



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.

February 2026

Going Once, Going Twice, Sold...

Monthly Meeting

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 Feb. 21, 2026

[Click here to stream the Rocky Mountain Shipwright meeting](#)

Annual Auction

No February Presentation

There will not be a presentation at the February meeting.

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: Mar. 7, 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 Jelsema
Workshop Chair: Ralph Buckwalter
Librarians: Alice Sampson

Website

<http://rockymountainshipwrights.org>

Cargo Hold

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Skipper's Log

This month's meeting will be the annual auction. I hope that everyone looks through their workbench and shop to find equipment and other materials that you have not used for several years. This is a fantastic opportunity to perform a shop cleanup and an opportunity to find new treasures. Thanks to Bob and all who will be helping to make this a great event. I understand that there are quite a few items and it might be a great idea to bundle some of your auction items. Check-in may take a while, so it would be helpful if you could take a few minutes NOW and email Jay McKeown information about your items for the auction. There is more information about how to [pre-register your item\(s\) as well as how to get the info to Jay](#) later in this issue. A few minutes now will save a lot of time and stress later.

Our friend Dave Brooks from the Wood Turners has taken it upon himself to clean up the display cases at Rockler's and has made them available for us to display models and information about our club. This is a terrific opportunity for us to be a little more visible in the building and show off our art. So, look at the stairway cabinets and the mantle place in the area where we have our boat show. If you have a boat that you are willing to display and it will fit; please let [Alice](#) know and we can make that happen. I do not believe there are any restrictions as to how long or how short of time that we will be able to use the spaces or how long any individual boat needs to stay.

Thanks to Dave and Hugh, we will be online for the auction. This month, the technological skills of these guys have made it possible for online participants to participate in the auction. The audio will be functioning this time. Fair winds and following seas.

Phil
Phil von der Heydt, Skipper
Bvdh@aol.com
817 832 7631

Editor's Note: We are still catching up on posting the videos from our meetings. Hopefully, we will catch up soon.

It is Dues-paying Time

Yes, it is that time again. The dues are still just \$12.00. Your Purser, Steve Lofshult, can take your payment at a meeting or a workshop. Payment can be cash (small bills please), check (it can be mailed to him at 4025 West 104th Drive, unit D, Westminster, CO 80031), or by credit card (check with Steve about the card reader). Please pay before March 1st.

January 17, 2025 Meeting

There were twenty-five attendees including seven online members (z) for the meeting. They were Fred Bell, Ralph Buckwalter, Michael Caramia, Joeseeph Carroll, Ross Clark, Bob Fivehouse, Lawrence Kuo (z), Steve Lofshult, Hugh Long (z), Mike Maung, Dennis Newman, Dave Niss, Jay Phillips, Mark Persichetti, Jeff Potter, Giuseppe (Joe) Presta (z), Jeff Ross, Bob Rushforth, Thom Scheerer (z), Jon Sorensen (z), Martin Ters, Barb van der Heydt, Phil van der Heydt, and John Worgan (z). There was also one unidentified person.

The meeting was streamed on Zoom with Dave at the helm.

Skipper Phil called the meeting to order at 9:35am and lead the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance.



Michael C, Barb vdH, Mark P, unidentified person, Jeff R, Joeseeph C, Dennis, Mike M, Bob F, Ralph, and Martin T

After the Skipper's and Purser's reports, any new member introductions, the new and old business items of the club were discussed. Members can review the full minutes [here](#).



Online attendees: Lawrence, Hugh, Jeff P, Giuseppe (Joe), Thom, Jon S, and John W
Clockwise – Hugh, Giuseppe (Joe), Thom, Jon S



Steve, Barb vdH, Jeff R, and Michael C



Dave, Bob F, Ralph, and Phil



Dave, Phil, Ralph, Bob F, Martin T, Michael C, and Mike M

Presentation

Ralph Buckwalter presented Towards a Better Model, a presentation that was put together about ten years ago by Fred Tournier, a founding member of the Rocky Mountain Shipwrights. The presentation is based upon a series of articles that originally appeared in the January, February, and March issues of the Scuttlebutt in 2015

