy Hancock: "I showed the *Sultana* with masts now having some 2 mm blocks attached to the crosstrees and topmasts.

The kit only has one size so I ordered other sizes from SYREN, along with some hooks. The blocks in the kit have sharp edges and all need to be rounded off, but the difference is hard to see at this small size. The SYREN blocks are rounded and look very realistic.

I don't know how they can make them so well and so cheaply. More blocks need to be added to the masts, and some deckeyes at the base of the masts, next. Temporary shrouds and stays will be used to hold the masts aligned when I glue them into the deck.

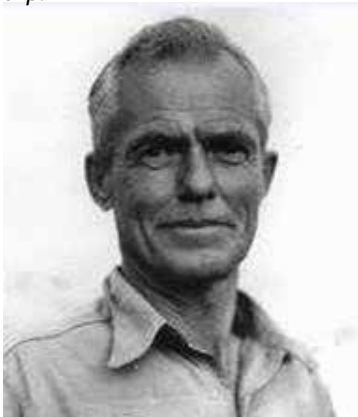




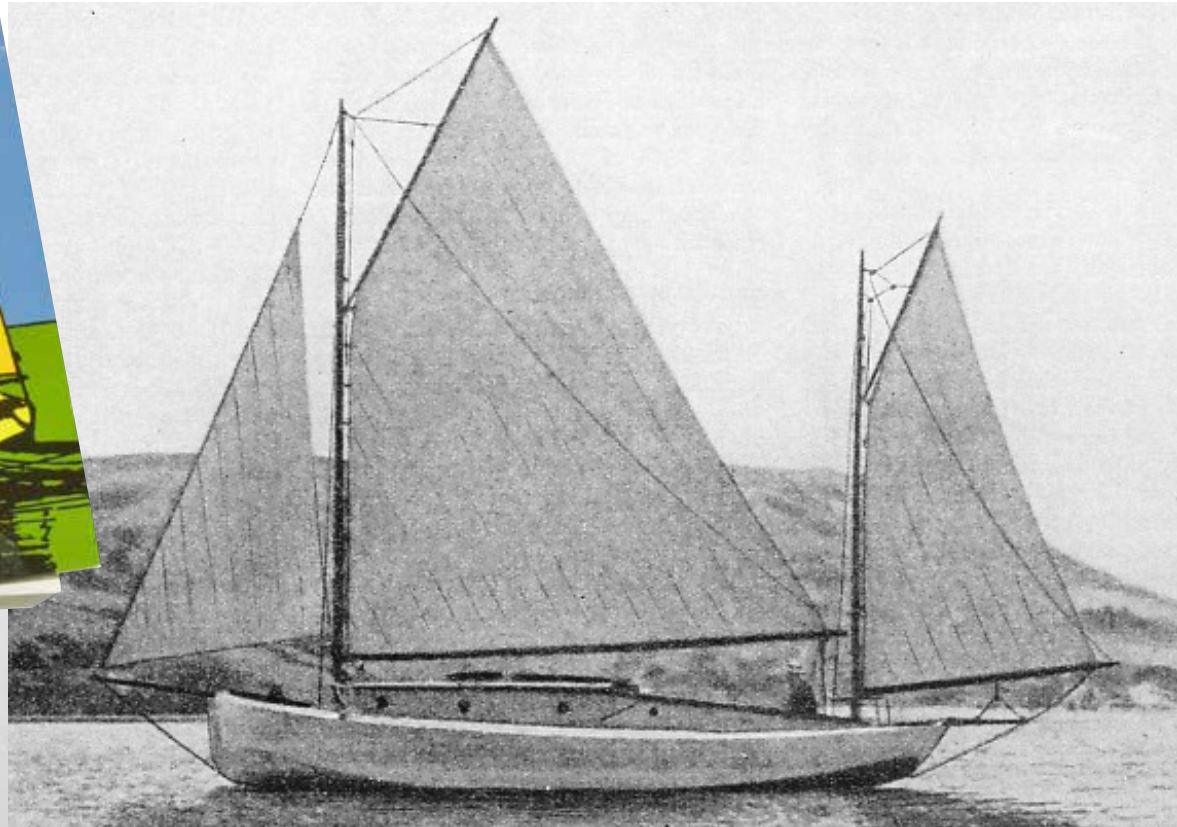
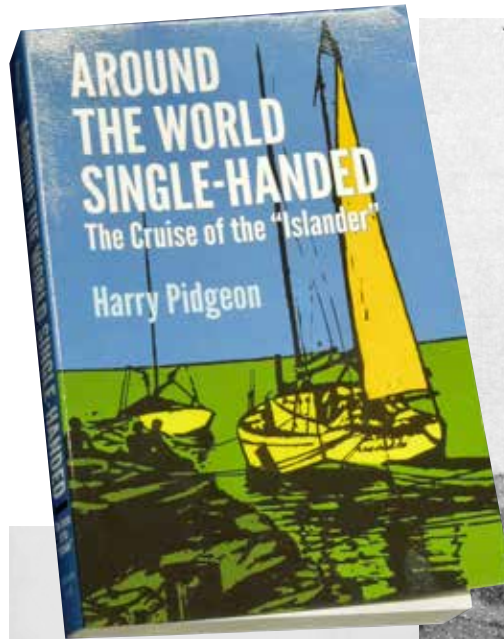
(Guy continued) I returned the book picked up at the last meeting, written by Harry Pidgeon (1869 – 1954), about his solo circumnavigation in the mid-1920's. He built the boat (34' yawl, *Islander*) himself from plans he saw in the Rudder magazine.

