

Ship's Log

TampaBayShipModelSociety

Meeting of October 28rd, 2025

TampaBayShipModelSociety.org

President Steve Sobieralski

2906 W. Bay Villa Ave. Tampa, FL 33611
ssobier@verizon.net

Treasurer OPEN

Secretary/Newsletter Editor Irwin Schuster

8503 Portage Ave. Tampa, FL 33647-1707
813 866-1442 irwin.schuster@verizon.net

Webmaster Phillip Schuster. Contact Sec/Ed.

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 Nov. 25, 10:30 a.m.

The meeting was opened by the president, **Steve Sobieralski**, who got things off to a scintillating start with a treasury report. Steve also recounted the details of his visit to the Largo branch of the Pinellas Federal Credit Union, where our previous treasurer, **George Hecht**, had established the club account. Since George was the only person with the authority to access the account, the credit union will require a copy of George's death certificate, and a copy of the club meeting notes regarding his death. If the club wishes to maintain the account at PFCU (which Steve feels would be a good idea as they allow the account to be in the club name, instead of the Treasurer's name) someone will need to join the credit union. A copy of George's death certificate, obtained from his wife Jane, was brought to the meeting by **Ed** and **Libby Brut** and turned over to Steve. Steve will go back to the credit union and establish himself as the holder of the account. Since Steve has already served as treasurer and lives in Tampa, which is not very convenient to any of the PFCU locations, he is hopeful that someone else may be willing to take over the office, but if not he will take it on.

(Steve noted this was the *penultimate* meeting of 2025!) The meeting then moved on to "Show & Tell." >>>>>



NOTE!
There is
NO
December
Meeting

Tom Hartline

depicted the aft end of the USS *Detroit* (AOE-4) that he deployed on in 1983-1984. Micro-Tom occupies the cockpit of the chopper.

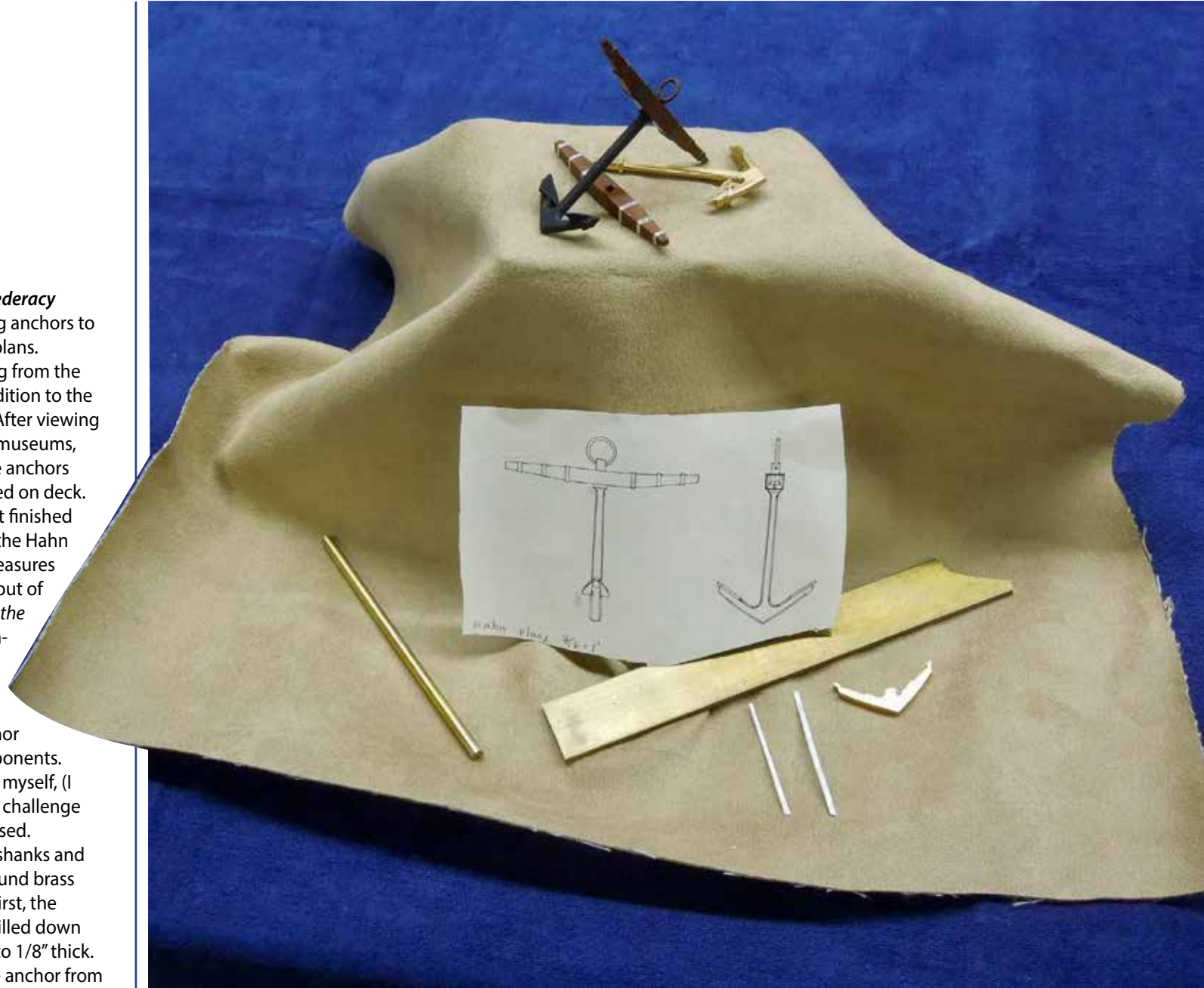


Charlie Gravallese: Anchors for *Confederacy*

"Several months ago, the idea of adding anchors to the *Confederacy* model was not in my plans. I did not think that two anchors hanging from the cat-heads would make an attractive addition to the model. Well, time changes everything. After viewing images of model collections in various museums, I saw that many models do indeed have anchors added. Mostly hanging and others stored on deck.

