



THE SCUTTLEBUTT

The Scuttlebutt is the official newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Shipwrights. Its objective is to promote, develop and further scale model shipbuilding, as well as study maritime subjects, including art, history and traditions.

October 2025

It's Showtime!

Monthly Meeting

Shipwrights normally meet the THIRD Saturday of the month at Rockler Woodworking and Hardware. The store opens at 9:00 am and the meeting starts at 9:30.

2553 S. Colorado Blvd. Denver, CO 80222

No October meeting due to the RMSW Boat Show

Friday 10/17-10am to 7pm

Saturday 10/18 – 9:00am to 6:00pm

Sunday 10/29 – 11:00am to 4:00pm

Arvada Workshop

The workshop is on the FIRST Saturday of every month, beginning at 9:00 am at the Arvada City Hall, Police entrance.

8101 Ralston Road, Arvada, CO 80002

Next workshop: Nov. 1, 2025

Officers

Commodore.....Martin Jelsema

Skipper..... Phil von der Heydt

First Mate..... Alice

Sampson

Purser.....Steve Lofshult

Clerk.....Jay McKeown

Committees

Events Chair: Erik Collett

Photographer: Jay Phillips

Historian: Roger Hanson

Scuttlebutt: Hugh Long

Webmaster: Dave Niss/Martin Jelsema

Workshop Chair: Ralph Buckwalter

Website

<http://rockymountainshipwrights.org>

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Skipper's Log

Well, it is ALL HANDS-ON DECK with the boat show coming up in just about a week. We hope that each of you has dusted off an additional model or two because this is going to be a special boat show. We expect a lot of guests and hope to impress them with all your art.

We need significant help during the set-up and take down shifts, so I hope that you will contact [Ralph](#) or [Alice](#) about your availability to staff the show. We need additional folding tables since we expect more models than we have had in the past, so if you have one that you can share, we would appreciate you bringing that in along with your model.

With the opening of the Shipwrights store and all our extra model kits, I have realized this may be an opportunity for fathers and kids to perhaps build memories together by building something together.

I hope our boat show brings memories for those that attend and a feeling of satisfaction to all of us that our work is not just for our own personal entertainment.

Fair winds and following seas.

Phil

Phil von der Heydt, Skipper

Bvdh@aol.com

817 832 7631

October Model Ship Exhibit

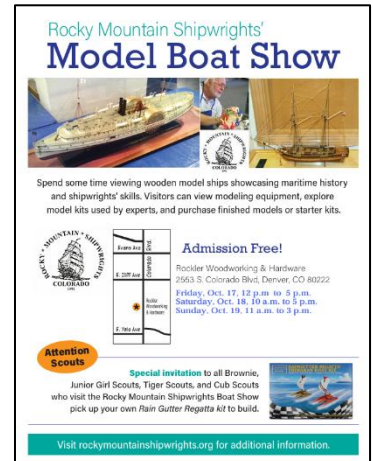
The October Exhibit is right around the corner as it is scheduled for October 17-19. In addition to looking for models, we are also looking for volunteers to work the show.

We will set up the show on Thursday afternoon, all day on both Friday and Saturday, and then to help shut down around 4pm on Sunday.

You can volunteer to manage the show by replying to the Scuttlebutt, or volunteer during the October workshop, or contact [Ralph B](#) directly.

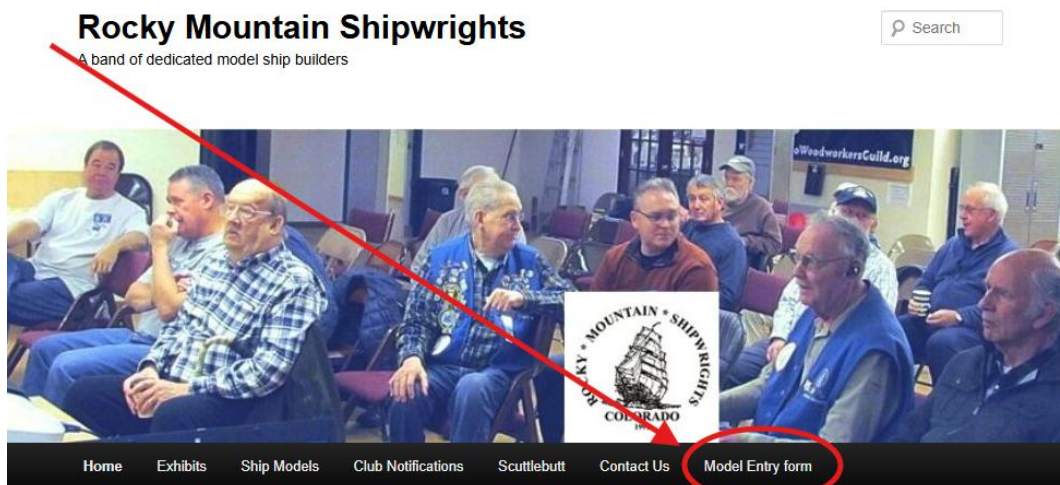
The exhibit will require three 2-plus hour shifts on Friday and Saturday, while Sunday only has two shifts. It is okay to sign up for multiple shifts. So please attend the September 20th meeting or the October 4th workshop and sign up.

The exhibit runs three days – Friday 10/17-10am to 7pm, Saturday 10/18 – 9:00am to 6:00pm, Sunday 10/29 – 11:00am to 4:00pm.



How to Register Your Models

1. Go to our website at <https://rockymountainshipwrights.org/>.



2. Click on “Model Entry Form”
3. Fill out the form. Note: If the model was displayed at one of the last Rockler exhibits, you only need to fill in the model’s name and your name and anything that may have changed since you last displayed it.
4. Click the “Submit Form” button.
5. Note: You will NOT get an acknowledgment notice even though your form has been recorded.

You may enter more than one model – in fact, the more the merrier. Also, “Under Construction” models are encouraged because attendees find them interesting and informative.

Additionally, you can reach out to [Alice S](#) directly about registering a model.

If you are interested in selling your model, please include that info on your registration form.

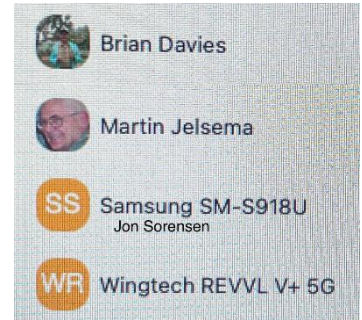
Please distribute the flyer that was attached to the Scuttlebutt wherever you feel it is appropriate!

If you have any questions, please reach out to us at RockyMountainShipwrights1991@gmail.com.

September 20, 2025 Meeting

There were eighteen attendees at the meeting, as well as four online attendees. In person attendees were Steven Alford, Fred Bell, Ralph Buckwalter, Michael Caramia, Bob Fivehouse, Dan Hart, Steve Lofshult, Hugh Long, Dave Niss, Russ Markowski, Jay McKeown, Marv Olson, Jeffrey Ross, Alice Sampson, Scott Shilling, Chuck Stroble, Martin Ters, and Phil van der Heydt.

Our online attendees were Brian Davies, Martin Jelsema, Jon Sorensen, plus one unknown attendee. Zoom screen name of Wingtech REVVL V+ 5G. Let us know if this was you.



(Left to Right): Phil vdH, Steve L, Martin T, Scott S, Steven A, Jeffrey R, Ralph B, Russ M, Alice S, Jay McK, Marv O, Michael C, Fred B, Bob F, Dan H, and Chuck S

Skipper's Report

Skipper Phil brought the meeting to order at 9:37 am and started with the pledge of allegiance.



