



Forecastle Report

Newsletter of the Midwest Model Shipwrights ♦ www.midwestmodelshipwrights.com ♦ August 2010

● Scuttlebutt ●

Commodore **Tim Riggs** opened the meeting at 7:30 PM with 24 members present. One of our mates, **Ed Cotey**, was welcomed back aboard after an extended absence ashore.

Coming events announced:

- 23 October is the firm date for the Tri-Club meeting and symposium to be held in last year's venue, "Lutheran Church of the Ascension", SW corner of Willow & Sunset Drive, Northfield, IL. Remember that Kurt Van Dahm has asked for any suggestions on presentation topics you would like to see.
- 23 August: the NRG Conference in Annapolis, MD.
- 23 August: the "Chicago Tall Ships" festival.

Tim Riggs, in addition to announcing the appointment of **Bob Filipowski** to the staff of the *Nautical Research Guild* during our meeting, also wrote to some of us his thoughts on this event. We excerpt his comments, as follows:

"The recent announcement that **Bob Filipowski** will be added to the staff of the *Nautical Research Guild* is a wonderful comment about Bob, his skills (and) commitment but, I think, mostly about Bob. Bob has volunteered to take on every office, (and) task or to work with anyone seeking help with a modeling question, presentation or task".



Thanks, Tim, we couldn't have said it better. All our best wishes to Bob for success in his new appointment - and our thanks, too, for the help we've all received from Bob over the years.

See Scuttlebutt, Page 5

2010 OFFICERS & STAFF

President (Commodore)	- Tim Riggs.....	(847) 697-9552
Vice Pres (Flag Captain)	- Gus Agustin.....	(847) 398-5208
Treasurer (Ship's Purser)	- Ken Goetz	(847) 678-4249
Secretary (Ship's Clerk)	- Jim Merritt.....	(847) 888-3882
Editor (Signals Officer)	- John Mitchell	(847) 392-2259
Photographer (M. Chief)	- Leon Sirota	(847) 541-6285

August Meeting Notice

Starting a Plank-on-Bulkhead Hull

By Dave Bottom

Whether you're building a "Plank-on-Bulkhead" type kit or planning on launching your own scratch built model, there's something here for everyone. It has been demonstrated again and again that knowing the basics can reduce frustration, increase the pleasure and ensure the hoped for results in building a model ship. Come hear Dave tell us how to achieve all these goals—we can assure you an evening well spent, mates.

Our next meeting will be at 7:15 p.m. Wednesday,
August 18, 2010
At the Community Presbyterian Church
407 Main Street in Mount Prospect

● TRYWORKS ●

By Sid Wotman



Our notice on Sid's presentation was not hype - he gave us what we came to hear, a detailed and entertaining account of the difficult labors on board a whale ship in the 1800's. Herman Melville didn't tell it any better.

Whale oil was, for a relatively short time, one of life's most precious commodities. Lubricants, cosmetic ingredients, and a source of reliable lighting were but a few uses for this product. Then came the discovery of oil and the production of kerosene for lighting and whaling came to an end. "O tempora! O mores!"

Now this lost phase in man's history is immortalized in novels such as "Moby Dick" and at the museum in Mystic, CT, where the restored *Charles W. Morgan* is berthed.

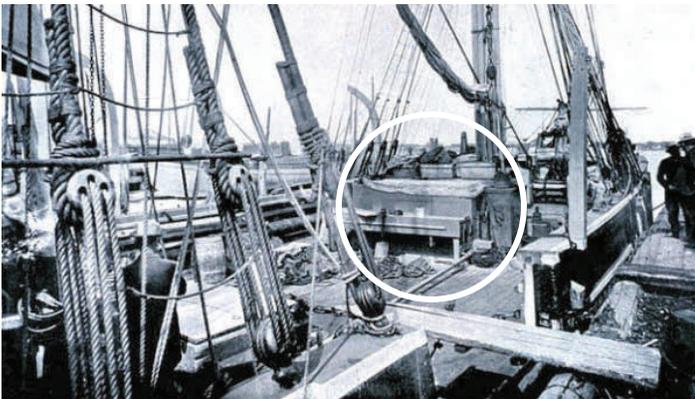
See Tryworks, Page 2

The Forecastle Report, August 2010 - P.2

Tryworks, continued from Page 1

Not having recorded Sid's presentation verbatim, we are presenting excerpts available on the web to describe the general features of a Tryworks in summary of his talk.

