



# Forecastle Report

Newsletter of the Midwest Model Shipwrights ♦ www.midwestmodelshipwrights.com ♦ December 2014

## ● Scuttlebutt ●

**COMMODORE, Bob Filipowski**, opened the November 2014 meeting promptly at 7:15 with a crew of 31 on deck.

Guest, **Ed Morris**, was introduced and said he will join the club to help get his new hobby off and running.



We met this night for the last time in the Presbyterian Church, as a change in the church's scheduling has necessitated our finding a new home. It has been 14 years and one month since the club first met here and so we now move on with a certain feeling of nostalgia but with hope for what the future will bring.

Bob presented the members with all the information on the newly selected meeting site, chosen to allow us to continue holding our meetings on the third Wednesday of each month (see p. 3).



Elections will be held in December and all of the current officers and staff, with the exception of Flag Captain, have volunteered to continue serving for another year. If anyone would like to volunteer to take the post of Flag Captain, please let **Bob Filipowski** know. We need members to get involved in the running of our club and this is an excellent opportunity for someone to do just that.



It's that time again to pay your dues for next year. As ever, your \$20.00 buys you a lot of good things: 12 months of *Forecastle Report*, significant learning experiences, the camaraderie of a great crew with whom to share your love of the hobby, and a year-end party to wrap it all up. Enough said! Please bring your check, made out to "Midwest Model Shipwrights", or cash to the December meeting or mail your check to our Treasurer, **Allen Siegel**, at **843 Bryant Ave, Winnetka, IL 60093**... Thanks, mates.

Another thing to think about is what topics you would like to see presented at our meetings in the coming year. If you have any ideas, please let **Bob Filipowski** know, so he can begin lining up our schedule for 2015.

See "Scuttlebutt", Page 3

### 2013 OFFICERS & STAFF

President (Commodore)	-	Bob Filipowski.....	(847) 394-0757
Vice Pres (Flag Captain)	-	Paul Pollowy .....	(847) 298-0563
Treasurer (Ship's Purser)	-	Allen Siegel .....	(847) 446-7248
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## December Meeting Notice

### Pizza Party & Flea Market



The end of another great modeling year will be celebrated by all with plenty of pizza, sodas galore, and a really great flea market.

Members may bring in their latest project to show plus we'll have another raffle of items from the Bob Johnson estate. And we'll ring in the new year in a new home base, too. What could be better?

Our next meeting will be at 7:15 p.m.

Wednesday, December 17, 2014

At: **The South Church**

501 S. Emerson Street, Mount Prospect

## ● NRG Conference Review ●

*By Bob Filipowski*

From the city of the big arch (St. Louis) Bob returned with a great set of photos of everything from the river tour aboard a paddle-wheeler to the many fascinating models that were on display at the conference. Since Bob already covered the "social" events last month, we will devote this space to a look at the unique models that were shown.



First and foremost were the models made by our own attending members.

**Gus Agustin** provided one of the finest miniatures to be seen anywhere in the form of his 1:192 model of the HMS *Royal William* c. 1719, which he just launched this past September. He also showed his *Royal Yacht*.



**Ken Goetz** got right into the spirit of things down on the river by showing his re-named paddle-wheeler *Valmeyer Belle*. She was a real standout.

See "NRG", Page 2

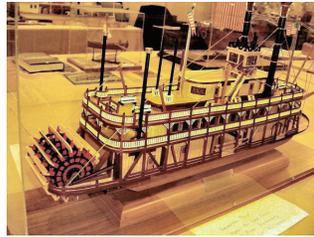
## The Forecastle Report, Dec. 2014 - P.2

"NRG", continued from Page 1

**Bob Filipowski** was not to be outdone by any means with his showing of his beautifully built model of a *Pinky Schooner*, bashed a bit from the original to great effect and including a scratch-built fishing dory.



**Steve Wheeler's** model of a *Colorado River Row Boat* has been a winner where ever it is seen and no wonder - Steve's attention to the smallest detail reaches the highest levels of the modeler's skill.