(Left to Right): Martin T, Scott S, Steven A, Jeffrey R, Russ M, Ralph B, Alice S, Jay McK, Marv O, Bob F, Michael C, Fred B, Dan H, and Chuck S



(Left to Right): Jay McK, Phil vdH, Steven A, Russ M, Marv O, Scott S, Martin T, Jeffrey R, Steve L, Alice S, and Ralph B

Announcements

If you are interested in purchasing any of the kits we currently have, look at the inventory ASAP as any kits we currently have will be for sale at next month's show.

The [Boat Show](#) is on 10/17 through 10/19. Set up on Thursday afternoon 4-7 and Friday morning. Form is [online](#), or e-mail [Alice Sampson](#).



(Left to Right): Chuck S, Fred B, Dan H, Bob F, Michael C, Jay McK, Marv O, Steven A, Russ M, Phil vdH, Scott S, Jeffrey R, Martin T, Alice S, Steve L, and Ralph B



Invitations to the exhibition were sent to every Girl-, Boy-, and Sea Scout troop in Colorado. Rain gutter regatta boat kits to be given to every attendee. Certificates and honorary membership in RMSW for completed projects.

Take a poster with you (also attached to this month's Scuttlebutt). Ralph needs volunteers on 10/16 to help set up tables for the Show. Contact [Ralph B](#) to volunteer.

Skipper Phil's granddaughter Allison bedazzled a kit as a marketing piece for the Girl Scouts.

Alice picked up six completed ship kits from Bob Smith in Fruita, Colorado. They are Model Shipways kits and are available for sale. They will be displayed at the show. We can now take credit card payments. Discussion of sales vs donations.

In addition to the number of restoration/repair projects we receive each month, we also get questions about completed models. Martin J has a list from a company that purchases completed models. He will share the document with the club.

Rehoming completed models are also a common request. County libraries are a useful resource.

Dan H will be attending the [High Plains Modelers Convention](#) in Loveland on Saturday, October 4, 2025 from 10:00am to 6pm. He has attended this convention in the past and has a great record of winning awards – more next month upon his return.



Purser's Report

September 2025 balances:

- September \$25
- \$4,356 in checking
- \$568 in savings
- \$5,212 in Certificate of Deposit
 - 3-month renewal

This gives the club a total balance of \$10,165.

Our card reader will be at the show, and we can also take Zelle payments. These both also keep good records on purchases.

We have 65 members plus 2 new members.



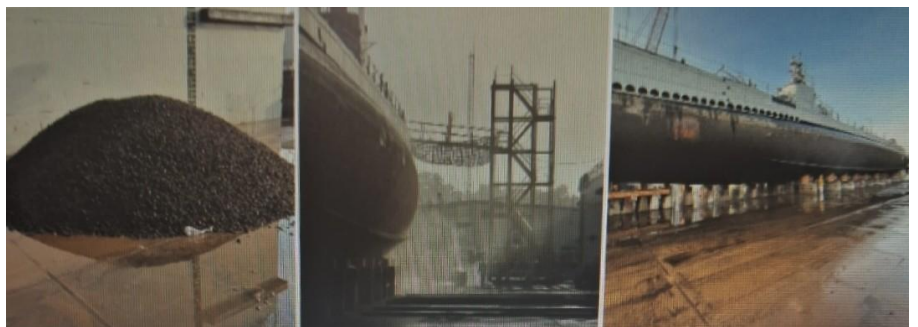
(Left to Right): Dan H, Michael C, Jay McK, Jeffrey R, Russ M, Bob F, Steven A, Scott S, Martin T, Phil vdH, and Steve L

New Business



Hugh - Next month there will not be a meeting stream as we are having the model show. A video of the models may be made available. We need one person to help Dave with the stream of the November meeting. Operating the board is fairly straight-forward. Contact [Hugh](#) if you are interested in helping.

Ralph B gave the group an update the repairs being made to the USS Cobia submarine (normally on display at Manitowoc Wisconsin. It is currently at the dry dock at Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. Shipyard crews started by scraping the zebra and quagga mussels from the hull so the metal beneath them could be



inspected. The Cobia then received a fresh coat of paint and some special protective coatings. The goal is to have the Cobia return home to Manitowoc in early October.

Visitors to Manitowoc can explore the USS Cobia in three different ways from a guided submarine tour to a technical Nook and Cranny tour in winter, to the experience an interactive overnight stay.

Ralph asked if the RMSW would make a \$250 - \$400 donation to help with the restoration and repairs. Bob Fivehouse made a motion for \$300. Alice second ed the motion. RMSW has a connection with the [Wisconsin Maritime Museum at Manitowoc](#) with prior support to their annual Midwestern Model Ships & Boats Contest held the third weekend of May every year. Motion passed unanimously.



Alice supports “[Rocking the Boat](#)” in NYC. Rocking the Boat works with area youth to develop pride, purpose, and possibility by learning the skills of building and rowing wooden boats and sailing, all while helping to restore the Bronx River. Their

annual “Rocking Manhattan” event is weekend where teams of between four and twelve members set out on Whitehall gigs for an all-day 29.5-mile row around Manhattan Island.

The program has been so successful that they have expanded to San Francisco.

For more information and how to support them, please go to [Rocking the Boat](#).



(Left to Right): Ralph B, Alice S, Jeffrey R, Marv O, Steve L, Martin T, Fred B, Russ M, Scott S, Chuck S, Jay McK, Steven A, Michael C, Dan H, and Bob F



(Left to Right): Phil vdH, Steve L, Jeffrey R, Marv O, Alice S, Martin T, Fred B, Russ M, Jay McK, Michael C, Steven A, Dan H, Chuck S, and Bob F

RMSW Meetings are Streaming

There is no October meeting, but we are exploring making a video of the show available at the regular meeting time.

We are looking for at least one or two other members to help with the AV board during meetings. We are not needing help with EVERY meeting, but it would great if we had more than only Dave Niss and Hugh Long on a regular basis as it is getting close to Mexico-season for Hugh and we do not want it to fall all on Dave. If you are interested, **even only every once in a while**, please let [us](#) know.

We know we need one volunteer to help Dave during the November meeting as Hugh will not be here.

The link to join the stream is [Rocky Mountain Shipwright meeting](#).

- Meeting ID: 873 8516 5128
- Passcode: 887438

Please remember that our meetings are on the third Saturday of the month, starting at 9:30 am (mountain).

Salty by Scott Shilling

Captain Salty, Scott Schilling, on his sailing adventure.

110 heat index on arrival, surveyor would not even come out.
Beneteau Oceanus 50, 7 ft draft, 29,000 lb. dry weight.



(Left to Right): Michael C, Steven A, Dan H, Chuck S, Bob F, and Scott S



The adventures of Salty

Not a lot of working components or tools.



Agenda

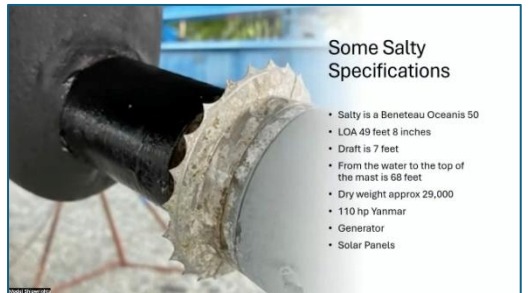
- Arrival in the Chesapeake
- Some Salty Specifications
- What we have done so far
- Navigation and Predict Wind
- What is next



Arrival in the Chesapeake

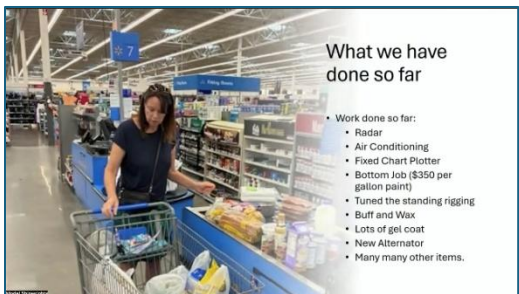
- IT WAS HOT!!
- The surveyor refused to come to the boat unless we had some sort of air conditioning
- Items of note
 - No air conditioning
 - No radar
 - Chart plotter did not have maps
 - Every single cubby hole had old food
 - No tools what-so-ever

Out of the water for hull paint and sail maintenance.