The world he explored was a very different place 100 years ago. He mentions many times how glad he was to get away to sea, and then how glad he was to get into a port after enduring storms and bad weather as well as calms.

It is fun to read, and reminds me of a quote from John Kenneth Galbraith about Christopher Buckley's book about going on a tramp steamer. *"My joy at reading the book was only exceeded by my joy at not having been along on the trip."*

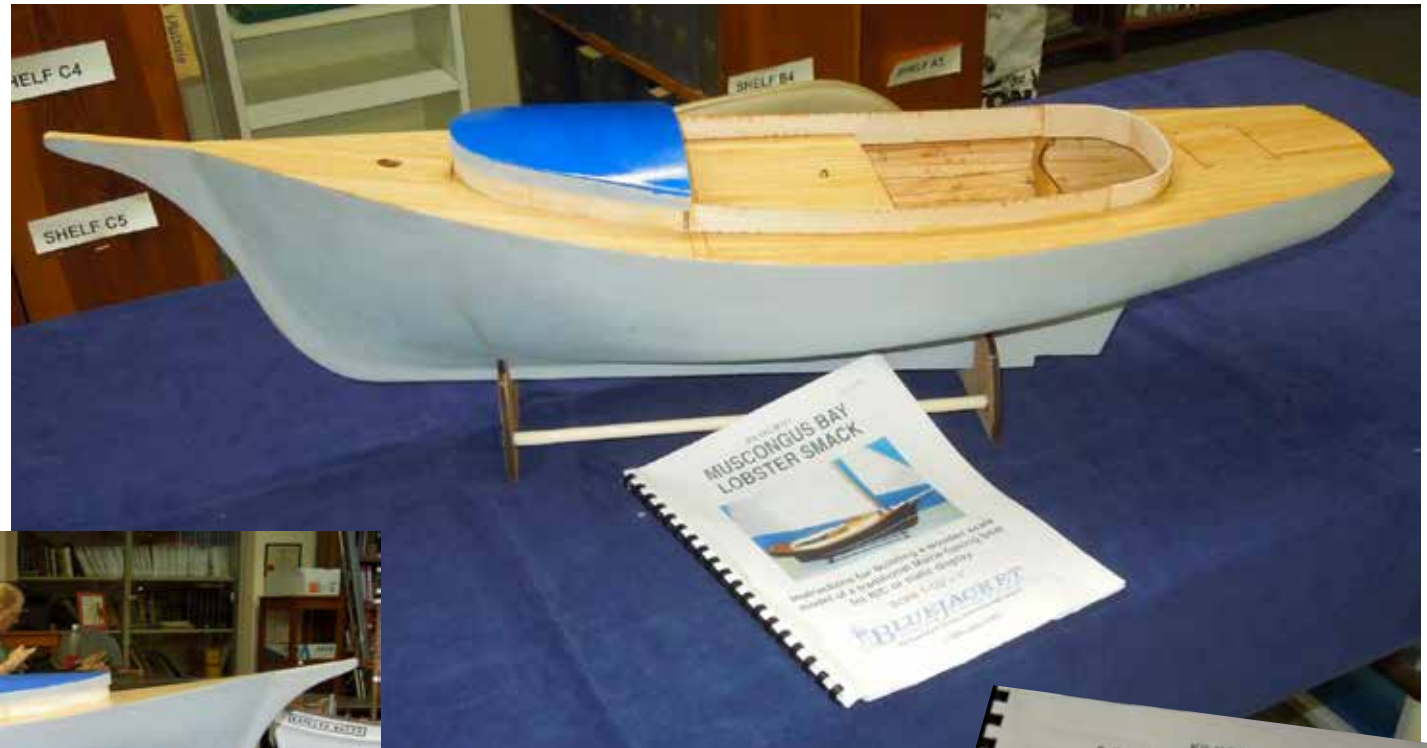


Harry Pidgeon





Udo Reif: Has a great start on a *Muscongus Bay Lobster Smack* kit by BLUEJACKET.