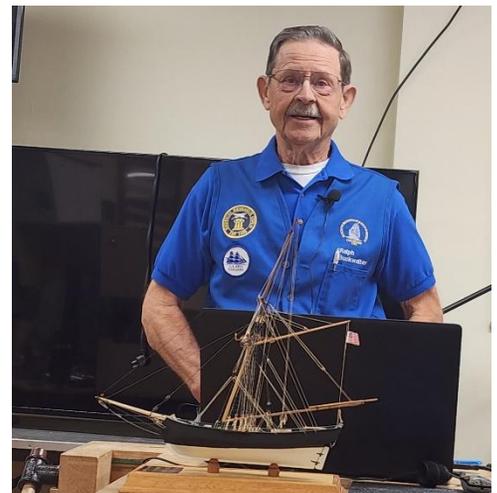
The articles explored how to look at your models and how to improve a kit. Fred wanted members to be able to take their models from “good” to “better.” And it started with just “doing it right.”

We are re-running the articles in the Scuttlebutt, starting with this issue. The first installment “[Towards a Better Model - Rigging](#)” can be found later in this issue.

Fred was highlighted in a video from the first model show at Lowery. A link to it was included in the November 2025 Scuttlebutt. The full video is about five and a half minutes and is repeated as it was shown on two different newscasts. The video can be found [here](#).

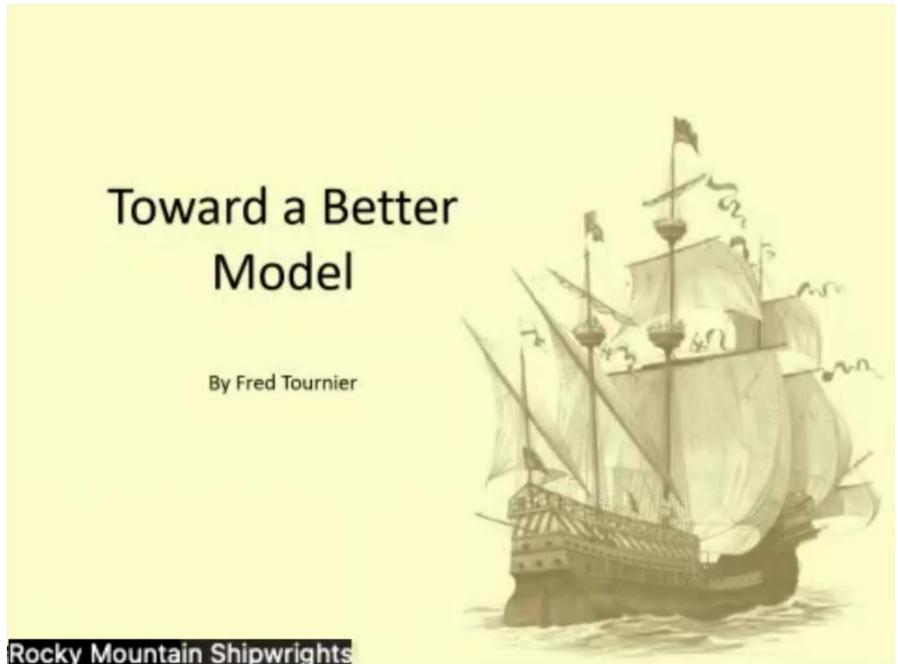
Fred Tournier’s bio:

- Fred was born in Kansas, 4/4/1933, and at the age of 12 he received a set of X-Acto knives which he kept until he passed away.
- He came to Denver in 1942, where he carved spotter plane silhouettes. These carvings were painted black to help WWII airmen identify enemy airplanes.
- His 1st ship model was the USS Essex by Ideal.



- He served in Korea from 1953 to 55 in the 2nd Division Heavy Mortar Company
- After the war he ran "Quarterdeck," a small maritime store in Heritage Square, a storybook Victorian theme park/shopping village in Golden, Colorado.

- He somehow made making and restoring model ships his living and restored models for Clive Cussler, the Boxer Foundation, The Ship's Tavern, Peter Coors Sr, Denver Mayor William McNicols, Colorado Governor William Noss, and Warden Roy Best.



