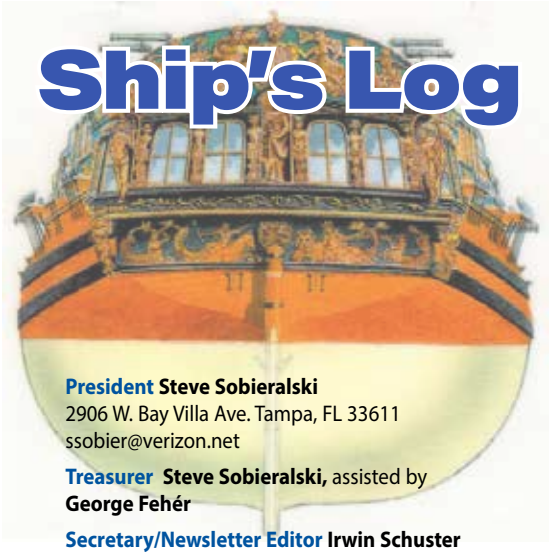
Ship's Log



President **Steve Sobieralski**
2906 W. Bay Villa Ave. Tampa, FL 33611
ssobier@verizon.net

Treasurer **Steve Sobieralski,** assisted by **George Fehér**

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. 24th, 10:30 a.m.

TampaBayShipModelSociety

Meeting of October 27th, 2026

TampaBayShipModelSociety.org

The meeting was opened by club president, **Steve Sobieralski.** There being no visitors or guests the floor was opened up for discussion of any old or new business.

Steve informed the meeting of the sudden unfortunate passing of **Donn Buerger**, president of our sister area group, the Pelikan Model Club. Donn had been president for six years, but had announced that this would be his last term. There is a tribute to him on the club website (https://pelikanmodelclub.org/). He will be missed.

There was a brief general discussion about some of Model Expo's recent offerings and **Chuck LaFave** related that the Naples club has put a display case in the local library and described their free model kit offer to new members.

The meeting then commenced to Show and Tell and, there being a lighter than usual number of show and tell items present on the tables, those present were asked to give a brief description of what projects they were (or were not) working on. About halfway through this our secretary/editor **Irwin Schuster**, whose unusual absence had been earlier remarked upon, entered the room with a guest in tow. The guest was a British gentleman who brought in a radio controlled rowboat built many years ago by his father, hoping someone in the club would take it and perhaps restore it to working condition. His hopes were answered in the form of **Roger Kibart** and we look forward to seeing what Roger can do with it.



Howard Howe finished his R/C version of a hybrid FV ***Andrea Gail.***

NOTE! This will be the final meeting of 2026



Guy Hancock: "I showed my completed 1868 ***Phantom*** harbor pilot schooner designed by Lawler and built in East Boston for use in New York. It was famous for helping to rescue over 400 people from Cunard's SS ***Oregon*** in 1886 when it was sinking off Long Island, transferring them to the liner ***Fulda***.

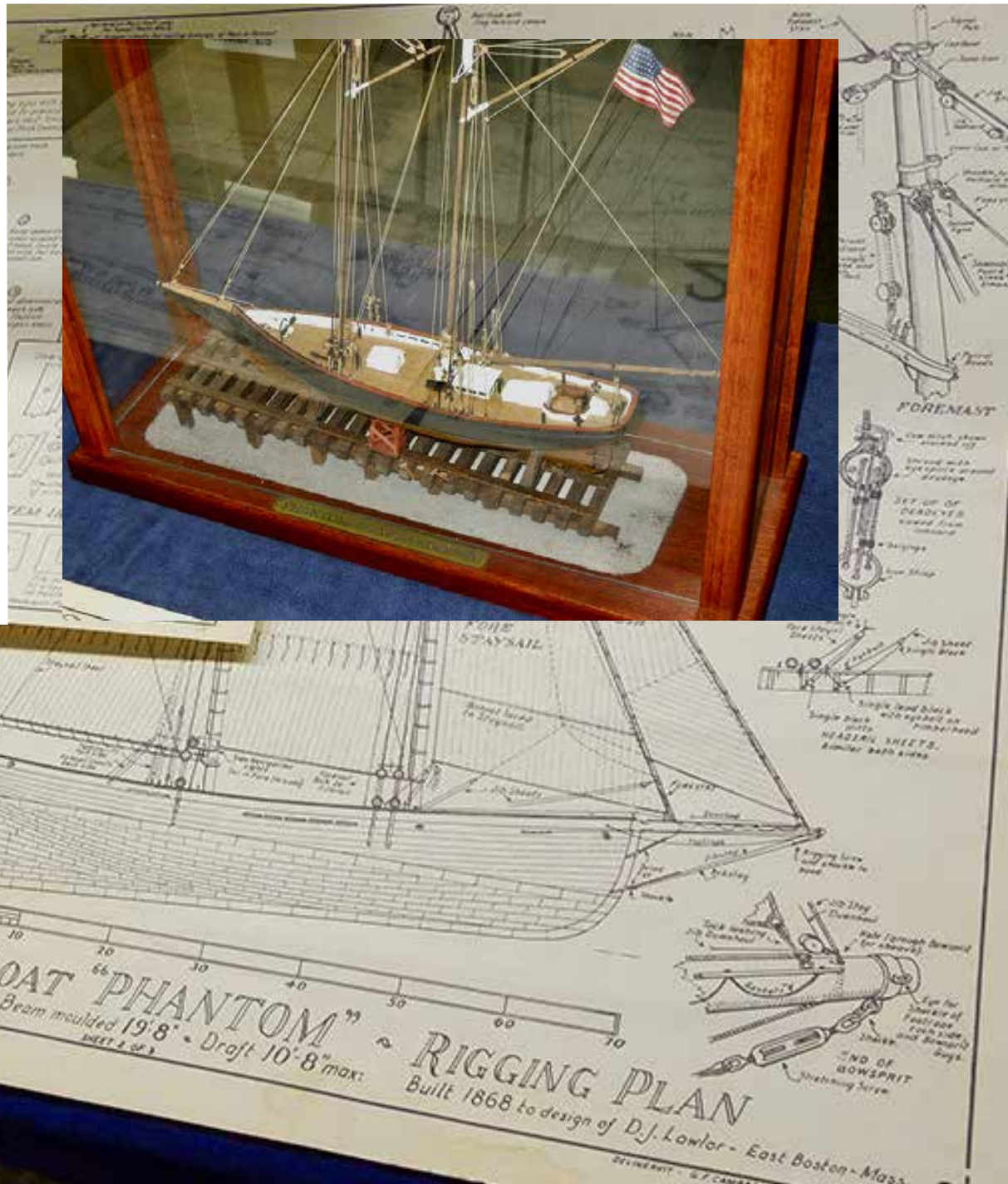
The ***Phantom*** went aground and sank at Sandy Hook, NJ in the blizzard of 1888 with the loss of several crew members.

