



# Forecastle Report

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

## ● Scuttlebutt ●

Commodore **Tim Riggs** opened the meeting at 7:30 PM with 22 members present. There being no guests to introduce, Tim called for any announcements or comments from the crew.

**Kurt Van Dahm** advised us that this year's *Tri-Club* meeting would be scheduled during the month of October and return to the "Lutheran Church of the Ascension" in Northfield, IL. Kurt also asked all members to let him know, if they have any ideas for program subjects.

In addition to this event, Kurt also mentioned the 2010 NRG meeting being held this August in Annapolis, MD.

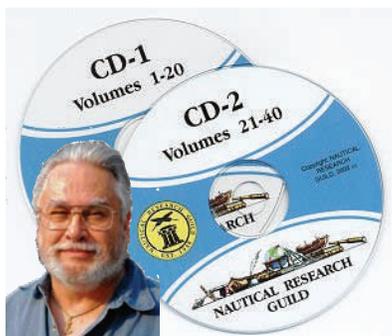
Another event high on Kurt's list is the "Model Ship Display" taking place at the Westmont (Downer's Grove) Library from mid July to 10 August. Kurt put out the request for model loans to populate this display. Give Kurt a call.

**Tim Riggs** brought in two kits for sale, a *NY Pilot Boat* and the *Elsiea Grand Banks Fishing Schooner*. Mates, they sold on the spot! So, if any of you have similar overstocks you'd like to move out of your workshop, bring them in to a meeting and see what happens.

*See Scuttlebutt , Page 5*

## ● NRG CD ●

By Kurt Van Dahm



**Kurt Van Dahm**, a Director of the Nautical Research Guild, Inc. (NRG), gave us an in-depth look at the contents and the methods to locate all the subjects and articles that have appeared in the "Nautical Research Journal" over the Journal's first 40 years as

well as its second 20 years ending with 2005. If you do the math, that would be a span of years from 1945 to

### 2010 OFFICERS & STAFF

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## July Meeting Notice

### TRYWORKS

By Sid Wotman

What is a "Tryworks" and why is it of interest? (cast-iron pots over a brick oven used to render oil from whale blubber).

Questions you may well be asking yourself. Well, if you ever built or ever will build a whaling ship model, this subject is right down your alley.

If this doesn't apply to you, come to the meeting anyway and be entertained by the club's acknowledged whale ship master, **Sid Wotman**, as he gives us, not only a scholarly description of a "Tryworks", but a vivid description of many activities and details on board a whaling ship.

Our next meeting will be at 7:15 p.m. Wednesday,  
June 16, 2010

At the Community Presbyterian Church  
407 Main Street in Mount Prospect

2005. In addition to the information available on the CDs, the NRG also maintains a lending library for its members.

With all these resources available, it makes membership in the NRG very appealing to anyone who likes to do extensive research on his/her modeling projects. Here's another reason to seek membership—the first 40 Years Set of 2 CDs sells for \$109.95 but only \$79.95 for Members. The CD covering Vol. 41-50 sells for the non-member price of \$42.95. The CDs can be purchased from the NRG through their web site at [www.thenrg.org](http://www.thenrg.org), where you can also view sample PDF files.

Each set of disks contains 8,000 pages of ship design information, maritime history, shop notes and the like. The Journals and Letters are complete - every page, article, photograph, illustration, plan, table, letter to the editor and, yes, every advertisement is included. The CD set contains a wealth of nautical research and ship model building information unobtainable anywhere else.

The electronic versions of the Journal and Letter have been organized by volume, just like the printed originals. To simplify looking up articles and references, each volume has been "book marked" so that you can easily navigate from article to article.

Thanks, Kurt, for showing us this great resource.

