



# Forecastle Report

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

## ● Scuttlebutt ●

Commodore **Tim Riggs** opened the meeting at 7:30 PM with 22 members present.

Our guest for the evening was **Jim Hobbs**, son-in-law to **Bob Filipowski**, who has earned the thanks of the entire club through his contribution of new software needed to continue publishing our newsletter. A special award was presented to recognize his contribution and to make him an honorary member, as well.



The "Wooden Boat Show" being held the 19th of June at the Michigan Maritime Museum in South Haven is said to be well worth the trip. Real and model boats are featured.



To read this notice and download a registration form, go to the museum web site at:

[www.michiganmaritimemuseum.com](http://www.michiganmaritimemuseum.com)

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## June Meeting Notice

### NRG CD DEMO

By Kurt Van Dahm

Everything you ever wanted to know about the *Nautical Research Guild (NRG)* but were afraid to ask, will be revealed in the CD Demo being presented by Kurt Van Dahm. And Kurt, being a Director in the *NRG*, is the man to go to, to find out what's what.

We're sure Kurt's presentation will stimulate some of you to become members of this high-profile group to extend your knowledge and foster your love of ship modeling.

Be sure and join Kurt for this informative evening.

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

## The 34th Annual Midwestern Model Ships and Boats Contest

By Bob Filipowski

Probably, the most anticipated aspect of this year's competition at Manitowoc concerned the tighter point brackets, and how they would affect the number of awards given out at each level. In 2009, the ratio of gold to silver was approximately 5:1. This year's event saw roughly two gold medals awarded for every silver.

This lower ratio was definitely not due to a lessening of quality. In fact, it might be said that the number of first rate entries presented quite a challenge for the judges, as the quantity of excellent models continued its annual upward spiral.

RC models were well represented this year, and the **Chicago Tri-Club Association Best Novice Award** went to a very nice *USS Indiana* by David Richey. The level of detail on this very large model was amazing!

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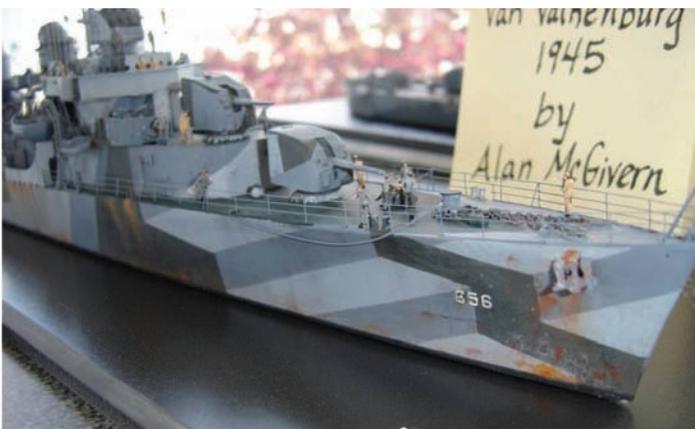
Manitowoc, continued from Page 1



**USS Indiana**

Our three clubs were well represented as Paul Pollowy, Helmut Reiter, Allen Siegel, Robert Jensen and Kurt Van Dahm all received awards. Ken Goetz, although not competing, exhibited his current work in progress, USS *Constitution*.

A recent trend continued as steel warships scored well at this competition. A 1:350 resin kit of the WWII destroyer USS *Van Valkenburg* by Allen McGivern took the **Dana McCalip Best Miniature Award**. The 1945 era



paint job, and excellent use of photo etched parts on this "tin can" were especially noteworthy.

Speaking of good paint jobs, Steve Kohl's USS PCE-877



took the **Badger Airbrush Best Paint Finish Award** and **Best Great Lakes Award**. Although the model is portrayed in late WWII guise, the "877" served as a reserve training ship out of Chicago in the 70's, thus qualifying it for the Great Lakes award.

It would appear that museum attendees were a little more discerning than usual this year since the **People's Choice Award** went to a very nice diorama depicting the Sheboygan Harbor and Shipyard during the 19th century.



It took Jim Brotz, who specializes in Great Lakes vessels, three years to complete this very educational piece.