Some Salty Specifications

- Salty is a Beneteau Oceanis 50
- LOA 49 feet 8 inches
- Draft is 7 feet
- From the water to the top of the mast is 68 feet
- Dry weight approx 29,000
- 110 hp Yanmar
- Generator
- Solar Panels



What we have done so far

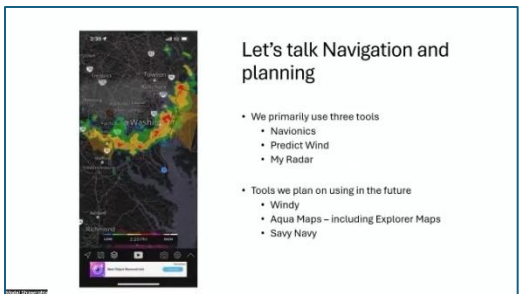
- Work done so far:
 - Radar
 - Air Conditioning
 - Fixed Chart Plotter
 - Bottom Job (\$350 per gallon paint)
 - Tuned the standing rigging
 - Buff and Wax
 - Lots of gel coat
 - New Alternator
 - Many many other items.

Deltaville VA to Urbanna to Reedville to Oxford to Annapolis to Chesapeake City to Atlantic City, hurricane concern led back to Oxford.



Our travels

- Started in Deltaville
- Storms in Urbanna
- Lonely in Reedville - encounter with a fishing boat - then onto Solomons
- To Oxford then Back to Solomons
- Up to Annapolis then onto Chesapeake City
- The Delaware Bay - goodness sakes
- Then onto Atlantic City - Hurricane turned us around
- Then back to Oxford



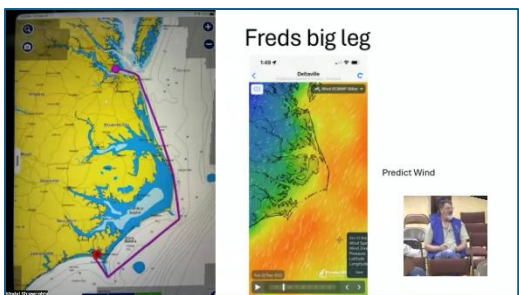
Let's talk Navigation and planning

- We primarily use three tools
 - Navionics
 - Predict Wind
 - My Radar
- Tools we plan on using in the future
 - Windy
 - Aqua Maps - including Explorer Maps
 - Savy Navy

[Salty from Canada](#) is how you find him on a maritime app.



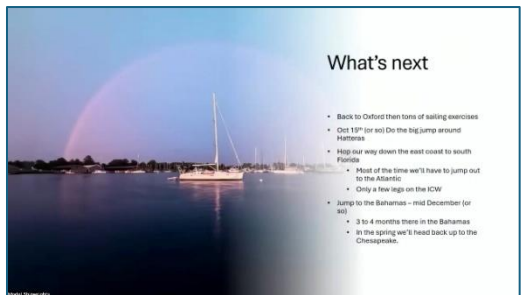
Navionics



Freds big leg

Predict Wind

Bahamas in December



What's next

- Back to Oxford then tons of sailing exercises
- Out 10° (or so) Do the big jump around Panama
- Keep our way down the east coast to south Florida
 - Most of the time we'll have to jump out to the Atlantic
 - Only a few legs on the ICW
- Jump to the Bahamas - mid December (or so)
- 3 to 4 months there in the Bahamas
- In the spring we'll head back up to the Chesapeake.

Chat GPT

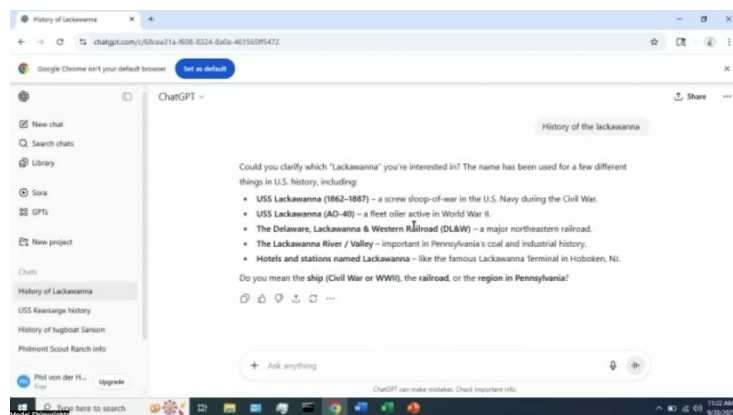
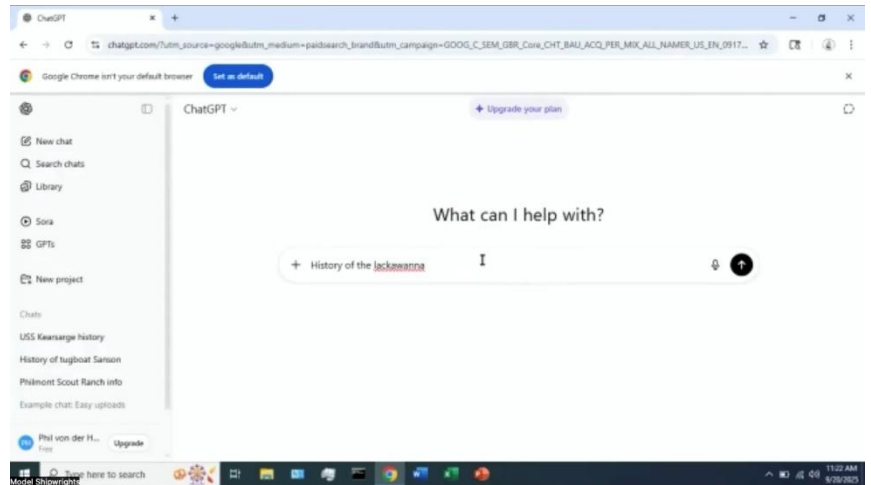
Phil vdH showed the group ChatGPT. ChatGPT is just one of many AI (Artificial Intelligence) chatbots that generate human-like text responses to questions. AI chatbots use advanced machine learning models that have learned on vast amounts of data to understand and produce text, making them capable of a wide range of tasks such as answering questions, writing content, summarizing text, and even generating code. Users interact with ChatGPT through a simple chat interface, providing text prompts and receiving AI-generated answers.

Phil described how ChatGPT can be used to find the history of a ship, something that we would like on the registration cards for the exhibition.

He pulled up ChatGPT and then asked the group for the name of one of their ships.

He then typed in “History of the Lackawanna” and selected enter.

The results came up.



then asked for “results that were nautical in nature.”

The response was narrowed, but still all over the place. I thought of how I would narrow the search even more.

I added “older men” to the question. I added this because it is the demographic of the club (sorry, and I am part of that demographic), plus also I was learning about how to use AI. You want an answer that is more of what you want, give it more information. This is one of major differences between a simple search and AI. AI remembers what you have previously asked it, and you can narrow your search by typing in your questions almost like you are talking to someone.

At this point of my AI conversation, I had a good list of topics. I then asked for specific topics related to “shipwrecks.”

