



Forecastle Report

Newsletter of the Midwest Model Shipwrights

August 2009

● Scuttlebutt ●

Commodore **Sid Wotman** rang the ship's bell at 1930 hours and mustered 23 hands. Since there were no guests to welcome, our Commodore moved on to his main topic for the evening: Liability Insurance. After a discussion on the issues involved in club liabilities, a motion was made by Tim Riggs and seconded by Ken Goetz to have the Club purchase liability insurance for the Club and two officers from the SSMA at an annual cost of \$175.00. A discussion of the motion followed, the results of which were a second motion made by Cole Seskind and seconded by Tim Riggs to table the first motion until the next regular meeting in August. Bob George volunteered to contact Bruce Hoff to get his opinion on our Club liability and prepare a report for next month's meeting. The second motion passed by vote of a majority of the members present. *(It should be noted that liability coverage for the Club and two officers would not cover any other officers. It would, therefore, be necessary for the other officers to resign their commissions and agree to offer their services on a volunteer basis).* As a part of the liability issue, a revision of the Club bylaws has become necessary to properly re-define the control structure of the Club as well as to codify the remaining operational elements. Bob Filipowski has been working on this document and will present it for member review at our next regular meeting with member approval to follow.

Kurt Van Dahm reminded us that the annual *Tri-Club Symposium* will be held on Saturday, November 7, 2009 from 8 AM to 4:30 PM at the Deadeye's meeting place: the Lutheran Church of the Ascension at the SW corner of Willow and Sunset Drive in Northfield. The day will include coffee and rolls in the AM, catered lunch and speakers for a full day of learning and fellowship. Gordon Stiller, a professional carver, will be a featured speaker. The *Tri-Club* would like members to pay their \$20 registration fee (\$25 non-members) as soon as possible to assure that adequate food is on hand. Payments after October 21 will be at a rate of \$25 for members (\$30 non-members). You can pay at your next club meeting. There is a need for suggestions on topics that members would like to see presented, so please let Kurt know your wishes. *See Scuttlebutt, Page 2*

OFFICERS

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 Signals Officer (Editor) - John Mitchell(847) 392-2259
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August Meeting Notice

"Making Your Own Decals"

By Tim Riggs

Who hasn't spent time looking through all the hobby shops for just that "right" set of to-scale decals to finish off a model? Or spent even more time browsing through the internet to find the really expensive offerings found there? Well, now you can learn the techniques for making your own decals and we can be sure you will be happier with the results, not only from a cost standpoint but from the satisfaction you will gain from having done the job yourself. You don't want to miss this session, for sure! See you there, mate.

Sixth in our new series, **Historic American Warships**, features the *USS Langley (CV-1)*, the US Navy's first aircraft carrier. Read about her on page 5.

Our next meeting will be at 7:15 p.m. Wednesday,
 August 19, 2009

At the Community Presbyterian Church
 407 Main Street in Mount Prospect

● Scratch Building on a Budget ●

By John Mitchell



Despite the fact that many in the audience had built a model from scratch, the core question of "Why build one?" reminded everyone of the unique advantages of working in this modeling genre.

In answer to this question, the following were offered as prime reasons:

1. Gain the ability to pick any subject you like.
The model you really like may not be offered as a kit
2. Build a model to any scale you like.
You may have limited space to display a model
3. Build a model that fits your \$ budget.
You can pay into the project as you go along.

With this question answered, the rest of the presentation dealt with how to select the desired scale, how to find plans, what tools are needed, how much work space is required, what materials can be made vs. bought, what construction methods are available and a quick review of the finishing and display of models.

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Scratch built, continued from page 1

So follow along, as we explore these issues and turn **YOU** into a scratch builder (if you weren't already one).

♦ How to select scale? Two things you need to know: How big is the real ship and how big do you want your model to turn out to be? If the ship you are modeling is, say, 50 ft. long and you want a model 1 ft. long, then the formula is: $1' = 50'$ or $12'' = 600''$ or $1'' = 50''$ or just 1:50. With this information, you should be able to scale any set of plans to the desired size.

♦ How to select type? Sailing ship, motor boat, tug boat, paddle wheel steamer, battleship, you name it, you can build it - BUT....to get the most enjoyment out of the model building experience....

 **YOU'VE GOT TO LOVE IT!** Meaning: there should be something in the model than really peaks your interest. Something of historical interest or personal interest or aesthetic interest that will keep you focused on the project over many, many months. Without it, it's about like last week's news.

♦ Source materials can be found in books, from friends who loan you an old set of kit plans, from model plan services found on the internet and even from the US Government. You can scale your plans using a computer and flat bed scanner to capture an image and enlarge it to desired scale.