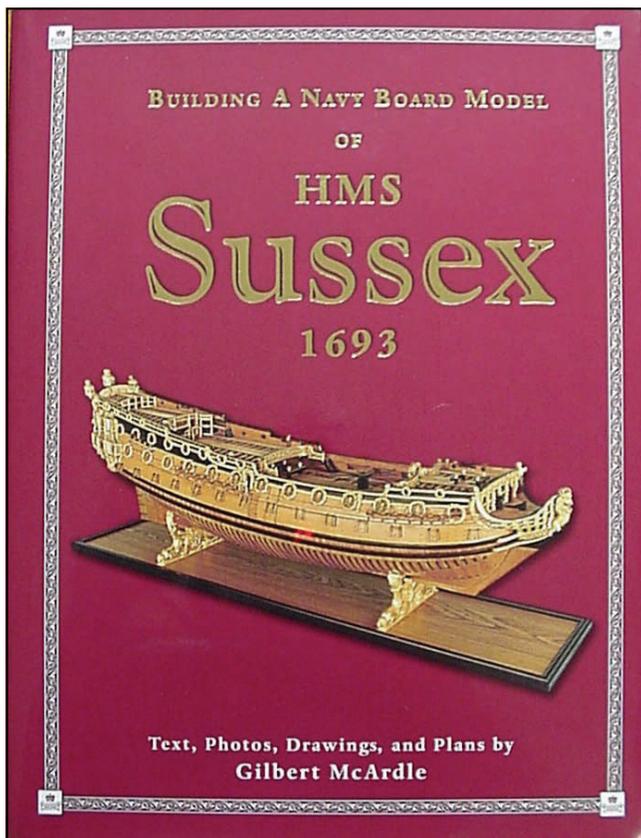
*Building A Navy Board Model  
of  
HMS Sussex  
1693*

By Gilbert McArdle, M.D.

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

For many years now, the English 3rd Rate Ship of the Line, which was the workhorse of the Royal Navy during the 18th and early 19th centuries, has been a popular subject for plans, books, and kits. However, little, if anything, has been devoted to their predecessors, which came into being during the late 17th Century.

Gilbert McArdle's latest work, *Building a Navy Board Model of HMS Sussex, 1693*, offers the model ship



builder an opportunity to construct a truly unique example from this turbulent period in English history.

HMS *Sussex* was one of thirteen 80 gun vessels built during the last decade of the 17th century. Her career would be a short one, less than a year, but her loss would have a far reaching impact on the course of European history. In what would be her first, and last, meaningful voyage, the *Sussex* foundered in a violent storm while escorting a convoy to the Mediterranean.

Research indicates that her Admiral also had a more pressing mission; to pay a large sum of money to the Duke of Savoy for his allegiance to Britain in the war then raging with France. The *Sussex* may have been carrying as much as 10 tons of gold coin in her hold when she sank. It's estimated that this amazing quantity would be valued in the billions today.

A year later, England would make another attempt to ship the money to Savoy - but it was too late. The Duke had supposedly accepted a French offer, and changed sides. His defection would bring the war to an end in a stalemate.

The political ramifications, and loss of such a large sum of money caused the English government to question the stability of the *Sussex* and her sisters. The Admiralty eventually deemed this class too small for the weight of canons they carried, and the building of an additional seven ships was cancelled. McArdle feels that history has misjudged these vessels. *Sussex* was the only ship in the class to be lost in heavy seas, and other 3rd rates built as part of this program served until 1718, which was acceptable for a wooden ship.



Photo by  
Gilbert McArdle



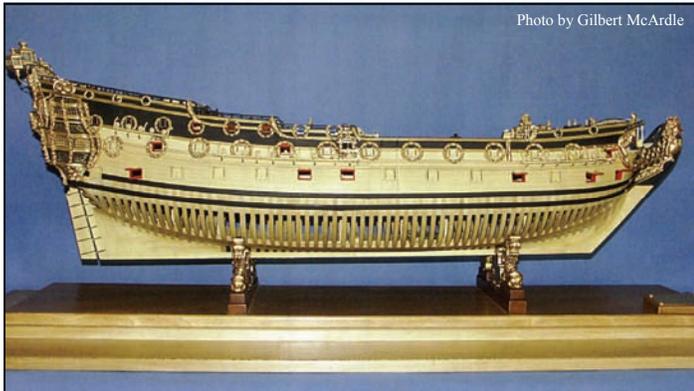
There are a number of things that set *HMS Sussex, 1693* apart from other works. First and foremost is the fact that it was not developed from Admiralty draughts. Mr. McArdle was given access to a contemporary navy board model now on exhibit in the Rogers Collection at the US Naval Academy Museum. He was able to take off the lines and document every detail. Supposition was used only where construction methods were hidden from view. McArdle also points out areas where 300 plus years may have taken it's toll on this elegant model. Supposed missing components are noted, and options for their replacement are offered. The author also states that Navy Board Models did not always reflect actual ship building practice in areas not pertinent to evaluating the characteristics of the proposed vessel. A good example are the rudder's simplified gudgeons and pintles.

