



# Forecastle Report

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

## ● Scuttlebutt ●

Commodore **Tim Riggs** opened the meeting at 7:30 PM with 28 members present - a really great turnout.

Tim welcomed **Len Dicicco** back aboard after an extended absence from the club. Nice to have you among us, mate.

**Kurt Van Dahm** gave us a run down on the coming Tri-Club meeting scheduled for October 23rd at the *Lutheran Church of the Ascension*, Northfield. The day will start with the usual rolls and coffee and then progress to three presentations during the morning. After lunch there will be a series of roundtables lead by experts in various phases of ship building - subjects to be announced. A flea market is also being considered, depending on interest, so let Kurt know, if you would like to participate.

There being no additional scuttlebutt to discuss, we moved directly into our Ships-on-Deck session.

## ● Starting a Solid Hull ●

By Dave Botton

We have to thank Dave for giving us the straight scoop on what solid hull model building is all about. Not only were solid hull kits discussed but working up a scratch built hull from plans was also covered.

When working on a pre-carved solid hull kit, it is as necessary to work with the plan outlines as it would be if you were building from scratch. That is because not all pre-carved hulls are delivered symmetrical. If they are not symmetrical, any planking of the solid hull will result in uneven plank runs and a very unsightly hull surface. Thus the need to true up the hull before planking (if it is to be planked).



## September Meeting Notice



By John Pocius

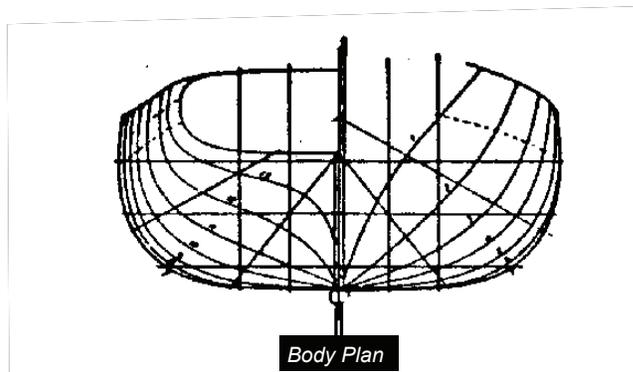
Whether or not you love speed boats, you will be fascinated by John's presentation and the sheer beauty of the many hand-crafted wooden boats from the classic era of boat building.

We will be shown a historical news reel about *Gar Wood*, the legendary industrialist, boat racer and builder and then John will present a history of *Gar Wood* the man and his racing boats. John has built many models of this type boat, which may inspire you to build some of your own.

Be sure to join us for this great look at the art of boat building.

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

The first task is to make multiple copies of the plans so that the hull stations can be cut out and used as templates when checking for correct hull shape. To get the copies to come out at the correct scale, first mark an "X"



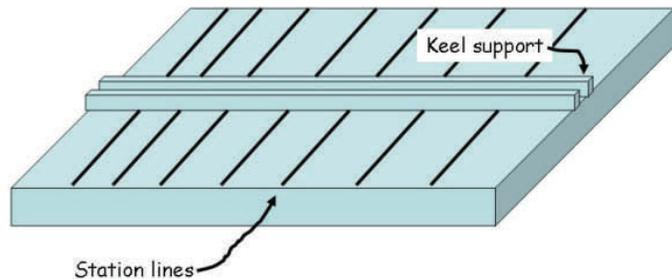
on the original plan to be copied and measure the dimensions of the "X". Then make the copies, enlarging or reducing the copy to get the "X" to come out the same dimension as on the original. Very neat idea!