♦ Basic tools can be as simple as an Xacto knife, jeweler's saw, inch/mm ruler, pin vise, small files, a sanding block, some clamps and your wits.

♦ Work space requirements depend on the size of your ship, but the smaller craft can be built on the top of a card table. It's good to have a cutting board to work on and a drawing board comes in handy as a work surface.

♦ Selection of materials depends upon your access to a table saw. If you don't have one, you can buy pre-cut wood stock from a number of outlets such as "Model Shipways". Small parts can be purchased individually and then duplicated using the molding process to reduce costs.

♦ Construction methods are usually one of two: plank on bulkhead or a built-up solid hull.

Which you choose depends upon the kind of information available to you in the plans you select.

♦ You can choose to finish your model by painting the hull, using either spray or brush, or leaving it in its natural wood color. Whichever way you go, try the finish out on a sample



before committing to your model just to be sure you have control of your medium and you like the end result.

♦ Display your model on a cradle stand (above, L), pedestals (above, R) or create a diorama to put your model into a realistic scene typical of its natural environment (below).



Building cases to protect your model from the elements (dust, moisture, etc.) has been the subject of an earlier presentation but one worth looking into.

Have a great model building experience and don't forget: your mates at the *Midwest Model Shipwrights* are always available to give you their best advice and suggestions. ❖

Scuttlebutt, continued from page 1

Three presentations and a like number of roundtables are planned for the day.

Another of Kurt's duties this evening was to make a formal presentation of the "Dana McCalip Best Mineatures Award" from the Manitowoc Show to our mate **Gus Agustin** for his beautiful model of the *Mediator*, ca 1741. Congratulations, Gus, on another successful showing. This award was sponsored by the "Nautical Research and Model Ship Society of Chicago".



Speakers for the **NRG Conference** have been lined up, as follows:

Thursday, October 8

9 AM- "Making the metal fittings in wooden warships" presented by Greg Herbert, DVM.

10 AM- "Making gratings" presented by Dan Pariser.

11 AM- "Spiling" presented by Bob Filipowski in a two-part session.

2 PM- "Silver soldering" presented by Kurt Van Dahm.

3 PM- "Making realistic flags" presented by Gus Agustin.

● Ships on Deck ●

Gus Agustin showed us his HMS *St. George*, ca 1701, in a scale of 1:192. Despite her small size, the list of things recently accomplished would make one think it was a



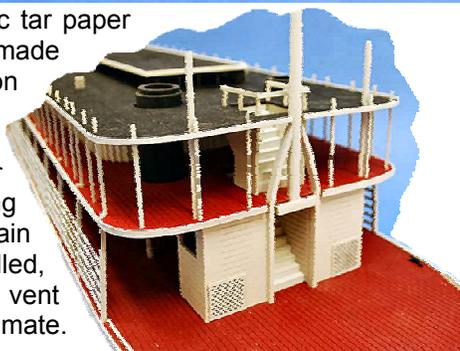
much larger model: installation of the rails on the main, quarter and poop decks and completion of the relief along the hull sides and part of the stern. These details took a

sharp eye to see and even sharper eye to install to such a high level of accuracy. The relief details were done by mixing gesso and gold paint. To get the two sides to match, Gus uses a mirror to view the first side while doing the second. Great techniques mate.

Kurt Van Dahm's paddle wheel steamer *Chaperon* (1:48) is taking shape in a beautiful way. In addition to the red



decks, an authentic tar paper looking covering made from silkspan on top of the boiler deck gave the model real "viewer appeal". Rigging posts and hog chain braces are installed, as well as several vent stacks. It's a gem, mate.



Doc Williams has been very diligent in working on his DPC "Hartman" Tug (1:24), and the results are very obvi-



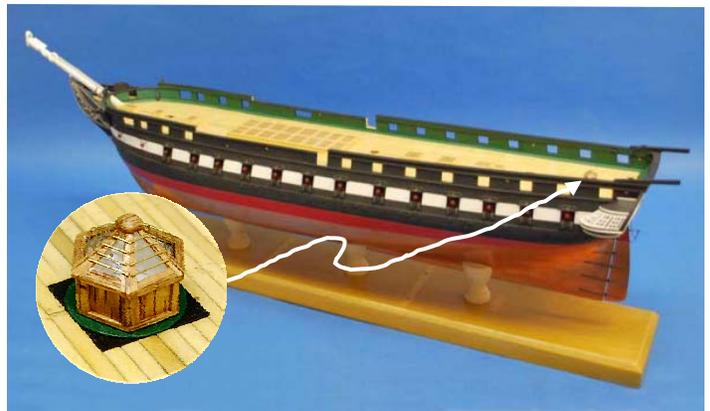
ous. The hull has been painted with "Badger" air brush paint, the bits installed and the "rope deck" planked and all that has moved the project into "serious" territory. Now it's "on to the superstructure" time. She really looks like she's ready to float, mate!

