

December 2025

Happy Holidays

Monthly Meeting and Holiday Get Together

Shipwrights 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

Next Meeting Dec. 20, 2025

Click here to stream the Rocky Mountain Shipwright meeting

December Presentation

Shipwrights 2025: A retrospective on what we have learned and where technology will lead us.

Hugh Long and Dave Niss

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: Jan. 3, 2026

Officers

Commodore	Martin Jelsema
Skipper	Phil von der Heydt
First Mate	Alice Sampson
Purser	Steve Lofshult
Clerk	Jay McKeown

Committees

Photographer: Jay Phillips
Historian: Bruce Bollenbach
Scuttlebutt: Hugh Long

Webmaster: Dave Niss/Martin Jelesma Workshop Chair: Ralph Buckwalter Librarians: Alice Sampson/Hugh Long

Website

http://rockymountainshipwrights.org

Cargo Hold

Cargo Hold	2
Skipper's Log	2
November 15, 2025 Meeting	3
December 6, 2025, Workshop	
December 20, 2025, Meeting Agenda	10
RMSW Meetings are Streaming	
What Does Your Workshop Look Like?	10
Members Checking In	11
2026 Officer Nominations	12
Ratlines	13
Get Your Swag	15
Website Password	15
Sources of Tools, Supplies & Services	16
Online Suppliers	16
Local Sources	17
Selected Informational Resources for Model Builders	18

Skipper's Log

2025 has certainly gone by quickly. Many changes have occurred to the Shipwrights this year, hopefully mostly positive:

One of the most significant changes includes the use of audiovisual technology and streaming capabilities for our meetings. In addition, we look forward to having our meetings available on YouTube videos in case you cannot attend or follow online. Also, in the future, you will find the minutes of the meetings in the secure section of the website.

Our team (mostly Dave) is working to edit a full review of the boat show which will also be available on YouTube.

With winter coming on and potential winter weather we hope to avoid having meeting cancellations and encourage each of you to avoid risky driving by connecting to the streaming meetings. (assuming some of us can make it).

One of the topics that has come up since the boat show is the issue of the Modelers' Choice Award and other recognitions at the boat show. This is an area that has some support, and we will be looking to form a committee to investigate the best way to deal with these issues for future boat shows.

We are looking forward to a new year with continued growth of membership and improving attendance at our meetings. We look forward to everyone's input as to how our meetings could improve and for volunteers to offer their expertise to make interesting presentations to the club. We know that each of us has expertise in both technical skills and nautical history. We hope that you will raise your hand and offer to share next year.

Do not forget that the December 20 meeting is also the annual celebration lunch sponsored by the Shipwrights. Please RSVP so that we are assured to have enough food for everyone.

Fair winds and following seas.

Phil Phil von der Heydt, Skipper Bvdh@aol.com 817 832 7631 **Editor's note:** You will see a couple of things that are different starting with this issue of the Scuttlebutt. In the past, as Phil mentioned, the full minutes were included in each issue of the Scuttlebutt. Moving forward we will be pulling parts of the minutes out of the newsletter, specifically the financial information and business items of the club. But do not fret, the full minutes will be available to club members on our website, in both pdf form as well as in video, but these will be password protected.

Another change you will see is that in addition to the normal write up of the Presentation and Show and Tells, we will have links to the club's YouTube channel where you can view that portion of the meeting. We will be working at getting the full video of the meeting posted to the channel as well – but it will be password protected.

November 15, 2025 Meeting

There were eighteen attendees at the meeting, as well as two online attendees. In person attendees were Steven Alford, Fred Bell, Ralph Buckwalter, Michael Caramia, Terry Duffin, Dan Hart, Steve Lofshult, Russ Markowski, Dave Niss, Marv Olson, Jay Phillips, Jeffrey Ross, Alice Sampson, Chuck Stroble, Martin Ters, Phil van der Heydt, James Webster, and John Worgan.

Our online attendees were Hugh Long and Scott Shilling.

Skipper Phil called the meeting to order at 9:40am and lead the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance.



(Left to Right): Steven A, Mary O, James W, Fred B, Jeffrey R, Michael C, Dan H, Ralph B, Steve L, Martin T, and John W

Members can find the full minutes here.

After the Skipper's and Purser's reports, two new members that were in attendance were introduced.

- Iames Webster
 - Joined at the workshop
 - Working on the Albatros from OcCre; found group online right after the show
 - o James can be found on Model Ship World with the username of vvvjames
- Iohn Worgan
 - Joined at the recent Model Show.
 - Has not built a ship yet, but his last kid just left for college giving him some free time. He has OcCre's Golden Hind, a Mississippi Steam Ship, and the Shelly Foss Tugboat (from his grandfather).