The Try-Works were central to the work of whaling until factory ships were built and more modern technology was applied to the job of getting oil from blubber. They.. (Try-Works) are seen here as the rectangular chest-like structure amidships. They were closed up when not in use.



Essentially very large simple cauldrons heated by an enclosed fire separated from the deck by fire-bricks and a shallow bath filled with sea water, the try-pots accepted cut-up chunks of blubber from whales where the oil would melt and be collected into barrels. When the skin or other parts had given up all the oil they were going to, they would be fished out of the try-pots and used to fuel the fire.¹



For additional descriptions of the Try-Works, you may refer to Herman Melville's "Moby Dick", Chapter 96, which is also to be found on the web at www.american-literature.com.

¹ www.coolantarctica.com/gallery/whales.

² www.wikipedia.com: "Southampton Historical Museum".

● Ships on Deck ●

Ken Wallenberg drove to our meeting in his ship-of-the-road, a 1930 Model "A" Ford. Ken has had the car for about 20 years and restored it over a period of 6 seasons especially to take his daughter to the church for her wedding. Shows what a wide range of talents our members possess. Imagine what Ken's ship models look like!



Ed Cotey has rejoined our crew after some absence and brought with him his *Merchant Viking Ship*. This project



was actually started in October, 1984 and the cargo was added since the last showing 13 years ago.

Ed is now busy making Viking figures to crew the ship and will add sail, rigging and tackle. Nice to see you again, mate. Welcome back.

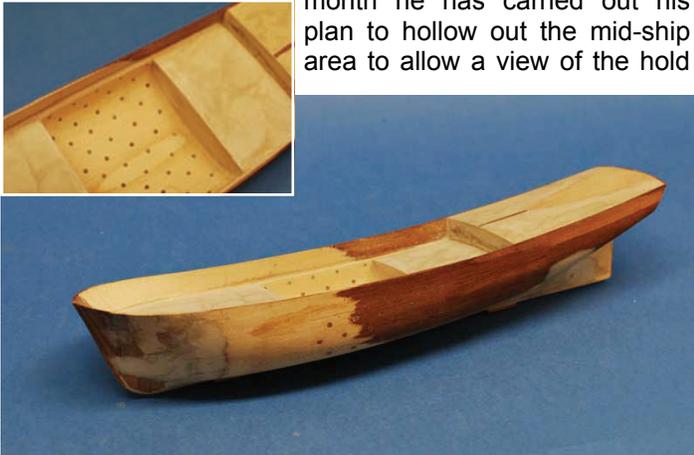


See Ships-on-Deck , Page 3

The Forecastle Report, August 2010 - P.3

Ships-on-Deck, continued from Page 2

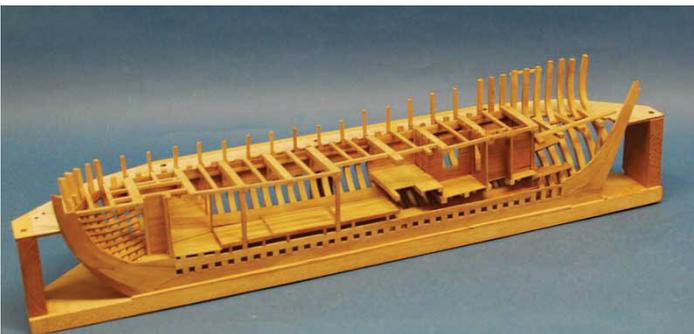
Bob Filipowski has made significant progress on his 1:64 scale model of the schooner *Arrowsic*. Since last month he has carried out his plan to hollow out the mid-ship area to allow a view of the hold



through an open hatch. His technique of inserting wood pins into the hull to mark the limits for wood removal worked like a charm.

Bob also gave us a look at the book he reviewed last month: Gilbert McArdle, "*Building a Navy Board Model of HMS Sussex, 1693*" (Florence: Seawatch Books, 2010). This was a very impressive publication and contained 17 sheets of beautiful, 1/4" scale drawings which would make constructing this big model much easier.