Ray Oswald's "Ships Boats" project is really like following a first class practicum—we are treated to all the technical secrets, including all the "do's" and "don'ts", that make this small but important modeling task work out. Ray had pre-



pared forms for the 23 ft Launch and 20 ft. Cutter, which are specific for the HMS *Bounty*. The cutout forms are used to bend the hull ribs, each cutout being one station. A lot of work but the results are unquestionably spot on.

Ken Goetz continues to add really neatly done details to

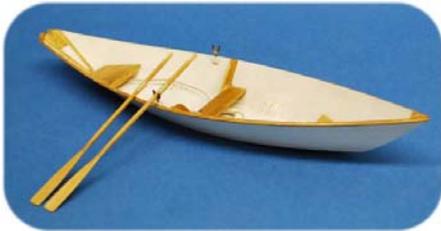


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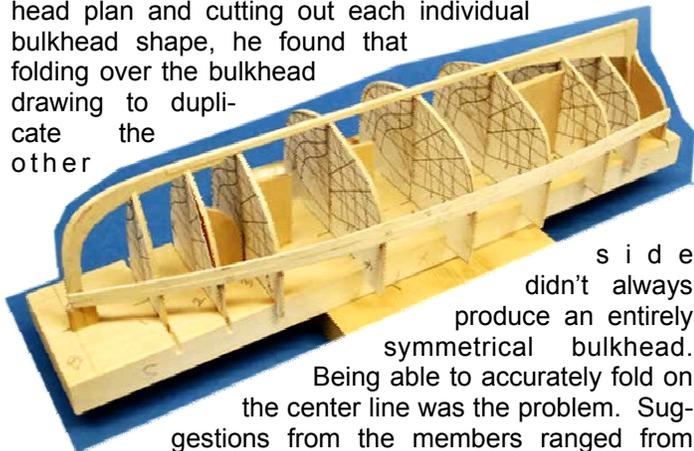
Ships-on-Deck, continued from page 3

his USS *Constitution* (1:76) hull. But the real twinkle in his eye came when he described the work he had done on scratch building the "Captains Skylight". Since the kit version lacked detail, Ken built his own and added some very realistic mullions out of brass to make the whole thing stand out. Nice work mate.

Bob Ivan was thoughtful enough to bring in two models relevant to the evening's presentation, both of which had been built from scratch. His *Swamp Scott Dory*, whose plans had been copied from a book and rescaled, had a three-piece, flat bottom hull. Bob had a particular attachment to this model, as he had had ideas of building a full size version one day before his rowing prowess left him. And a beautiful model she is, too, with some really fine oars.

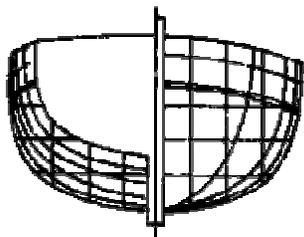


Bob says his second model, a *Whitehall Tender*, had given him a little more trouble. After copying the bulkhead plan and cutting out each individual bulkhead shape, he found that folding over the bulkhead drawing to duplicate the other



side didn't always produce an entirely symmetrical bulkhead.

Being able to accurately fold on the center line was the problem. Suggestions from the members ranged from matching sides by sanding or shimming to doing point-to-point drawings to create the second side. Hope we were a help, but, if you are still having trouble, bring it up again, mate. We'll get to the "bottom" of your problem for sure.



John Mitchell showed his 1:64 scratch built model of the cutter *HMS Fly*, as part of his program this evening. This model, launched back in May of 2003, is a good example of what can be done on a tight budget. Costs were minimal and enjoyment was high.



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Saturday, October 10

Speakers are to include Jim Kennard on "Discovery of an early 19th century lake Ontario schooner", Patrick Matthews on "Building the tug *Dearborn*", William Lafferty on the book "Buckets and Belts : The Evolution of the Great Lakes Self-unloader", Dan Pariser on "The brief but stellar career of the US Brig-of-War *Oneida*" and Clay Feldman on a variety of subjects.

John Pocius, our new "Webmaster", has launched a great new club web site that you all need to check out. Log on to www.midwestmodelshipwrights.com and see



our new look. We should all be proud of the way we are being presented and extend our thanks to John for his efforts....not just now, but in the future as well. Managing a web site is NOT a one shot deal. Thanks, John.

