Forecastle Report

Newsletter of the Midwest Model Shipwrights ◆ www.midwestmodelshipwrights.com ◆ March 2012

● Scuttlebutt ●

COMMODORE **Gus Agustin** opened our February meeting at 7:30 sharp with 23 hands aboard.

Kurt Van Dahm advised that the **2012 NRG Conference** will be held in Portland, Maine from 12 to 16 September. Further details will be posted on the **NRG** web site as they become available (www.theNRG.org).

Kurt also provided, via email, full details on the upcoming ***"36th Annual Midwestern Model Ships & Boats Contest and Display"*** being held May 18-20, 2012 at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum in Manitowoc, WI. Submission of the Registration Form is required before May 14th, so start planning now. Additional registration copies will be available at our March meeting for those who missed the email on this subject sent on February 27th.

Also on this subject, we've been advised by **Wendy Lutzke** at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum that their registration forms for the "36th Annual Midwestern Model Ships & Boats Contest and Display" have been updated to reflect the fact that the Midwest Model Shipwrights are sponsors of the *People's Choice Award*. Thanks, Wendy.

PURSER **Ken Goetz** reminded all hands that, if you have not paid your 2012 dues, this will be your last issue of the Forecastle Report. Don't be left ashore. Now's the time to sign on for another cruise. We're only 5 hands short of a full ship's company. Thanks mates.

We got the following remarkable bit of modeling news off the internet . The subject was "Matchstick Fleet" and told of 79-year-old **Phil Warren** from the UK, who spent 62 years building this incredible fleet of 432 ships and 1200 aircraft entirely out of matchsticks and their wooden boxes. The collection includes 370 U.S. and 60 British ships and their associated aircraft.

Now 79 years of age, he began creating his first boat in 1948 when he was 17. He uses a razor blade, tweezers, sand paper and glue and has used more that 650,000 matchsticks to create this amazing collection of 1:300 scale models. Our hats off to Mr. Warren.

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March Meeting Notice

SCRAPERS
The Powerful, Little Known Hand Tool

Forget sandpaper, "Doc" Williams is going to share with us the alternate technique of wood surface preparation using a variety of scraping tools.

We know this evening is going to be well worth our attention, as "Doc" has turned this technique into an art form. Once you see the fine results achieved by scraping, the words oxide, garnet, flint and emery will sound like a foreign language. Purpose, types and sharpening of these tools will be covered.

Our next meeting will be at 7:15 p.m. Wednesday, March 21, 2012
At the Community Presbyterian Church
407 Main Street in Mount Prospect

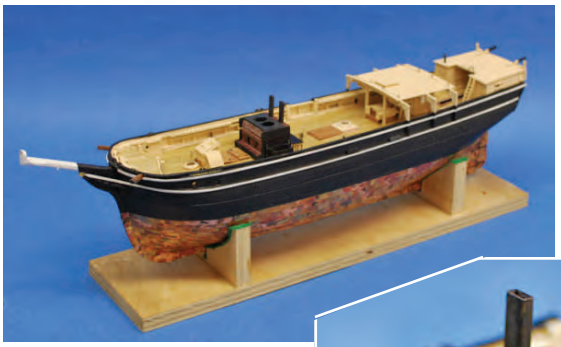
Our review of the February program on making parts on the lathe runs on pages 4-5 and was extracted from the excellent PowerPoint program provided to us by our fellow Shipwright in Australia, **Kevin Hudson**.
We're sure you will enjoy this review and the amazing photos included.

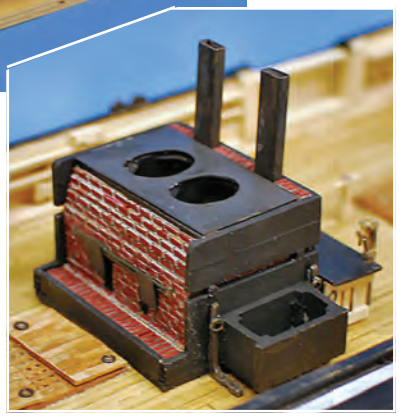
• Ships on Deck •

Your Editor has made notable progress on his 1:48 scratch-built model of the Great Lakes Clipper Schooner *Challenge* and, along the way, found a simple method to draw water lines on a hull (subject of a future presentation). In addition to painting the hull, paper mockups of the deck houses and hatches were made to test appearance, position and scale.