- The ship he restored for Roy Best was made by an English prisoner and was given to Fred by an English Warden. During Fred's restoration, he found a small hidden compartment in the ship that contained a small bottle of pills, 3 bullets, and a small knife.
 - In the ship he restored for Governor Noss, he found an 1855 gold half dollar stuck between the bulwark and the deck.
- Fred was a founding member of the Rocky Mountain Shipwrights and a member of NRG (Nautical Research Guild), and with the Shipwrights he conducted 4 club builds, two of which Ralph was part of the group build. The ships were:
 - New York Pilot Boat Phantom which was based on plans from Model Shipways kit
 - Brig Lady Washington was built from plans of a replica ship supplied by another club member, Ed Leviker.
 - The Cod Banger, a fishing schooner was built from plans drawn/created by Fred based on an article in Model Shipwright Magazine
 - Lady Hamilton was built from plans drawn/created by Fred based plans in one of Howard Chappelle's books, probably The National Watercraft Collection.
- Fred usually worked on 5 to 10 models at a time.
- He helped members improve their models by pointing out details like
 - Proper shades of colors based on specific era.
 - Rigging lines and fittings
- Fred passed away on one of the days of the Club's show in 2016.
 - Members went to pick up a few ships for the show and upon not getting an answer, called 911. They found Fred dead.
- Many of his models are still on display in various museums and libraries across the country.

Ralph wrapped up the presentation by showing his group build of the Lady Hamilton and showing his figure-eight method of tying strops.



Figure Eight Strops

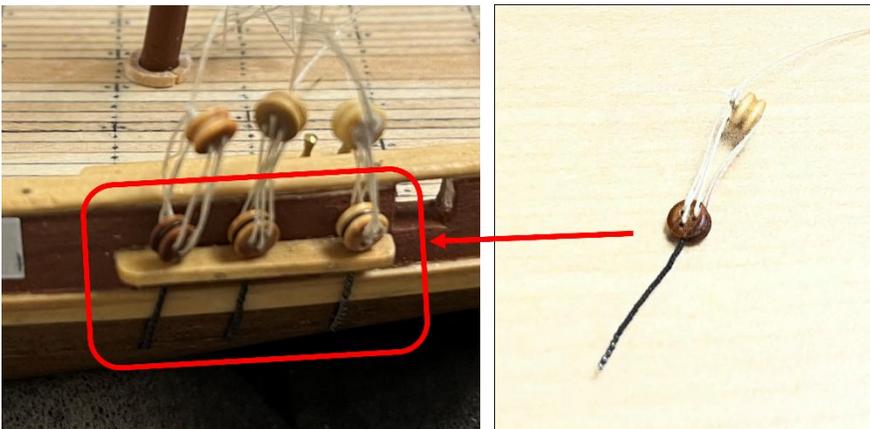
A strop on a ship is a durable loop of rope, wire, or metal used to secure blocks (pulleys) to spars, hold rigging components in place, or secure loads. Often made of rope with spliced ends, they provide a flexible, non-corrosive attachment point for running rigging, such as on booms or yards. In model ship building, a strop is the loop of line that wraps around a block or deadeye to secure it to the ship's rigging, masts, or yards. Because standard rigging blocks are too small to be nailed or bolted, the strop provides the essential structural link.

Ralph uses a "figure-eight" technique to create a secure, double-looped strop that can hold a hook or be attached to a yard.

The stropping line is formed by creating two loops, shaped like the number "8". At the center of the "8" (where the lines cross), the lines are seized together with a fine thread. The block is placed in one loop and the attachment point (such as a hook or a yard arm) is placed in the other loop (hooks and ringbolts should be placed on the line prior to seizing). The tails are then gently pulled until the loops tighten up against their respective object(s), and the excess tails are cut off.



In the picture above, a DIY ringbolt was placed on the line prior to seizing in one of the loops. A block would be placed in the other loop, and the tails would be gently pulled to tighten the loops.



This picture to the left shows how this can be used to attach a deadeye to a chainplate.