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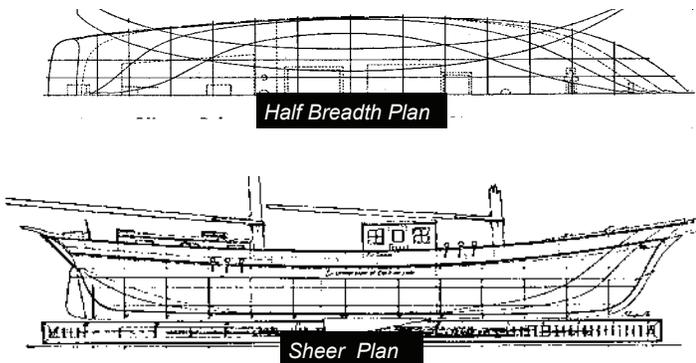
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Hull, continued from Page 1



A building board is useful, as you can mount the solid hull on it and mark the hull station lines on the board for template alignment. Mount two parallel wood strips to secure the keel—make them equal to the keel depth in height.

When building a solid hull from scratch, you have the choice of using “Waterline” sections (from the “Half Breadth Plan”) or “Buttocks” sections (from the “Sheer Plan”). Waterline sections are parallel to the keel and Buttocks sections are vertical to the keel.



Once you have made multiple copies of the plans and cut out the sections, you then use the cutouts as patterns to cut the sections out of wood. Be sure and draw in the center line on the Waterline sections and all station lines, so you can align them before gluing all the pieces together. Pegging the sections together when gluing assures that they won't slip or become misaligned.

Using gouges, knives, sandpaper, etc., carve the extra wood away to achieve the desired contour at each station line using templates of each station line as a guide. Cut away 3 to 4 station lines at a time.

If you cut away too much, not to worry; “Elmers” wood filler will allow you to replace the lost material.

Thanks, Dave, for giving us a truly educational evening.

## ● Ships on Deck ●

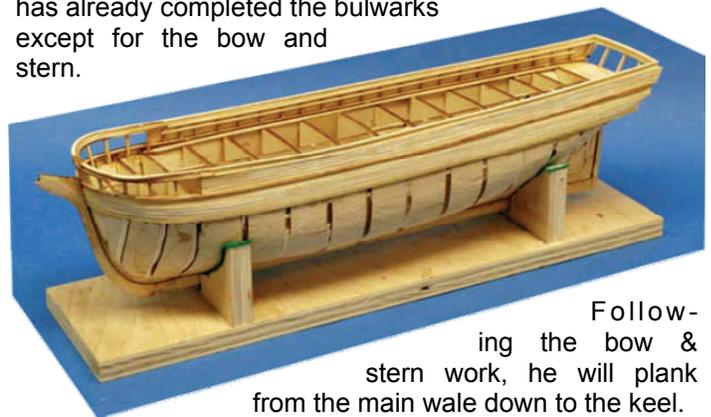
**Tim Riggs** brought in a set of laminated wood samples from a company that makes custom business cards in wood. The samples provided an excellent example of wood types and their characteristic grain and color. They were 0.01” thick and double laminated with a layer of cloth in between.

Anyone wishing to get more info on this item should contact Tim directly or look for the web site for the firm “Cards of Wood”.

**Paul Pollowy** found a set of plans for a 4-man rowing shell on the web and will build it as his next project at a scale of 1/4” = 1’. In keeping with the original, the hull will be made of styrene and possibly vacuum formed over a solid wood plug. Nice sourcing effort, mate. Sounds like a really interesting project; one which will be a real learning experience for all of us. Thanks, mate.



**Doc Williams** has begun the planking of his “Model Shipways” model of the whaling ship *Charles W. Morgan* and has already completed the bulwarks except for the bow and stern.



Following the bow & stern work, he will plank from the main wale down to the keel.