Gus Agustin got back to work on his 1:288 model of the HMS *Bellona* ca 1760. This model was on hold for 6 months but now Gus has attached the rudder, skid beams and channels. Next up will be the stern and quarter galleries. Completion is planned in the next couple of months. Truly a unique miniature with a split hull, giving us a view of the lower deck. Another gem, mate.

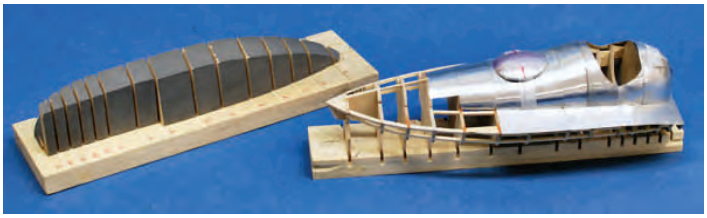
Doc Williams is having a great time adding all the deck furniture on his whaler *Charles W. Morgan*. We can tell he's enjoying himself by the enthusiasm with which he describes his efforts. The try works (the heart of a whaler's operation) with the try pots and furnace plus the scrap box, cooling tank, chicken coop and work bench have been completed. We're all enjoying your work, mate.





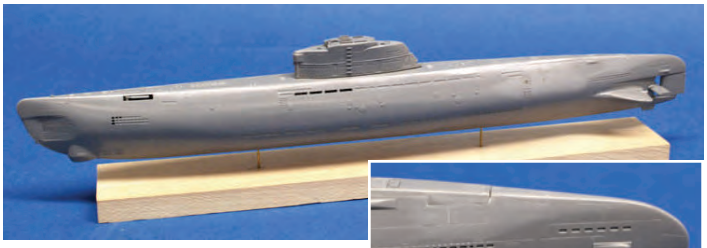
Sid Wotman gave us a visual report on the status of his *Charles W. Morgan* whaler and what a surprise the photos were! The last time we saw Sid's work, he was agonizing over the foremast. Now the whole rigging set is complete together with all the hull fittings. Added to his fine workmanship is the base, which he made from a piece of the actual *Morgan* salvaged during a recent renovation. After 12 years, he's almost done! Outstanding job, mate.

Bob Ivan continues work on his scratch built racing boat, ca 1936, with more aluminum cladding of the hull. The domed portions were created by pressing the aluminum sheets over existing forms that had the desired shape.

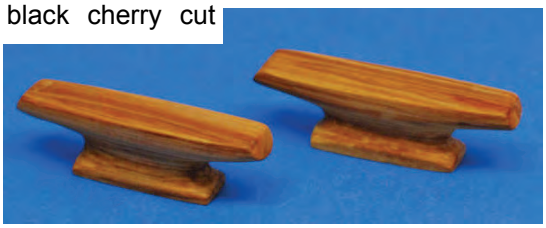


As we learned last December, the hull bulkhead templates were created by cutting out segments of a solid hull made of floral foam. These foam shapes were then used to cut the actual wood bulkheads. Exciting work, mate.

Pete Pennigsdorf is working on a "Revell" (Germany) plastic model of the *U-Boat Type XXI* in a scale of 1/144 in. to the foot. Some modifications from the kit were required to duplicate the way the boat would look while submerged. Great looking project, mate.



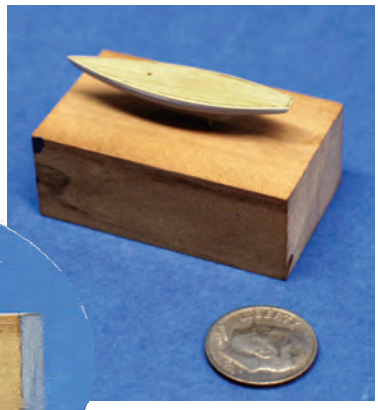
Rich Kuenstler has produce a very fine set of *cleats* 1:1 made from black cherry cut from a tree. They would be used to reef the main sheets. Very shipshape mate.