In case you were trying to reach **Marty Myers** in response to his offer of the specially priced *HMS Vanguard* kit, as written up in the June, 2009 Forecastle Report, his phone number should have been **773-631-7668 (fax 773-631-7235)**. He can also be reached on e-mail: curlee11@aol.com; or via mail at: 5821 N. Navarre, Chicago, IL 60661. Of course, Marty also handles the "MOROPE" product line. Sorry for any inconvenience this error may have caused.

Around the Horn

with the Tri-Club

The **Nautical Research and Model Ship Society of Chicago** held its meeting on Saturday, August 8 at 7:30 PM. Featured presentation was by Bob Filipowski on how to sharpen slitting blades used on the Preac and Byrnes saws. Works in progress were also displayed during the "Ships On Deck" session. A call for members to sign up for the November Tri-Club symposium was also made, with the advice that August and September meetings would be their only chance, as there is no October meeting planned for the club due to the NRG Conference.

A Friend Indeed

By Bob Filipowski

It's not uncommon for West Coast member Robert Hewitt to send Gus Agustin a model or two via UPS. After all, he's never had a problem in the past. Unfortunately, this time the postal gods did not smile on him. When Gus opened the package containing the Thames River Barge *Kathleen*, which was supposed to be exhibited at the NRG Conference in Chattanooga, the carnage he beheld was substantial.



Agustin immediately called Robert to give him the bad news and got permission to make the needed repairs. It's fortunate that Gus is also a miniaturist.

The average model ship builder might have sent what was left back to San Diego! After taking some photos, Gus assessed the damage, and proceeded to figure out where everything went as best he



could. He admitted that some of the "debris" stumped him and was left off the model, but you really couldn't tell.

In addition to making things right, a new case complete with brass trim was made. The model was then taken to Chattanooga for the NRG Conference where attendees were non the wiser as to what had befallen this splendid miniature.

Nice going, Gus!

● *USS Langley (CV-1)* ●

The USS *Langley* (CV-1/AV-3) was the US Navy's first aircraft carrier, converted in 1920 from the collier USS *Jupiter* (AC-3), and also the US Navy's first electrically-propelled ship. Conversion of another collier was planned but canceled when the Washington Naval Treaty required the scrapping of the partially-built battle cruisers *Lexington* and *Saratoga*, freeing up their hulls for conversion to the aircraft carriers CV-2 and CV-3. The *Langley* was named after Samuel Pierpont Langley, and American aviation pioneer. Following another conversion to a seaplane tender (AV-3), *Langley* fought in WWII.



As the first American aircraft carrier, *Langley* was the scene of numerous momentous events. On 17 October

Namesake: Samuel Pierpont Langley, aviation pioneer
Builder: Mare Island Shipyard
Laid down: 18 October 1911
Launched: 14 August 1912
Commissioned: 20 March 1922
Status: Sunk 27 February 1942

Length: 542.3ft overall
Beam: 65.3ft
Draft: 18ft 11in
Displacement: 13,000 tons
Speed: 15.5 knots
Machinery: GE turbo-electric drive; 3 boilers; 2 shafts
Crew: 468 officers & enlisted,
Aircraft: 55
Armament: 4 x 5in guns

1922 Lt. Virgil Griffin piloted the first plane, a Vought VE-7, launched from her decks. Though this was not the first time an airplane had taken off from a ship, this one launching was of monumental importance to the modern US Navy. The era of the aircraft carrier was born introducing into the Navy what was to become the vanguard of its forces in the future.

Langley was converted to a seaplane tender

and reclassified AV-3 on 26 February 1937. On the entry of the US into WWII, *Langley* was anchored off Cavite, Philippines. With the

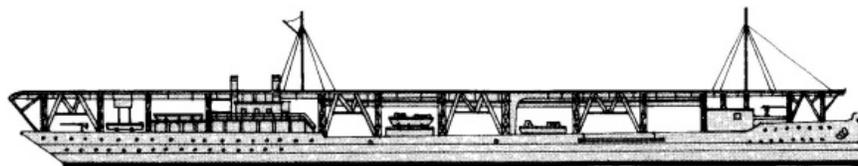


advance of the Japanese, she assisted the Royal Australian Air Force in running antisubmarine patrols out of Darwin. While delivering P-40 fighter planes to Java, she was attacked by Japanese bombers, taking 5 hits with the loss of 16 crew members. Too badly damaged to be brought to port, she was sunk by shells and torpedoes from the destroyer *Whipple* on 27 February 1942.

This article was compiled from information in the public domain found on the web at Wikipedia.org.



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