So, here we are and I am now almost finished with my anchors. When first looking at the Hahn drawing of the anchor I found that it measures 13 scale feet long. This indeed seemed out of scale. However, in Hahn's book, *Ships of the American Revolution* he presents a mathematical formula that starts with the tonnage of the ship and uses a set of commonly accepted ratios in use at that time for determining not only anchor size but also the size of its various components. I did not try to work out the formula for myself, (I couldn't if I wanted to), but who am I to challenge Harold Hahn? So those are the specs I used.

The metal parts of the anchors, the shanks and the crowns, are made respectively of round brass bar stock and 1/8" flat brass bar stock. First, the round brass piece about 2" long, was milled down resulting in two opposing flat surfaces to 1/8" thick. To form the crown, I made a copy of the anchor from





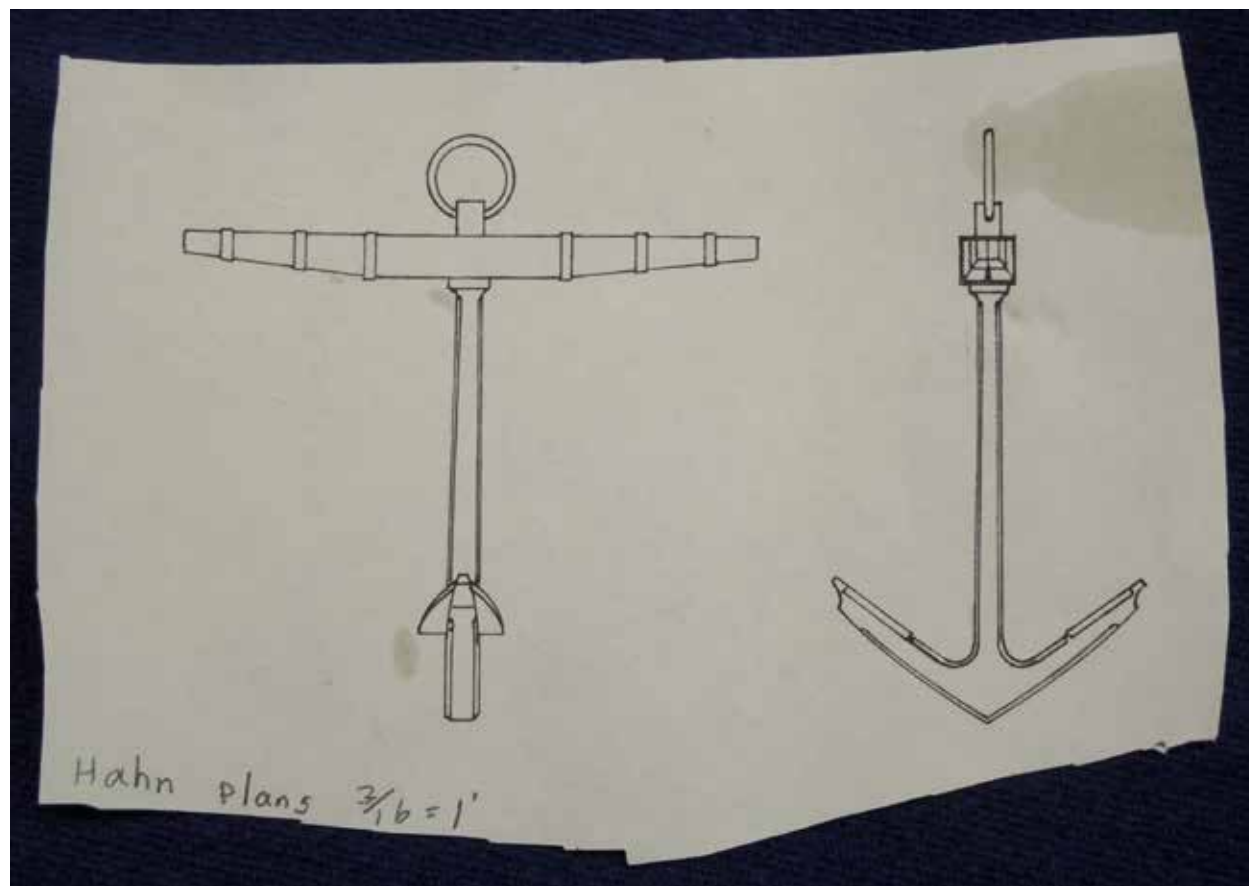
Harold Hahn's plans and rubber cemented it to the 1/8", flat brass stock. I then used a Jeweler's Scroll Saw to hand-cut the roughed outer shape of the crowns coming as close to the outline as was reasonably possible. (only broke 4 saw blades).

Leaving the image cemented in place, I then proceeded to carefully cut the final shape to the image outer lines. The final shape of the crown was completed using a variety of watch-makers Escapement files. The shank was then silver soldered to the crown. The flukes, (pointy pieces at each end of the crowns), were formed from 1/32" flat brass stock using files and these pieces were then silver soldered to the crowns. Heat sinks kept previously soldered parts from separating. The brass parts were then cleaned up, primed and painted with a flat black enamel.

The wood stock for each anchor is made in two pieces with a square opening cut in the center that when assembled, fits onto the top of the anchor shaft. Here too, I followed Hahn's specs. The wood used is something I've been told is "English Plum", There was no special reason for using this wood except I like its color and it has the three properties most useful to ship model builders: it's hard, very close grained, and grain figure is minimal.