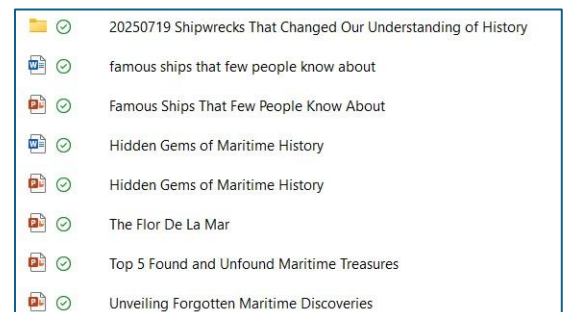
I went back and forth and produced this list.

From them I decided to go with “Shipwrecks That Changed Our Understanding of History.” Knowing I had only 20 to 30 minutes, I picked the three (Whydah galleon, Vasa, and Antikythera) that interested me the most.

I told AI my shipwreck selections and then asked AI to create a 30-minute power point presentation based on that topic and include graphics.

This may seem a lot like what you could find by doing a Google (or other search engine) search, but the difference with AI is that the answer can then be used to dig deeper, and deeper. For example, a few months ago I was asked to give the club a history or mystery presentation. Instead of going back and forth in my head on what I should do, I decided to try using AI for the first time.

I started by asking “Give me a list of history topics for a group of men.” My results were all over the place. I



Shipwrecks That Changed Our Understanding of History

- The Whydah Gally: Authenticating the Golden Age of Piracy
- The Vasa: A 17th Century Swedish Warship
- The Antikythera Wreck: A Window Into Ancient Greece

And voila! I had about 75% of the presentation. During the early half of my business career, I was a stand-up technical trainer and curriculum developer, so I have a good understanding of how to make presentations. This hour of talking/texting to an AI chatbot was a huge time-saver. What took me about an hour to produce would have taken not just several hours, but possibly days.

Sure, I then spent a couple of days getting the graphics I wanted and deciding what to say about each ship, but with my first attempt using AI, I was hooked.

The next time you are a little bored, try AI. Even from a “free” experience, it is a powerful tool.

Show and Tell

Hugh Long showed the club his Canadian Schooner, the Bluenose. He started the build in October of 2000, but within a month or so life got in the way, and it was put away until March of 2023. He has been working on it since then to get to this point. It is his first model. Everything from the rails up and all the structures on the deck have been completed since the club's last exhibition. The model is 1:64 scale. Unfortunately, he will not be working on it any time soon as he is getting ready for his migration to Puerto Vallarta. He hopes to be able to give a show and tell on his Molino from Mexico for the November meeting.



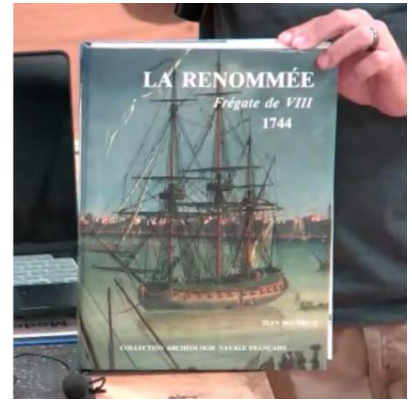
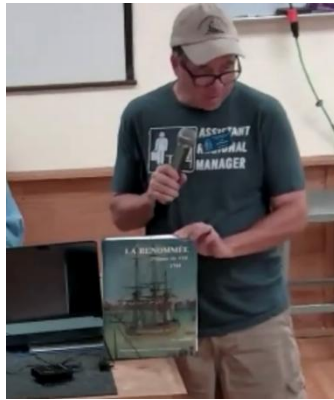
Michael Caramia showed the group his Baltimore Clipper, the Albatros. The kit was from Mantua was his first model and is a plank on bulkhead. His build is approximately 50% scratch.

The Albatros was made for coastal patrol and probably smuggling. Some of the parts did not seem to be built to scale, especially the cannons. It is a top sail schooner, and the model is 39 years old as he started it in June of 1981 and finished it in October of 1986. This build time included a huge move of the family.



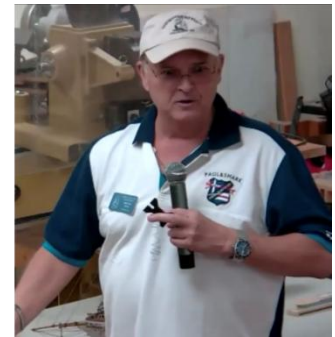
Jay McK Plan showed everyone a scratch-build book that while from the outside looks like a book, it is actually a set of 1:48 plans. The La Renommée was a plank on frame. The book is in the club's library.

Did you know that the [club had a library?](#)



Martin T showed the group his Sultana. The model was more than entry level but was enjoyable to make. After seeing one of Ralph's rigging jigs last month, he decided to make one himself.

The Sultana was a solid hull kit and required a lot of work that was different from his previous builds. He had to mark where each frame would have been and then rasped and sanded it to make the sides symmetrical. The rigging line was a problem as it kept spiraling "up" making rigging next to impossible. He tried weights, wax, and finally a heat gun to get the line to straighten out.



Marv O showed us a deadeye that he built when he was building the schooner John Muir. The ship required 24 deadeyes and for some reason he built 25 and this one has been knocking around with him ever since. It is made of lignum vitae wood from central America. This wood was used for ball bearings for a while.

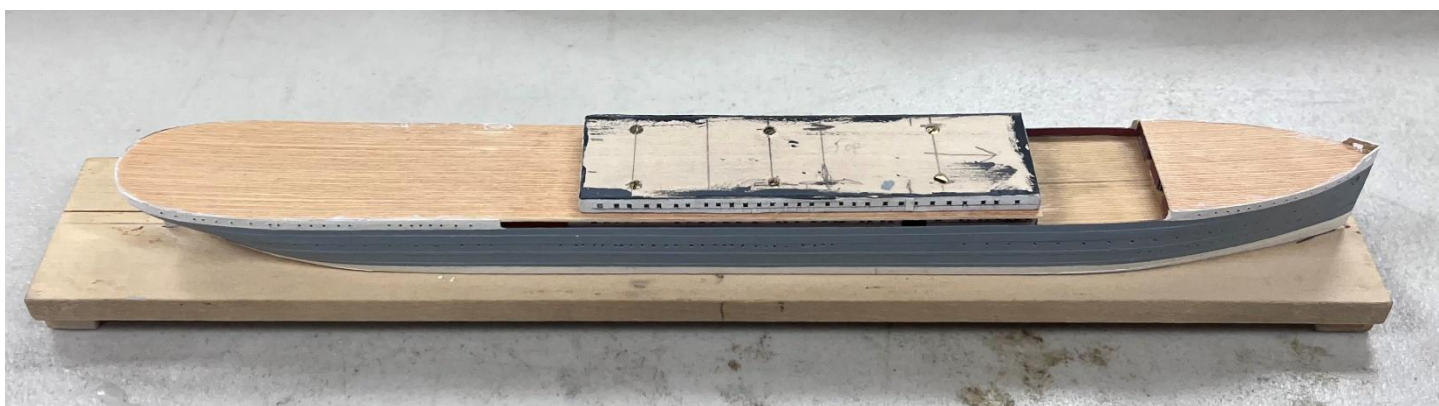


He is donating the deadeye to the club (in addition to several books).



Bob F showed his scratch build of the liner SS Insulinde. It was a Dutch steamship built in 1914 by the Rotterdam Lloyd company to serve the Rotterdam to the East Indies (later known as Jakarta). The ship was later renamed Banfora in 1933 after being sold to Fabre Lines and subsequently served as a British troop and supply transport during World War II.

He is building it as a gift for a friend's wife who is from Indonesia. The hull is carved and is at 1:600 scale. He uses mostly basswood and holly. The deck is made from holly which he likes as it has a very small grain and is light colored. The deck receives a few coats of lacquer and is then placed on a drawing board where he scribes the lines of the deck boards with a razor blade. Lastly, he puts on a coat of stain that he quickly wipes off, but it has enough time to get into the scribed lines.