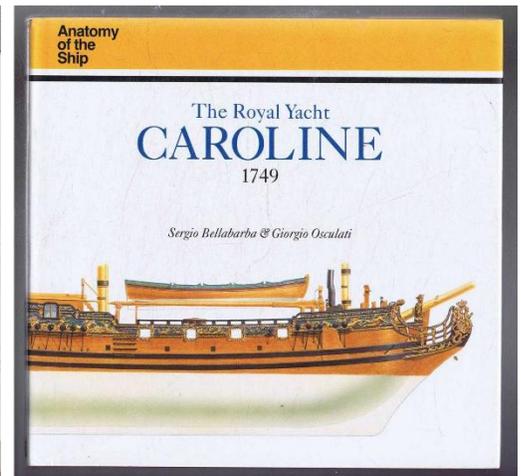


Dave, Fred, Bob F, Phil, Ralph, Michael C, Joseph C, Dennis N, Mike M, Martin T, Jeff R, Mark P, Ross C, Bob R

Show and Tell

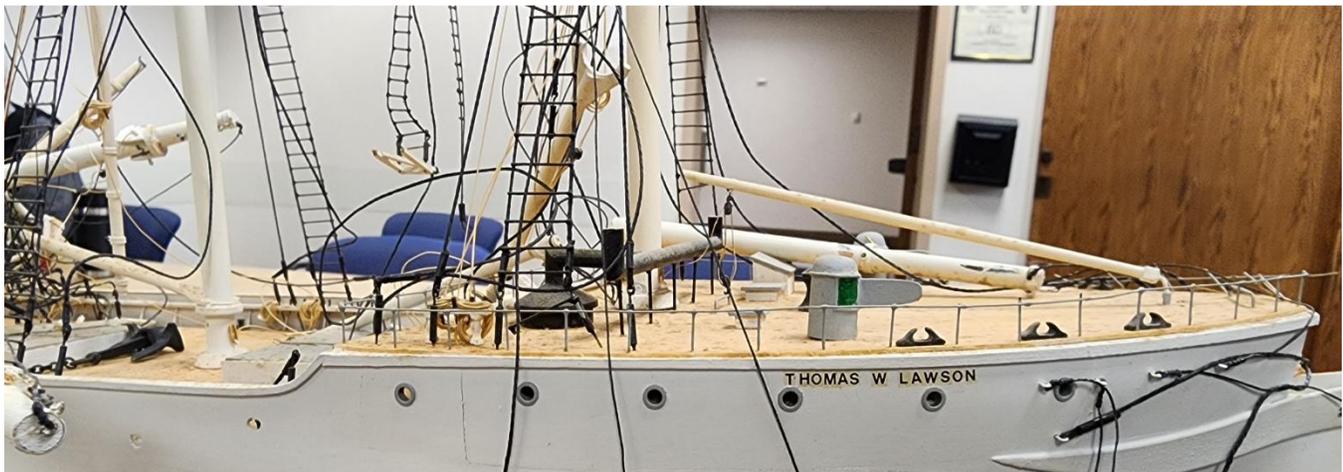
Martin Ters showed his Royal Caroline 1749 which he purchased at a previous club auction.

- o Talked about using a solid mount to hold a ship better which he drills holes completely through the hull and uses long screws.
- o Has completed the first planking which required a lot of fairing.
- o Purchased a book “The Royal Yacht Caroline, 1749 (Anatomy of the Ship)” by Sergio Bellabarba and Georgio Osculati to get a better idea of the paint and color scheme.



Restoration Request

- The club was recently contacted to see if we were interested in restoring the Thomas W. Lawson. It was a seven-masted, steel-hulled schooner that was damaged during shipping.
- The great grandfather of the requestor was the Captain, George W. Dow
- The captain and the engineer Edward L. Rowe were the only survivors when the ship sank in 1907.



Bob Fivehouse was contacted by a club in Tulsa, OK as one of their members has recently passed away. They are trying to sell the members' kits. See the [list of the kits](#) later in this issue of the Scuttlebutt.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:17am and members were invited to BoHo Pho (next door to Rockler's) to partake in the Skipper's Lunch.

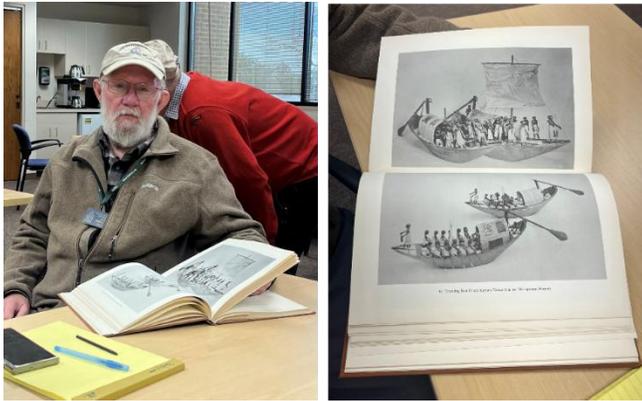
Members can find the full minutes [here](#).