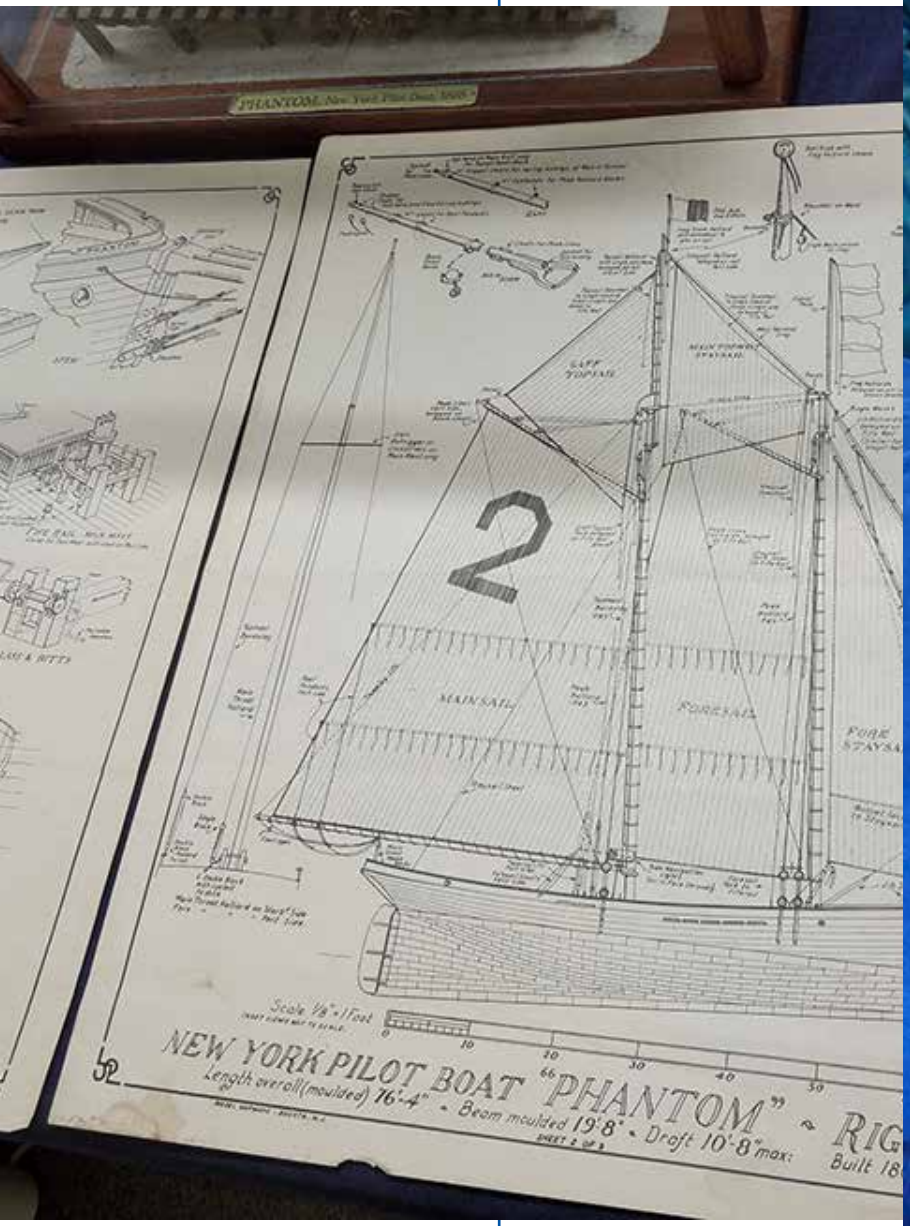
The model is a very old Model Shipways kit given to me by my sister 25 or more years ago. I didn't have a place or the time to work on it until about 2012, and completed it about 2014.

It is a solid hull, 1/96 scale, and I liked the looks of it and its seaworthiness. I carved a foot well and made coamings instead of using the cast metal coamings in the kit. I planked the footwell and added a grating.

The lines are all approximately correct length, which is why the main sheet has a large coil on deck beside the cockpit. I used the lines that came in the kit, but looking at the finished model, I think the shrouds are slightly oversized. The copper plating is cut from 1/4" copper foil with an adhesive backing.

I didn't know how big a job this would be when I started, and my estimate is there are 400 or more. Each plate overlaps the adjacent plates on two sides. I let them tarnish naturally. This is the first case I built, and one of the challenges was making the name plate. I tried many combinations of printing the name on inkjet printer and transferring it to the brass plate before I got it to work."




NEW YORK PILOT BOAT "PHANTOM"
Length overall (moulded) 76'-4" - Beam moulded 19'8" - Draft 10'-8" max:
MAINSAIL
FORESAIL





Howard Howe "My FV ***Andrea Gail*** model is finished and when the price of diesel comes down, I will take her fishing on the Seminole Pond! I may have to use a battery instead! This kit was very challenging with all the dowels and wood structure assembly. My expression for being tired now is "I'm about doweled out!"