As has been the case on eight other occasions, Rocky Mountain Shipwright, Steve Wheeler took home the **Best of Show Award**, but it wasn't a "slam-dunk" this year as models like John McGann's remarkable *Die Kogge von Bremen* offered him stiff competition. Steve's Star Class Racing Sloop also earned him the **Modeler's Choice Award**, which certainly is an appropriate testimonial to just how accomplished a modeler he is. Congratulations, mate! ❖



**Die Kogge von Bremen**

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*Manitowoc, continued from Page 2*

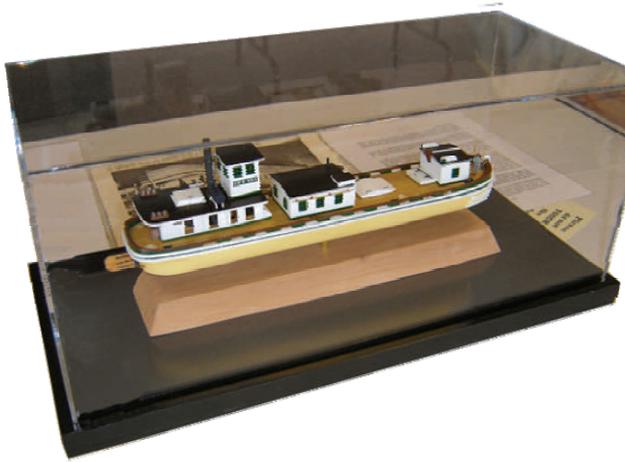
As mentioned earlier, Tri-Club members were well represented in the winner's circle, the following winning gold:

**Helmut Reiter** for his *LaBelle* in the Category I, Scratch-Built, Intermediate B Category.



**Robert Jensen** for his *Flying Cloud* in the Category II, Kit Models, Intermediate Wood category.

**Paul Pollowy** for his *City of Peking*, same category.



**Kurt Van Dahm** for his *Chaperon* in Advanced Category.



Winning Silver in the Category II Kit Models was **Allen Siegel** in the Novice Class with his *Lynx*.



**Ken Goetz** also exhibited his *USS Constitution*, as a work in progress entry (highlighted in our Ships-On-Deck segment).

Congratulations go out to all of our mates who attended this year's show.

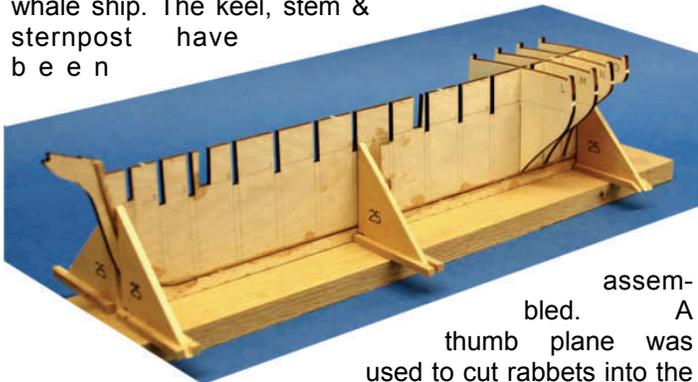
Here are a couple of "Editor's Choice" models:



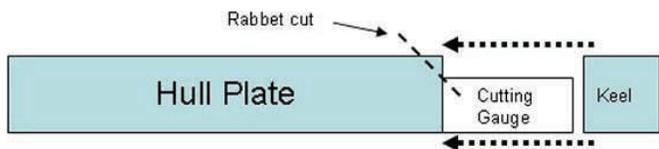
There were many, many more to see on Bob Filipowski's CD, which will be available for loan to any member wanting to borrow it. See Bob at our meeting to arrange the loan.

● **Ships on Deck** ●

**Doc Williams** showed us the start he's made on his 3/16" scale "Model Shipways" kit of the *Charles W. Morgan* whale ship. The keel, stem & sternpost have been



assembled. A thumb plane was used to cut rabbets into the base plate, all of which took only about 30 minutes.



To get the correct cut depth, Doc laid a 1/8" thick strip of wood next to the 3/16" thick hull plate and that gave him a depth gauge for a 1/16"-deep cut. After cutting the rabbets, the keel was attached to the hull plate. Nice solution, mate.

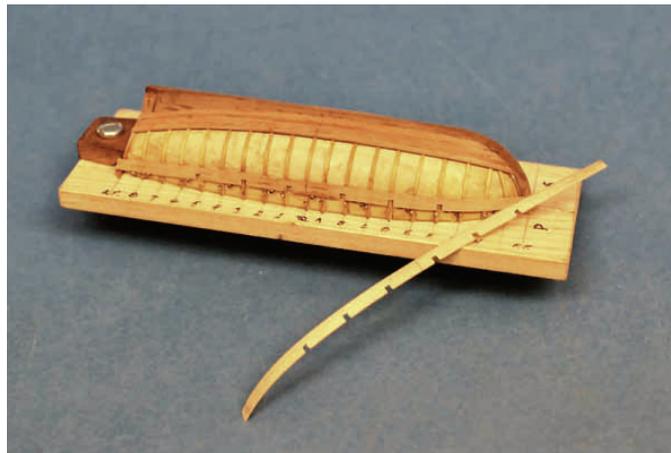
**John Pocus** has started two new busts of Tlingit and Yupik natives in 1:9 scale. The Tlingit Chief is wearing a ceremonial hat that is a killer whale with a mystical creature riding on its back and he is also holding a ceremonial dagger. The second is a Yupik Eskimo wearing a hunting visor hat with a wal-



rus on it being herded by a flock of penguins. John's inspiration for these designs come from books and visits to the Chicago Field Museum and the National Museum for the American Indian web site. A real work of art, mate, and educational as well!