Libby Brut looks comfortable at the helm.



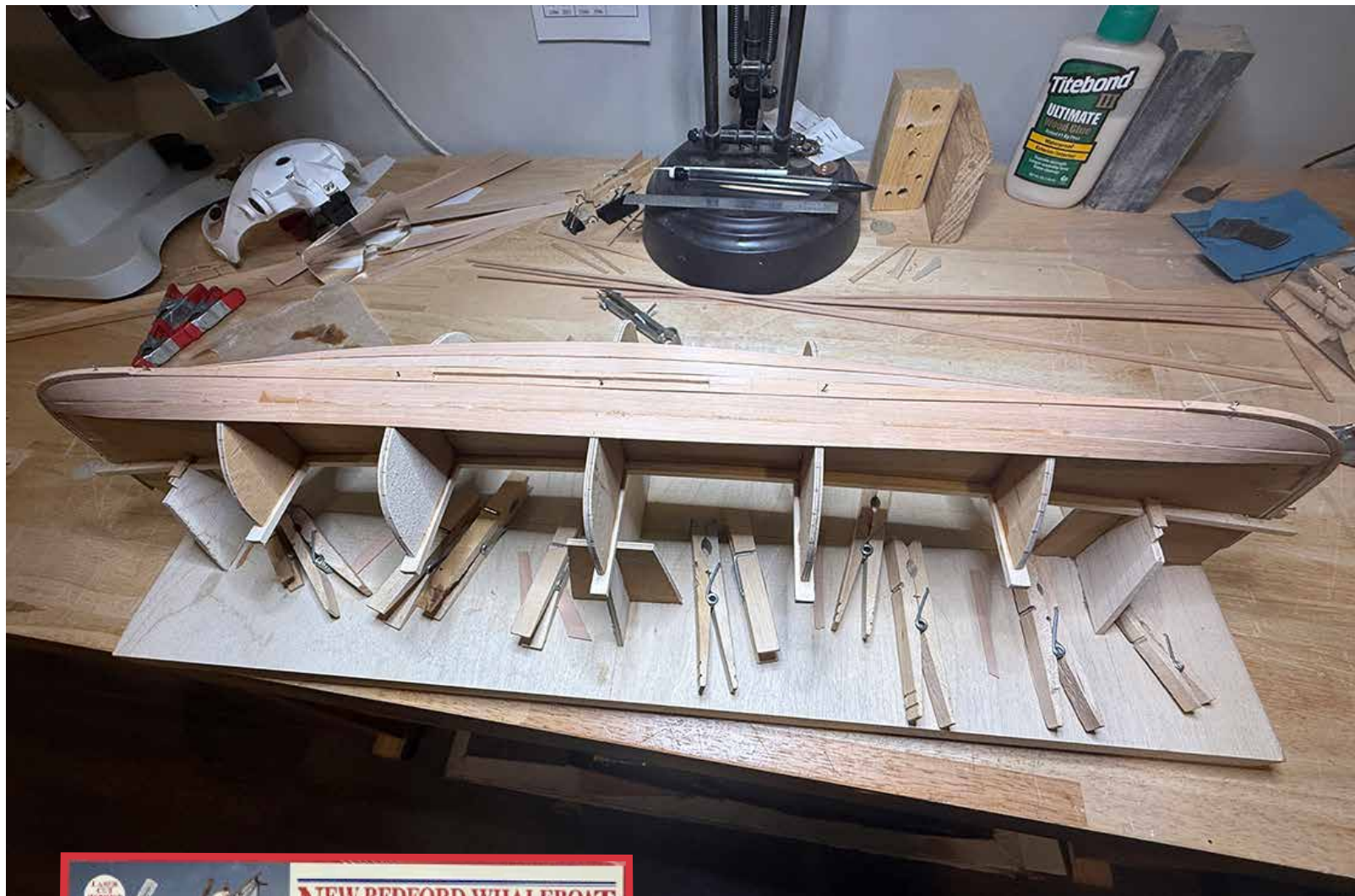


Steve McMurtry: Newer members will not recognize Steve, briefly club President before moving to TN some years back. Steve's last build was a big, beautiful *Chas. W. Morgan*.