After completing the two major mast structures, I continued with dowel assembly of the two outriggers with their anchors and chains. Again, the 1:1 drawings helped fabricate the subassemblies with the dowels and frames.

I assembled the two mast deck light hoods, painted them black and bonded them to the upper part of the mast. Then installed the bulbs, wired them and ran the wiring down the mast for interior electrical connection. The running lights and the deck lights will be on a timer for home use.

The kit is designed for a section of the forward deck with the wheel house, the mast and the outriggers to be removable for interior access along with the center section of the











lower deck for RC components. Since there are support struts and chains, these also have to be made removable. I also attached the assembly to the hull with two screws for RC operation.

The next challenge was using dowels to create some of the aft deck fishing equipment storage area. Holes were predrilled in the deck for four post storage tower and holder for the marker buoy posts. I was able to make templates by using the deck spacing to drill holes in another piece of wood to insure the correct spacing of the post while gluing.

The fishing line reels were created from kit parts and after careful gluing, the reels can turn. The diesel drums for extra fuel were also completed using some kit parts. The drums were cut from the supplied PVC tube. For the two circular lines, I used a small diameter string instead of the copper wire to simplify installation. And finally, the crew arrived from China so she is ready for her first fishing trip!"



Photos from Howard











Photos from Howard



Jeff Potter: "Regrettably I was not able to attend the October meeting, however, here's a picture of the framework for the lower foredeck of the 1/48 ***Enterprise*** I have been working on. The kit is made with Swiss Pear wood and the decking is the same. I wanted there to be a contrast with the decks so I purchased some Holly that I need to cut up to use for that purpose. The finished decking planks will be 1mm by 4mm (0.0393" x 0.1572" for the metrically impaired).

Hi to the gang and I hope you have a great meeting."



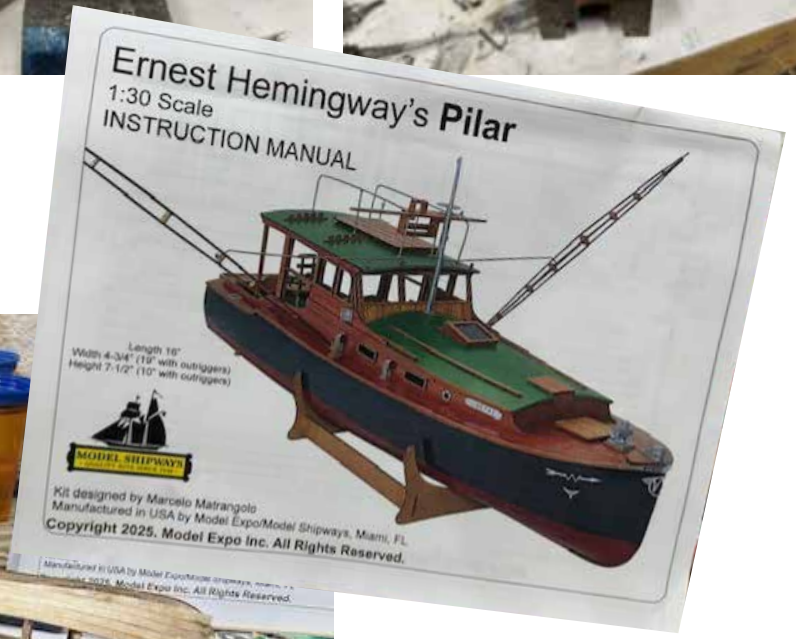
Photo from Jeff













Chuck LaFave: "I have been working on a 1/60 scale stern section of the ***Enterprise***. As I started to build it I came to the conclusion that this was too small a scale for my hands, but I give it a try (and failed).

I didn't like the way it came out so it gave to the trash can.

I have purchased a kit for Ernest Hemingway "s ***Pilar*** and stared to work on that, but have not gotten much done."

Photos from Chusk



Roger Kibart: On the Dusty Old Row-boat...

"When Irwin arrived at the meeting unusually late due to heavy traffic and an accident on 275, he was followed in by two gentlemen, one of whom was carrying a large wooden box. At first, it was thought that maybe these men were visitors or two potential new members to the club. Both assumptions were incorrect. When questioned by our President, one man introduced himself as **John Cairnes** of Tampa who stated, while opening the custom made box that it contained a model rowboat with rower that was made by his father many years ago in England.

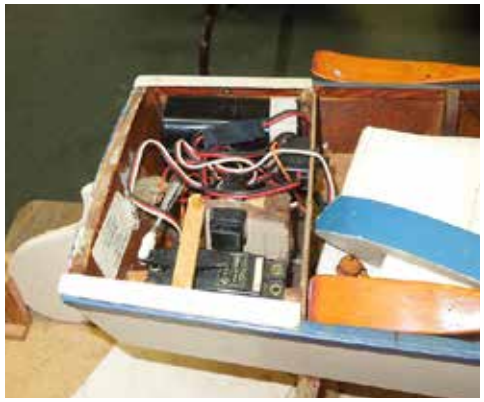
The box was opened and as shown in the accompanying photos revealed an aged rower in a dusty relic along with a couple of ants scurrying to safety. John went on to explain that it needed repairs beyond his abilities to restore. As a result, he brought the model to the club after finding out about the club on the internet, with the intention of donating it to anyone who wanted it in anticipation that it might be restored and made operable again.

After a great deal of hesitation by members sitting near the model, it was





Some photos from Roger





Photos from Chusk



strongly voiced that one of the clubs RC guys consider ownership. Sitting at the rear of the meeting room and not having good eyesight and questionable judgement, I agreed to take possession and pursued the donation with excitement. John, the donor, was grateful and contact information was exchanged.