*The Valmeyer Belle*

The riverboat theme was also followed by **Kurt Van Dahm** with his meticulously built "Model Shipways" kit of the sternwheeler *Chaperon*. Plenty of embellishments made this example truly authentic.



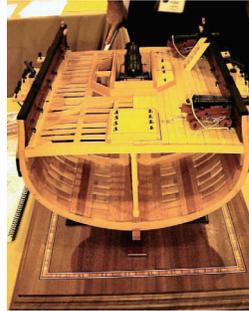
**Bill Maxwell's** scratch-built model of *HMS Fly* is being built with great patience that is achieving for him a truly beautiful result.



**Toni Levine** (Tri-Club) has built the quintessential model of the US Schooner *Hannah* c. 1775. Her efforts not only are fine to look at but it also won her a prize in the 2011 NRG Photo Contest.



**Toni Levine** also built this fine example of the *English Longboat*.



Hull cross sections were a popular subject and here is one done up to a very high level of detail. This example of a bomb vessel had a naval mortar installed with a very accurate swivel mounting base showing fine attention to historic detail.



Demonstrating the next level of modeling technology, this *Panair XX-P* was made by Pat Mathews using a 3D printer. It was truly amazing what could be accomplished with a PC.

Nice job on a Bluejacket kit of the side-wheeler *Portland* nicely showed transitional ship development.



What would a model boat show be without a Great Lakes freighter. This example was particularly well done.

Fully rigged models were there, too, and this one of the *HMS Ardent* c. 1764, was extremely well executed. The attractive base added to its overall beauty.



# The Forecastle Report, Dec. 2014 - P.3

"Scuttlebutt", continued from Page 1

**Kurt Van Dahm** gave a run down on current **NRG** news together with the information that it will be necessary to raise the dues by \$10.00 next year, in order to meet increasing costs to publish the Journal. The good news was that, if you sign up for 2 years NOW, you can get the membership for \$76.00 - a real bargain.

Next year's NRG Conference will be held at the *Mystic Seaport*, CT on October 22 to 24. Sounds like a great event featuring a lot of nautical points of interest.

**Kurt** has found an excellent new paint primer: "Badger" *Stynylrez*, 4oz for \$12.79. Says it can't be beat.

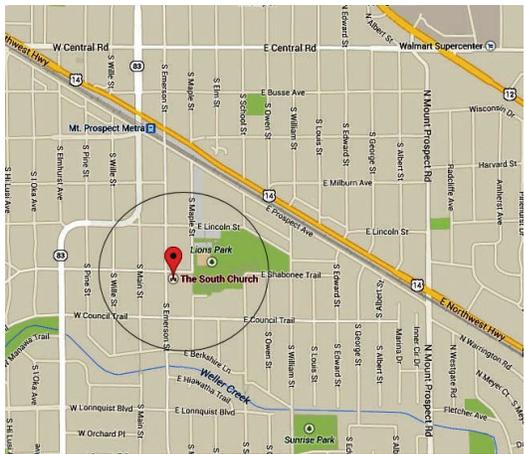
**Steve Wheeler** won a prize at the recently held Butch O'Hare Chapter of the IPMS show. Nice going, mate!

July 24, 2015, will mark the 100th anniversary of the Eastland Disaster. The history of this event can be found on the web at [www.eastlandmemorial.org](http://www.eastlandmemorial.org).



If you were not at the October meeting and did not sign up for the pizza you wanted, you will need to call **Bob Filipowski** and let him know that you will attend the December meeting and what kind of pizza you would like. If you don't, there may not be enough pizza to go around. Likewise, if you did sign up and now find you can't attend, let Bob know as well.

For those of you lacking GPS in your car, here is a map to help you locate our new meeting site in December.