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*Sussex*, continued from Page 2

With 265 photos and drawings, needless to say, *HMS Sussex, 1693*, is a well illustrated book. McArdle uses this to good advantage as he describes each segment of his model's construction. In many cases the building of sub-assemblies is brief and to the point. Information includes dimensions, type of material, and any required procedure not evident in the photo or illustration.

Where necessary, McArdle goes into more detail. This is



the case with the unique style of framing, which was a salient feature on navy board models. In spite of the fact that a full set of frame drawings are supplied with the book (more on this later), early illustrations and text describe how the shape of the floor timbers and futtocks are developed from the body plan. In each case, the frame segments are cut oversize by as much as 3/8" inboard and outboard to compensate for their contours going fore and aft. The frames are then assembled, and final shaping takes place.

Arguably, the most challenging areas on a model of this type are the bow and stern. In spite of the stern's complexity, McArdle does a very nice job of breaking down the fabrication of the counters, numerous window assemblies, transom and quarter galleries.

However, it's the bow that offers the greatest challenge.

McArdle states that "It is truly a tangle of three-dimensional in-  
volution." The author does a gallant job of trying to simplify fabrication procedures, and shares his successes as well as failures with the reader.



In fact, throughout the book, McArdle makes every effort to make the builder's task as painless as possible. A good case in point are the many baroque

figures the *Sussex* contains. Unlike his previous models where they were all carved, McArdle's *Sussex* contains resin castings where duplication is feasible. Gun port wreathes are a good example. This saves a substantial amount of time, and once painted, they are indistinguishable from the master.

The book contains two appendices. The first is a reprint of an article, which appeared in the Fall, 2003 issue of the *Nautical Research Journal*. It describes the devices used by the author to take lines off ship models. The second features photos of the Naval Academy Museum model, as well as McArdle's completed *Sussex*.

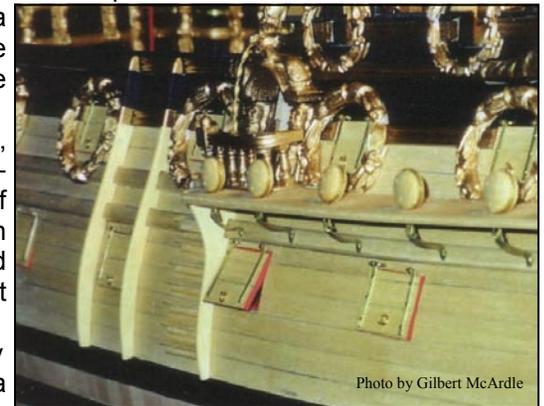
Without a doubt, the "pièce de résistance" of this book, is the companion set of plans, which were created by Gilbert McArdle.

Conveniently stored in a pocket at the

back of the book, fifteen sheets are drawn to a scale of 1:48, while two bonus sheets also depict all the frames at 1:96. Unlike so many "anatomy books", the author and publisher are to be applauded for providing us with plans that are actually useable!

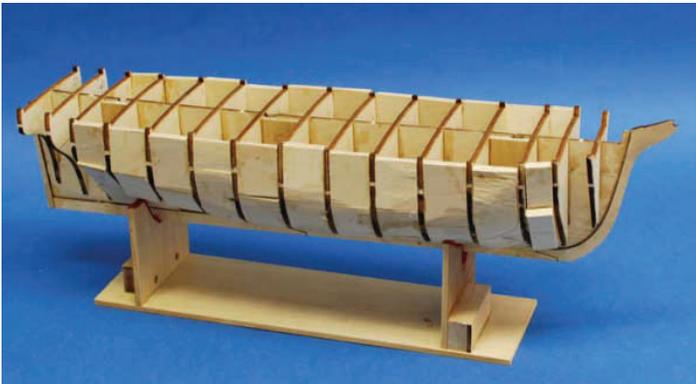
It was noted that *HMS Sussex, 1693* does have some editing issues. On four occasions, references are made to illustrations that have been omitted, and as many incorrect references to figures also occur. In each case, the errors have little impact on one's ability to interpret this book. Gilbert McArdle and Bob Friedman at Sea-WatchBooks, LLC are to be congratulated for providing us with a truly remarkable work about a beautiful and historically important ship, *HMS Sussex*.