The wood parts of the anchor were assembled and the ends tapered from middle to extremities per specs. They were then finished with Deft sanding sealer and 4/0 steel wool. The metal binding bands, 6 on each anchor are made using Britania metal strips obtained from BLUEJACKET SHIP CRAFTERS. I love working with this metal. Its soft enough to easily bend into shape and can also be re-bent many times before metal fatigue causes it to break.

One more feature I like is that it is easily blackened with a product called JAX PEWTER BLACK. I got mine on AMAZON.





Howard Howe: "George Hecht was right! This model has a lot of wood that can be replaced in some cases with plastic to avoid cussing or saying "Oh, Crap" as **Charlie Gravalles** would say. So, I have been using some plastic in place of the wood, but still maintaining the overall wood boat appearance. I also purchased the Jacques Cousteau's *Calypso* book from Jane Hecht as a memory of George and additional information. Since last meeting,

I have completed the wiring of the EVAN DESIGNS 3V chip lights for the cabin and the wheel house. During RC operation the lights can be activated from an internal 3V battery source. For home night light operation, I added a switch and plug on the starboard cabin side for an AC adapter and timer. The chip lights are very bright and when near the hull interior, they are visible through the hull. This will require some modification such as reduced voltage or barrier between the lights and the hull sides.

For access to the wiring, batteries, and ballast I have made the upper cabin and its deck removable. It is secured in place with two screws.



Above photo from Howard





The forward deck with the wheel house is also temporarily secured with two screws. Eventually it will be bonded to the plastic hull after completion of the deck equipment and the masts for the radar and antennas."

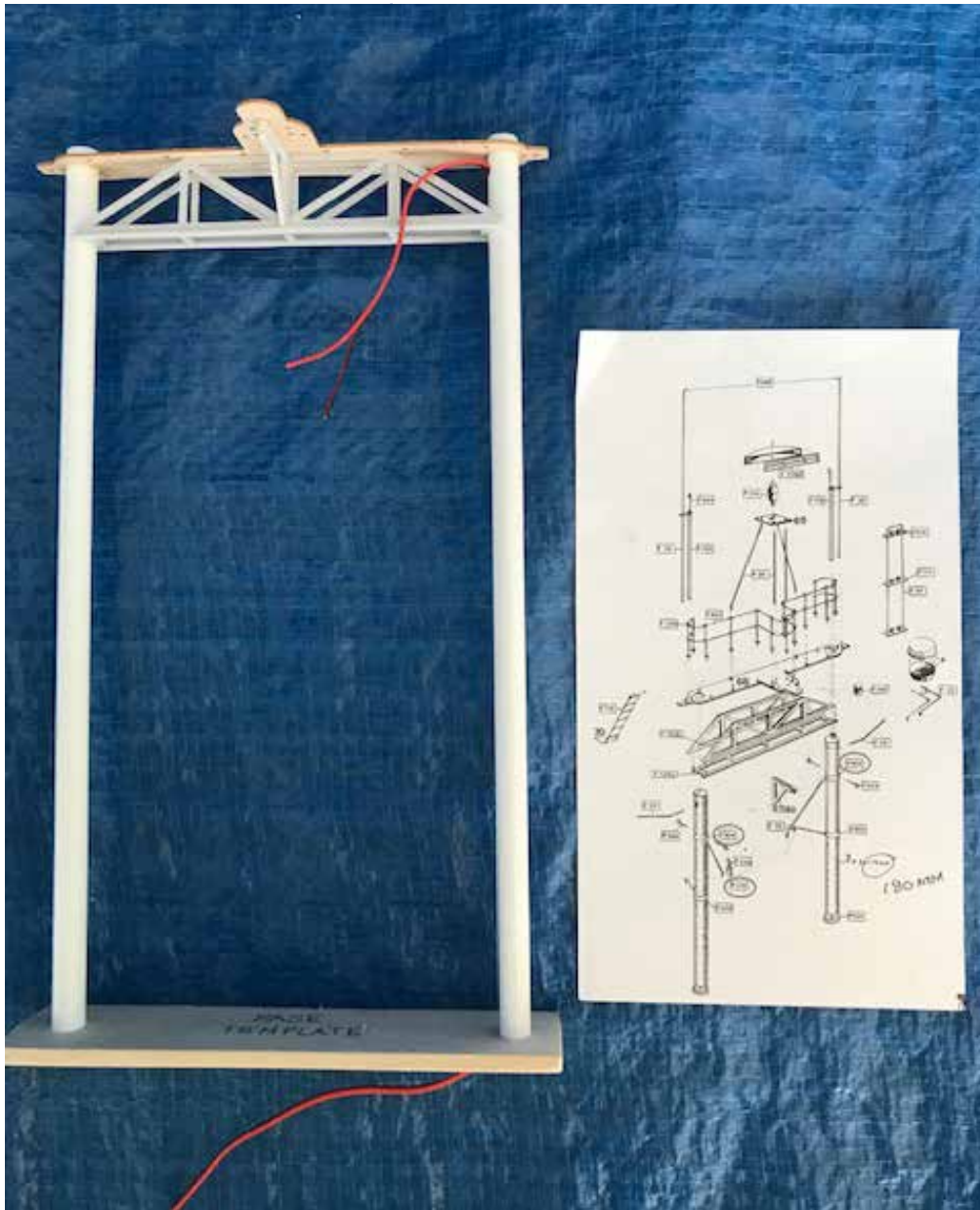
I have completed some of the other deck equipment assemblies like the foredeck windlass, sonar winch, fore deck hatch, and aft windlass. I'm just getting started on the mast assembly. The detail instruction for the mast assembly is a 3D 1/5 scale drawing that requires good eyesight or magnifier to read the part numbers and dimensions!

Lots of challenging assembly work ahead including assembly of plastic halves for helicopter, submersibles, and dinghy boats!