You can also find the location on MapQuest at: **The South Church, 501 S. Emerson St., Mt. Prospect, IL.**

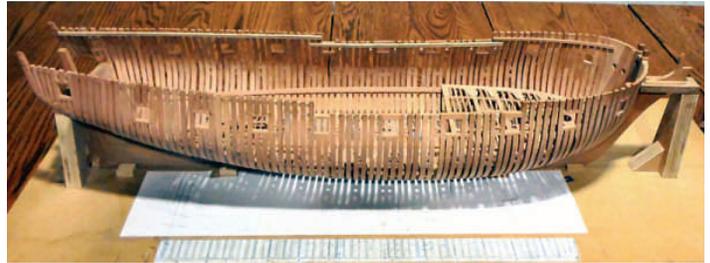
Photos of the actual site are below. Enter through the lower basement door, down the ramp, as shown in the photo at the right.

See you all there.



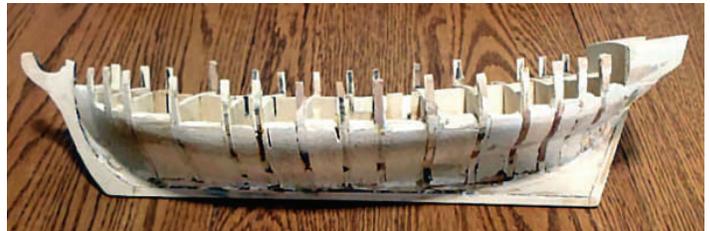
## ● Ships on Deck ●

**Helmut Reiter** has completed the framing on his 1:48 model of *Pegasus* and has started work on the lower



deck. Helmut's plan is to leave off some of the upper decking to permit viewing the lower deck. Now's the time to see his entire effort down below. Beautiful workmanship, as ever, mate.

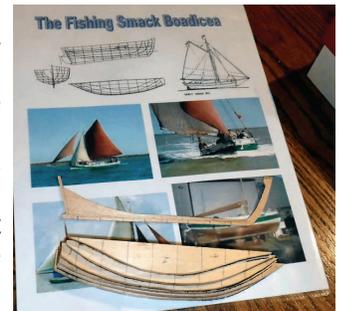
**Sid Wotman** has his 1:48 model of the "Model Shipways" *Fair American* down to the final shaping and sanding phase. Work is also being done to set up the rudder post and associated hardware. Can't wait to see her planked.



**Bob Sykes** has just about finished the hull on his 1:75 "Corel" model of the French *La Mirage* and he's done it so well it looks scratch-built. Our hats off to Bob, not only for his industry but also for the high level of finish he achieves. Nice going, mate.



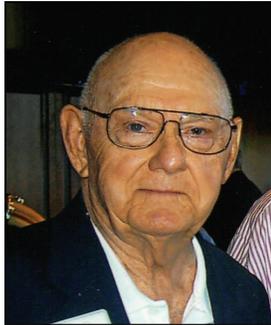
**John Mitchell** is scratch-building the English fishing smack *Boadicea* at 1:60 scale using the frame-over-plug construction method. Plans found on the web were scaled on a PC and used to cut out lifts to form the plug just like his recent rowboat project.



## Bob Johnson

September 23, 1926 - November 25, 2013

One of the more disconcerting aspects of our club is the fact that we are made up primarily of senior citizens. Consequently, it is not uncommon for a member to stop attending meetings, with no further contact forthcoming. We often fear the worst, but rarely know for sure.

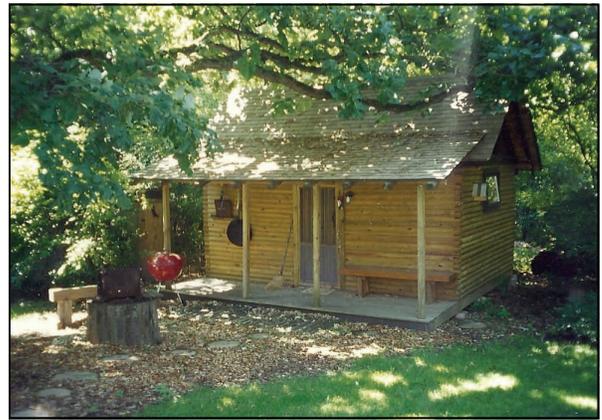


Until recently, this was the case with longtime member Bob Johnson. Our records only go back to 2003, but they indicate that Bob was a member until we lost touch with him in 2013. Bob passed away in November of that year.