February 7, 2025, Workshop

There were eleven club members at the workshop. They were Ralph Buckwalter, Brian Davies, Bob Fivehouse, Martin Jelsema, Steve Lofshult, Hugh Long, David Niss, Jay Phillips, Jeff Ross, Martin Ters, and Phil von der Heydt.

Here's what everyone is working on:

- Ralph Buckwalter: Berbice Baltimore Clipper
- Brian Davies: Brig Eagle 1814
- Bob Fivehouse: Insulinde
- Martin Jelsema: Rattlesnake Frigate
- Steve Lofshult: Purser duties
- Hugh Long: Measuring threads
- David Niss: NRG Half-hull Planking Model
- Jay Phillips: Ancient Egyptian Tomb Ship Models
- Jeff Ross: Flying Cloud
- Martin Ters: Royal Caroline 1749
- Phil von der Heydt: Donuts



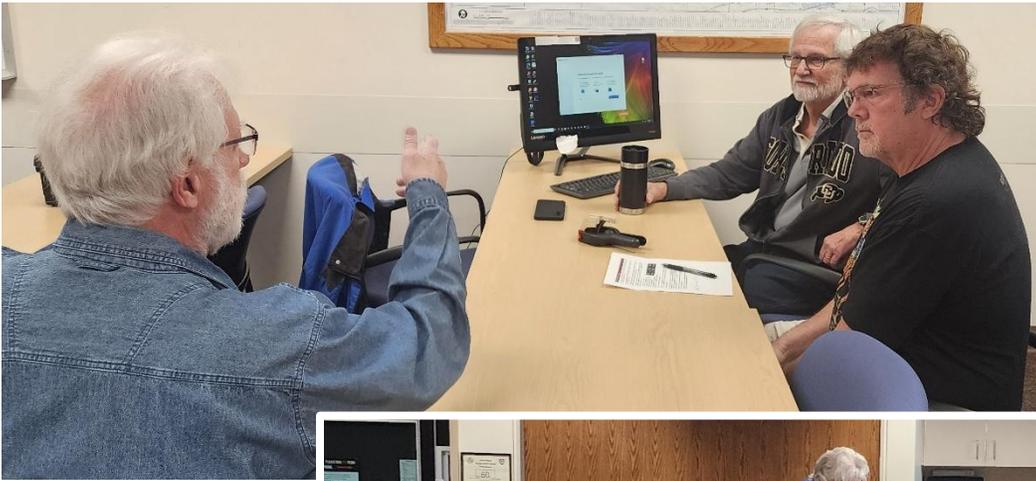
Jay P researching Ancient Egyptian Tomb Ship Models



Jeff's Flying Cloud copper plating



Martin T, Jeff R (Flying Cloud's copper plating), Dave N, Phil, Hugh, and Martin J



Bob F, Dave, and Hugh discussing the auction



Phil, Steve L, Jeff R, Ralph, Martin T, Martin J, and Brian



Martin J, Phil, and Charlie

Phil, Bob F, Hugh





Bob F, Jeff R, Martin T, Phil, and Brian



Martin T and his
Royal Caroline 1749



Martin J and his Rattlesnake



Ralph's Berbice



Phil's ongoing project

February 21, 2026, Meeting Agenda

Please join us on Saturday February 21st 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.

[Click here to stream the Rocky Mountain Shipwright meeting](#)

- 9:00-10:00AM Auction item check-in and participant registration
 - Flag Ceremony
 - First Mate's Report
 - Purser's Report
 - Old Business
 - New Business
 - BREAK -Visit auction items
 - Auction—Bob Fivehouse
 - Adjourn

Auction

Our auction will be on February 21st, following an abbreviated meeting.

We have a number of great items but are still looking for more. I am sure there are a lot of you whose eyes have been bigger than your available time and you have some great stuff that you would like to get rid of.