Steve L





John W and James W

After the new member introductions, the new and old business items of the club were discussed. Members can review the full minutes here.



(Left to Right): Steve L, Phil vdH, Ralph B, Michael C, Dan H, Martin T, Russ M, Jeffrey R, and Fred B

The meeting was streamed on Zoom under the watchful eyes of David N. and Terry D. A big shout out to these two for their work.





Terry D and Dave N

Scott S and Hugh L attended from afar. Scott was sailing near Charleston and Hugh was in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

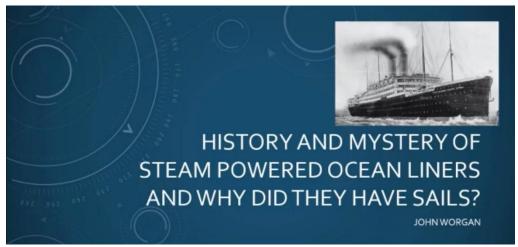




Scott S and Hugh L

History and mystery

John Worgan presented "The History of Steam Powered Ocean liners and why they had sails."



The idea for the presentation came from John's belief that his grandfather sailed on a liberty ship that had sails, but while researching he found that his grandfather's ship wasn't actually a liberty ship (which were built assembly-line fashion during the war), but rather an ocean liner with sails.

So even though the type of ship had changed, the question still remained... why did it have sails?

To find out the answer, please check out John's full presentation on the <u>Club's YouTube channel</u>. The video can be found <u>here</u>. Please check out the channel and like the video. Additionally, please subscribe to the channel so we know people are using it.



John W

For those of you who want the answer, but do not want to watch the presentation, the answer will be given towards the end of the newsletter.



(Left to Right): Steven A, James W, Jeffrey R, Marv O, Fred B, Russ M, Martin T, Michael C, Dan H, Ralph B, and Steve L

Technology:

- A discussion on planking techniques
 - o Phil starts at gunnels and works towards the middle using tapered pieces
 - Others say you do not taper a plank more than ½ of its original width.
 - Overall topic will be rescheduled.



(Left to Right): Jeffrey R, Dan H, Ralph B, Marv O, Steve L, Michael C, Russ M, James W, Steven A, and Chuck S

Show and Tell

A video of the Show and Tells can be found here.

Martin Ters

- Micro drill with diamond tipped bits and some small bits. This micro drill will only hold bits down to about 0.5mm, a bit too big for many projects.
- Phil has had problems with powered drills and small bits as the speed and small diameter bits tend to break. He uses a pin vise instead.





Manual Craft Drill Sharp HSS Micro Mini Twist Drill Bits Set, Pin Vise Hand Drill for Jewelry Making; Small Hand Drill for Resin, Rotary Tools for Wood, Jewelry, Plastic, Miniature - Blue



LET'S RESIN Cordless Drill, 19Pcs Electric Resin Jewelry Drill, 3-Speed Rechargeable Small Drill with Deburring Tool, Hand Drill for Resin Jewelry Making, Keychain Making, Multi-Purpose Resin Tools



3-Speed Cordless Mini Drill Pen With 8 Small Drill Bits,Rechargeable Electric Hand Drill Pin Vise,Resin Drill Set For Jewelry Making,Resin,Plastic,Wood,Keychains DIY (BLUE)

James Webster

- Brought in his Albatros by OcCre. This is his first model, and he has done several enhancements, such as the staircase, the cabin, the lining of the gun ports, and the breeching lines for the cannons. He made eyebolts using 24-gauge steel wire and just added the port side main mast shrouds.
- To see more of James' build, go to <u>Ratlines</u> later in this issue.
- Question to the group... What is the spacing between the deadeyes (other than just what is shown in the plans).
 - Phil suggests using graph paper when tying ratlines. Do not cut the tails too short as the clove hitches are adjustable, allowing adjustment after all are done.
 - Ralph suggests using a fabric glue called Fray Check as it is designed to prevent fraying.















The meeting was adjourned at 11:45am and 6 members joined Phil at BoHo Pho for lunch with the Skipper.

December 6, 2025, Workshop

There were ten club members at the workshop including Bob Fivehouse, Dan Hart, Martin Jelsema, Steve Lofshult, David Niss, Jay Phillips, Jeff Ross, Bob Tucker, Phil von der Heydt, and James Webster. Additionally, there were four guests: Lawrence & Michelle Kuo, John Ott, and Bill Waggoner.