See Ships-on-Deck, Page 3

Ships-on-Deck, continued from Page 2

John Pocuis has created a model of the miniature 39" model sloop, *Pirate* in a scale of 3/8" = 1'. This miniature miniature will be part of a larger diorama that will include a 7 ft. outboard powered punt and a human figure. The hull on this model is carved from pear wood with the deck



planked in boxwood. A miniature of a miniature? If you work out the scales, his model is 1.22" long. Right on, mate. We're enjoying this already! An interesting sidelight is that the plans for this model were published in "The Motorboat Book, Vol. X", 1927 and also published in the "L.A. Evening Herald" in 1926. Interesting, too, that newspapers published model boat plans back then.

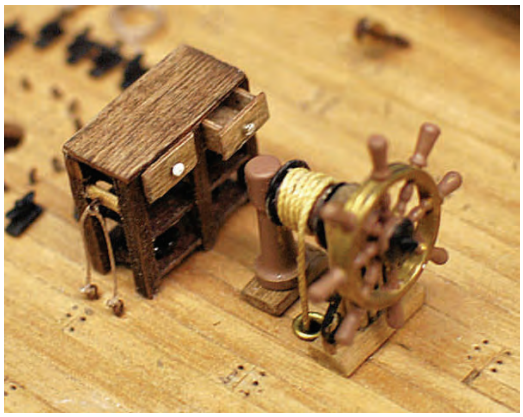
Bob Sykes is way out ahead on his "EuroModel" kit of the HMS *Ajax* ca 1765 (1:72).

As you might imagine, Bob has been having many problems in trying to convert or translate instructions almost entirely written in Italian; so much so that this job has become a virtual scratch-built model.

Bob's model just does not give any hint of construction work-arounds, as his attention to detail is spot on.

Lots of skill went into the hull coppering and the decorative trim was done in such a way that there is no trace of the usual metal castings heaviness seen in many kits.

Ship's boats were also an extra project and add greatly to the model's appeal. And check out the binnacle and wheel detail. Fine work, mate. Can't wait to see all the rigging!



Paul Pollowy is bashing an LST kit to make the *Solveig* (1/245" = 1'), a pulpwood barge based on an actual LST

converted in 1951. She hauled pulpwood, stone and gravel until scrapped in 1974. A real piece of Great Lakes history in the making, mate.

Bob Filipowski showed us his companion way doors made from two sheets of pear wood, which were epoxied together. The upper layer was then cut away on a Preac saw, leaving just the horizontal raised panels. The side panels were then glued in place and trimmed to their required widths.

Introduction to Lathe Turning

By Kevin Hudson

For those members willing to brave the February cold, they were rewarded with a remarkable presentation by our Australian member, Kevin Hudson. His Power-Point, complete with audio explanations, was a tour de force on making complex parts on a lathe.

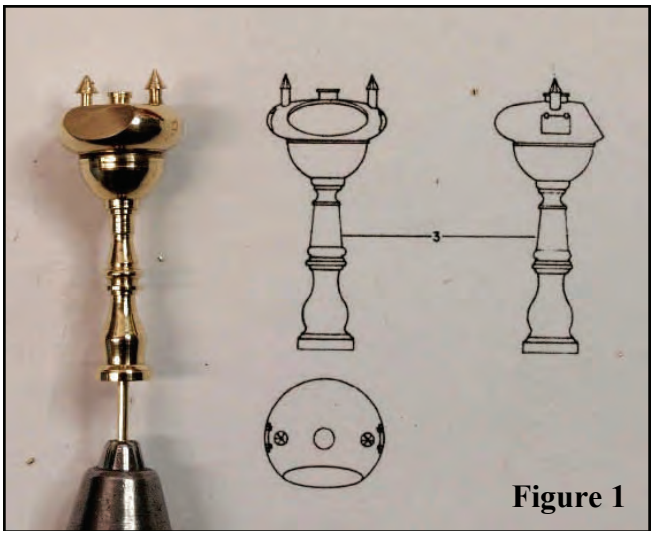


Figure 1

Appropriately, the discussion started out with safety, and the possible hazards if one does not stay focused when operating one of these machines. The consequences could be quite dire, and included broken bones, lacerations and eye injuries.

The first item discussed was a beautiful binnacle (Figures 1&2), which immediately got everyone's attention. Kevin explained that his approach was to break the piece down into manageable subassemblies, which were later assembled with pins, or by soldering. This would be a common theme throughout the talk.