After returning home, with great anticipation, I carefully removed the model from the box for my first close examination of my new prize possession. The first item investigated was the vintage Futaba transmitter/radio which appeared intact despite being caked in dust and dirt. Until I removed the rear battery cover showing four heavily corroded AA batteries leaking their inner contents in the compartment. This was followed by examining a separate circuit for operating the rudder and a separate battery holder containing batteries.

After removing the sealed cover of the holder and expecting the worst, I found 4 dead AA batteries that were not corroded at all. Probably the result of being in a sealed container.

The remainer of this first cursory inspection showed a geared motor on another separate circuit with wiring detached and requiring greater expertise to evaluate the challenges beyond my current abilities.

For this, I will be seeking consultation and advice from fellow members.

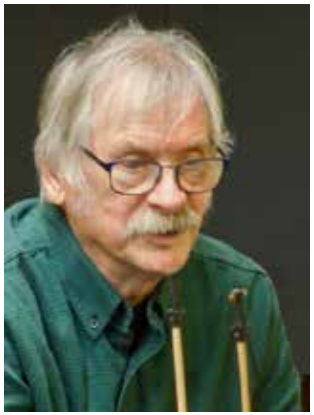
Be advised that further cleaning and restoration will occur but will require time and patience.

I'll keep you posted.

Just today (11/03/26), I spoke to the gentleman who donated the model to gather additional information and history of the model. John told me his father made the model in the late 70's or early 80's in England where he lived. He was an engineer of some sort - he wasn't sure of the details, and worked for British Aerospace for many years. Much of his time was working on the English ***Harrier*** aircraft. Prior to his death he had two model boats that he made, and gave one to each son. (This) One he has had in his garage since he received it and now resurrected and donated to our club."







George Pope: "My recent activities have not been related to ship modeling but very much to do with sailboat restoration. We spend our summers in Saratoga County, NY and I had been on the lookout for a small sailboat for single handed sailing. At the end of last summer I was able to acquire a 14' sailboat in very rough shape for a very low price.

It is a 1986 ***Capri 14.2*** sloop rigged daysailer with centerboard and 119 sq. ft. sail area. She had heavily oxidized topsides, missing lines and stained sails on a trailer with poorly fitted bunks and rusting hardware.

Over the winter I researched the boat and purchased what I thought would be necessary to bring it back to life. Then I spend this summer cleaning, repairing, sanding, polishing, waxing, painting and rigging the boat with new lines and equipment.

She is now presentable and I sailed the lake several times before putting her into storage until next year. This summer I still have the starboard side as well as the bottom yet to sand & polish, however the plan is for more time sailing and less time restoring. Perhaps there is a half-hull model in the future..."