Doc's second project was an old galleon he has been restoring for a local customer. Work included replacing all the standing rigging complete with rat lines. Next will come installation of the yards, where he hopes to reuse most



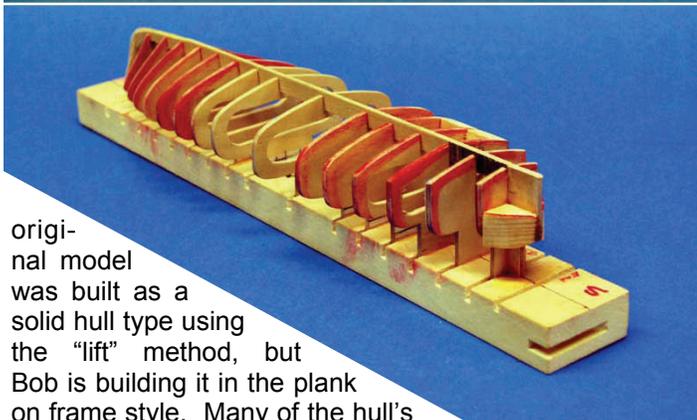
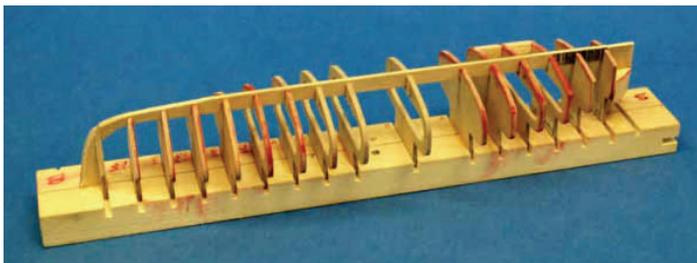
of the old blocks, and new running rigging. Must have been a real basket case before going into dry dock. You'll make someone very happy with this job, mate.

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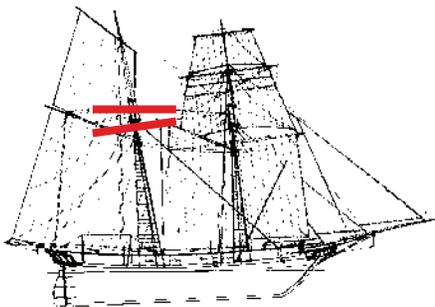
*Ships-on-Deck, continued from Page 2*

**Bob Ivan** is working on a scratch built model of *Snow Leopard* using a plan from Harold Payson's book. The



original model was built as a solid hull type using the "lift" method, but Bob is building it in the plank on frame style. Many of the hull's lines are sharply curved, so it will present some real challenges. Great looking project, mate.

**Ray Oswald** is back working on his slave ship *Dos Amigos* (3/16" = 1') and the crossrees and mast tops are a puzzle to him. With the pronounced rake of the masts, Ray wonders whether the mast tops should be parallel to the deck or at right angles to the mast. Anyone like to weigh in on this one?



**Gus Agustin** spent his time experimenting with figureheads in 1/8" and 1/16" scale for a possible future model of the HMS *Bellona*. As ever, his work is remarkable for the amount of detail at such small scale. We're all looking forward to possibly seeing that model built some day.



**John Pocius** and his son **Rey** have done a pair of oil



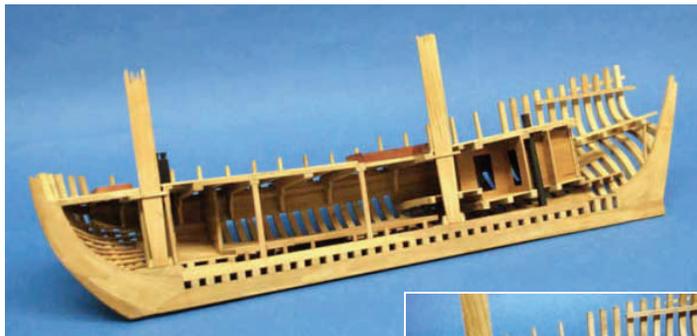
paintings of Mt. Hood scenes in preparation for work on a new diorama featuring this area. With such art talent showing, the diorama will surely be a winner. The im-



ages will provide the backdrop in the planned diorama, so we can expect a fascinating result.