**Ray Oswalt** has started laying planks on his 7/32" scale model of the 23 ft Launch of the *HMS Bounty*. Ray cut 12 planks per side, all of which were shaped the same way.



The tough part was getting the gunnel strake on because this launch had simple, square-notch oar locks, which, in some cases, lined up with his alignment pins outlining the shape of the sheer. Planks are bent using a plank bending tool that applies heat like a soldering iron. Work progresses from the garboard plank up and from the gunnel down—hopefully fitting together in the middle, if all his measurements were correct—and we'll bet they were!

**Bob Sykes** can be very proud of the job he is doing on his 1:64 "Model Shipways" kit of the *Charles W. Morgan*.

Bob's one problem has been with the kit's wood whale boat davits, which he feels do not look good, do not allow for detailing and break easily. Therefore, he will scratch-build new davits out of brass. Everything else has gone together without problems, even the rigging, which allows for plenty of working



room. After reading several books on the Morgan, Bob was amazed to find that, at one point, they had adapted an early form of steam driven donkey engine to power the lifting winch used to raise slabs of whale blub-

ber. Beautiful work, mate!

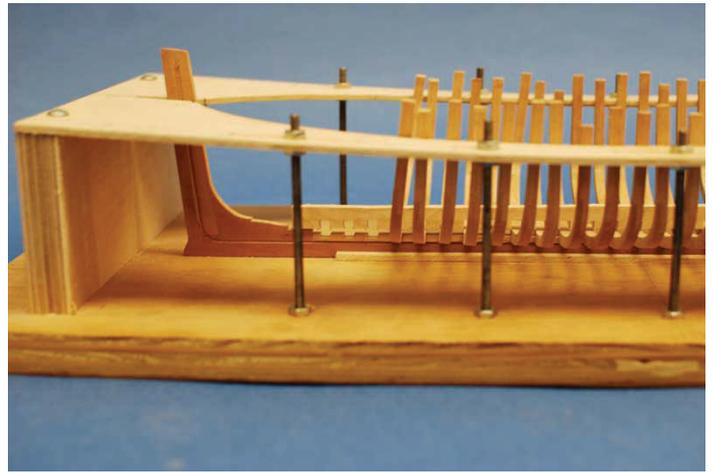
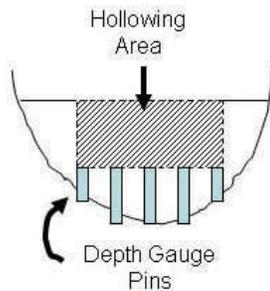
And thanks to Bob for donating a quantity of small files to any takers. Nice gesture, mate.

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

**Bob Filipowski** has been working on the main deck camber of his 3/16 scale model of the *Arrowsic*. Bob's visit to the Manitowoc show has inspired him to modify his ship by hollowing out an area amidships for the main hatch. This will allow him to include some below deck details, such as the keelson and cargo barrels, and display the model with hatch covers removed.

From suggestions he received from **Steve Wheeler**, Bob will insert pins of contrasting color into the bottom of the solid hull at a length to mark the limit of his hollowing out area. This will prevent him from hollowing out too much material. Great idea there, mates.



**Ken Goetz** has been busy with the small, but important, details on the spar deck of his 1:76 USS *Constitution* kit by "Model Shipways". Gun rigging has been finished, as are the hammock stanchions and netting.



Next up are the ship's boats, which are being built in the "bread-and-butter" style using overlapping lifts glued together and sanded to shape. Beautiful work, mate!

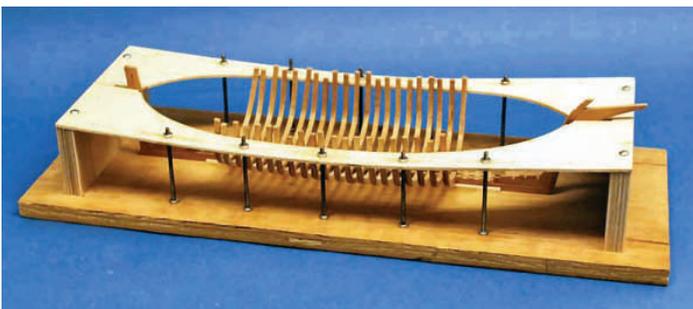


Another neat idea from Bob was the use of the foam pillow (above) to cradle his model for transport and for working in his shop. Simple but effective.

**Helmut Reiter** showed us the first beginnings of his new project, the 1:48 *La Gemma*, an 1864 Ligurian Sea Tartane.

The hull construction is set up in the "French way". That is, a template is made of the deck shear configuration and the frames are installed snug against the inner opening. The template is held up with long screws running from a building base, which allow the height of the template to be exactly positioned to the deck shear.

