



Forecastle Report

Newsletter of the Midwest Model Shipwrights ♦ www.midwestmodelshipwrights.com ♦ August 2011

● Scuttlebutt ●

COMMODORE **Gus Agustin** opened the meeting at 7:30 sharp with 18 hands present, our crew having been reduced somewhat by heat and/or holidays. Those present were hearty and enthusiastic. Newsworthy items shared with the group were:

- The tours offered at the NRG conference on 21 August are closing out so you need to take action, if you are attending and haven't signed up yet

- The entry fee for the 2011 Tri Club Symposium scheduled for 15 October will remain at \$20.00. A real bargain for a great day of shared modeling knowledge, camaraderie, and a fine lunch with all your mates.

We have become aware of the fact that our articles and program write ups over the last two months failed to mention the Manitowoc contest accomplishments of two of our sterling members: **Kurt Van Dahm** and **Steve Wheeler**.



We would like to correct this oversight by applauding the **Gold Medals** won by Kurt for his model of the *African Queen* and by Steve for his model of a *Pierce Engine*.



Nice going, mates.

Kudos were given by Gus to the *Tampa Bay Ship Model Society* for the fine job being done by them in their modeling and newsletter excellence. We are happy to be exchanging our Forecastle Report with them.

We were happy to have **Paul Pollowy** back among us again after an extended illness. We wish him a full recovery and many happy years of modeling to come.

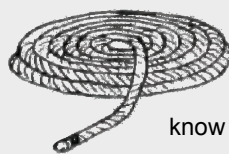
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August Meeting Notice

Modeling Rope Coils

By Bob Filipowski



Here is one of those details we all would like to add to our model to enhance deck appearance but are reluctant to make because we don't know the proper techniques.

If your rope coils don't look just right and you would like to improve on your ability to create that authentic look, then you need to attend this meeting to learn Bob's secrets.

Our next meeting will be at 7:15 p.m. Wednesday,
August 17, 2011
At the Community Presbyterian Church
407 Main Street in Mount Prospect

HMS Leopard

By Gus Agustin

How did Gus do this? And at that scale 1:192. Well, we got the full story, step by step, during an excellent Power Point presentation given by **Gus Agustin**.



Of course, it looked simple when demonstrated by Gus. But, if one listened closely, one could pick up his many references to the close attention to detail and the constant checking of work against plans needed to achieve the

See Leopard, Page 2

The Forecastle Report, August 2011 - P.2

Leopard, continued from Page 1

desired results. This was a project that took many months to complete, having been started in July 2004 and launched in September 2005 after 1000 hours of work.



After first creating detailed concept drawings, Gus began the project by getting 15 sheets of cherry wood from Midwest Products and cutting them into 105 individual sheets of 3/32"x2.5"x3".

Once cut, the sheets were glued together with white glue then the whole block carved to the outer shape of the hull. Sheets were then delaminated and numbered in sequence from bow to stern.



Each sheet was then hollowed out to the inner hull shape before being glued back together. Lower hull frame spacing was created by cutting off frame sections.

The upper hull was then planked with boxwood using 1700 tree-nails.

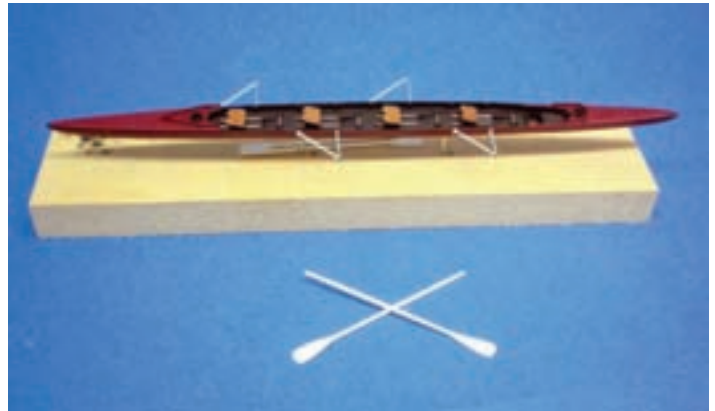


Thanks, Gus, for giving us a glimpse of your special techniques and for inspiring us to try it ourselves. This was a very enjoyable evening.