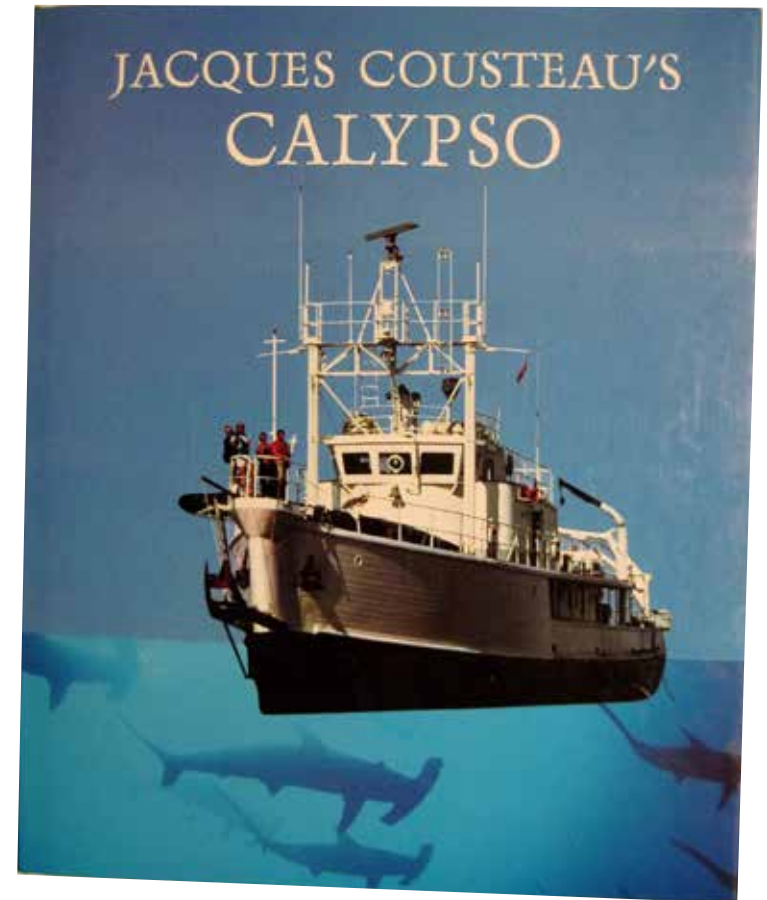


Photo below from Howard





Above image from Howard



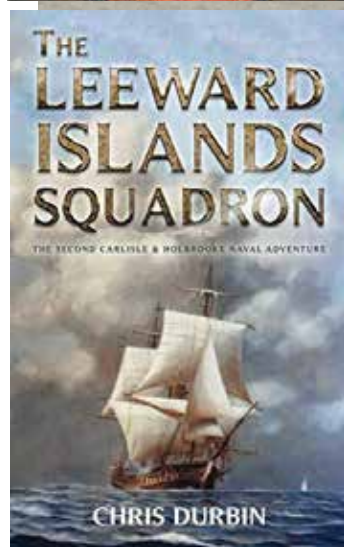
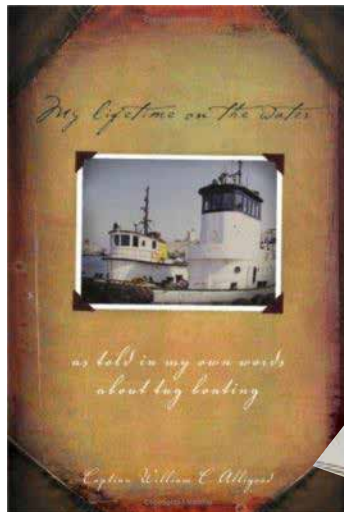


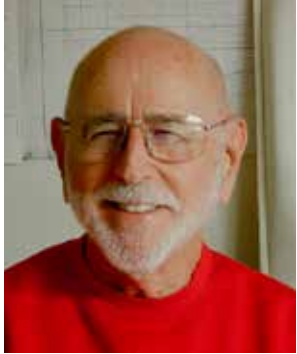
Guy Hancock: "I showed a book by Captain William Alligood titled, *My Lifetime on the Water*, and, *The Leeward Islands Squadron* by Chris Durbin, which gives a good insight into sailing a square-rigged ship in the mid 1700's.

These books from the giveaway a couple of months ago have been enjoyable reading.

I received the pearwood single and double blocks from Syren Ship Model Co. and they are as small as 1/8", or 3 mm.

Finding ways to hold them has been a challenge. The latest was to put blue painter's tape on a block of wood with the sticky side out. I mounted a fine wire in the wood and slide the block onto it while I try to strap it. The *La Gaceta* newspaper is a weekly published in Tampa that has articles in English, Spanish, and Italian. The front page had a picture of a ship being built in Tampa by a company that is no longer there.





Irwin Schuster (Sec/Ed):

A Brief Lecture on *Scottish Chief*:

There was only one military skirmish of the Civil War in Tampa. It involved the burning of James McKay's sidewheel steamer, blockade runner, 124', *Scottish Chief* and schooner, *Kate Dale*. They were burned by Union troops in the Hillsborough River in October 17, 1863.

I was asked to provide a model of *Scottish Chief* by a descendent of McKay, and was provided an illustration on which to base research. A solid couple weeks of searching has turned up no photos or plans, but one contemporary, atmospheric, action painting, on which I (wrongly) based a drawing. NOT ScChf!

I also have great suspicion of the genesis illustration, because a virtual sister image turned up, featuring identical hull, lifeboat, stack, pilot house, sidewheel housing and fenestration, albeit of 181' "Maple Leaf." "Scottish Chief" was built in NC in 1855, while *Maple Leaf* was built in Canada in 1851. The *Scottish Chief* shows no derrick-masting, flagstaffs or walking beam. The painting shows a significantly different vessel, while not providing any scalable detail.

Unfortunately, at the time of the October meeting, there was no viable documentation on which to base a model. If a model is to be built, it would be totally speculative.