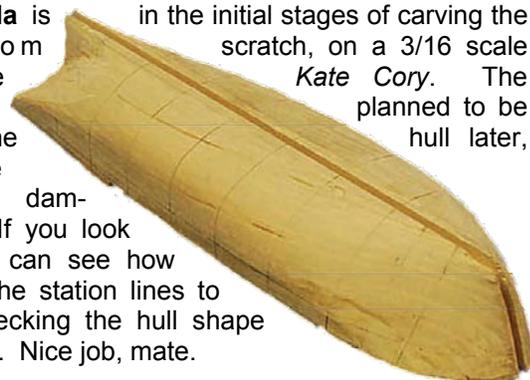
Beautiful work, you two, especially since it's a first effort at painting!

**Bruce Hoff's** schooner *Chaleur* (1:32), is really taking shape (both halves, that is). Bruce's planning for color



and finish on the bulwarks and deck has been extensive. He built detailed mock ups using various woods such as lemon wood, red hart, apple wood and ebony. Deck calking was initially simulated using strips of black paper glued between planks. Later, he decided that that method was either not to scale or unnecessary and changed to rubbing the sides of the planks with a No. 2 lead pencil. That worked well, as we saw in his mock up, and shows up even better when a finish is applied.

**Dick Samojla** is in the initial stages of carving the hull, from scratch, on a 3/16 scale model of the *Kate Cory*. The keel was added to the hull later, so it could be replaced if damaged, etc. If you look closely, you can see how he marked the station lines to allow for checking the hull shape as he carved. Nice job, mate.



*See Ships-on-Deck, Page 4*

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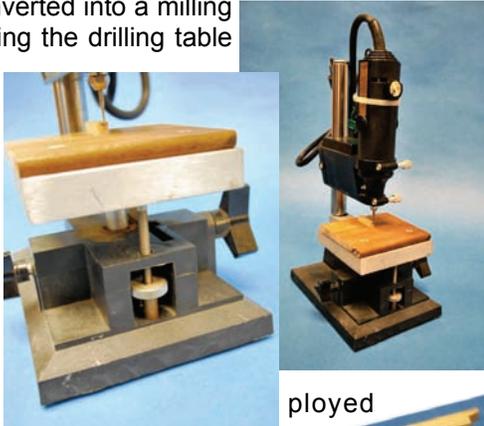
*Ships-on-Deck, continued from Page 3*

**Kurt Van Dahm** started out by thanking Bruce for the loan of an interesting book by Kathryn Hepburn on the making of the movie "African Queen", which fell in very well with the model he is building.

His next project, and the subject of tonight's Ships-on-Deck, is the (1:96) "Bluejacket" solid hull kit of the *Lackawanna Tug*. Kurt has had this kit sitting around since 1999 and just now was able to fit the building of her into his schedule. Bluejacket will supply him with kit updates, so his write up on the project will reflect the current configuration.



**Bob Filipowski** showed us how his ca 1973 "Dremel" drill press can be converted into a milling machine by making the drilling table height adjustable. This allows him to bring his work surface close enough to the drill bit to work with grinding bits.

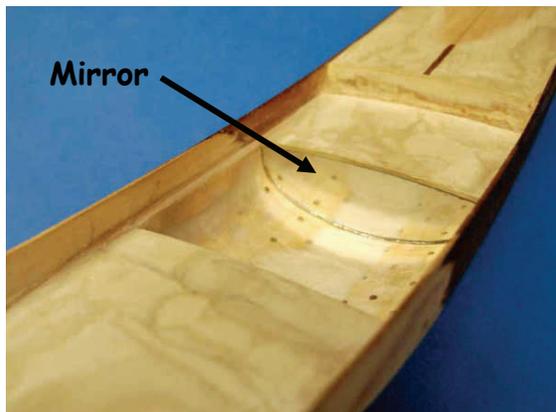


As part of his *Arrowsic* project, he employed the milling feature using a dental bit to cut rabbets into the ship's keel and stem. This went much faster than trying to do that job by hand.