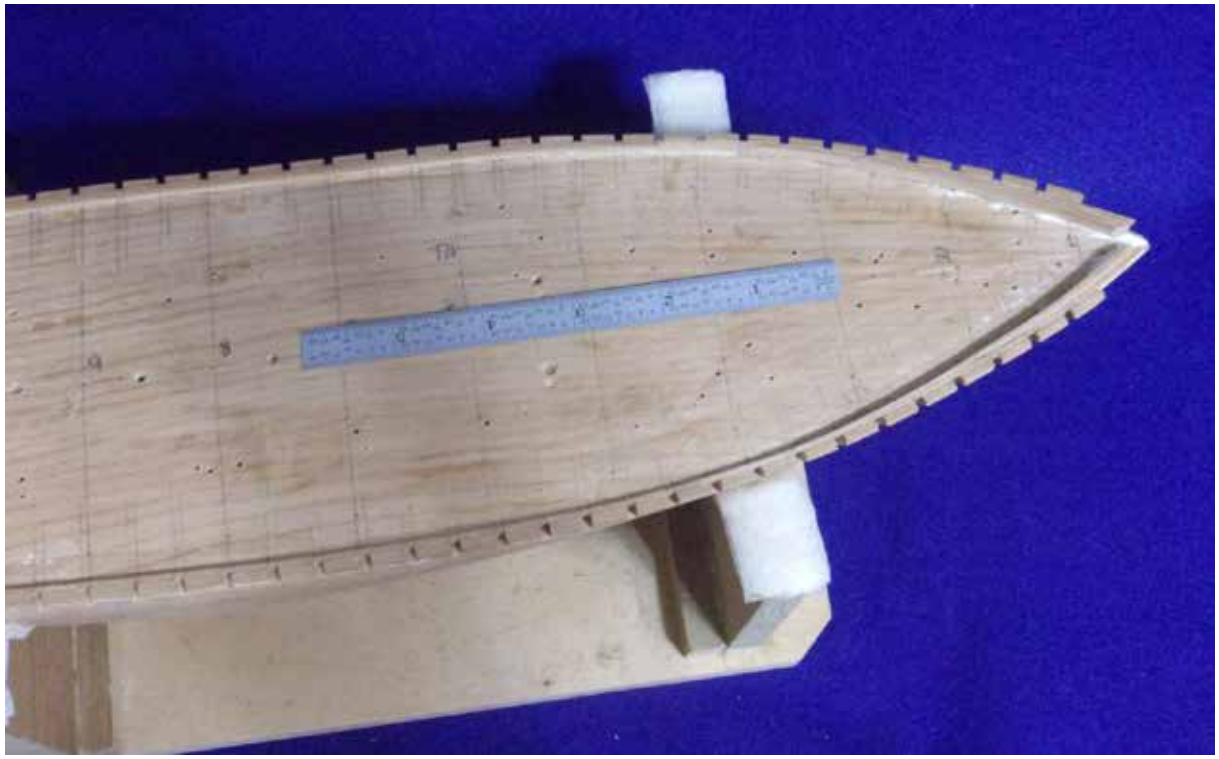
Photos from George

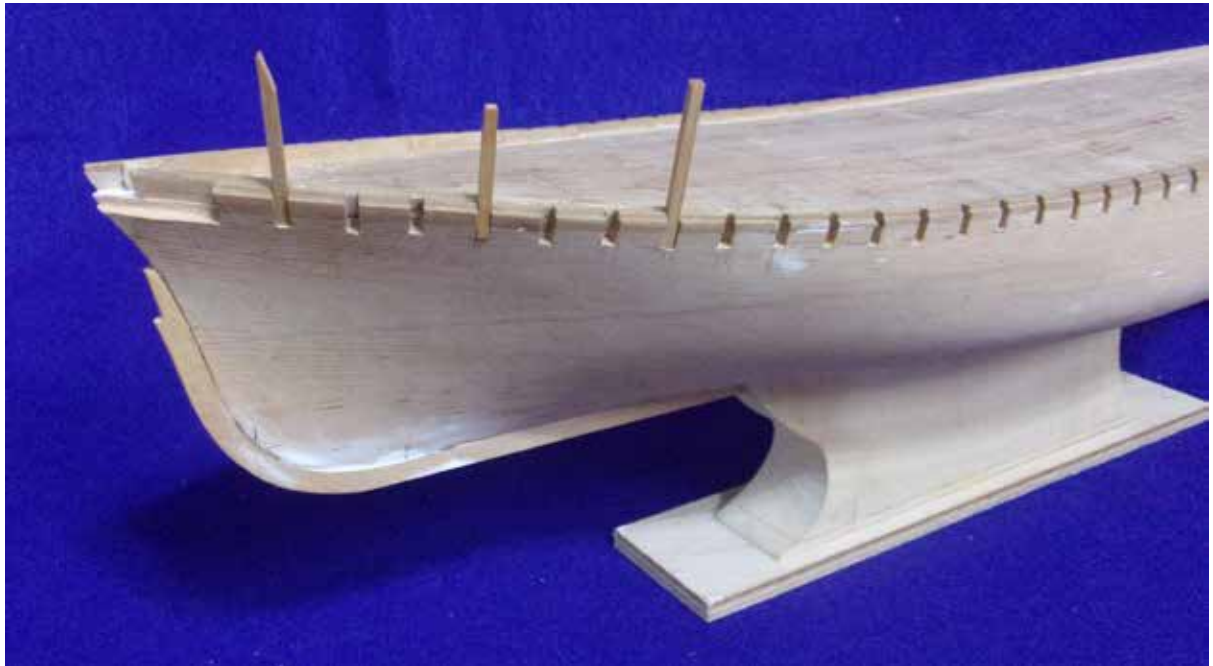


Charlie Gravallese: *Newsboy* – 1854: "Timber heads; There are approximately 90 timber heads required. Each one measures 3/32"x 3/32" and are first cut a little long, about 1-¼" long. Later, after all are installed, the height will be adjusted to an average of 5/8" above the deck line. Each timber head requires a recess-mortise be cut into the hull at the waterway/plank sheer completely around the hull at the deck line. There is no way to make this task sound easy.

It was both difficult and tedious. It took about 3 weeks to get all the mortises cut in. While each mortise takes only about a half hour to cut, I needed to work in short sessions with many mental breaks in between to keep my patience, concentration and sanity intact. All cuts were done by hand, no power tools. On average I completed about 6 per day.

The mortises at the bow and stern are the most challenging. The bow mortises must be cut so that from top to bottom, they are





Photos from Charlie

perpendicular to the hull waterline and also allow the timber heads to be flared outward. The stern mortises must be cut so that they conform to the rounded stern area and these too must accommodate timber heads flared outward.

Shown in the photos are several carving tools that I used to cut the mortises. The three smaller ones are by Dockyard Models and may now be out of production but can still be had on eBay. The larger fish tail chisel came from Woodcraft Supply. The critical item with carving tools is to keep them razor sharp. I'm not an expert on sharpening but I find that running them over a leather strop with fine grain sharpening compound at the start of each day is almost always all that is needed for honing.

Layout work prior to carving is very important. Each mortise is spaced 3/8" away from its adjacent neighbors and must be aligned to fall at the same location on both port and starboard sides of the hull. To achieve this, I used two hardwood spacer blocks (also shown in the photos), and worked from the midship area out to the bow and then to the stern. These reference lines are still visible in the hull photo.

The next challenge is installing the timber heads."



Photo from Charlie

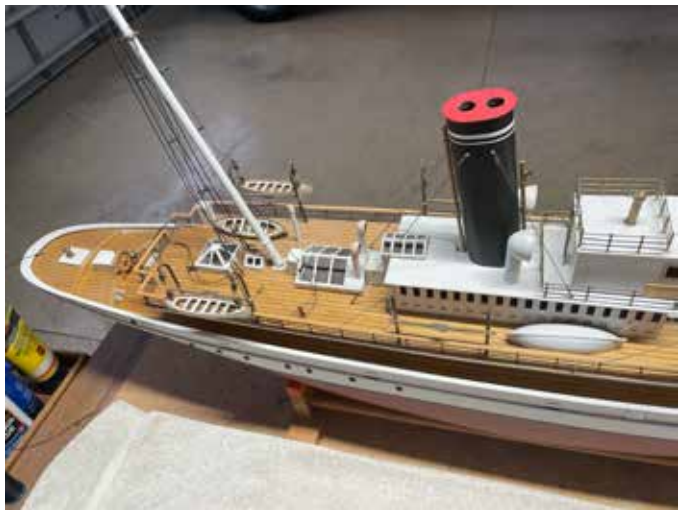


Vic Lehner repaired and cleaned an RC model of Marconi's historic steam yacht ***Elettra*** for a gent in Ocala. He could not remove the epoxied-in ballast, but took out the batteries as she is not projected to see the water again.