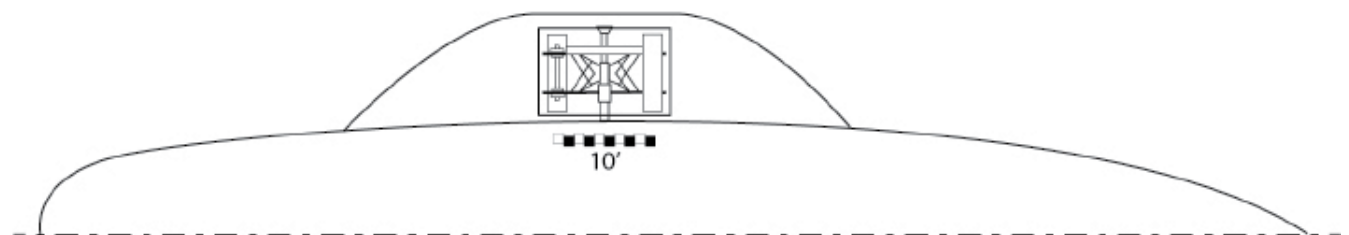


Above, the suspicious image provided from Pioneer Florida Museum and Village. At right, the painting thought to be *Scottish Chief* is now known, not to be, nor by Alexander Charles Stuart.

Below, my conjectural illustration that turns out to be totally without foundation. It is just a side-wheeler of the appropriate size and specification for Gulf and Tampa Bay service.



James McKay's **SCOTTISH CHIEF** Built in 1855
As she may have looked carrying mail, passengers, cattle and cotton
Largely based on a contemporary action painting by Alexander Charles Stuart (1831-1898)
123' - 9" - 110 tons





I learned something from the book on Alexander Charles Stuart, thought to be painter of **Scottish Chief**. The majority of commissions were painted for owners or building yards. Marine paintings are nearly all of PORT side, so facing left (does not apply to battle scenes).

Why, I wondered until I realized that the artists viewed and sketched the ships while on the dock / quay. We all know port side is named port because it is the convention that that side faced the dockage-site of the port.

I favor starboard-facing for models and illustrations. One reason is, virtually all ship and boat plans show the starboard side! Ditto for builders' half-models!

Everything is obvious right after you hear it.

The **Annie of Cedar Key**, a 45' schooner of **1892**, started in 2023 is nearing completion. A few odd lines and the shrouds remain to be mounted, and the figure, anchor, cask, and a bit of deck hardware.

I pointed out that the rigging lines are mostly fed through holes drilled in the backboard, snugged up and glued behind. Quite unsightly, like the making of sausage.

Finally, I displayed an illustration of mine printed in the most recent issue of **WoodenBoat**, the subject being **Precious**, a Sam Rabl **Picaroon** design that belonged to a San Diego friend also named Annie (no relation).



Why sweeps?
Here's a bit in history:
1892 saw first successful gas engine in Iowa and Diesel filed his patents the same year.

Flag is printed paper on soda can.
Maybe beer.



The Annie, now complete, makes 35 models in my home, and 8 elsewhere.



Chuck LaFave: "I started a kit from ZHL, called the *San Felipe*; scale 1:50. The kit come in two boxes, and the directions are not the best. Once the hull is built your kind of on your own!

It does have a CD with more pictures to help out, but my PC has no CD player. So, I purchased an after-market one.

The model is part kit and part scratch built. At this time, it's about 25% built, as you can see in the photos. My goal is to have the ship finished by late January (I have not said what year)."

These photos from Chuck



"She was a lead ship of the famous Spanish Armada. The *San Felipe* displaced more than 1000 tons, and was armed with 104 guns, enabling her to take on the most formidable ships in the French and British navies. The *San Felipe's* role in the war against the British and French was to help protect Spanish settlements and harbors, to transport treasures, and to safeguard the long and hazardous passage back to Spanish ports.

In 1705, she participated in a furious and heroic battle between 12 Spanish ships and 35 British ships. After 24 hours of battle, she was captured by an English ship, but was so badly damaged that she could not be salvaged as a prize. She went down to the bottom of the ocean with several tons of gold."

[A "short" ton is 32,000 oz. Gold is over \$4k/oz.]

Model:

- Length: 1200 mm (47.2")
- Width: 930 mm (36.6")
- Height: 475 mm (18.7")







Chuck also reports on an RC venture:
"Also, while working on my *San Filipe*,
I was restoring an RC sailboat. She's an
old Cox Sailboat from the 60's.

The only RC equipment was an old
sail controller, so I purchased a new
servo, radio, battery and charger. The
inside was foam so I added plastic
blocks and mounted the servo. I took
her to a nearby lake and gave her a
test run. Performance was good!