Another interesting touch to his schooner was the installation of mirrors on the bulkheads inside the hold rather than painting them. This simulated a much larger hold area when viewed from outside and masked the fact that the bulkheads were close together.

What a great idea!



**Ken Wallenberg** brought in his completed model of the clipper ship *Flying Cloud* measuring 37" long by 27" high. It was Ken's first attempt at building a ship model and a truly fantastic job it was. We can only encourage him to keep up the good work and launch another soon. The history of this ship had also been well researched and



was very evident in Ken's love of his subject. Plans were from historical articles that once appeared in "Popular Science" magazine and other sources. Thanks, mate, for sharing her with us. She's a beauty.



*See Ships-on-Deck, Page 5*

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

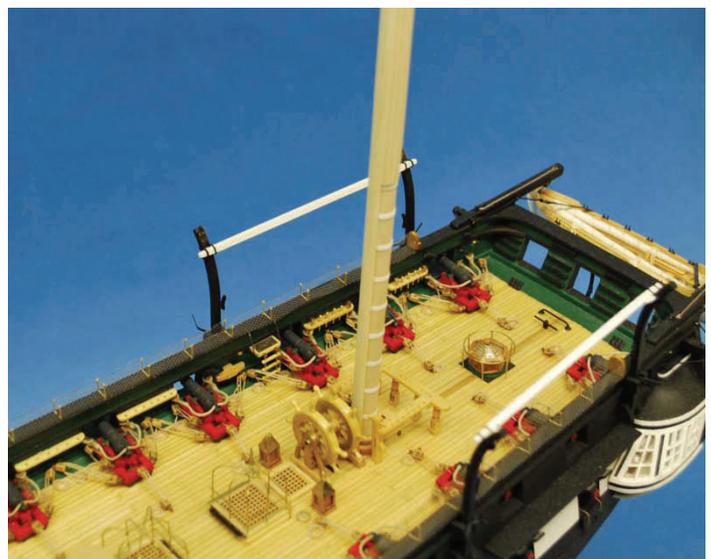
**Len Diccio** brought in some photos of a model of the USS *Constitution* he built, in case any members would like to see the results. Being an artist by trade, Len can also take some great photos, too! Now he is starting a model of the HMS *Victory*. Working with the photo etched parts was a problem, as it was necessary to paint the photo etch material to simulate windows, then sand off the raised photo resist material. Members recommended using #600 grit wet/dry sandpaper, wet, as found in auto body paint departments. Plenty of building spirit there, mate! Keep up the good work.



**Ken Goetz** has finally finished the last two ship's boats for his USS *Constitution* but they won't be mounted on the quarter davits until the rigging is all done (for obvious reasons). The last of the deck furniture is now done, including the ship's bell, and the masting has begun. Lower masts are under way but the materials were changed to



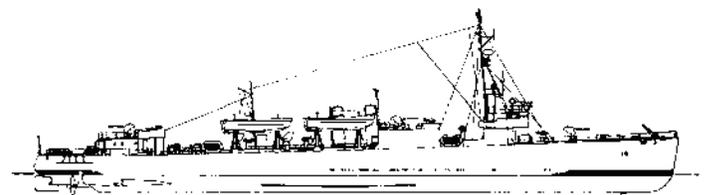
**Helmut Reiter** has picked up the building pace on his 1:48 model of *La Gemma* because he found his work shop the coolest place to be during our recent severe weather. Good enough reason, we'd say. The framing



birch from the kit supplied oak dowels because birch is easier to work with (sanding and shaping).

Plenty of work left to keep you going this winter, mate!

**Pete Penningsdorf** gave us a look at two books from his collection of great interest to those who build WWII fighting ships. One was a 1941 issue of *Jane's Fighting Ships* and the other a 1944 issue of *Jane's Merchant Ships*. Both were excellent reference sources and may be available at some public libraries. Check it out.



on hull and deck is now complete and was

made easier by the fine drawings included in the book by Franco Fissore, *GEMMA Tartane Ligure 1863*.