Bruce Hoff is well on his way to completing the cabin details on both halves of his 1:32 scale model of the

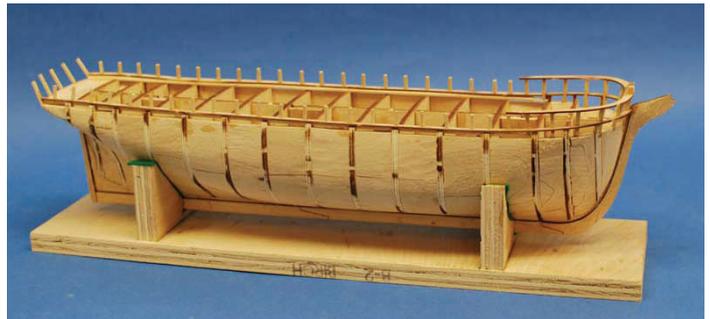


schooner *Chaleur*. This has really been a labor of love because he has to do everything twice;

once for each side of the hull. The end result is going to be very exciting to view. She's a beauty, mate.



Doc Williams reports that the hull of his 1:64 whaler *Charles W. Morgan* has been fully faired (after having added bass wood filler blocks between all bulkheads); the

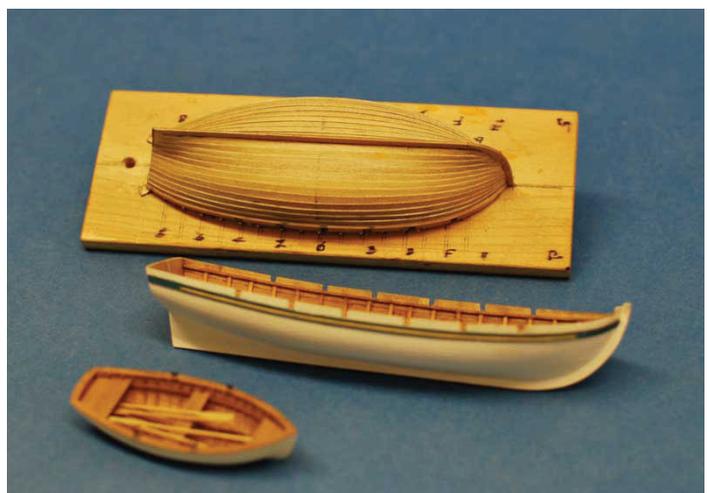


waterways, plank sheer, bulwark timbers and forward main rail (as well as knightheads) are also in place.



To shape the hull, Doc first used a big block of 80-grit sand paper then switched to a gouge and scrapers in the hollow areas. Bulwarks timbers were glued into notches using carpenter's glue, which is remarkably strong and perfect for this application. Looking good, mate. This is a learning experience for everyone!

Ray Oswalt has put in some fine touches on his HMS *Bounty* Ship's Boats - a 23 ft. Launch and a 20 ft. Cutter. Scale is $7/32" = 1'-0"$, (1:54.857) to be exact. The Cutter, still on the mold (top), is clinker built with a coat of sealer to be followed by paint the same color as the Launch.



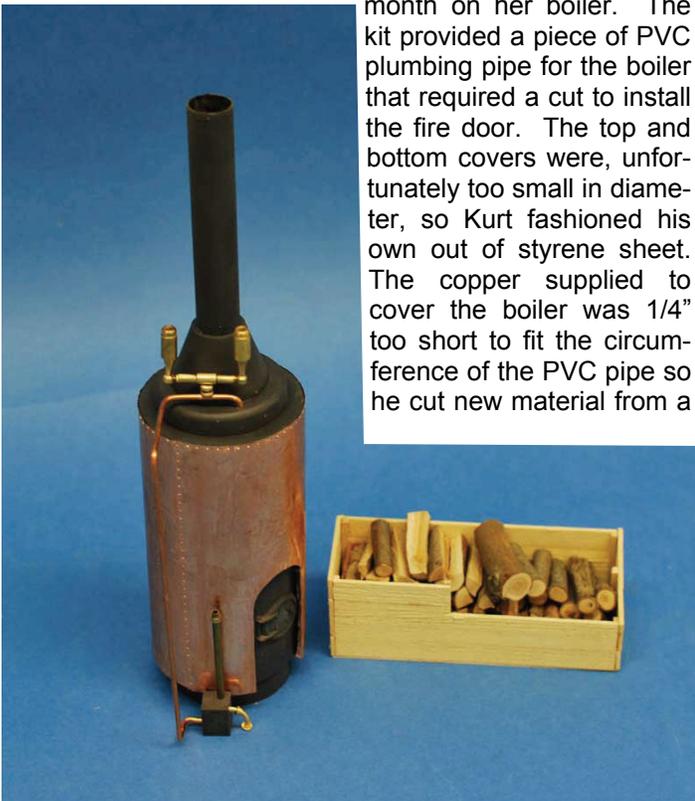
Ray has enough material cut to build another set of these boats (one set goes on the *Bounty* model) but plans to put this project aside and return to work on his slaver ship. It's been a joy to watch you build these boats, mate.