*Reviewed by Bob Filipowski*



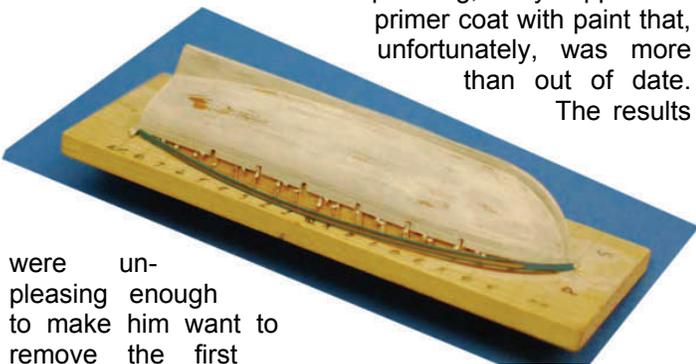
## ● Ships on Deck ●

**Doc Williams** has all the bulkheads in place on his 3/16" scale "Model Shipways" kit of the *Charles W. Morgan* whale ship. To eliminate the problem of planking dips between bulkheads, Doc has placed basswood blocks



between the bulkheads, thus creating a virtual solid hull. Everything will be faired off using thumb planes and rasps to achieve the correct hull shape. In addition to this, he also reinforced the mast footings so that he can eventually fit the masts without the need for glue (makes possible mast replacement, in the event one should break - heaven forbid!). Nice building tips, mate.

**Ray Oswalt** is still working on the 7/32" scale model of the *HMS Bounty's* 23 ft. *Launch*. After completing the planking, Ray applied a primer coat with paint that, unfortunately, was more than out of date. The results



were un-pleasing enough to make him want to remove the first coat. To produce the very finely detailed "rubbing rail", which also needed a thin paint stripe down its middle, Ray cut a groove the length of the strip using his milling machine, filled it with yellow paint and then painted the rest of the strip with a mini-roller. That was the only/best way to get such a small stripe on that size strip of wood. Neat job!



**Kurt Van Dahm** is working on a "Billings" kit of the *African Queen* (1:144), made famous in the movie of the same name. Even though the kit "leaves a lot to be desired", Kurt is going to build it (It's sort of an inherited "family" project), as it is the only kit of this boat known to exist.



Pre-printed sheets of deck planking were replaced by custom cut planks of his own. Kurt is starting to paint and distress the wood details and



vacuum-formed plastic hull, as only he can. Some research is being done to come up with an authentic appearance for a boat which was subjected to the kind of wear and neglect depicted in the movie model. One technique he's been practicing is to first paint areas of the hull with rust then cover that area with rubber cement. After the final paint coat, the cement will be removed to expose the rust area. Should be a ground breaking project, mate. Can't wait to see the result.

As an historical reference to Kurt's project, the *African Queen* (also known as *S/L Livingstone*) was built in 1912 in Lytham, England, for service in Africa on the Victoria Nile and Lake Albert. She was used by the British East Africa Railway from 1912 to 1968 to shuttle cargo and passengers across Lake Albert.

The boat is now on display in Key Largo, Florida and was added to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in 1992.<sup>1</sup>

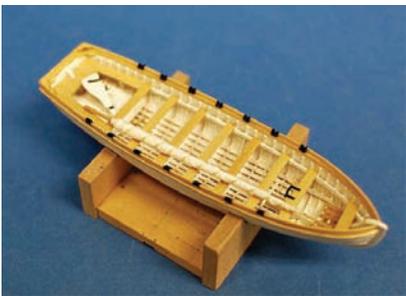
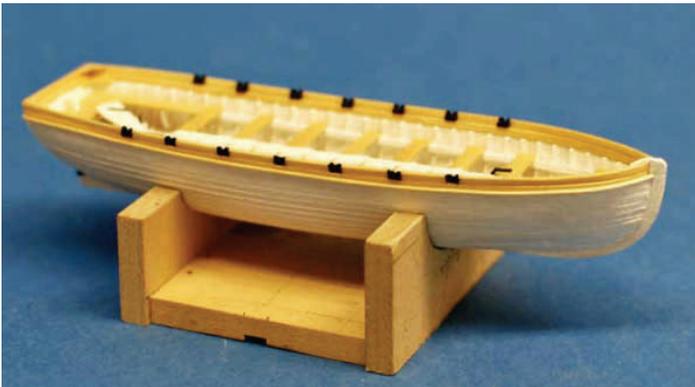
<sup>1</sup> www.wikipedia.org