I have to admit that I really didn't know a lot about Bob, but that would change when I received an email from Linda Kraus, Bob's daughter. She indicated that her mother, Dorothy, wanted to donate some of Bob's model ship building supplies to our club. A few days later, I met with Linda and her mother, and I was so impressed by their graciousness and hospitality.



I learned that Bob Johnson was a remarkable man, and a prolific model ship builder. This latter aspect was evidenced by the many models that his wife showed me. Linda Kraus' pride and joy was the *Hector*, a scratch-built model of the ship that her mother's ancestors came to Nova Scotia in. Attached, is a photo of Bob working on this model.



Without a doubt, the most fascinating aspect of Bob's hobby was "The Cabin." This structure resided at the back of his property, and was the ultimate "Man Cave."



Constructed with landscape timbers, it was the scene of numerous card games, family cookouts, and many days and evenings working on his models. It lacked insulation, which forced Bob to move his modeling activities back to the house during the coldest months of the year. Never the less, this is where he spent most of his time, surrounded by personal mementos. Two noteworthy photos featured Bob with Terry Bradshaw and Jonathan Winters.

The man's sense of humor was also quite evident. Bob built a dummy out-house next to the cabin, which actually was a storage shed. It had me fooled, and I had to ask his wife about it, which made her laugh!



Bob Johnson is no longer with us, but we will be remembering him throughout 2015. An item used by Bob to build his models will be raffled off at every meeting during the coming year. Our sincere condolences go out to the Johnson family, and we thank Dorothy Johnson for her generous gift.

*Bob Filipowski*

*The Royal Navy Fireship*

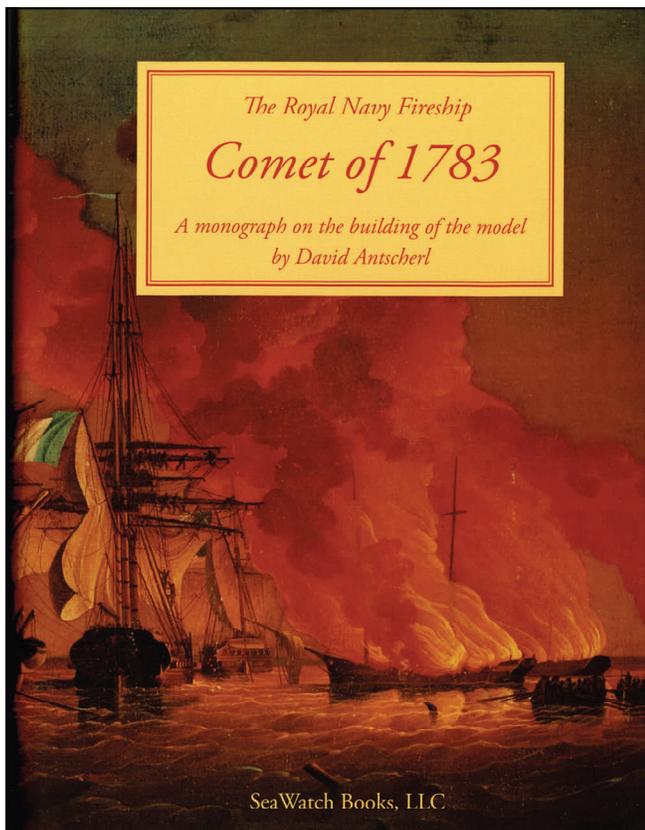
# *Comet of 1783*

**A monograph on the building of the model**

**by David Antscherl**

Distributed by: Sea Watch Books, LLC, Florence, Oregon  
[www.seawatchbooks.com](http://www.seawatchbooks.com), [seawatchbooks@gmail.com](mailto:seawatchbooks@gmail.com)