Cherry wood planking was ripped from a single piece of wood then tapered to fit. Steam from a tea kettle was used to finally bend the planks to fit the hull shape.



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### NRG Annapolis

By Bob Filipowski

Every Nautical Research Guild Conference has some salient feature that sets it apart from others. The 37th edition, held in Annapolis, Maryland, provided the atten-



dees with everything they could possibly want, including an excellent slate of speakers. However, it was the remarkable concentration of model ships seen on the three



tours that truly stood out.

Starting off with the National Museum of the US Navy at the Washington Navy Yard, the membership viewed a myriad of models and artifacts outlining the history of the



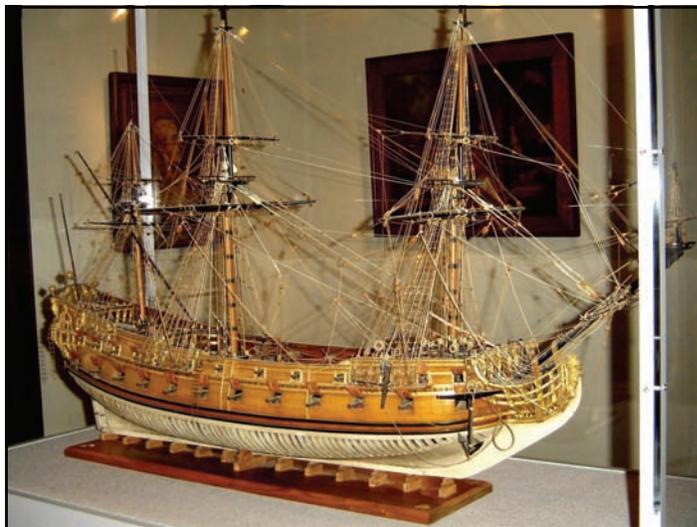
US Navy. Many were original builder's models, and included examples of the Great White Fleet, which were very impressive.

Outside the museum, the grounds are littered with various types of ordinance. Many date back to the pre-Civil War period. One of the most intriguing artifacts is a 26 inch



thick steel plate that would have been used on a Japanese *Yamato* class battleship. After the war, the US Navy conducted ballistic tests using a standard 16 inch naval gun. Well, the above photo speaks for itself!

Our next stop was the Naval Academy and Museum.



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After a tour of the grounds, which included John Paul Jones' crypt, we were given total access to the museum and workshop where models are restored and repaired. Again, superb models and exhibits described the history of the US Navy, but it was the magnificent Rogers Collection that everyone wanted to see.



When we entered the gallery, it would be safe to say that we were like "kids in a candy shop"! One could have



spent hours studying each model, but there just wasn't enough time. The museum had recently completed a major renovation, and it was truly impressive.

The third tour took us to Saint Michaels, Maryland for a very different venue. The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum specializes in telling the history of the craft unique to that area. It also features a lighthouse and active shipyard. If you're into skipjacks and bugeyes, it doesn't get



any better than this!

The facility is composed of several buildings, each telling a different story about the maritime history of the bay.

Although not a hunter, this writer was quite fascinated by the exhibit which showcased the duck hunting industry, and the watercraft and weaponry developed by local hunters and poachers.

One such gun could easily be classified as a small canon. It was nothing more than an eight foot long pipe with a firing mechanism. Too heavy to be picked up, the skiff had to be aimed in the general direction of the prey before firing. The results must have been devastating!

Another gallery featured vessels from the nineteenth century, including merchantmen and Baltimore Clippers. The quality of the models, in general, was quite good.

Unfortunately, space doesn't allow for the showing of more examples. Hopefully, the few photos included in this article will convey how special this particular group of museums are. We will try to feature some Power Point presentations in the near future so that you can fully appreciate the exhibits conference attendees were fortunate to see.