WWW says, "Hobbyists who wish to build a replica of the famous floating radio laboratory generally have to work from scratch using historical blueprints and architectural plans (such as those from G.L. Watson & Co. or local ship-modelling associations like the Navimodellisti Bolognesi) to scratch-build or kit-bash their own models. Finished scale displays of the ***Elettra*** exist primarily as custom scratch-builts or as exhibit pieces.

Detailed scale models of Guglielmo Marconi's historic steam yacht ***Elettra*** (originally built as the ***Rovenska*** in 1904) are built and shared by maritime hobbyists and model-making communities:







The vessel was 67m (220'). The model is about 5'. Photos from Vic.

Sec/Ed will be building a base and has ordered an acrylic cover from Pirate City Pastics.

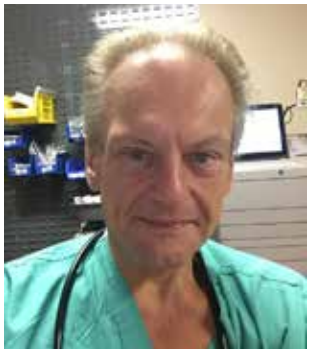
- Scale Model Builders: Enthusiasts have built precision replicas, such as a 1/64 scale completed model of the vessel (documented in maritime modeler groups on Facebook Ship Models Group), capturing her classic steam-yacht profile and layout from her time as a floating radio laboratory.

- Historical Exhibits & Talks: Detailed large-scale physical models of the SY ***Elettra*** have occasionally been crafted and displayed for specialized lectures and maritime history presentations, such as events hosted by the Chelmsford Science and Engineering Society tracing her service across two World Wars.

- Vessel Context: The original 67-meter steam yacht was acquired by Marconi in 1919/1920 for short-wave wireless and radio experiments, requisitioned in World War II, and later commemorated through various artifact preservation efforts and successor research vessels like ***Elettra*** III."



Photo donated by generous www.



Frank Wolf: "I commented that I am trying to join the Crystal River Boat Builders, an educational organization that builds models and life-size boats that were historically used on Florida's Gulf Coast.

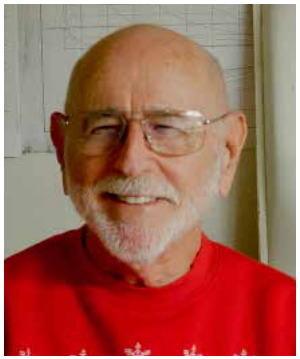
I personally at some point would like to build a Lugger, a ubiquitous work boat that was used for oyster and shrimp fishing in addition to hauling cargo in the 1800's to early 1900's."

Frank is interested in sailing luggers and their conversion to power.



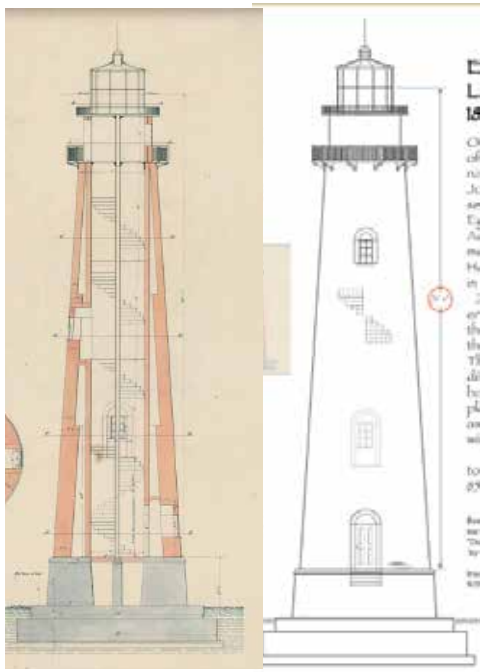
COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Oyster Luggers in New Orleans