In keeping with that theme, he has started this Erik Ronnberg, New Bedford Whaleboat. It is 1:16, ca. 1850-1870.

"Our Model Shipways New Bedford Whaleboat kit is supported by a superb set (6 sheets) of plans and a 150 page instruction book by Erik A.R. Ronnberg, Jr. The book, To Build a Whaleboat, gives you step-by-step building instructions, design and technical data."

Welcome back!



Above image from Steve.
Sec/Ed presuming he is building this kit.



Chuck LaFave: Offered this classic kit for free. Generous members is clearly a benefit of belonging to our club! The kit is 1" = 1' and was donated by **Bob Graham**, for whom Chuck rigged a Friendsfip Sloop. Bob had created a beautiful hull, but health reverses prevented him from doing the stick and string part (next page).

Mike Wolf took advantage of the opportunity.

The Herreshoff 12-1/2 "Buzzard's Bay Boy's Boat" was designed by Captain Nat in 1914, specifically for stability and handling ease, as a trainer.

The image at lower right is the goal, a finished charmer.





Chuck then submitted this:

"The model Friendship Sloop hull was built by the gentleman who had a stroke and was unable to finish it, (He contacted TBSMS, and was very close to Chuck, who took on the completion).

I sanded the hull, coated it with marine spar varnish and let it set for a few days. The sails were already made, and a very good job. I install the sails and rigging, and added a stand plus a few extra details."





Tom Hartline: "Thanks to everybody for welcoming me to my first meeting. I'm a 28-year navy veteran, so interest in things nautical is in my blood."

I have been a scale model builder most of my life, focusing on mostly ships, aircraft and spacecraft. I like to model things that I have been associated with like the ships I served on or helicopters I flew. I also like to model "ships" that fly into space, since I worked for NASA for over 30 years.

I brought in a work in progress of the OcCre 1/100 *Buccaneer*. This is only the second sailing ship I have built. The first one was the REVELL *Constitution* I built for an English class while I was at the Naval Academy. But the *Buccaneer* is the first wooden ship I have built. Although it is a fictitious ship, it is similar in design to Drake's *Golden Hind*.



Images supplied by Tom



Building a wooden ship definitely requires a different set of skills than "normal" plastic models. The instructions and videos of the kit make the build process much easier. I'm about to start the ratlines and rigging so I hope to bring the completed model back in the near future."

OcCre 1/100 *Buccaneer* as completed, according to the www.





Roger Kibart: "I gave a brief summary of my final completion of my replica of a Lithuanian fishing vessel named "*Kapusta Galva*" translated to English – meaning "*Cabbage Head*."

I didn't think anybody present wanted to hear about the sordid history of the boats or the infamous and historically inaccurate captains or my boring presentation of Lithuanian history going back to the 9th century.

Instead, I will celebrate that I completed the model hopefully depicting a bit of satire and reflective of the boat's reputation. In completing the project, I experienced for the first time the art of making sails and completing the rigging. This was my first attempt at such a challenge – and I am confident to say – it will be my last attempt to do so.



These photos supplied by Roger



I cannot detail how totally frustrating it was to fabricate some of the mounting fixtures needed and the additional frustration of trying to thread 3mm blocks to suspend the sails – 3mm.

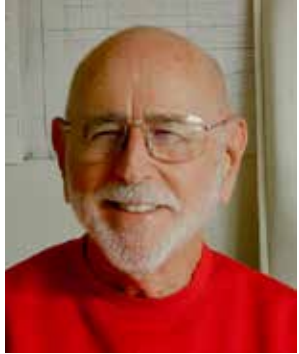
My eyes hurt, my back hurt, my head ached, my finger-tips hurt with needle punctures and as a result my alcohol intake soared for a brief period of time. But – it was all worth it when I reached my point of satisfaction and completion.

Since the boat's history included long periods at the dock, I tried to simulate barnacles forming on the hull. After making a number of samples using oats and various sized grains of sand and salt, I finally decided to use a great sand quality I acquired at Pass-a-Grill Beach a couple months ago. Using clear glue, patience and my fingertips to apply the sand. I thought the result looks pretty good and I'm pleased.