See Ships-on-Deck, Page 4

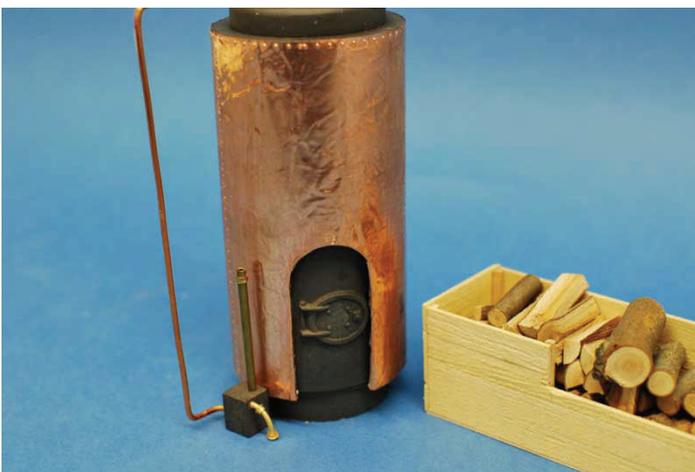
The Forecastle Report, August 2010 - P.4

Ships-on-Deck, continued from Page 3

Kurt Van Dahm has been working out the fine details on his 1:12 model of the *African Queen* and focused this month on her boiler. The kit provided a piece of PVC plumbing pipe for the boiler that required a cut to install the fire door. The top and bottom covers were, unfortunately too small in diameter, so Kurt fashioned his own out of styrene sheet. The copper supplied to cover the boiler was 1/4" too short to fit the circumference of the PVC pipe so he cut new material from a



roll of tooling copper. Rivet heads were simulated using a "Northwest Short Line Railroad" tool that works like a drill press with male/female dies for different size rivets. This operation can also be accomplished using a "Pounce Wheel" tool. Engine parts, such as piston rod, crankshaft, etc., were made of smooth plastic but the real thing would

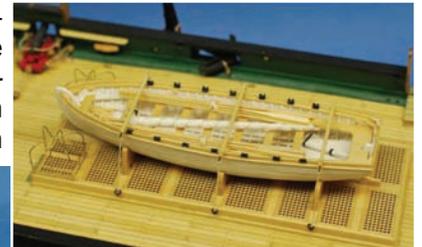


have been made of cast iron. So to duplicate this material, Kurt dabbled on a product called "Mr. Finisher" to get the desired texture of iron. Fire wood was made using actual tree twigs gathered after the last big storm we had. Pays to keep your eye open for "stuff" mates.

As an addendum to Kurt's boiler work, your Editor chanced upon a similar boiler at the Maritime Museum in San Francisco that was used to power a "donkey engine". That subject came up once before, when it was described by Bob Sykes as having been used on his *Charles W. Morgan* to lift the slabs of whale blubber. Isn't it strange how things seem to tie together!



Ken Goetz has finished his 36 ft. pinnacle for his *USS Constitution* and mounted it on its cradles, tied down



with three strongbacks. Oars and a furled sail are included and, eventually, some extra items such as buckets and rope coils will be added.