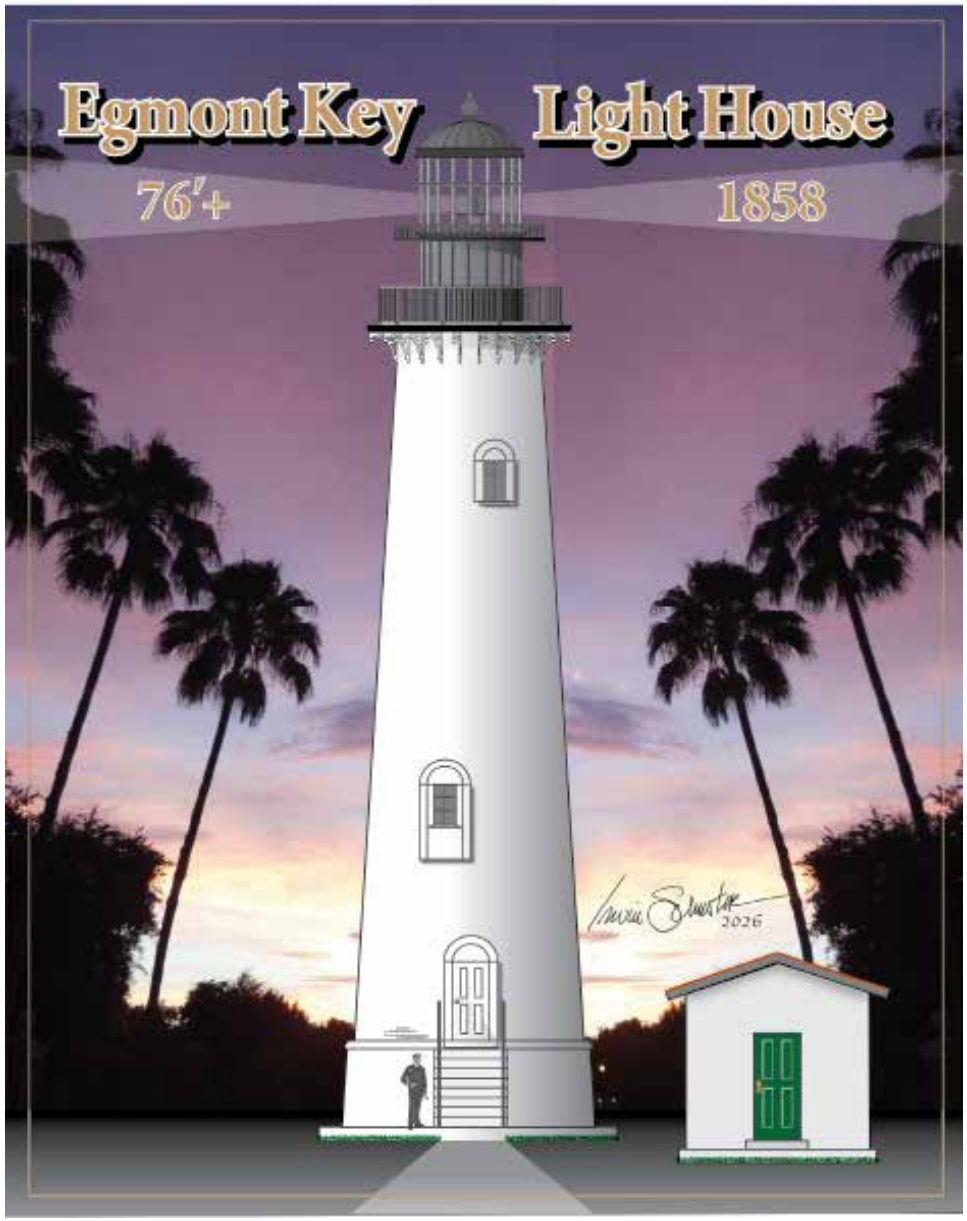


Irwin Schuster (Sec/Ed):
I continued working on an Egmont Key Light House illustration. For those "from away", Egmont guards the entrance to Tampa Bay, and is historical home to the Tampa Bay (Harbor) Pilots Association since 1926. 2024 Hurricanes brought down most of the Pilot's structures, and while the basic tower still stands, it is decapitated. And, due to a number of renovations, it has had many "looks."

I had finished my drawing when I turned up another photo that appears truer to the earliest version, so I converted the file to that. Bear in mind that none of the structures built reflect the 1858 architectural plan. The supporting iron trusses are challenging to portray as they fan around the tower. Proper name; Corbels / Brackets.







Upper left, the 1858 plan. To its right, my line interpretation.
Lower left, an undated photo and to its right, a 1933 B/W.
ABOVE, my final illustration, put to bed (I hope).

I also did a quick cleaning and minor restoration on a family heorloom, ***Sovereign of the Sea***s, for a family in St. Pete. The model had a pair of totally inappropriate lead yacht chocks where catheads would normally be. These had distributed white flakes all around the deck and base due to outgassing of materials and finishes which had also coated the inside of the **GLASS** case.

The first challenge was to get the 30+ pound case separated and off the model. After I figured how that beast was attached, and backed out the six slotted screws underneath the base, I called on a neighbor and we managed to accomplish that.

Somehow, a couple of hatch covers had gotten displaced, so those were resettled and the anchors painted. After that clean and reattachment of a few stray lines, I figured out how to get the glass back on by myself.

See the last page of this digital fishwrapper for that secret.

Everything is obvious right after you have been told, right?







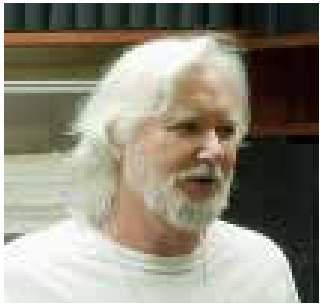


Upper left, ready for pick-up.

To its right, the case, foggy inside coating.

Lower left, when separated.

Left, the offending yacht chocks.
The coating is called lead carbonate, lead hydrocerussite or cerussite.