Without going into details, I did find out that, although I strive for perfection how difficult it is to try to replicate imperfection. And without a doubt I know that all you guys who enjoy making boats with any bit of rigging detail deserve a very special place in heaven – because you are a special person to be able to do that kind of work.

Viva Lithuania !!!





Irwin Schuster/SecEd: About this Gozzo, I was asked by a woman to create a model to add to a scene called a "precipe" (presepi). This is a diorama usually of an Italian village of late 1700's, which includes a manger scene.

There is an industry in Naples (Italy), that supports these with scale figures, jugs, wheelbarrows, carts, animals, musical instruments, market wares and such. The builder's structural material is Styrofoam insulation. I was shown a painting as a guide for the vessel. The scale requested was called "10mm." I presumed the lady meant 10mm, about 4", length on deck, so that is what I drew up.

I was wrong by a factor of 2.5. The folks in this industry define a scale of 10mm as the height of an adult male (about 1/18). Happily, a couple clicks brought my plan up to size and we tested it in place and confirmed a 10" LOD. I decided to make a game out of it and complete it in a week. I missed by a couple of days. The scale is strange and it is a bit crude, but appropriate to the scene.



The lone image I was charged to work from. Crew indicate a ship length of about 100'. I was not able to find any of the type over 38'.



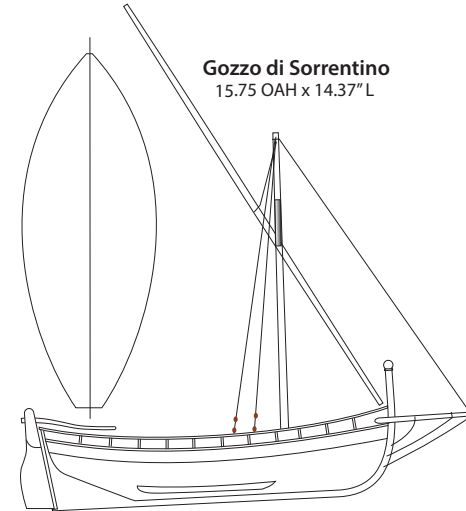


The hull is EPS (Expanded Polystyrene) cheeks on a plywood center-plate, the lattice bulwarks are basswood strips on cherry veneer, and the deck is desk-top-printed cover stock with planks digitally assembled from a photo of my oak dining table. Paint is craft acrylic. The grapnel is ferrous wire, sails are muslin and all the rest is basswood scrap.

Professor Wiki claims: "The development of architectural foam began with the invention of polystyrene in 1839 by Eduard Simon, but it was Dr. Friedrich Stastny at BASF who developed Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) in 1949, paving the way for its use in building applications by the mid-20th century. Modern architectural foam relies on cutting EPS into desired shapes, then coating it with a polymer-modified, cement-based adhesive, mesh, and a finish coat to create lightweight, durable, and versatile decorative elements for building exteriors, such as cornices, arches, and columns."

Consider the amount of use and experience there is with this stuff between Disney and NASA.

It is grain-less, open cell, so takes adhesive, fillers and primer well. For indoor use, there is no need for the architectural coatings. Your personal woodworking tools of both shop and studio scale are fine but wear a mask because the dust created is nasty. Here's a thought: wet it before working and wash the residue down the drain. Not super for the environment, but infinitesimal at our scale vs. Disney's.