**D**avid Antscherl's newest book, "The Royal Navy Fireship *Comet* of 1783" is unique in many respects.



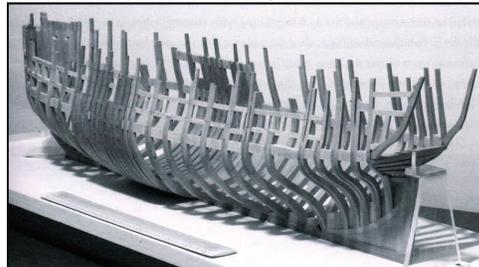
First and foremost is the subject itself. This may be the first work dedicated to this class of vessel, a type highly misunderstood by most modelers and history buffs. In the introduction, the author provides a brief operational history of the *Comet*, the men who commanded her, and the ship's ultimate fate. It's interesting to note that several of these individuals would achieve the rank of captain, and command ships-of-the-line.

In addition to this vessel's unique mission and design as a fireship, the author discusses the fine lines *Comet* and her eight sister ships possessed. *Comet* was especially handsome with decorative quarter galleries and painted friezes on her counters.

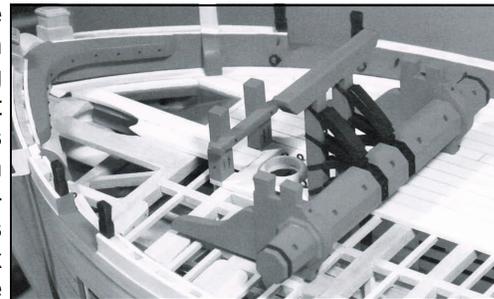


Another unique aspect of this work is that you will not find it to be a stand-alone, from-the-keel-up, how-to, book. The author explains as much in the preface. Mr. Antscherl states that it would have been redundant to describe in detail the construction of this sixth-rate, when the information is available in his previous treatise, *The Fully Framed Model, HMN Swan Class Sloops 1767-1780*. Rather, this monograph is considered an adjunct to FFM, and concentrates on aspects peculiar to *Comet*, as well as modeling techniques not covered in the author's previous work.

As a result, a prelude to Chapter 1 fast forwards the reader to a point where the model is fully framed, and the middle deck and hull are planked over. Proper built frames only appear amidships. The rest of the hull is composed of half frames. However, there are 6 plans provided with this book that will supply you with enough information to build a fully framed model.



Chapter 1 discusses the fire deck, a place unlike any you may have ever encountered. The forward two thirds of this area is dominated by the fire room, which the author describes as a "huge incendiary device." Fascinating details include fire ports with exploding chambers that cause the ports to swing down when they detonate. There is also a complex gridwork of fire troughs, fire barrels, and hawse chutes peculiar to this class of fireships.



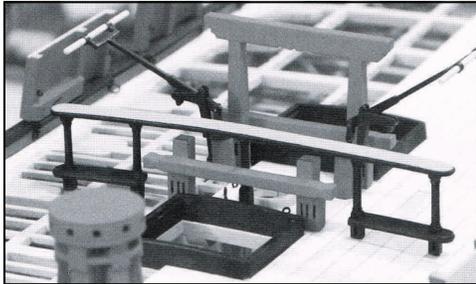
The second chapter is devoted to weather deck details. Again, unique features abound. Most notable is the continuous deck that lacks any type of break, a massive 16-foot windlass located aft of the foremast, and the placement of the gunports for the fourteen 18-pounder carronades. This chapter concludes with an informative note on fixing bolts without the use of glue.

The next segment discusses the lower counters and tafferel, an area that might have most modelers thinking twice about taking on such a project. However, the author's method for painting the friezes will have you thinking otherwise. It's interesting to note that the same technique, suggested by Antscherl, has been discovered on contemporary models.