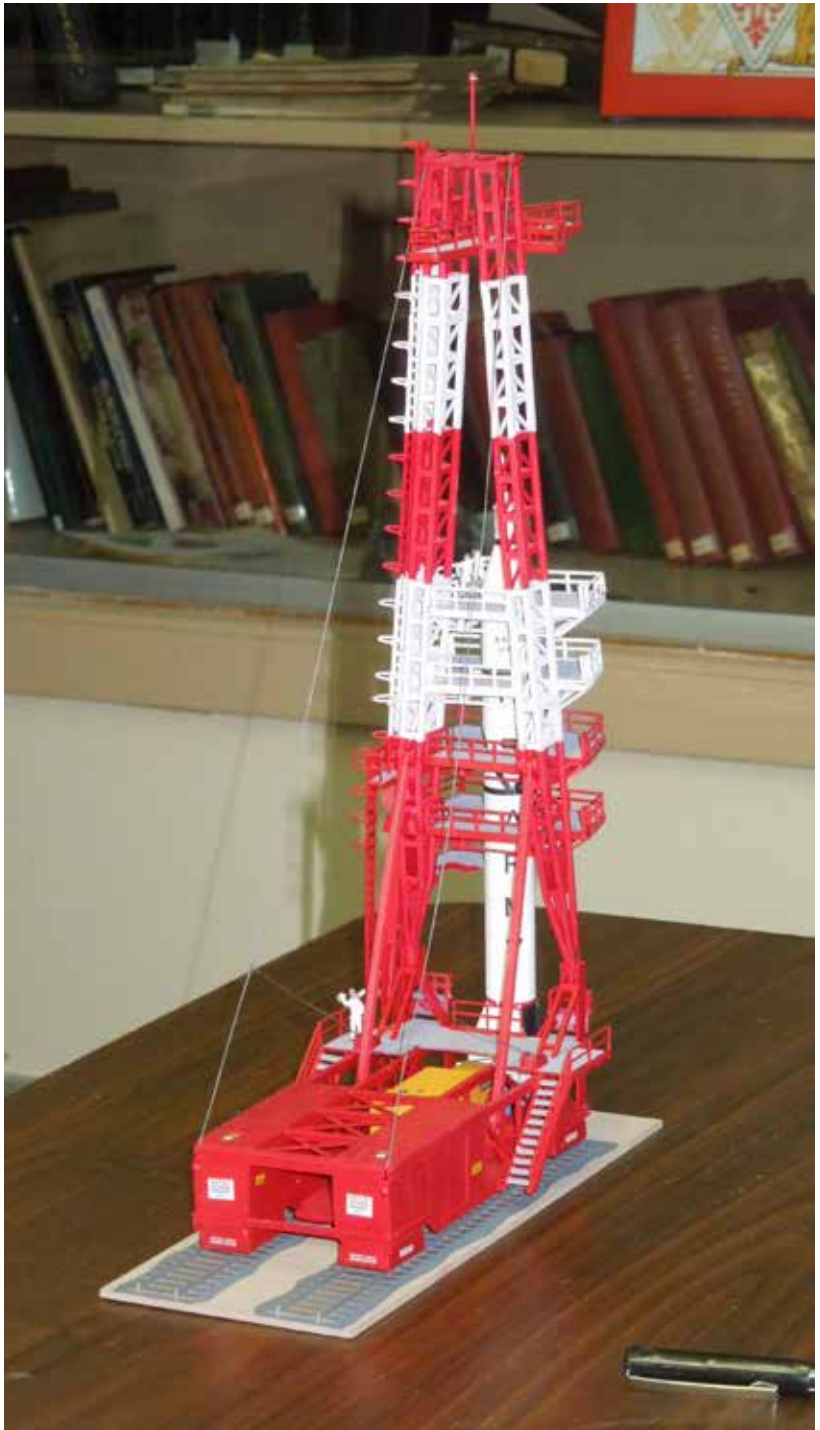


Steve Sobieralski: ***Jupiter C Rocket, Explorer Satellite*** and Gantry Tower.

"I have been taking a bit if a break from ship modeling lately and brought in this model I recently built from the old (1958) 1/110 scale Revell kit of the rocket used to launch America's first satellite. This was a nostalgia build for me as I had originally built the kit when I was nine years old. I had long wanted to give it another try, but original kits commanded pretty high prices on the auction sites. So when it was re-released several years ago at a reasonable price (still far higher than the kits original $1.98 cost in 1958) I eagerly picked one up. I know I spent far longer assembling it than I did as a nine year old and the results (hopefully) are far better.

The ***Explorer*** was America's response to the Soviet ***Sputnik***, which was the world's first artificial satellite. The rocket used was a modification of the ***Redstone***, which was developed by the US Army from captured German V-2s using captured German scientists, among them Werner Von Braun who was later instrumental in the ***Apollo*** project. The ***Redstone*** was developed into the ***Jupiter C*** as a research rocket, but the rocket that carried the ***Explorer*** was renamed ***Juno*** and did not carry US Army markings as provided in the kit.

The main part of the model is the gantry tower and is a fairly accurate representation of the first of its kind to be deployed to Cape Canaveral in 1954. So, not a ship (maybe a space ship), but a bit of modeling nostalgia and Florida history.

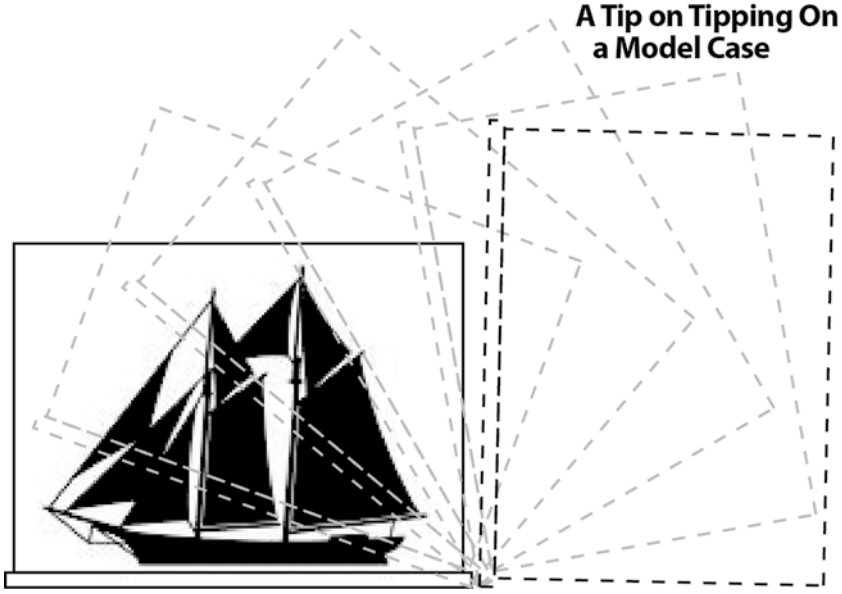


Believe It or Oar Knot!

Sec/Ed recently had a very large case to remove and replace. I called in a neighbor to lift it straight up and off, but later figured that I could replace it by tipping. It worked with this particular configuration.

Could have come off the same way.

A Tip on Tipping On a Model Case



The latest news on the "Barely Boats" 2027 America's Cup Regatta in Naples, Italy:
Challenger Series will be May 22 > July 4.
38th Cup Match will be July 10 > July 19, defended by Emerates Yeam New Zealand.
No more human-powered winches.
Will be covered on YouTube.

Mark your calendar! April 15, 2028 will be the 500th anniversary of Panfilo de Narvaez' visit to Pinellas County. Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca hiked across the country from here, and from CA, down to Mexico, getting back to Spain 8 years later!

Sign up for the (free) GCMM Newsletter



Gulf Coast Maritime Museum

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