Adjourn & Skipper's Table

The meeting adjourned at 11:41am, and several members headed next door for the Skipper's Table Lunch at BoHeo Pho Kitchen (next door to Rockler's).

October 4, 2025 Workshop

Turnout for the October workshop was extremely light (maybe members were attending the [High Plains Modelers Convention](#) in Loveland) as only four members showed up. They were Ralph Buckwalter, Martin Jelesma, Hugh Long, and Phil von der Heydt. In addition to the members, there were two guests, Bill Coleman and his wife had heard about the workshop and decided to swing by. They have recently moved to the area from Oregon to be closer to their kids and grandkids. Bill has scratch-built several ships over the years.

In addition to some modelling going on, there was a lot of talk about the upcoming show. And of course there was a plethora of coffee and donuts.



Elly & Hugh L



Ralph B



Martin J

Here's what everyone is working on:

- Ralph Buckwalter; Berbice Baltimore Clipper
- Martin Jelsema; Rattlesnake Frigate
- Hugh Long; Conversation & donuts
- Phil von der Heydt; Donuts

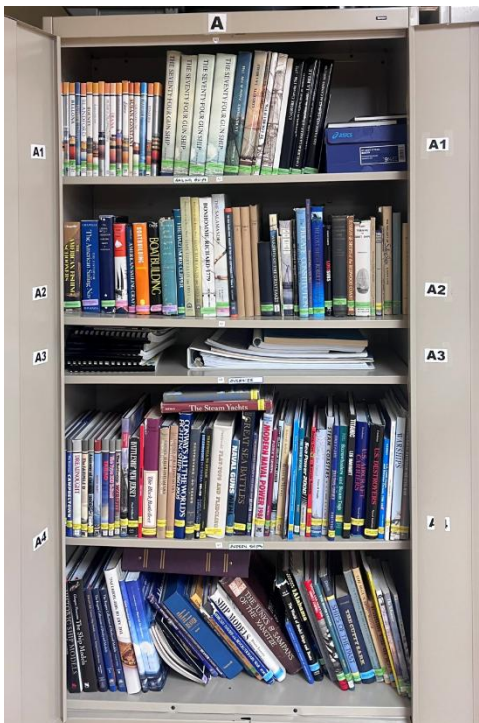
The Library

Ever know you need some help and know it is covered in a book, or maybe you like to read about naval history? Did you know that the Rocky Mountain Shipwrights has a library with over 400 books as well as a large inventory of magazines, tools, and ship plans for members to use.

The library is located in the cabinets at the back of the room at Rockler's. Next time you are at a meeting at Rockler's, take a look.

The titles are constantly in flux as books are checked in and out (mostly on the honor system) by members plus we have new donations all the time.

If you are wondering about a specific title, our would like to see the list, check out the [website](#) or reach out to [us](#).



The Art of Sanding

[Paraphrasing from the Suburban Ship Modeler](#)

Sanding is something that we all do, but many times the importance of sanding gets overlooked. In this issue, I am going to focus on the different grits of sandpaper, and some of the more common sanding tools. Next month I plan on diving into the actual art of sanding.

I believe we all know how important sanding is, but I bet there are times that in our excitement to move forward with our build, we skip giving parts a proper sanding. For me, I almost always must remind myself that if the part is not sanded, it will stand out, even if it will be painted later. Paint will not make an unsanded board smooth.

Every piece of wood that goes on your ship should be sanded. How much you sand is a matter of preference. A quick sand with a low-grit sheet of sandpaper will give a rougher finish, which might be what you are after if you want that real-world 'wood' look. If you are looking for a more polished look, you might use a higher grit sheet of paper.

Sandpaper Grit

It is recommended to use a variety of sandpaper grits and sanding tools.



Commonly used grits are 800, 400, 220, 150, and 80. The higher the number of grit, the finer the finish, while the lower the number, the more wood it takes off (and the rougher the finish). I usually split my full sheets into $\frac{1}{4}$ sheets which allows a substantial number and variety of grits to be stored in quart sized baggie.

A low grit, like 80 or 100, is great for evening out pieces of wood that do not quite line up or quickly reducing the thickness of something.

A medium grit, like 220, will remove less at a time, and gives a fairly nice finish.

A high grit, like 400 or 800, will give an exceptionally smooth finish, but it will not help much if a bunch of material needs to be removed.

Impact of sanding

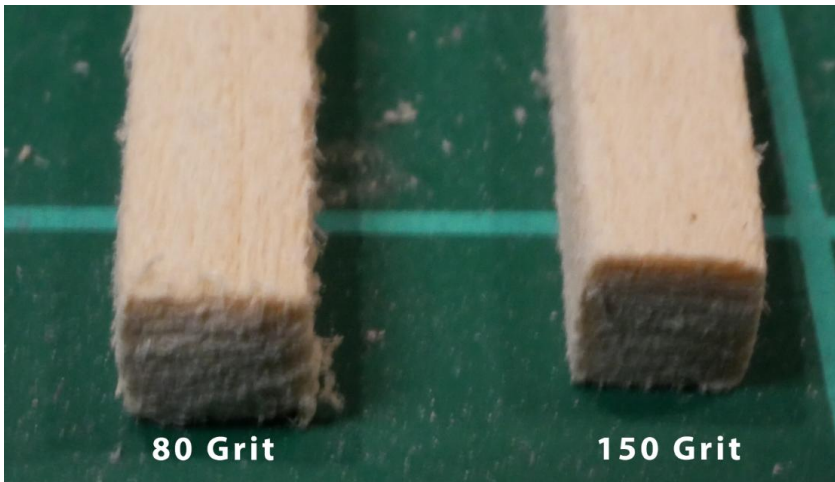
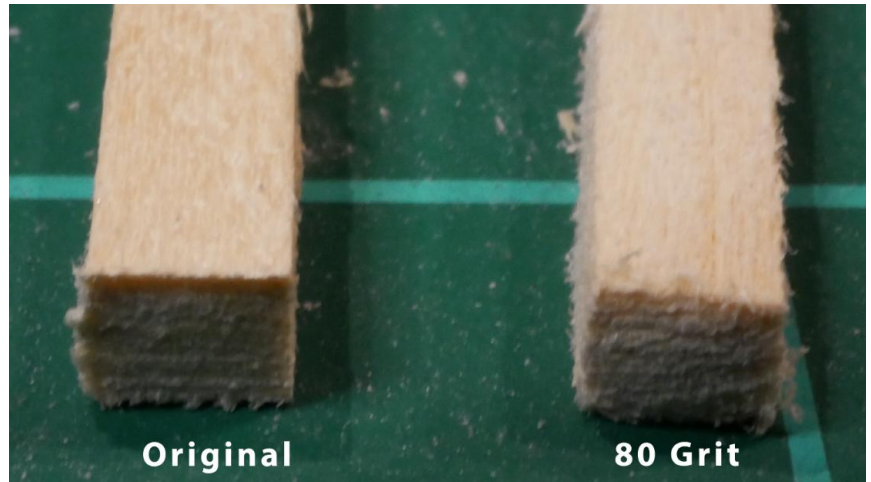


From left to right, un-sanded, 80 grit, 150, 220, 400 and 800.

Left to right, you see the original wood, with no sanding, then 80 grit, 150, 220, 400, and 800. The wood starts off as pretty rough, then getting progressively smoother.