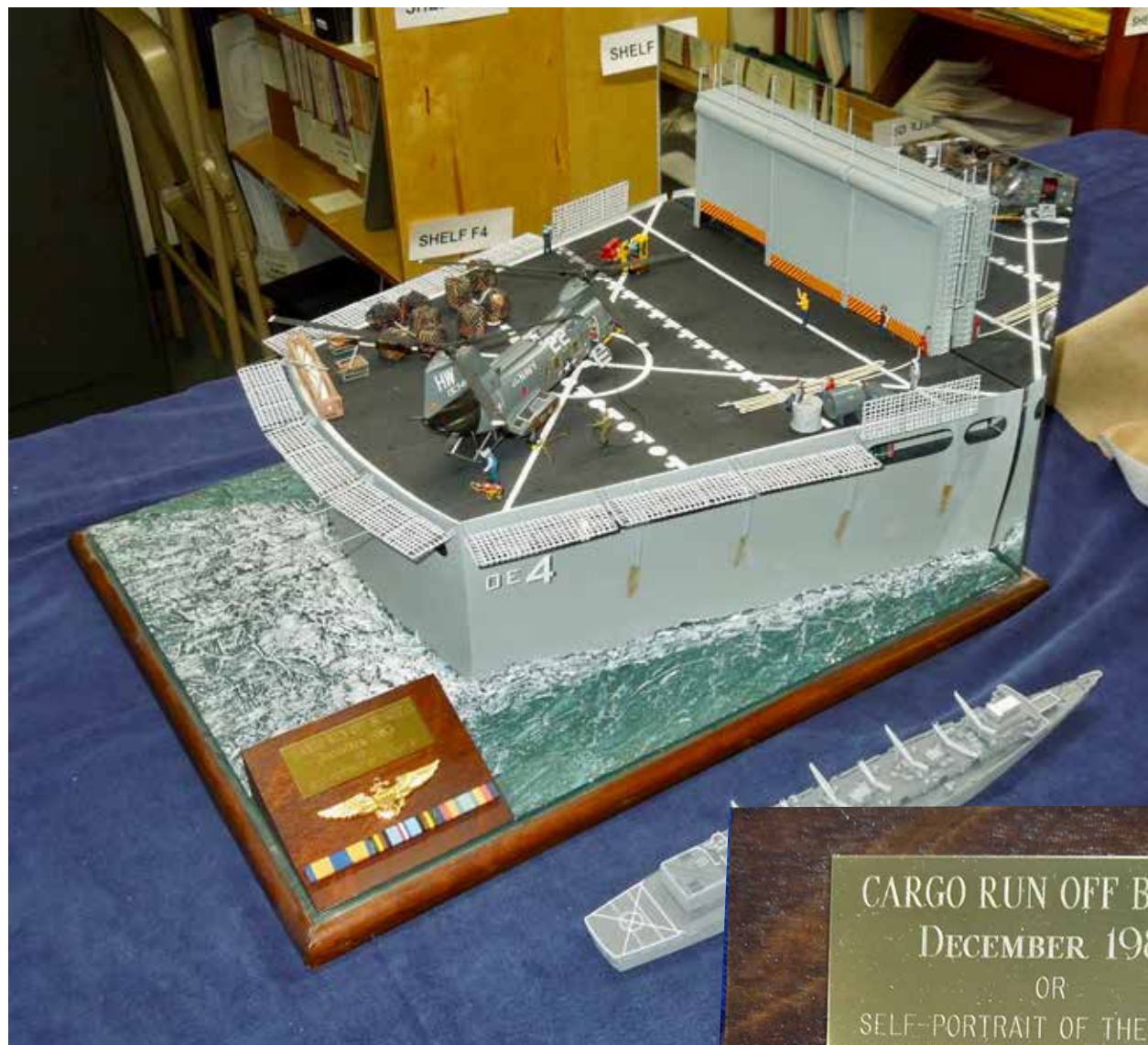




Tom Hartline: "This diorama is titled, "Cargo run off Beirut," or "Self Portrait of the Artist". It depicts the aft end of the USS *Detroit* (AOE-4) that I deployed on in 1983-1984. We were assigned to support two aircraft carrier battle groups, the Battleship *New Jersey* and a Marine amphibious battle group in the response to the Marine barracks bombing in October, 1983.

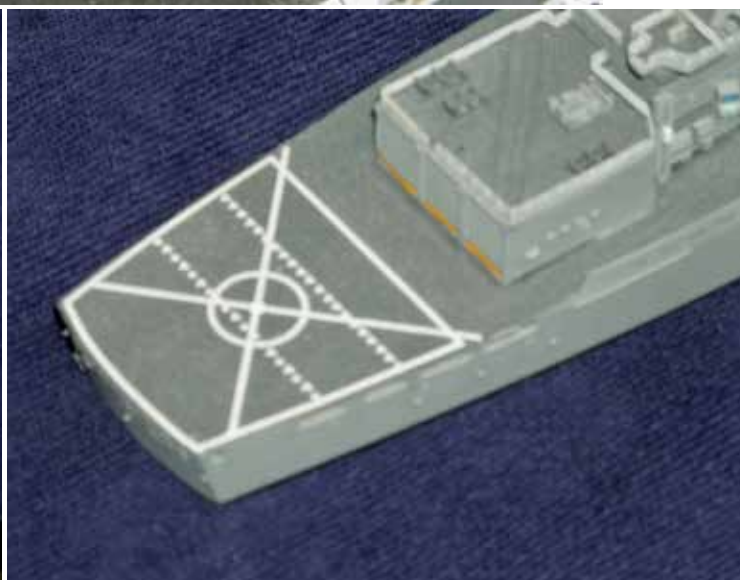
We were so busy supporting the fleet that we set a record for the most mail ever transferred by a helicopter detachment in the month of December, 1983.

The helicopter was 1/72 scale and built to match the one on our detachment (We were the Detroit Flying Tigers) and the pilot's helmet markings match my helmet. The ship was scratch built from wood and plastic sheeting. Flight crew and deck crew were added to show what it was like staging cargo for transfer and during flight ops.





A galley crewman was added below decks taking out trash to dispose after flight ops. I built the model over 35 years ago and it has survived many moves due to the plexiglass case I built around it. The model ended up taking 2nd place at an IPMS national contest in Atlanta.