We're going to enjoy watching this model take shape and we'll learn a lot of techniques, too. Thanks, mate.



## ● LCVP “Higgins Boat” ●

“Let freedom ring” is a well known refrain from a well known patriotic song, but nowhere was it marked “paid” more than in the early morning hours of June 6, 1944 when our brave soldiers headed toward the beaches of Normandy, France in their “Higgins Boats”.



Another anniversary of the most significant amphibious operation in the history of modern warfare has past and we are again reminded of the great effort and sacrifices made on that fateful day.

Among the many ships that participated in this operation, America had three of the seven battleships (USS *Arkansas*, *Nevada* & *Texas*), three of the five heavy cruisers (USS *Augusta*, *Quincy* & *Tuscaloosa*) and fourteen of the 135 destroyers and escorts (USS *Amesbury*, *Baldwin*, *Barton*, *Carmick*, *Corry* [sunk], *Doyle*, *Frankford*, *Harding*, *Hobson*, *Laffey*, *McCook*, *Murphy*, *O'Brien* and *Saherlee*).

However, The *Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel* (LCVP) or *Higgins Boat* was one of the most critical vessels in use on that day, as it was responsible for delivering the first waves of troops and supplies to the beach.

General Eisenhower is quoted as saying: “Andrew Higgins...is the man who won the war for us...if Higgins had not designed and built those LCVPs, we never could have landed over an open beach. The whole strategy of the war would have been different.”

The LCVP was designed by Andrew Higgins of Louisiana and was based on boats made for operating in swamps and marshes. More than 20,000 were built by Higgins Industries and licenses.



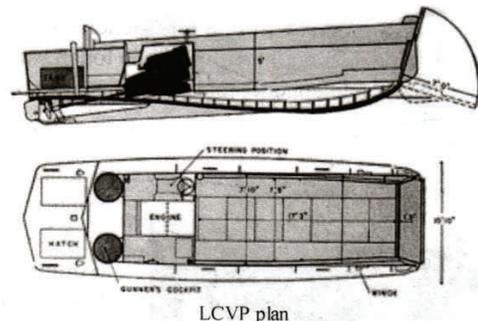
Typically constructed from plywood, this shallow-draft, barge-like boat could ferry a platoon-size complement of 36 men to shore at 9 knots (17 km/h). Men generally entered the boat by climbing down a cargo net hung from the side of their troop transport; they exited by charging down the boat’s bow ramp.

The Higgins Boat was used for many amphibious landings including Operation Overlord on D-Day in Normandy, and previously Operation Torch in North Africa, the Allied invasion of Sicily, Operation Shingle and Operation Avalanche in Italy, and of course the Pacific Theatre at the Battle of Guadalcanal, the Battle of Tarawa, the Battle of the Philippines, the Battle of Iwo Jima and the Battle of Okinawa.



Only a few Higgins Boats survived to the 21st century. A replica Higgins Boat, built in the 1990s using the original specifications from Higgins Industries, is on display in the National World War II Museum in New Orleans.

One original Higgins Boat was located in Vierville-sur-Mer, Normandy, by Overlord Research LLC, and is being professionally restored by the North Carolina Maritime Museum for the First Division Museum at Cantigny Park in Wheaton, Illinois.<sup>1</sup>



### Class overview

Builders: Higgins Industries, and others  
Operators: United States Navy  
Built: 1941-1945  
Completed: 20,000

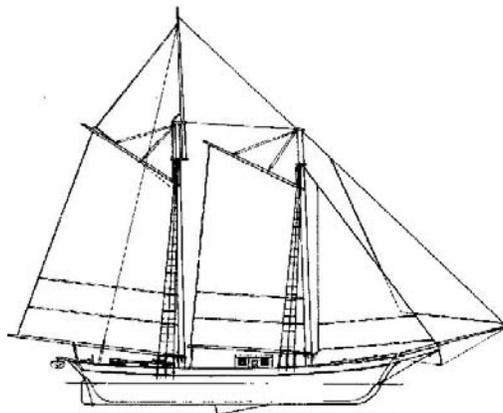
### General characteristics

Type: Landing craft  
Displacement: 18,000 lb light  
Length: 36 ft 3 in  
Beam: 10 ft 10 in  
Draft: 3 ft aft, 2 ft 2 in forward  
Propulsion: Grey diesel engine, 225 hp or Hall-Scott gasoline engine, 250 hp  
Speed: 12 knots (14 mph)  
Capacity: 6,000 lb vehicle or 8,100 lb cargo  
Troops: 36 troops, 3 crew  
Armament: 2 x .30 cal machine guns

<sup>1</sup><http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LCVP> (info in Public Domain)



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