Here's what everyone is working on:

Bob Fivehouse: Shotton

Dan Hart: Cousteau's Calypso

• Martin Jelsema: Rattlesnake Frigate

Steve Lofshult: Pond Yacht Restoration

• David Niss: NRG Half-hull Planking Model

• Jay Phillips; Ancient Egyptian Tomb Ship Models

• Jeff Ross: Flying Cloud

Bob Tucker: PVAM

• Phil von der Heydt: Donuts

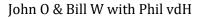
• James Webster: In-between; waiting for HMS Beagle

The workshop was a bit different than normal as we were locked out of the room for around an hour, as Ralph is out of town and no one else had a key. Finally, a city employee came by and let us in.

John O and Bill W donated a model kit of Yacht America.

Lawrence K is a modeler working on the Pride of Baltimore II. He attended as well as his wife Michelle.







(Left to Right): Steve L, Bob T, John O, Dan H, Martin J, David N, James W, Bob F, and Jeff Ross



(Left to Right): Martin J, David N, Jeff R, Dan H, Bob F, Michelle K, Phil vdH, James W, Lawrence K, Steve L, and Bob T



Bob F's Shotton



(Left to Right): Dan H, Martin J, Bob T, Phil vdH, and Bob F



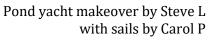


(Left to Right): Dan H, Bob T, Bob F, Lawrence K, Martin J, and Phil vdH

Martin J and Jay P



(Left to Right): Bob T, Martin J, Dan H, Steve L, Phil vdH, Bob F, Jeff R, James W, Lawrence K, and David N





December 20, 2025, Meeting Agenda

Please join us on Saturday December 20th at Rockler Woodworking and Hardware for our monthly meeting. The store opens at 9:00 am and the meeting starts at 9:30 am. Rockler is located at 2553 S. Colorado Blvd. Denver, Colorado 80222.

- Flag Ceremony
- Skipper's Report
- Purser's Report
 - o Introduction of new members
- Old Business
- New Business
 - The Logan School*
 - o The Boat Show ...An exhibition or a competition?
- Break
- History, mystery, and technology (40minutes)
 - Shipwrights 2025: A retrospective on what we have learned and where technology will lead us.
 Hugh Long and Dave Niss
- Show and Tell
- Break
- Holiday Celebration/Lunch

RMSW Meetings are Streaming

If you cannot join us in person, please join us online as the meetings are now streamed on Zoom, but we will not be delivering food to the online attendees.

We are still looking for a person to help with the behind-the-scenes stuff that it takes to stream a meeting. If you are interested in helping (even just for this meeting), please let us know.

The link to join the stream is <u>Rocky Mountain Shipwright meeting</u>.

• 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).

What Does Your Workshop Look Like?

In September I asked for volunteers to highlight their workshops and finally got a volunteer... Jeff Porter.

Jeff is a long-time club member who now resides in Florida. Jeff can be found on Ships Of Scale under the username of Corsair.

He says he owes the shop totally to his wife (do not most of us). When he moved from CO to FL, he was looking for a house with a separate shop or a 3-car garage. He had pretty much given up on finding one and told the realtor to just find them a 2-car

garage. Unbeknownst to Jeff, his wife told the realtor to keep looking for a 3-car garage and they finally found one. He then turned one of the bays of the garage into his shop! A huge step up from his previous shop which had him building in the home office.





The TV is also the monitor for the computer that has mounted above it.

Thanks for sharing, Jeff!

So, what does your workshop look like? Send a couple of pictures and a little bit about it and you will get to see it in a future issue of the Scuttlebutt.

Members Checking In

We received a couple of pictures from members who are currently not in town, but they wanted to say "hi."

Jon Sorensen now resides in Gulf Shores, where he has been for over 2 years. He has not found a local club so will enjoy our streamed meetings.

In addition to ship building (he is currently working on a model of the HMS Warrior) he enjoys fishing. He says that fishing in the Gulf depends on the moon's location to determine the best times. Going out on a boat is best.

Jon is the happy fisherman on the left.



Scott Shilling is currently sailing along the east coast of the US aboard Salty. Here is a picture of Salty leaving Charleston.



Answer to John Worgan's question from his presentation...

And the answer to the question from John Worgan's presentation "Why did Steam Powered Ocean Liners have Sails?" ... The masts remained on the ships as the new steam technology was not fully trusted (sailors are known to be a bit superstitious) and was then later used as a communication tool (signal flags and antennas as time progressed.)

2026 Officer Nominations

At the November meeting, Ralph Buckwalter, our Officer nomination chairperson, announced the nominees for 2026. They are:

Phil von der Heydt - President/Skipper

• The President/Skipper shall have general supervision of the Club and its functions, preside over meetings of the club and the Board of Directors, call any special meetings, and appoint committees as required herein or as deemed appropriate, including appointment of an editor of the monthly newsletter ("Scuttlebutt").