The members should bring the items they wish to sell to the February meeting. When they arrive at the meeting, they check in and get a bidding number and paddle. The items should be clearly identified on the item with the owner's name and a description of the item. If they have a reserve for the item, they should identify the item, their name and the reserve on a separate sheet that will then go to the auctioneer in confidentiality.



We will need two or three runners and the treasurer and an assistant. The money transactions were explained at the January meeting and will be reviewed prior to the start of the auction.

Seller Pre-registration

Each item/lot you wish to have auctioned off must be accompanied by a Lot Description Form. *These forms are being distributed along with this issue of the Scuttlebutt as well as the distribution of the February Meeting agenda.*

Fill in your name and item description for each lot. A lot may be a "bundle" of items (three books for instance) or a single item. For sheets with multiple items, it is best to print out the sheet and then cut the page into three separate forms.

ENTRY FORM Please use the forms to submit your items for the auction. If there are any special requests or instructions, please add them to the description. Also, if there is a minimum bid, please ensure that you enter that value into the minimum bid field.

First Name _____

Item Name _____

Item Description _____

Reserve/Minimum Bid (If there is one) _____

To be filled out by auction administrators: Lot ____ Winning bid ____ Purchaser ID ____

Additionally we are asking that you please pre-register your items by emailing [Jay McKeown](#) the following information:

- Your Name
- Description
- Reserve, if any

NOTE: there will be blank forms available if you have last-minute items to sell.

Lot Registration Process

Upon arriving at Rockler's on the day of the auction, find the check-in table. There each lot will be assigned a Lot Number that will be recorded on the Lot Description Form. If you wish to place a reserve on a lot, (i.e., designate the lot must be sold for more than the designated reserve amount.) tell the in-take person who will record the amount on a reserve list for the auctioneer. Once registered, the lots and their forms will be placed on the review tables for potential bidders to review.

Bidder participation

At the bidder participation table, potential bidders will be assigned a unique numbered bidding paddle to be used to indicate you are bidding on the current lot. Raise the paddle to participate at the current auctioneer's call; lower the paddle if you no longer wish to participate. You may re-enter the bidding again by raising the paddle. If a lot has a reserve designation and the bidding has not reached that reserve, the auctioneer may ask the lot owner if they wish to cancel the reserve and accept the last bid. Once a winner is declared that person will take possession of the lot. The accompanying Lot Description Form will be updated with the winner's paddle number and the purchase amount. The purser will use the information to consolidate all purchases into statements for each winner. *Those statements will be distributed at the March meeting.* Any winners not attending will receive their statement by email.

Non-member participation

Any non-member who participates and wins a lot must pay for their purchase in cash or by check at the meeting.

Online Auction Participation

From an auction perspective, the best way to participate in the auction is to be in attendance, but we know not everyone can attend.

Unfortunately, we will not have a list or pictures of the items. We will do our best to show the item to our online audience.

At the start of the auction, we will go over the rules. We have not conducted an auction over Zoom before, so the information below may change at any point.

If you plan on bidding on an item, at the start of the auction, **unmute yourself** and create a bidding "paddle." This is nothing more than a piece of paper with your name on it. Please make the letters BIG. During the break directly before the start of the auction, we will attempt to test each online attendee's audio, making sure they can be heard and confirm their bidding paddle.



To unmute yourself in a Zoom meeting, click the microphone icon ("Unmute") in the bottom-left corner of the screen, or use the keyboard shortcut Alt+A (Windows) or Cmd+Shift+A (Mac). When unmuted, the red line over the microphone icon disappears.

Here is a [video](#) showing the unmute process.

If you have a question about an item, please speak up, and we will attempt to get your question(s) answered. Do not be afraid to use hand gestures in addition to speaking up.

GET OUR ATTENTION.