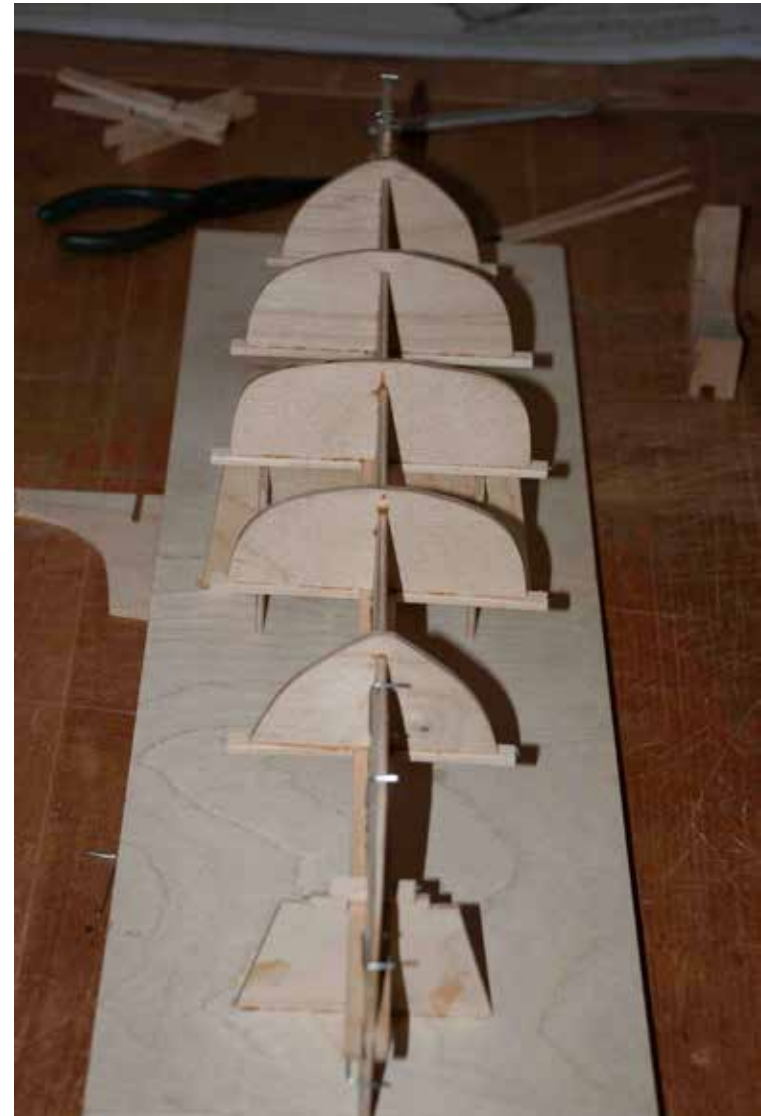
Steve McMurtry reports: "Greetings from Tennessee!! Contrary to popular rumor I am not dead yet. I have taken a long sabbatical from modeling to work on my photography.

I recently started work on the $\frac{3}{4}$ "=1' scale New Bedford Whaleboat based on the plans by Erik A.R. Ronnberg, Jr. This is not a "Beetle" boat, but all whaleboats designed and built in the 1850-1870 time frame were very similar. [Why? One reason was, they had to nest.] The plans are based on the actual construction techniques used in making the craft.

Construction begins with the assembly of a strongback with 5 frames and a centerline mold of the keel shape. The hull is built on this frame and then removed once all the planking is complete, creating the basic shell of the boat.

The first step was to laminate the keel to the center mold. The keel consists of 3 planks laminated and held in place by clamps to retain the shape until the glue dries. Next some carving is required to allow for a landing surface for the ends of the planks at the bow and stern posts of the keel.

Next comes the fun part; planking the hull. I use a miniature plane and spokeshave for most of this work. The plans have exact outlines for each plank. I traced these onto 1/32" Swiss pear. I selected the pear for its very straight grain and flexibility. Each plank is rough cut to size using a strong X-Acto knife and then worked down to fit with the spokeshave and a sanding block.



Photos from Steve



Next comes the fun part; planking the hull. I use a miniature plane and spokeshave for most of this work. The plans have exact outlines for each plank. I traced these onto 1/32" Swiss pear.

I selected the pear for its very straight grain and flexibility. Each plank is rough cut to size using a strong X-Acto knife and then worked down to fit with the spokeshave and a sanding block. Most of the shape was done by eye, checking for a fair smooth curve. Matching one

plank to the previous just takes time and care.

Some of the planks have a batten joining the two adjacent plank edges. These are 1/8 x 1/31 (sic) and are glued on the underside of the first plank against the frames with half the width under the previous plank and the new one glued to the remaining exposed surface.

I'm about half done with the planking and should be ready to remove the shell from the jig sometime soon."



Photos from Steve

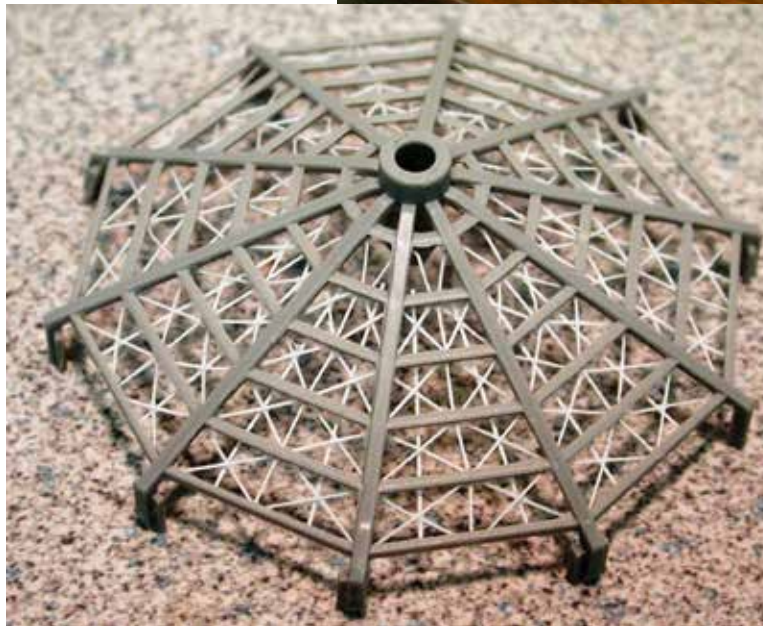


President Steve Sobieralski:

"For Show and Tell I brought in something a little different, my model of a US Navy LCAC, or Landing Craft Air Cushion. The LCAC is a hovercraft vehicle used by the navy to transport personnel and equipment from ships offshore to the beach, under combat conditions if necessary, and have been in service since 1987. Powered by four turbines of 4,400 HP each they can carry up to 75 tons of cargo at 40+ knots and can reach 70+ knots unloaded.