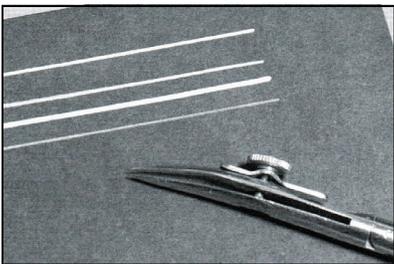
*Continued on page 6.*

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The next two chapters cover bulwarks, decks, and deck fittings. Antscherl's procedures for drilling the scupper holes and configuring the fixed bulwark blocks is noteworthy. As stated earlier, *Comet's* weather deck does not have a break at the quarterdeck. Never-the-less, a rail existed that created a division, and also served as a location for the main brace bits — another peculiar aspect of this sixth rate.



In chapters six and seven, the outer bulwarks are addressed, with a considerable number of interesting techniques and subassemblies being described. They include discussions on the fire ports, sheer rails, carronade mounts, trail board carvings, channels and the considerable amount of ironwork employed on this part of the ship. *Comet* had pin striping bordering certain painted areas. The author's use of a *bow pen* to duplicate this ornamentation is just another one of the many innovative ideas found throughout this book.



The next chapter deals with the headwork, which includes two sets of gammoning (an unusual feature for a vessel this size), the lower head rail, seats of ease, and those pesky head timbers. The author points out that



temporary assembly and disassembly of various components was done repeatedly. He offers a 10-point sequence of assembly for the upper headwork, which can be applied to any vessel of this type from this period.

The next three chapters deal with what, admittedly, makes this a beautiful ship, the quarter galleries, stern gallery, quarter figures and figure head. Swan class sloops did not have quarter galleries, so Antscherl describes their construction in great detail.

Where practical, these complex structures are broken down into layered subassemblies. The author's approach

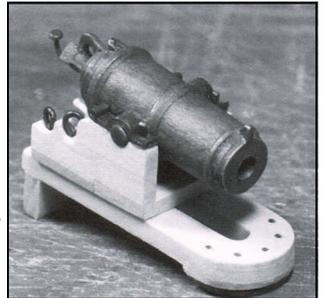
and attention to detail is exemplified while fabricating the gallery roof tiles, which are asymmetrical in shape.

Although carving figures was covered in FFM, David devotes additional effort when describing



his technique for carving the two quarter gallery figures and the figurehead. New procedures, such as the use of a *Maquette*, a study in clay, is outlined. The author feels that this practice can help the modeler visualize the figure more clearly from various angles. Other tips involve the use of a mirror, card templates, and a technique for polishing the completed figures so they resemble those found on contemporary models.

The final chapter deals with armament. *Comet* was one of the first naval ships to be fully armed with carronades. Thus, they were of an early design. The author's research into the type used during that period describes a weapon unique in many ways. He also discusses the shortcomings of this ordinance, and how it posed a threat to the ship itself.



The book concludes with a color section that features eleven photos, and a postscript. This last item describes some features that had not been completed when this book went to press.

One final comment: As stated earlier, the plans provided with this book will give you all the information needed to construct a fully framed hull. However, for further details, draughts must be ordered from the Royal Museums Greenwich's Plans and Photographic Department. The author provides the drawing numbers for *Comet*, as well as other fireships of the period.

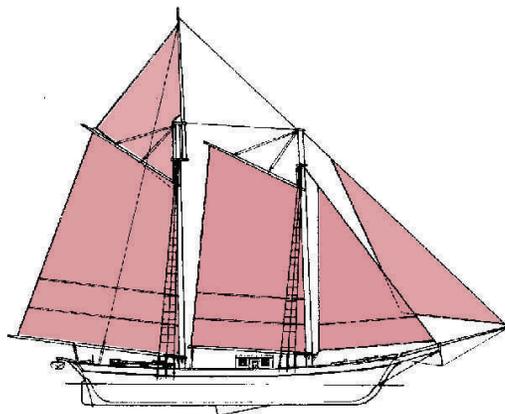
This is a remarkable book that provides the modeler with numerous helpful hints and tips, while providing incite into the design of a most interesting and unique warship. The "Royal Navy Fireship *Comet* of 1783" would be a noteworthy addition to any ship modeler's library. This book is highly recommended.



Reviewed by  
Bob Filipowski



John R. Mitchell, Editor  
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