The next step was to turn down the stock to the piece's largest diameter. The item was then divided into distinct segments, which were also turned down to their largest diameters. It then became a case of working each segment to its desired shape. In most cases, micro-files were the tools of choice for this operation. The tapering of canon barrels (Figures 3 & 4) is a good example.

Figure 2

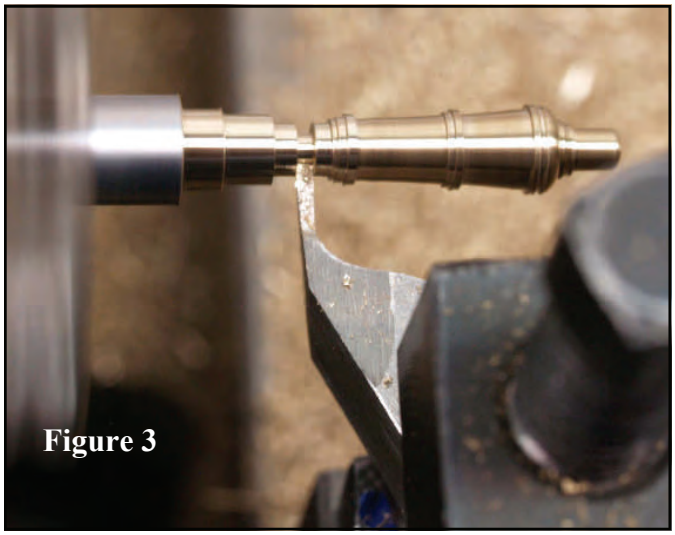


Figure 3

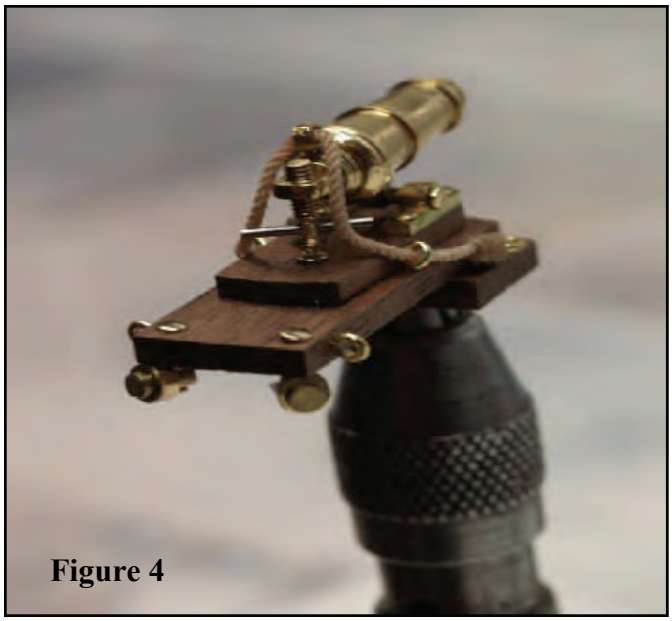


Figure 4

Hudson's innovativeness with a lathe was especially apparent in the construction of a ship's wheel. A special tool bit was designed from a piece of hacksaw blade that reflected the profile of the wheel's spokes. (Figure 5) The tool had to be very sharp, and the wood of the highest quality, so the piece would not break while being turned.

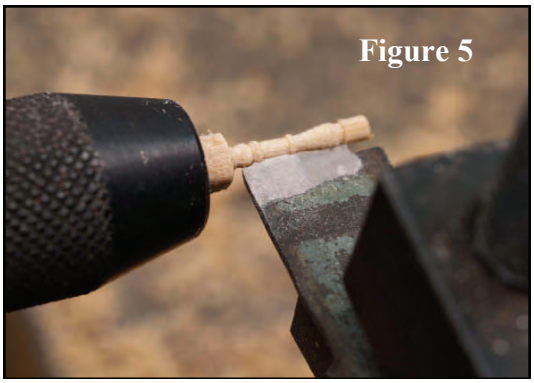
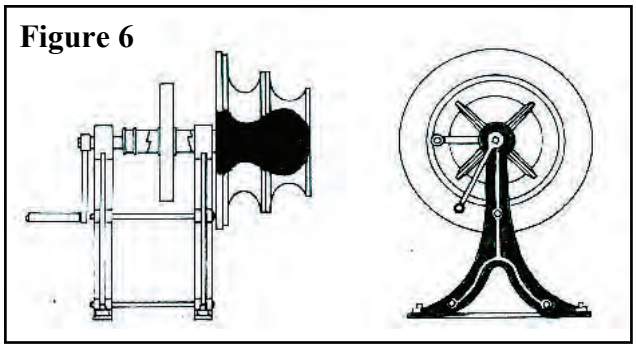