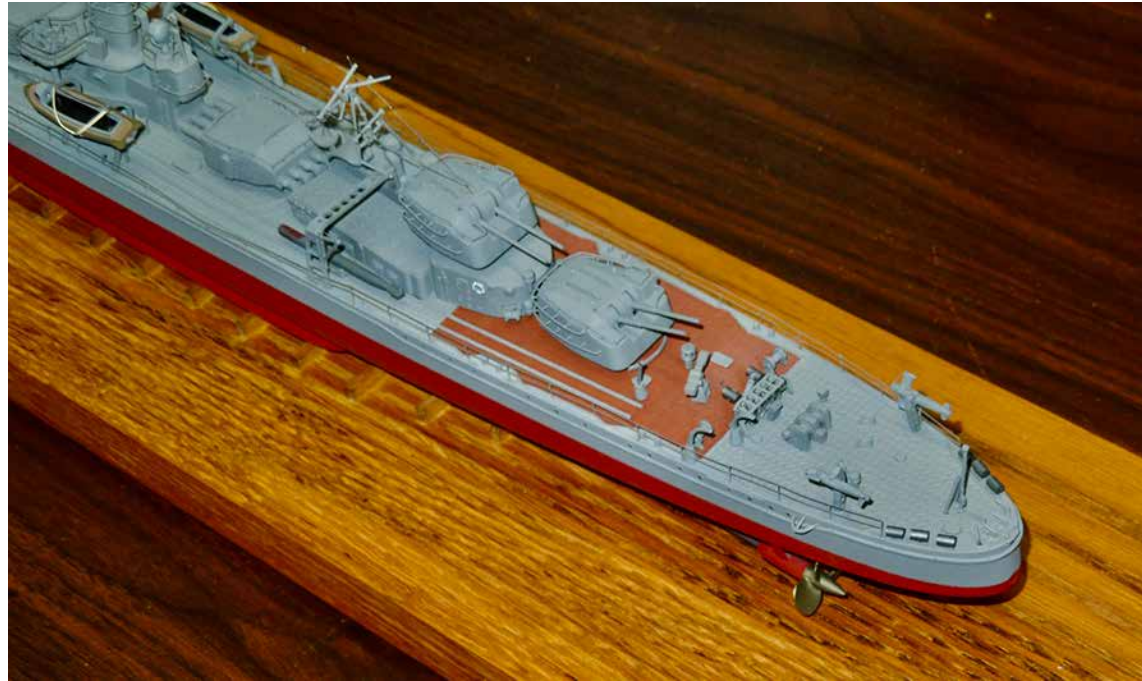


President Steve Sobieralski:

"Since I had not done much ship modelling between the August and September meetings, I brought in perhaps my oldest surviving model: the Japanese destroyer *Yukikaze*.

Out of a class of 15 ships she was the only one to survive the war, and she did so, receiving no major damage and losing only one crew member while participating in most of the major battles of the Pacific war. After the war she was awarded to the Nationalist Chinese as war reparations. She served in that navy until 1966 and was finally scrapped in 1970.

Her general characteristics were length 389 ft, beam 35 ft, draft 13 ft, speed 35 kts, and displacement 2,530 tons. Armament was six, 5" dual purpose guns in three twin turrets, eight 24" torpedo tubes w/eight reloads and 36 depth charges. Anti-aircraft guns were gradually increased throughout the war, but my model depicts *Yukikaze* in mid-1942 when she carried only two triple, and one twin 25mm mounts.





The model was built from a Japanese kit by NICHIMO and is 1/200 scale. I believe the kit was originally released in the 1970s, but is well detailed and accurate, and stands up well even today.

Typical for that time the kit came with a motor and running gear to allow for in-the-water use. Aside from adding photoetched railings I did add quite a bit of scratch-built detail, primarily hand rails on the gun turrets and torpedo tube enclosures using .02" plastic rod, which I also used to make the funnel top screens.

I also brought in my two-volume set "Random Japanese Warship Details". Produced by TAMIYA several decades ago and unfortunately long out of print, these books contain hundreds of sketches of various areas of Japanese WWII era warships, and I have used them extensively for all the Japanese ship models I have made, starting with this model of *Yukikaze*, over the years."

The case for encasing:
This model sustained damage to its cage masting.
SEE NEXT PAGE !





This is the tale of a collaborative effort on *Albatros*, a model received by **President Sobieralski**, restored by **Chuck LaFave**, and encased and delivered by your **Sec/Ed**.

Steve received it and brought it to our meeting. Chuck took it home, cleaned, repaired and acquired and mounted sails, then returned it to a meeting where I took it home and sized an acrylic cover.

Based on that size (and when the 0.187" cover had been fabricated by PIRATE CITY PLASTICS in Tampa), I made a base as shown, of 0.75" Mahogany plywood with heat-applied veneer on the sawn edges.

0.75" Sq. runners provide finger clearance. Finish was Mahogany stain and "Deft" clear, satin lacquer.

The photo below shows the rig prepared for travel back to the owner. The runners make it easy to slip the straps on and off. The metal strap clamps are padded with washcloths. Those straps are the lifting points, essentially lifting the base, with model and cover along for the ride.

The rig was carried on the back seat, restrained by the seat belts. So, it attended yet another meeting, although not brought inside. As we get closer and closer to the delivery, we want to take fewer and fewer risks - like stairs.

What I learned on delivery was, the lady was taking it on to St. Aug. Had I known, I would have added temporary support for the hull.