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*Ships-on-Deck, continued from Page 4*

**Ken Goetz** has focused in on the ship's boats for his *USS Constitution* (1/76" scale, "Model Shipways" kit) and the first example he showed us, the 36' *Pinnace*, was very



neat. From previous meetings we knew this was a "bread and butter" type construction, but the results hid this fact completely. The hull was planked with 1/16 X 1/64 basswood strips and the frames were 1/32 sq styrene

(very clever idea, mate). Thwarts were 1/32 basswood and Ken also added rowlocks, footlings and foot boards. Plans are to have the rudder stowed along with oars and a mast with furled sail. Now he's got the remaining three boats to do, all of which are smaller than the *Pinnace*. Great job on these really fine details, mate.

### **Gus Agustin**

gave us a last look at his 1:384 scale model of the *St. George* (1701) before the 2010 NRG Conference being held in August. He plans on showing her with the launching flags he just added and then will start working on the masts and rigging after returning from Annapolis.

Now "the rest of the story": he made the flags the morning of our meeting. Goes to show you that, once you have a technique down pat, you can do a task with very little effort. There's hope for us all! Best wishes for a successful NRG showing, mate.



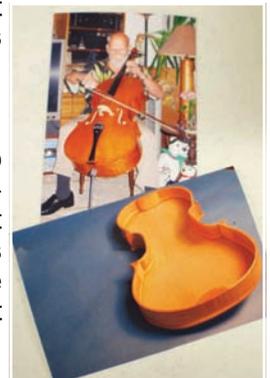
*Scuttlebutt, continued from Page 1*

A two-CD set with all the photos from the Manitowoc show is now available for loan to members. Contact **Bob Filipowski** to borrow this item.

**Kurt Van Dahm** reports that the 28th Annual - IPMS (International Plastic Modeler's Association) "*Butch O'Hare Chapter*" Open Model Contest will be held November 13, 2010 at Lakeview Jr. High School, 701 Plainfield Rd., Downers Grove, IL. Kurt notes that wooden boats have taken Best of Show in recent IPMS contests and that completely wood models now qualify. In fact, all modeling media are acceptable including an all-metal ship, if one were entered. Judged by the "Chicago Rules", the show includes unlimited class awards in Gold, Silver & Bronze Medallions plus Special Awards for distinguished modeling excellence: Best in Show, People's Choice, and Best Use of Creativity in Modeling, among others. Contest entry fees are: \$7—Adult (over 17 yrs) for first 3 models, \$3 for each additional; \$1—Junior (under 17 yrs) for first 6 models, free for each additional. Spectator fees: \$5 Adult, \$1 Junior. A "Traders Room" and Door Prize Raffle are other features. Contact **John Wendt** at 630-969-9016 for registration forms & information:

(jwendt001@comcast.net).

In addition to **Doc William's** ship building talents, we must acknowledge his musical endeavors. Not only does he play the cello but he is building his own violin. We all hope to hear him play a chantey on it soon.



### Around the Horn

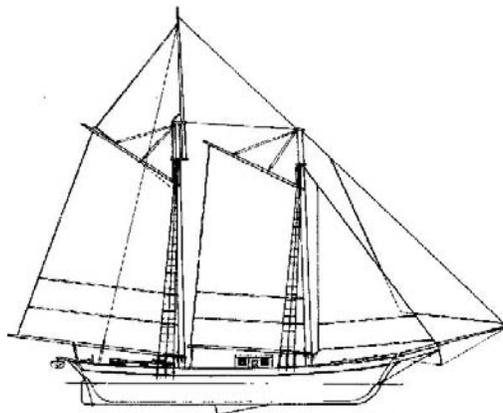


### with the Tri-Club

It's been some time since there was any *Tri-Club* news to bring you, but this month's meeting notice from the Nautical Research & Model Ship Society could be of interest. **Kurt Van Dahm** is going to present a talk on "How to Photograph Your Model" without spending a fortune on equipment. The talk will be geared to using digital cameras. If you missed a similar presentation given at our April meeting on this subject, you may want to take this one in. Meeting topics for NR&MSS in the coming months include Anchors, Types & History; Hulls, solid bow & stern pieces; Sail rigging; Scrapers and, last but not least, the annual December Pizza & Conversation meeting.



John R. Mitchell, Editor  
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