Figure 5

Another trick that was shared with us involved the use of templates. (Figure 6) Kevin utilized these modeling aids to construct gun carriages, portions of the ship's wheel, and the sounding winch, which was particularly complex.

Figure 6



Although lathe work was the main focus for this presentation, Hudson repeatedly demonstrated the value of files in fabricating complex subassemblies. In addition to the various shapes already described, he also fabricated

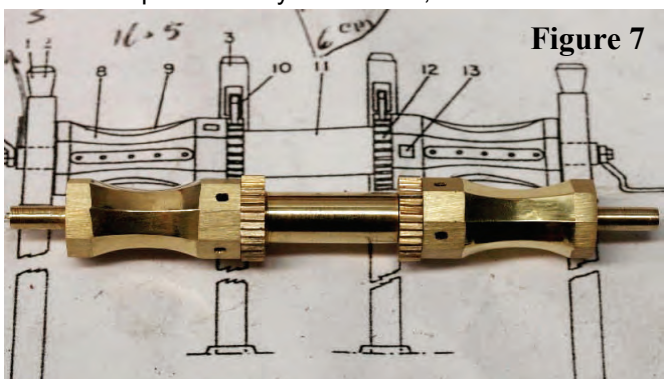
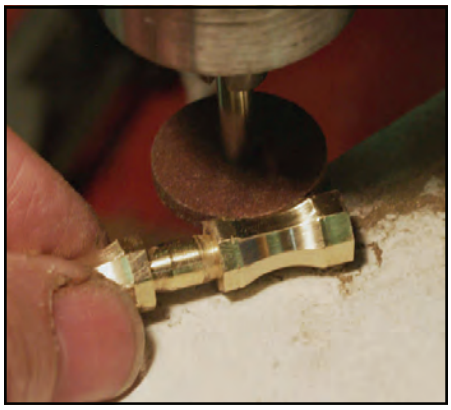


Figure 7

some remarkable winch and windlass gears (Figure 7) by filing each tooth to shape.

The flats on the windlass drums were especially problematic, and were shaped using a grinding wheel mounted in a drill press. This was a time consuming process, but the results speak for themselves! The square holes were formed by hollowing out the end of each drum, which allowed the holes to be drilled and filed to shape. This was a remarkable presentation, and everyone left the February meeting with a better understanding of what is possible with a lathe, some files, and a little ingenuity! We thank **Kevin Hudson** for an excellent presentation.



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Access to Members-Only areas of our web site

- searchable access to our **List of Members**
- access to our NRG **E-mail System**
- browse and upload **Project Photos**
- borrow from our **Lending Library**
- **Research Assistance** from our Members

Four Issues of 'The Journal'

Photographs and articles on ship model building, naval architecture, merchant and naval ship construction, maritime trade, nautical history, and maritime arts.

Annual Conference

The NRG Conference is held each fall in a "nautical" location. Join other members for our annual celebration of model ships and maritime history.

For more information, visit our website at www.theNRG.org .

John R. Mitchell, Editor
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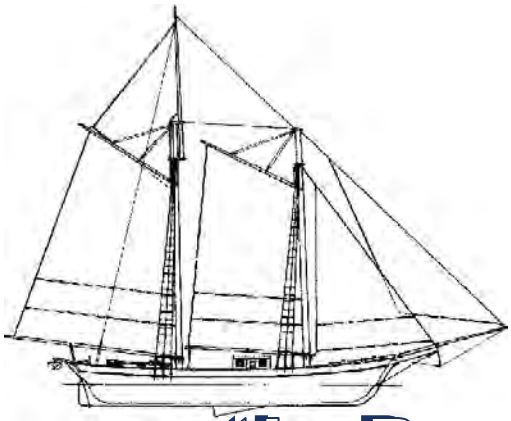

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