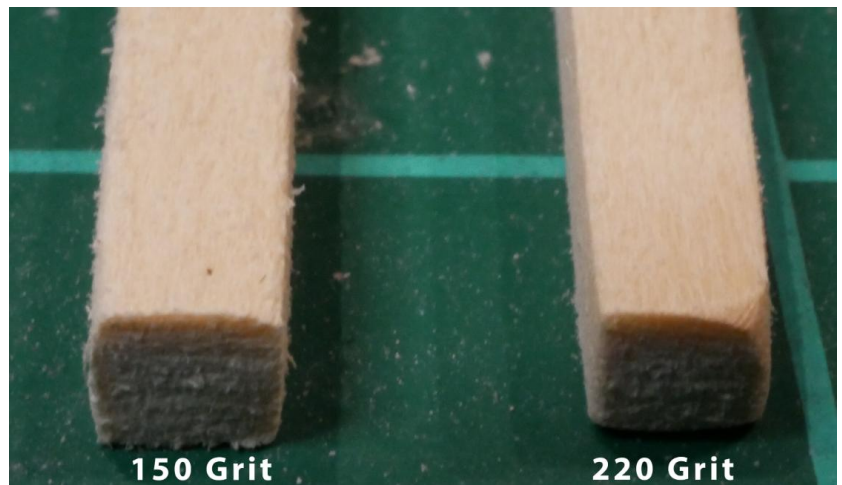
Sanding with 80 grit paper actually appears to make the surface worse.

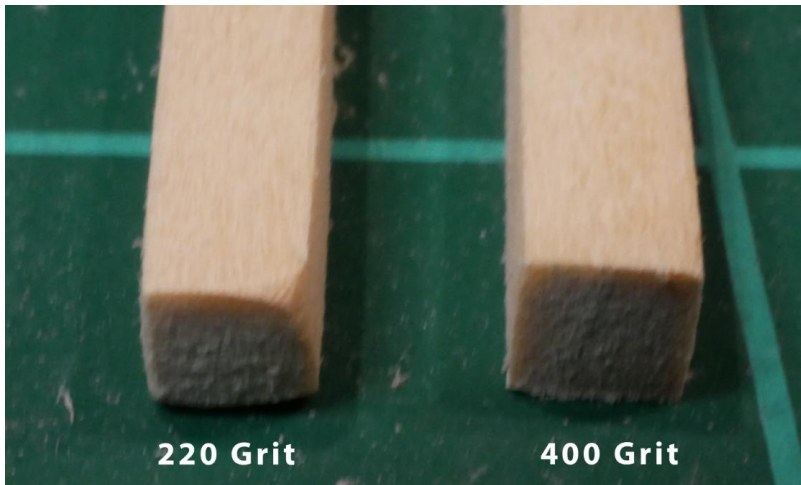
Notice the texture of the wood is even rougher than it started! This proves that rough sandpaper is great for removing material, but it is not going to give you a smooth wood surface.



Sanding with 150 gives a slightly better finish (in this example) than the original. It is definitely better than the 80 grit, but still not smooth.

At 220 grit, the surface starts to look good, and the wood is getting a smooth finish.

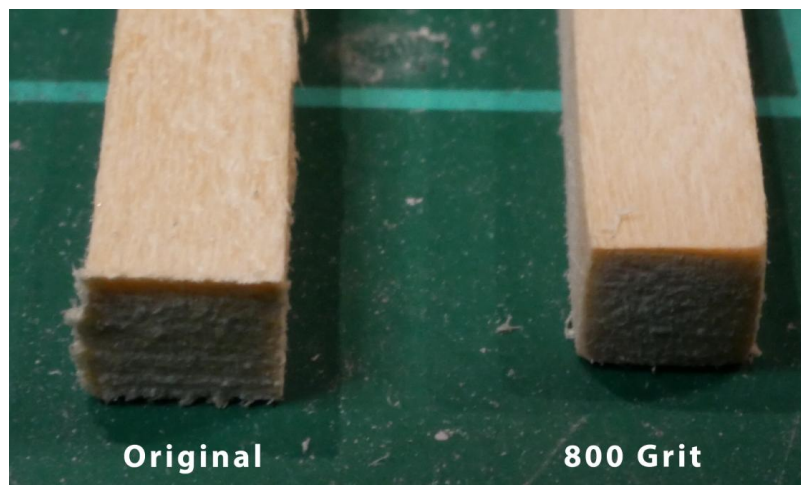
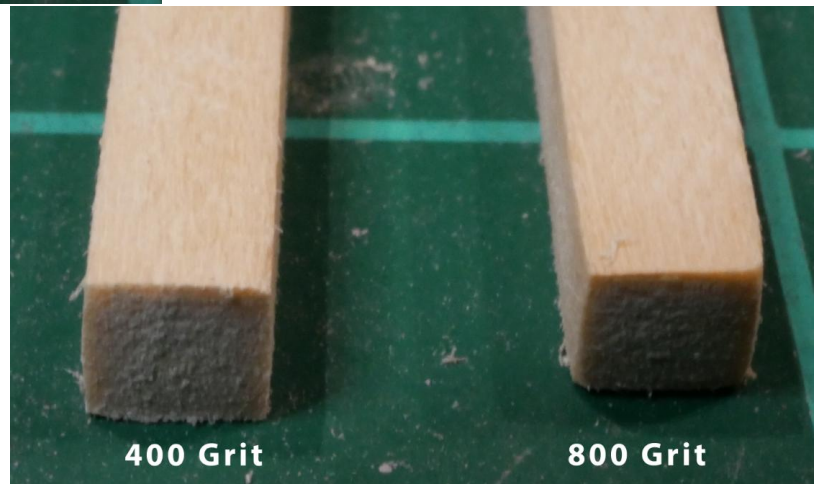




At 400 grit, the surface starts to get really smooth. This is normally the point where you cannot detect any roughness when you run your finger over the surface. For many places on the ship, 400 will give you a nice, smooth surface. When painted, you will still be able to see the grain of the wood if the paint is not too thick.

Finally, at 800 grit, the surface of the wood is exceptionally smooth, and depending on the paint, you can get a finish where you cannot even see the wood grain.

Comparing un-sanded (left) to the final 800-grit result.



To wrap up this discussion on sandpaper grits, let us compare the original un-sanded wood to the final 800 grit version. There is a very noticeable difference.

Ultimately, it is up to the builder to decide what finish you want to achieve, and thus what grit should be used. And if you do not need to remove material (thin down some wood), you do not

need to work your way up through the various grits. You should be able to do the initial sanding with whatever grit gives you the desired finish. Most wood that comes in ship kits is already cut pretty nicely. Jumping right to a high grit also helps to ensure you do not take a $1/8''$ piece down to $1/16''$ because you were just trying to smooth it out.

If you need to sand something that is already painted (the paint itself is a little rough, or because there is bead of paint you want to eliminate), there are even higher grit available at a hobby or hardware store. These higher grits can be up to 12,000 and can be used on painted surfaces.

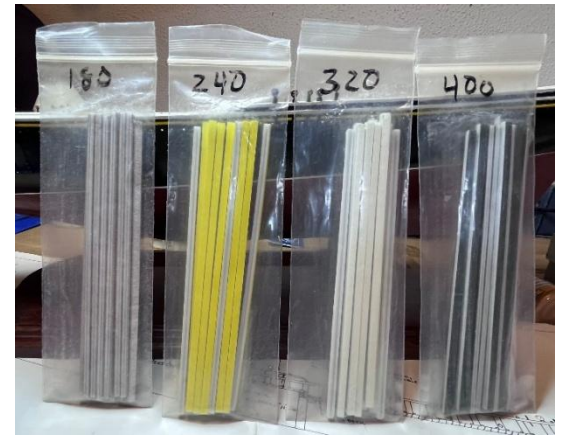
Sanding Sticks

There are also foam sanding sticks that can be used in tight spaces.