Now he's working on the 28 ft. whale boat. It's been temporarily suspended from the stern davits to check the tackle setup. Of concern is the "grip", which is a strap to prevent the boat from swinging. Installation of



this was not clearly described, but Ken was advised that the "grip" would have secured the boat tight to the hull. Two more whale boats are now under construction but won't be mounted on their port/starboard davits until most of the rigging is done, so as not to interfere with that work. The final task will be the masting and rigging. What a "meisterstück" this is becoming, mate!



See Ships-on-Deck, Page 5

The Forecastle Report, August 2010 - P.5

Ships-on-Deck, continued from Page 4

Jim Merritt is putting the finishing touches on his 1:54 *Yacht Mary* by "Mamoli". He has the anchors mounted, running rigging installed, sails added and now he will start work on the rat lines. This job was postponed to the last so as not to create an interference with the installation of the running rigging - great idea, there! Sails were made from "designer velum" that were sprayed a tan color, with a thanks to Gus for adding the Lion Decoration on the top sail. Beautiful results, mate!



Gus Agustin has put launching flags on his 1:192 model of *HMS Resolution* - 1667 in preparation for its transport to the U.S. Naval Academy Museum at Annapolis, MD, where it will be on loan for an extended period.

Looks to us like this is a great honor for Gus and a nice boost for the Club to have one of our members asked to provide a display for our nation's Naval Academy. Nice going, Gus. We know you'll miss your creation but she is in great company where she's going.



● Historic Tug Boats ●

By John Mitchell

Those of you who have traveled to San Francisco recently have undoubtedly had the pleasure, as I did in July, of visiting the San Francisco Maritime Museum. If you haven't been there, let me heartily recommend it to you.



As part of the west coast's maritime history, it seems that tug boats played a big roll in the early part of the 20th century. On display at the museum is the steam tug *Hercules*. The 151-foot ship, of riveted steel construction, was powered by a triple expansion steam engine. Built on the East Coast in 1907, she towed her sister ship *Goliath* from Camden, NJ around South America to San Francisco. *Hercules* towed barges, sailing ships and log rafts between pacific ports. Because prevailing NW winds generally made travel up the coast by sail both difficult and circuitous, tugs often towed large sailing vessels to points north of San Francisco. On trips back down the coast, *Hercules* often towed huge log rafts, laden with millions of board feet of NW timber, to Southern California mills. She worked until 1962 and was acquired for the San Francisco Maritime State Historic Park in 1975. In 1986 she was designated a National Historic Landmark.¹

But not all tugs were so fortunate. Witness the tug I saw at Gold Beach, OR on the Rogue River; A sad end for a hard-working boat.



¹ San Francisco Maritime Museum National Historic Park; <http://www.nps.gov/safr/historyculture/hercules-history.htm>

Scuttlebutt, continued from Page 1

In memory - **Dan Dorcy**, 83, long time member of the *Nautical Research & Model Ship Society of Chicago* and a professional model builder passed away July 30, 2010. Dan had attended a few of the earlier *Tri-Club* meetings but had not attended in recent years. He was one of the original members of the NRMSS when it was revived after WWII.

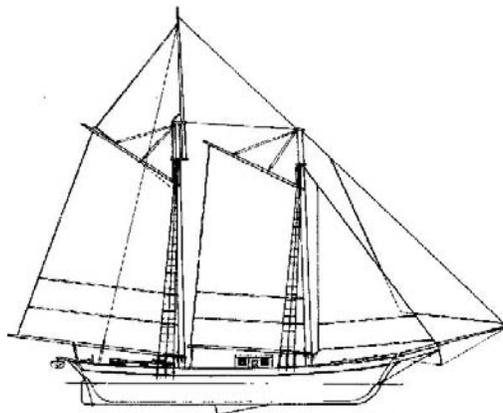
Dan got some of our members started as professional modelers when he ran the model shop at Helmut Jahn's architectural firm. Dan had previously managed the All Nations Hobby Shop in downtown Chicago, was a lifelong model builder and operated Dorcy Models (a commercial model shop) until shortly before his death.

A memorial service was held at Dan's home on Sunday, August 1, 2010.

Kurt Van Dahm



John R. Mitchell, Editor
2011 N Charter Point Dr. • Arlington Hts., IL 60004



Forecastle Report

Newsletter of the Midwest Model Shipwrights
www.midwestmodelshipwrights.com