Alice Sampson - Vice President/First Mate

• The Vice President/First Mate shall preside over the meetings in the Skipper's absence and shall organize a program for the regular meetings of the Club. If possible, program topics are to be announced in advance in the newsletter.

Steve Lofshult - Treasurer/Purser

• The Treasure/Purser shall maintain the membership list of the Club, shall receive, and disburse the Club's funds as authorized and shall maintain a bank account for such purpose, as well as the financial records of the Club. He/she shall report periodically to the membership on the balance of any bank account. In addition, once yearly, an audit of the accounts will be conducted in concert with competent and responsible club members. To reserve/protect our sole usage of the Rocky Mountain Shipwrights Club name the Purser shall renew the registration/certification with the Colorado Secretary of State every two years.

Jay McKeown - Secretary/Ship's Clerk

• The Secretary/Ship's Clerk shall maintain any official records of the Club including minutes of the monthly Club meetings.

Our formal election will take place at the December meeting.

The Committee leads are as follows (these are volunteers and are not voted on):

Events Chair:

Photographer: Jay PhillipsHistorian: Bruce Bollenbach

Scuttlebutt: Hugh Long

Webmaster: Dave Niss/Martin Jelesma
Workshop Chair: Ralph Buckwalter
Librarians: Alice Sampson & Hugh Long

Ratlines

By definition, ratlines are a series of small ropes tied across a ship's shrouds like the rungs of a ladder and are used for climbing the rigging. Or, as many of us think, they are a tedious task where we must tie a million knots.

Recently while scrolling through my Reddit feed, I ran across a time-lapse video of someone tying all of the ratlines of one mast. The whole thing was done in less than 30 seconds. Simply amazing.

The Redditor was using some sort of jig I had not seen before, and I was immediately drawn in. The source of the jig was linked in the comments so I checked it out and it went to <u>Model Ship World</u>.

The MSW post was from 9 years ago, posted by a "guest", so other than a quick check in with the poster, I couldn't get more information, but they said that the jig was simply two pieces of stock that have the width of the desired ratline spacing, and are a bit longer that the widest section of the ratline. A strip of fine grit sandpaper (somewhere between 180 to 330 grit) is glued to one side of each piece of stock and clamped in place (with the sandpaper side against the ratline). These are then used as a guide.





To expand upon the width of the strips, the width is equal to the vertical distance between the individual shrouds, or, more precisely stated, the distance between the knots. For those that like numbers, here are a couple of good widths based upon the model's scale:

- 4mm plank for a scale of 1:100
- 6mm plank for a scale of 1:72 (equal to a distance of 43mm)
- 8mm plank for a scale of 1:50 model

The sandpaper holds the ratlines in place, allowing the modeler to not have to worry about the "hourglass effect" on the main lines. These allowed the knots to be tightened easily without moving the vertical lines and kept the ratlines nice and tight.

After a knot is tied, it can be gently moved down to the jig until the knot rests slightly between the two pieces of stock giving a nice straight and tight ratline. Once a row is completed, the jig is moved up and the process begins again.



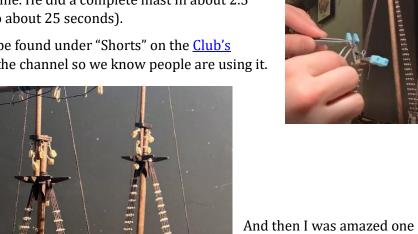


The modeler of these examples (not James) admitted he used the wrong color of line, but look at those ratlines

Once done with a row or the complete ratlines, put a drop of white glue on the knots.

After reading through the MSW post, I returned to Reddit and <u>watched the video again</u>. And it seemed to be even better than the first time. He did a complete mast in about 2.5 hours (which the time-lapse video shortened to about 25 seconds).

For those of you without Reddit, the <u>video</u> can be found under "Shorts" on the <u>Club's</u> <u>YouTube channel</u>. Please like and subscribe to the channel so we know people are using it.







final time when I looked up the Redditor and saw his username... jwebster2016. Our own James Webster, a new member from November. And yes, these are his first ratlines!

Get Your Swag

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



Website Password

Certain parts of our website will be password protected. Currently it is only the Meeting Minutes and the video of the Club items and financials. These portions of the website will be locked down to members only. The password was included in the email announcing the release of the Scuttlebutt. If you ever need the password, please reach out to RockyMountainShipwrights1991@gmail.com.

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 sentinars, 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