Sanding Blocks



Some sanding can be done with just a piece of sandpaper. In these cases, use a 1" by 3" piece, often folded over. Using a small piece gives better control over where you sand.



For larger areas, or for when you need to keep a surface flat, you need a sanding block. Sanding blocks are essential for keeping the surface flat and straight.

There are a number of blocks available, and it will be up to the builder to decide which one they prefer.

Some blocks, like the Sand-it, use a ¼ page of sandpaper and give multiple types of sanding surfaces (flat, convex, and concave).

Dremel

If you need to remove a LOT of material and do not feel like carving, a Dremel is very handy.



A Dremel is sometimes a better choice if you need to remove a LOT of material. A flex-shaft attachment makes it easier to use.



Recently I had struggled cutting some openings on my build, first I tried whittling, then I tried sawing, I even tried using a bench pin and a saw, but none worked very well. Then I thought of my Goxawee (cost effective Dremel-like device) and the circular sanding drums. That along with the bench pin was the trick. Together, they let me not just create the openings but let me fairly easily modify as needed.

Files

There are many small metal files that come in assorted sizes and shapes. These are handy for cleaning up joints, sanding the inside of holes, or getting into corners.

Sanding is critical for getting a good finish on your ship and can make a dramatic difference in the final result. A variety of sandpaper grits, as well as some tools for special purposes (blocks, files, or sticks) is extra nice.

A Dremel is not essential but definitely has its place.



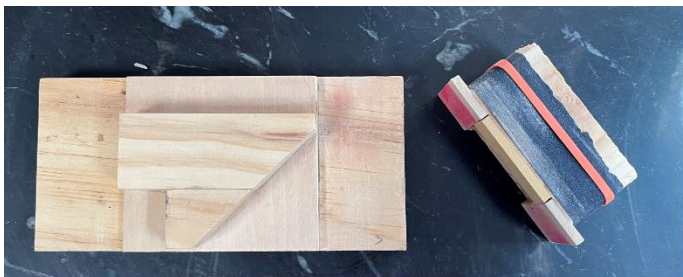
Shooting Board for Sanding

Recently I ran across yet another time where I needed to cut a number of boards, and wanted them each to have ends that were square to the sides. I cut each board and then used my sanding block to sand the ends. It worked, just like it has in the past, but it was only as good as how much time I spent on the sanding. It was very easy to accidentally sand an angle other than the desired 90 degrees.

I knew there had to be something out there that would make this task easier. The first thing I found was "Sand It" by Micro-Mark. It was a bit pricey (around \$35-\$40) and was difficult to find in a quick manner. I then found things called Shooting Boards. They are used in wood-working to cut angles.

Putting the ideas of the two things together I came up with my home-made shooting board for sanding. I'm sure it doesn't work as well as the one from Micro-Mark, but the price was right (free as I had the scrap wood in my garage) and its delivery was great too (just 30 or so minutes to make).

The main board is made with 4 pieces of wood and the sanding block was made with 3 pieces (later increased to 4) and a rubber band. The set up allows for both 90 degree and 45 degree sanding



Place the boards (works equally well with multiple boards) in either the 90 or 45 degree area, with just a little over-hang. While firmly holding the board(s) in place, tightly grab the sanding block (you hold the sand paper in place) and gently move it back and forth until you get the desired angle.

For a single board or just a couple, I probably would not use it, but as the number of boards increases, I prefer it. If you'd like more information, please let me know.

See you next month when I delve into the actual art of sanding.

We still have kits!

Any remaining kits will be available at the Shipwrights Store during the Boat Show. The inventory constantly changes, so the list below may not be 100% accurate.

Ship Name	Vendor	Retail Max	Suggested Price	Discount	Scale	Comment	Estimated difficulty
Cutty Sark	Sergal (Mantua)	870.00	200.00	77%	1:78	Big Model - Box is crushed - model ok inside	Expert
Canadian Fishing Schooner (blue nose) 1921	Model Shipways	300.00	75.00	75%	1;64	Length 32 Nice looking boat	Intermediate
New York Pilot Boad (Phantom - 1866)	Model Shipways	250.00	70.00	72%	1:96	Small basic boat	Basic - advanced Beginner
New York Pilot Boad (Phantom - 1866)	Model Shipways	250.00	70.00	72%	1:96	Small basic boat	Basic - advanced Beginner

Independence 1775	Artesania Latina	130.00	35.00	73%	1:35	length 29 - nice boat for sure	Advanced Beginner
North Atalantic Fishing Trawler	Lindberg	45.00	12.50	72%	Plastic	Length 17	Easy Beginner
Tuna Clipper	Lindberg	38.00	10.00	74%	Plastic	length 14	Easy Beginner
Kits from John McGann							
HMS BOUNTY	Marine Model Inc.	150.00	35.00		77%	1/4" = 1 ft	Solid hull
RATTLESNAKE	Model Shipways (1963)	150.00	35.00		77%		Solid hull
WILLIE E. BENNETT	Model shipways (1989)	75.00	15.00		80%	3/8" = 1 ft	solid hull
SEA WITCH	Marine Model Inc.	150.00	35.00		77%		Solid Hull
FLYING FISH	Model Shipways	175.00	40.00		77%	1/8" = 1 ft	Solid hull
SOVERIGN OF THE SEAS	A.J. Fisher	175.00	40.00		77%		solid hull
CHARLES MORGAN	Marine Model Inc.	100.00	25.00		75%	5/32" = 1 ft	Solid hull
BENJAMIN LATHAM, 1901	Model Shipways (1901)	150.00	35.00		77%	1/4" = 1 ft	Solid Hull
PRESSEN , 5 mast Clipper	Heller	150.00	35.00		77%	1:150	Plastic
30' cutter & 28' pinnace Harold Underhill							plans

Get Your Swag

- For polo shirts, caps, and vests, ask **Steve Lofshult** at any meeting.
- For name badges, ask **Rob Cuscaden** at any meeting.



Update to Website Password

In the past, club members were the only ones to have access to the archive of the Scuttlebutt on the website. This portion of the [website](#) was locked down to members only. Recently the password was removed, and anyone can access the Scuttlebutt.

Ships In Scale Magazine

< Copied from [Ships In Scale](#)>

Ships in Scale magazine is back and charting a new course for 2026!

Celebrating the art and joy of ship modeling for builders of all levels, Ships in Scale offers practical build logs, step-by-step techniques, inspiring stories, and a wide variety of subjects — from workboats and coasters to classic sailing ships and modern vessels.

Whether you are starting your first kit or refining advanced skills, Ships in Scale provides approachable, hands-on guidance and showcases the creativity and dedication of modelers everywhere.

What's Inside?

- Tool and technique tutorials
- Tips & Tricks
- Product reviews (tools, paints, etc.)
- Scratch-building techniques
- Step-by-step build logs (wood kits)
- Historical articles about ships
- Book reviews
- New kit announcements
- Profiles of modelers and their work
- And more!

Celebrate the Craft of Ship Modeling

Discover new skills, new techniques, and new inspirations in every issue.

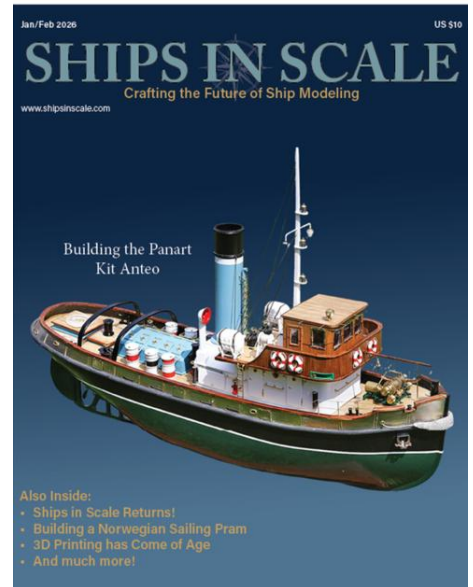
Ships in Scale is your trusted source for high-quality, practical, and inspiring content that honors the rich tradition of model shipbuilding.