Charlie Gravallese: "Making the 1779 Colonial flag for the *Confederacy* was one of those small projects within the bigger project that scared me. Specifically, it was the question of how to paint believable tiny stars on the blue canton.

My first thought was to buy a commercially made flag but that would have been too easy. Also, that would be a deviation from my goal to have this model be truly scratch built. I decided to make the flag myself by painting it on fabric and the first challenge was to find a suitable piece of material.

I looked for a cotton broadcloth weave that was made from very fine threads and tightly woven. Having finally located a suitable piece of cloth, I cut it to the size needed adding about 2 inches oversized to allow for a work edge. The fabric was then taped down onto a piece of clear plastic wrap. The first step was to seal and stiffen the fabric using MICROMARK Scenery Ballast Cement on both top and bottom surfaces. This step also allowed any tiny cotton fibers to stand up, and when dry, I gently sanded them away with #320 sandpaper. Next the fabric was given 3 coats of Jo SONJA warm white acrylic paint, again to both sides.



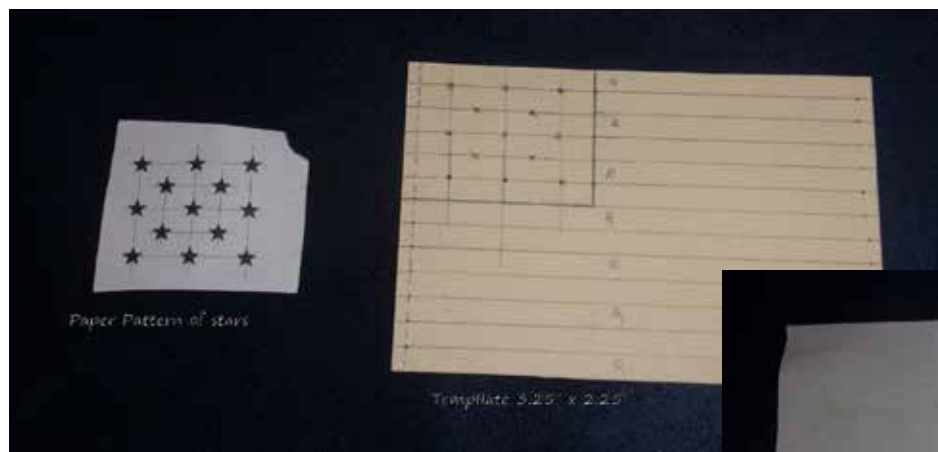


This paint comes in tubes and must be thinned with water to a creamy consistency. After allowing to dry overnight, I proceeded with painting the red stripes and blue canton.

The choice of masking tape was critical. My favorite is Frog Tape for delicate surfaces. The next steps were relatively easy, i.e. marking out the layout details, cutting the masking tape into strips, and air brushing the stripes and canton. The paint used for these steps was the old formula Floquil Enamel, sadly no longer being produced. The paint I used was more than 20 years old... remarkable shelf life!

Painting believable looking tiny stars was the real challenge. After experimenting for several days using a variety of techniques, I realized that the best and easiest way to paint the stars was to make a stencil of the 13-star pattern, place it on the blue canton and then airbrush them all at one time. I know it sounds really simple but not having attempted this before presented a learning experience. With Irwin Schuster's help, we came up with a star pattern of the correct size. Next was to figure out what to use for stencil material.

My first attempt was to use a sheet of .005" thick styrene plastic. This material was easy to work with and I made some great looking stars. The problem was that as much as I tried, I could not succeed in getting the plastic stencil to lie perfectly flat during the airbrushing procedure and this led to stars with fuzzy edges. I finally arrived at the conclusion that the stencil could be made with masking tape alone. Not just any masking tape but one engineered for delicate surfaces and would not allow any paint bleed under its edges.



These images from Charlie

"Paper Pattern of stars"

"Template 3.25" x 2.25"



"Fabric treated with ballast cement"

"Fabric treated with Jo Sonja warm white"



"Single edge razor used to cut stencil"

"Test sample with stars painted after removal of stencil"



FROG TAPE was the winner. The steps were:

1. Using 2-sided mounting tape attach the paper star pattern onto the top side of a piece of masking tape

2. Make a star cutting tool. The stars have five points, each point in every star is equidistant from its opposite point. The cutting tool is simply a single edge razor with the cutting edge reduced to the point-to-point length needed.

3. Using the razor cutting tool, cut five lines into each star by simply laying the cutting edge onto a line and just pushing straight down. After making the five cuts on each star, the small pieces in the center of the star should pop right out leaving a sharp image of the star. Good lighting and magnification are essential.