● Ships on Deck ●

Paul Pollowy brought in his *4-man plus coxswain rowing scull* (1:48) to show that he did make progress despite being sidelined by health issues. Paul's description of the



work he was able to do from a sick bed gave inspiration to us all. He has applied the oar outriggers and made the oars (sweeps/sculls), leaving only some small details to finish the project. Great looking results, mate.

Allen Siegel has been busy working on the rigging of the cannons aboard his 1:48 *Fair American* brig and they look very realistic. Allen



says it's his first attempt at this job, but the results look very accomplished. While the breach lines were easy to rig, the gun tackle was another matter. At the 1/4" scale, the small size of the tackle blocks made the work very difficult. "Never again!" ..says Allen.

Kurt Van Dahm's *Tug Lackawanna* (1:96) shows great progress with the pilot house in place, complete with interior details, the masts made up and the smoke stacks ready to mount. Yet to be made are the black and brass name boards that go on the stacks as well as a steam whistle on one and steam pipes behind each.



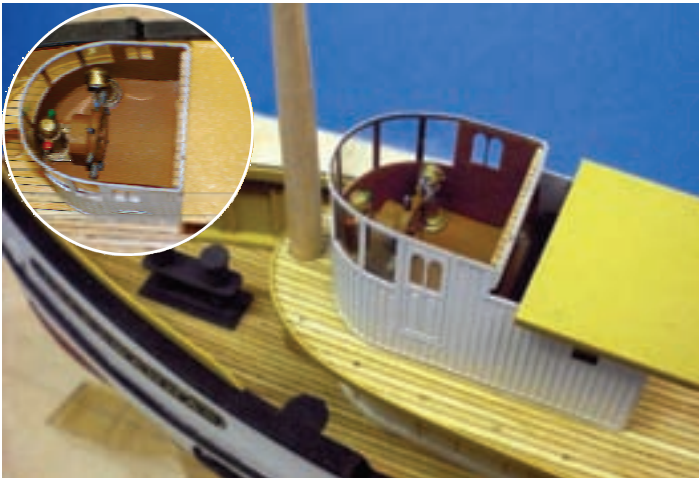
See Ships-on-Deck, Page 3

The Forecastle Report, August 2011 - P.3

Ships-on-Deck, continued from Page 2

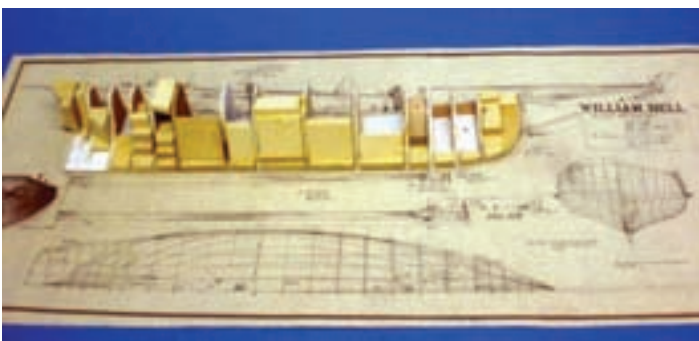
Once mounted, the stacks will be rigged down to the deck.

The pilot house interior includes the ship's wheel, a binnacle and an engine room telegraph. Despite the fact that once the pilot house roof is mounted you will not be able to see the interior details all that well, Kurt says.. "I just had to do it".



Trim, steps and rails are all that remain to be done on the upper decks. Kurt will add another layer of simulated canvas (parchment paper) to the cabin roofs, as he was not happy with the single layer added so far. The kit manufacturer will, as will we all, be overjoyed with your final results, mate.

Peter Pennigsdorf is working on his "Training" half hull of the *William Bell #24 New York Pilot Boat*, which is being constructed in a rather unique fashion. This boat was built in 1864 and was captured and burned by the Confederate Navy that same year, so she had a short life.