The model is in 1/72 scale and was made from a kit by TRUMPETER about 15 years ago. The kit is well detailed and came with photo etched brass for the multiple mesh screens in the engine area.

The only additions I made were the propeller screens made from very thin plastic rod, and a 1/72 M1A1 Abrams tank from a kit by (I think) TAMIYA.





Anchors



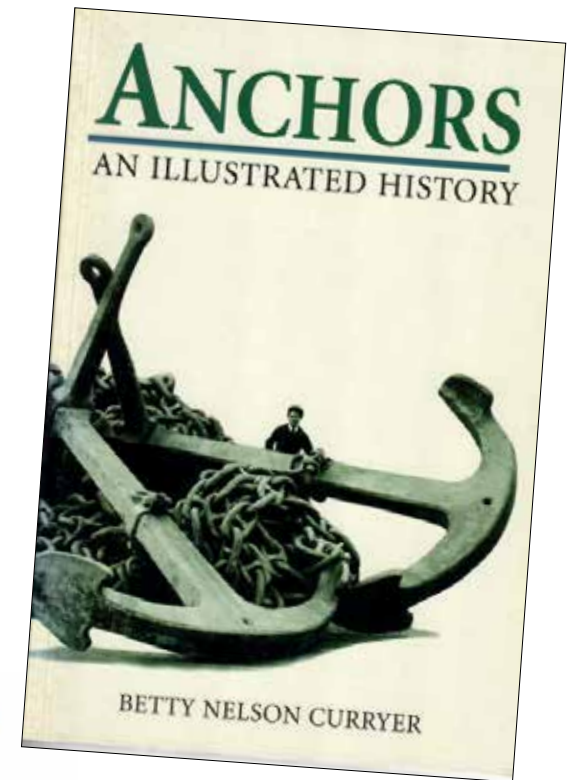
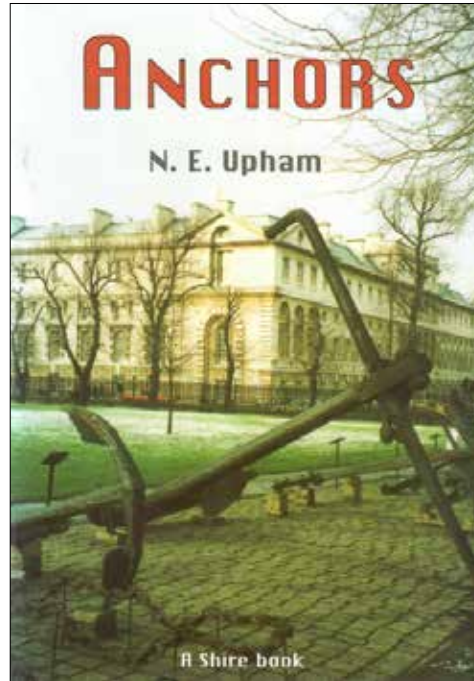
The subject of anchors deserves a lot more study, if you/we are seeking historical accuracy. Of course, not being "built-in," at any given point in time they could be upgraded or lost and replaced with a different model..

What is rarely shown is how many were routinely carried aboard large ships. These books cover all that, but are still incomplete as to the huge number of designs.

Parts of classic anchors:

- Shank
- Stock
- Ring
- Ball
- Bands
- Keep Pin
- Throat
- Fluke or Palm
- Arm
- Head
- Crown
- Bill or Pea
- Snape
- Balancing band

Pierced stone, Killick, Junk, Kedge, Porter, Trotman, Roman, Long Shank, Parachute, Grapnel, Brown's, CQR, Bruce, Danforth, Mooring Screw, Mushroom, Tombstone, Single Fluke, AC16A Sub, Halls, Dreadnaught, Stockless, Pool, McDougall, Stokes Bower, etc. not necessarily in that order.



Crown, flukes and head, cold pressure-forged with VISE-GRIP pliers.



A Killick from the Royal Museums at Greenwich would make a nice model for an afternoon's "work".



Ed Brut on George Hecht:

(July, 1946 - September, 2025)

"On Saturday, October 25th, a memorial service was held for George Hecht, who served as Tampa Bay Ship Modelers Society's Treasurer and longtime member. He served in the US Air Force and an honor guard was present in honor of George's service to our country.

George was well liked by the organizations he was a member of, Tampa Bay Ship Model Society, the (IPMS) Pelikan Model Club and the MVPA (Military Vehicle Preservation Association).

About 100 family, friends, club member and coworkers from DEPCO PUMP attended. Military vehicles lined the parking lot along with some of George's fine scale models sitting on tables for viewing. George's smiling personality will be missed by all who knew him.

Pictures of one of his many model boats, the military vehicle salute, and George and wife Jane."



Photos from Ed



Believe It Oar Knot!



Artist/Maker:
Perry, Manuel R.
1885-1966

Place Made: Portugal

Title: Muleta model

Dimensions: 6-3/4 x
12- 1/2 x 5 in. (17.1
x 31.8 x 12.7 cm)



[Sec/Ed] Taken at the New Bedford Whaling Museum.
This is NOT the most elaborate rig for the *Muleta* type!



One of our members has
been promising to get into
the half-hull game.

You gotta start somewhere.

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.



**JOIN
TODAY!**



For more information contact us at: www.thenrg.org or telephone 585-968-8111