4. After the 13 stars were cut I carefully lifted the piece of masking tape and even more carefully placed it onto the previously painted blue canton. Gently burnish down the tape so that there is no possibility of paint seeping under any of its edges.

5. I then air brushed the stars using Scale-coat flat white enamel.

6. After about 15 minutes, carefully removed the masking tape and voila, there's the flag!

Much of the time it required to make the flag was consumed by the learning process, all trial and error. The reward was being able to do it and not have to buy one made by someone else. After figuring out how to do it, the actual time to make the flag was about 3-4 days, and most of that time was waiting for paint to dry between steps.



Finished flag - reverse side

"Finished flag - reverse side"

Above image from Charlie

The real thing, from the Pioneer Florida Museum & Village in Dade City, shows a whole lot less care than Charlie demonstrates!



DEDICATION...



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Cave - shop - hobby center of dedicated modeler, **George Hecht - RIP.**





Sec/Ed had a request: "In regards to my locating copies of plans of old ships. I will probably build the *Bounty* most likely the CALDERCRAFT kit. I figure the copies of the real plans would help me build a more accurate model. If someone could direct me to where I can get plans of ships it will be much appreciated.

The Royal Museum in Greenwich, England has them but I would rather do business with a company or museum here in the U.S. I would assume that those who do scratch building of old sailing ships have to get the plans to do them from somewhere. Thank you for your time today and I hopefully will hear from you soon.

Sincerely, **Christopher Taylor**
(Dade City).

Plesae respond, to me, fellows.

These are from the Pioneer Florida Museum and Village in Dade City:

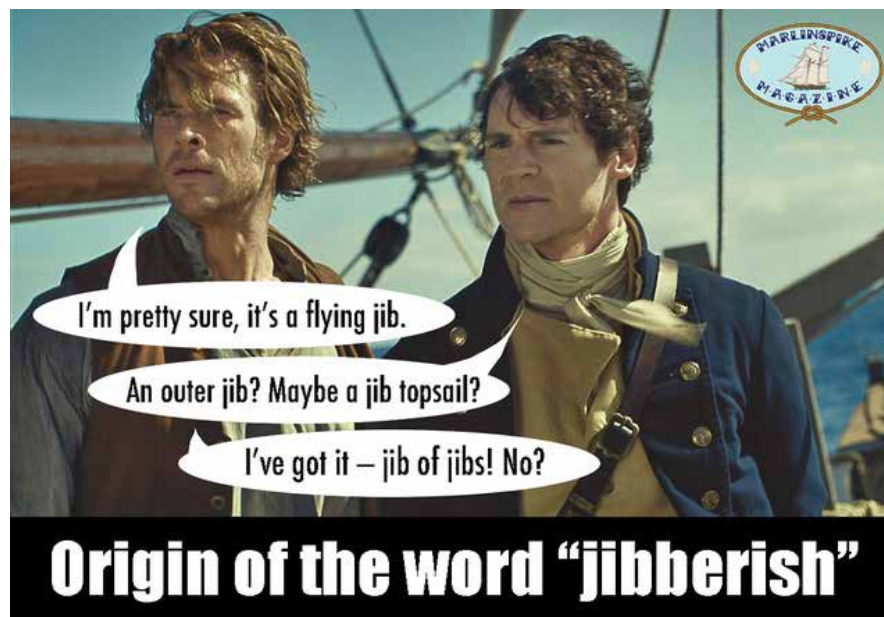




Believe It or Oar Knot!



Barcelona Tushy-stern, "Galera Real, a replica of the Spanish flagship galley housed in the Maritime Museum of Barcelona. It represents the ship commanded by Don Juan of Austria, which served as the flagship of the Holy League's fleet during the historic Battle of Lepanto in 1571 (won vs. Ottoman Empire).



Submitted by Guy Hancock!

THE NAUTICAL RESEARCH GUILD

"ADVANCING SHIP MODELING THROUGH RESEARCH"

Annual membership includes our world-renowned quarterly magazine, Nautical Research Journal, which features photographs and articles on ship model building, naval architecture, merchant and naval ship construction, maritime trade, nautical and maritime history, nautical archaeology and maritime art.

Other benefits include Virtual Workshops, ship modeling seminars, NRG products and juried model competitions which are offered exclusively to Guild members. We hope you will consider joining our ongoing celebration of model ships and maritime history.



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