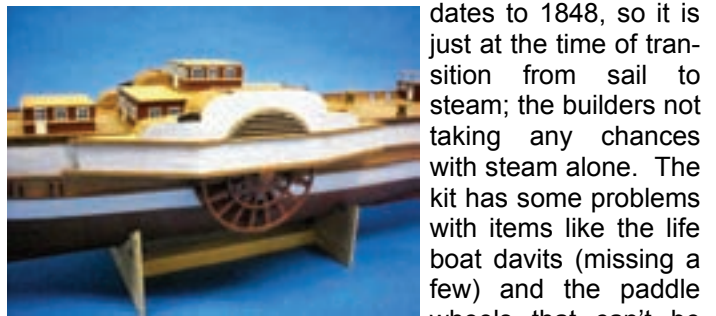
Peter's plan is to build the hull using bulkheads and then fill in the spaces with wood, after which he will plank over the hull. Sounds simple but it does have its pitfalls.

Using balsa wood as filler creates a problem when the soft balsa develops dents or valleys. This leads to uneven plank runs. A better choice for Peter was the use of a product called "Jellutong" (spelling?), which is easy to carve but retains its shape better than balsa or basswood.

Bob Sykes is well along on his 1:100 scale model of the French Navy steam/sail ship *L'Orenoque* by "Mamoli".



This is a very unusual type of vessel, having both steam driven paddlewheel as well as sail propulsion. The ship



dates to 1848, so it is just at the time of transition from sail to steam; the builders not taking any chances with steam alone. The kit has some problems with items like the life boat davits (missing a few) and the paddle wheels that can't be drilled into but otherwise "a nice kit". Bob says it has a lot more on it than what we see here, meaning a lot of railings, masts, etc., so be prepared to be amazed next month when we see the final results.

Ken Wallenberg spent the last several months patiently working on his miniature model of the *USS Constitution*. The hull is made of oak, the sails of brass, the masts L-cota Bamboo and the flags of aluminum foil.



See Ships-on-Deck, Page 4

The Forecastle Report, August 2011 - P.4

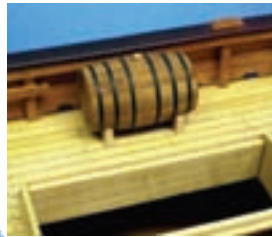
Ships-on-Deck, continued from Page 3

The Lucite case came from "The Container Store" and has the advantage of a hinged door for cleaning access. A really fine result, mate. She's a beauty.



Helmut Reiter has nearly completed the hull on his 1:48 Tartane *Gemma* and has started work on the rigging.

One highlight was that he is now able to turn out barrels with ease, following the technique he described last month, and they look very realistic.



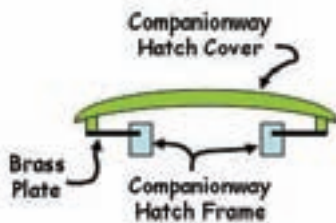
Work on the bowsprit is complete and features a rather



unconventional dolphin striker, which was sawn to shape from brass.



To make the companionway hatch cover slide open, Helmut cut small grooves into the hatch frame and then fastened thin brass strips to the bottoms of the hatch cover rails so they would just engage into the slots. The brass strips remain invisible but he got the desired action.



One mystery explained: The "springboard" out the front of his base plate is to protect the bowsprit from damage—a very heads up move. As with all of Helmut's work, this one is turning out to be a thing of beauty.

Bob Filipowski has completed the components for the hatch covers with hatch framing all in place on his 1:64 scale model of the schooner *Arrowsic*.



The hatch covers will all be removable and may be displayed stacked on deck, depending on how that will look. All that remains in this area is to plank the deck - a project we're all eagerly waiting to see, mate.



Gus Agustin is in the process of creating another "meisterstück" in his ca 1760 model of the HMS *Bellona*. Gus's description of his progress is: "Bow is almost completed - working on stern - windows are etched brass, while the scroll work on the rail is lace".



What we see here is the upper half of a two part hull being built up separately. The lower and upper half of the hull will be displayed separated so the viewer will be able to see all the details on the lower deck.