NOTE THAT OUR FIRST ISSUE WILL BE JAN/FEB 2026

Ships in Scale Magazine is making a comeback under new ownership. It will officially launch in 2026 with the January/February issue, but you can sign up now and get 10% off of your first year's subscription! For more information, view the attached PDF or go to www.ShipsinScale.com.

PRE-ORDER SHIPS IN SCALE TODAY!

- Digital Only - Relaunch Special! - \$35.95
- Print & Digital - Relaunch Special! - \$40.45



Sources of Tools, Supplies & Services

Rocky Mountain Shipwrights is not affiliated with any of the companies in the lists below (other than the fact that we meet on the **3rd Saturday of each month at Rockler**).

The first list is of selected on-line suppliers. The second list is of local suppliers of goods and services that could be of value to ship modelers. And the third list is of additional resources. **Think of these lists as incomplete.** If you use or have discovered others, please email them to hlong222@comcast.net and they will be added to the lists. With your contributions, we can make these lists a more comprehensive and valuable resource.

Online Suppliers

Nautical Hobby Shops

[Ages of Sail](#)

Kits, parts, plans, supplies, and tools.

[Blue Jacket Shipcrafters](#)

Kits, parts, plans, supplies, and tools.

[Cast Your Anchor](#)

Kits, supplies, and tools; based in Canada so shipping is a little longer.

[Model Expo](#)

Nautical hobby shop, extensive ship kits, parts, tools, and supplies

[Modelers Central](#)

Kits, supplies, plans, and tools

[Seaworthy Small Ships](#)

Kits are geared towards new and younger modelers.

[Syren Ship Model Fittings and Supplies](#)

Ship model kits, parts, and scale fittings.

[Wooden Model Ship Kit](#)

Ship model kits, parts, and scale fittings.

Tools

[Byrnes Model Machines](#)

Top of the Line micro-saws, sanders, and other tools

[Contenti Jewelry Supply](#)

Jewelry tools, fair prices on hand tools, cheap and quality versions of most tools.

[MicroMark](#)

Small tool specialist; a small selection of ship kits, and ship modelling supplies.

[UMM-USA](#)

Modeling tools for plastic and wood models

[Razor Blade Company](#)

Cutting blades and handles

Materials

[Cards of Wood](#)

Thin veneer and plywood

[Constantines's Wood Center](#)

Wood veneers plus Rockler-like tools and supplies.

[National Balsa](#)

Wood supplier, airplane centric but good stock of dimensional strips, sheets, and substantial number of blocks in diverse types of wood. It may have a \$50 minimum order.

[Northeastern Scale Lumber](#)

Wood and fabricated wood for models, doll houses, and railroad layouts

[Saunders Midwest Products](#)

Balsa, basswood and more – strips, sheets, and dowels. Also, beginner boat kits

Parts

[Flags of the World](#)

Info about all types of flags but not a source of nautical modeling flags

[I.T. Sitek Props](#)

Scale model ships propellers.

Graphics

[Shapeways](#)

3d printing company with parts for units ranging from complete ships to figureheads. Also does custom work.

Local Sources

[ABC Imaging](#)

77 Klamath St. Denver
303-573-5757
Large & small format copying, B&W printing

[Art Parts Creative Resource Center](#)

3080 Valmont Road, Boulder
720-379-5328
Contributed used arts stuff you get for cheap, from chalk to sewing machines, and more.

[Austin Hardwoods of Denver](#)

975 W Mississippi Ave, Denver
303-733-1292

Colpar/Hobbytown – two locations

[Aurora Location](#)

1915 S Havana St, Aurora, CO
303-341-0414

[Lakewood Location](#)

3355 S Wadsworth Blvd, Lakewood, CO
303-988-5157
These are good local hobby shops that have a selection of wood ship kits, supplies, and tools.

[Guirys](#)

Multiple locations
303-412-6522
Art supplies and house paints

[Hobby Lobby](#)

Multiple locations
Arts and craft supplies

[Laird Plastics](#)

10004 E 45th Ave, Denver, CO
866-292-9090
For plastic case covers ask for Tracy

[Meininger Art Supply](#)

499 Broadway, Denver
303-698-3838
Paints, brushes, tools, paper, and more

[Michael's](#)

Multiple locations
Arts and crafts supplies

[Plasticare](#)

4211 S Natches Ct Suite K, Englewood, CO
303-781-1171
Plastic supplier/resin with customer shop. can do acrylic fabrication & laser engraving.

[Reynolds Advanced Materials](#)

3920 Grape Street, Denver
303-399-0202
Clays, resins, silicone, and more

[Rocky Mountain Train Supply](#)

6060A W 55th Ave, Arvada, CO
303-456-6702
Only model-train store in Denver, broad selection of supplies, strip wood, details, scenic supplies.

[Rockler Woodworking and Hardware](#)

2553 S Colorado Blvd, Denver, CO
303-782-0588
Home base for wood, tools, and supplies

[Thinker Tinker Workshop](#)

3735 Ames St. Wheat Ridge, CO 80212
303-748-9180
A building and creative space for all ages

[Woodcraft of Colorado](#)

6770 S Peoria Street, Centennial
303-290-0007

Selected Informational Resources for Model Builders

[Model Ship Builder](#)

This website has a popular forum with over 1900 members and an extensive group of building logs. They also sponsor group builds and provide an opportunity for members to place articles. The site also has archived issues of "Warships and Workboats" and "MSB Journal."

[Ships of Scale](#)

This website provides a forum and build logs from around the world, though it is an English language site headquartered in the USA. It was never associated with the now-defunct *Ships In Scale* magazine; those are the intellectual property of the Nautical Research Guild.

[Nautical Research Guild](#)

Official website for this premier ship building organization. There are articles, links, and NRG news.

[Model Ship World](#)

The Nautical Research Guild operates this large comprehensive site. It is a major forum with build logs and responses to modeler's questions. Also access shop notes, tips, techniques, and research.

[John's Nautical & Boatbuilding Page](#)

This site includes mostly life-size boat building material, but its self-proclaimed "Mother of All Maritime Links" can be helpful.

[Bottled Ship Builder](#)

This is a forum that is all about ships in bottles and miniature buildings. Information for anyone interested in ships in bottles and miniatures.

[Model Ship Building Secrets](#)

This is an English blog with a directory, "50 of the Best Model Ship Building Sites".

[DeAgostini Model Space](#)

A British commercial site selling kits and tools with a forum filled with build logs of large models.

[Arsenal Modelist](#)

Olivier Bello's ship modeling site features forty-three short tutorials, closeups of his fine work and building logs.

[Wooden Ship Modeling for Dummies](#) (aka Naval Model Making for Dummies)

The site contains illustrated photos (three thousand) and videos (two hundred). However, unless you pay to subscribe, you may only access a limited amount of this instructional material. Those unrestricted tutorials are certainly worth exploring.



THE NAUTICAL RESEARCH GUILD

"ADVANCING SHIP MODELING THROUGH RESEARCH"

Annual membership includes our world-renowned quarterly magazine, *Nautical Research Journal*, which features photographs and articles on ship model building, naval architecture, merchant and naval ship construction, maritime trade, nautical and maritime history, nautical archaeology and maritime art.

Other benefits include discounts on annual conferences, ship modeling seminars, NRG products and juried model competitions which are offered exclusively to Guild members. We hope you will consider joining our ongoing celebration of model ships and maritime history.

For more information contact us at: www.thenrg.org or call 585 968 8111