The photo at left shows the mullioned windows out of photo etched brass sheet and the stern balcony scroll work out of lace material. Stern head board is hand carved and will be gilded. Lettering on the stern was done on his computer. Fascinating

work, mate.

The Clipper Ship *Torrens*

By
Bob Filipowski

I recently obtained some vintage postcards that feature the clipper ship *Torrens*. Three examples are featured in this article. I have to admit that I had never heard of the vessel, so I did some research on the Internet. As it turned out, she was a very famous ship.

Among the almost innumerable list of Sunderland-built sailing vessels, this one stands out as being the most fa-



mous of them all. She was launched in October, 1875, by James Laing's Deptford shipyard, and was the last full-rigged composite passenger clipper to be built.

Constructed with iron frames and teak planking, the 1,335 tonner was designed to carry emigrants from England to South Australia and return home with wool and other produce. Flores Angel, daughter of the ship's first master and part owner, Captain Henry Robert Angel, performed the launching ceremony. A striking figurehead, modeled on Flores, was carved by sculptor, Joseph Melvin.

Torrens entered service as flagship of the Elder Line,



leaving Plymouth on December 12, 1875, for her maiden voyage to Adelaide, which was completed in 85 days.

She was regarded as a beautifully modeled ship, with splendid sea keeping qualities. In light airs, when other vessels were practically becalmed, *Torrens* was able to glide along at several knots.

As Commodore of the Elder Line, Captain Angel flew his own ensign from *Torrens*' masthead; this being a white flag with a crescent and two stars. Other members of the Elder fleet flew a similar house flag with a red background.

Captain Angel made 15 voyages between Plymouth and Port Adelaide, averaging an unequalled 74 days for the outward passage. He also established a record-breaking 64 days for the passage, once sailing 336 miles in 24 hours.

On his retirement in 1890, Angel was succeeded by Captain W.H. Cope, who made six return voyages to Adelaide. On his first passage, a mid-Atlantic squall resulted in *Torrens* sustaining major damage, forcing her to put into Pernambuco, Brazil, for repairs. She finally arrived in Adelaide, 179 days after leaving London.

Between 1891 and 1893, the famous Polish novelist, Joseph Conrad, served as chief officer on two return voyages.

Captain Falkland Angel (son of Henry Robert) took over command in 1896 and completed six passages between London and Adelaide, the last two coming close to disaster. In 1899, the vessel struck an iceberg near the Crozet Islands in the southern Indian Ocean, losing her foretopmast, jib boom, bowsprit and figurehead.* The second photo in this article features the damage that was sustained.

In 1903, while returning from Adelaide, she loaded explosive ordnance (remnants from the Boer War) from St Helena.

While under tow in the Thames, she collided with another vessel. Fortunately, the explosives did not ignite, and she was not badly damaged.

Afterwards, she was sold to Italian owners and was eventually scrapped by Genoese ship breakers in 1910. The third photo shows the *Torrens* under the Italian flag.

*In 1973, an Australian National Antarctic Research team discovered a headless figurehead of a woman on Macquarie Island (south-west of New Zealand). Researchers believe this is the figurehead lost by *Torrens* in 1899. It was later taken to the Queen Victoria Museum in Launceston, Tasmania.

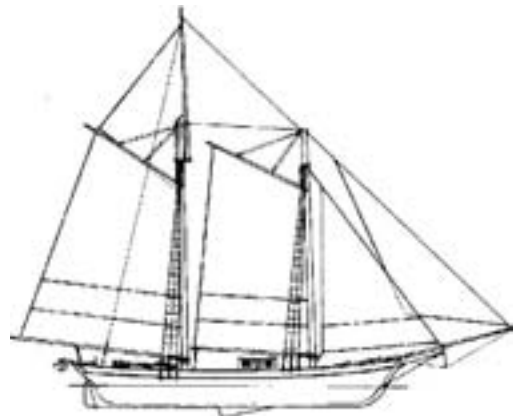
For those who are interested, plans and an "Anatomy of the Ship" book featuring this clipper ship can be purchased on the Internet.

Bob Filipowski





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