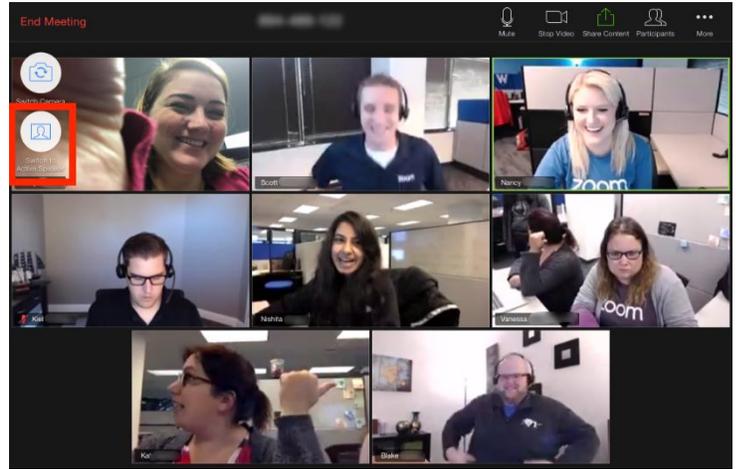
When bidding, please speak up and raise your bidding paddle, and we will do our best to get your bid in. Having never attempted this before, and knowing everyone has different computers, phones, and tablets, plus everyone's connection is different, we do not know if there will be any lag between what is happening live, and what our online audience is seeing.

The sooner you chime in that you are interested in an item, the more likelihood that we will get your bids in a timely manner.

Our goal (behind the A/V board) is to yell out **"Online Bid - \$ amount,"** so please make sure we can hear and see you.

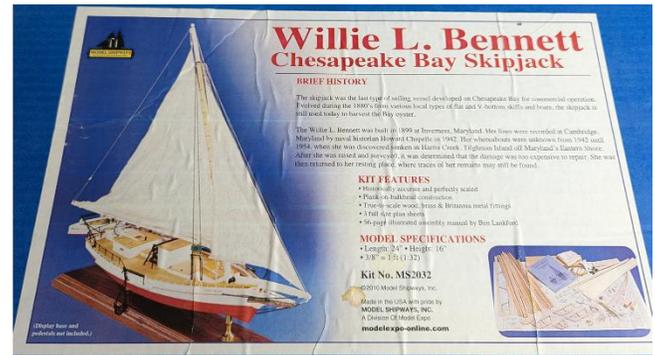
We also plan on switching the video stream for the normal presenter mode (where you only see the speaker) to Gallery View. Gallery view shows every online attendee plus the normal presenter screen.

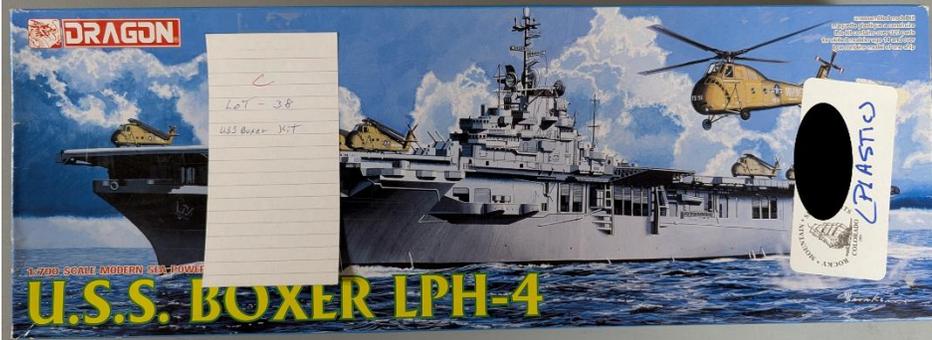
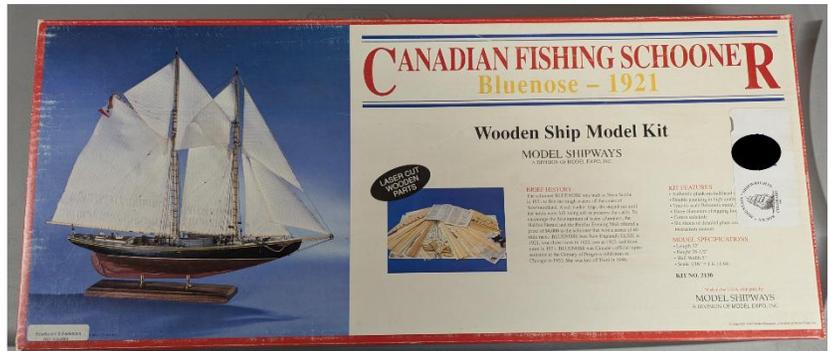
Given this is new to all of us, we cannot guarantee how the online portion goes. Hopefully, it will be a good online experience, but we cannot guarantee it.

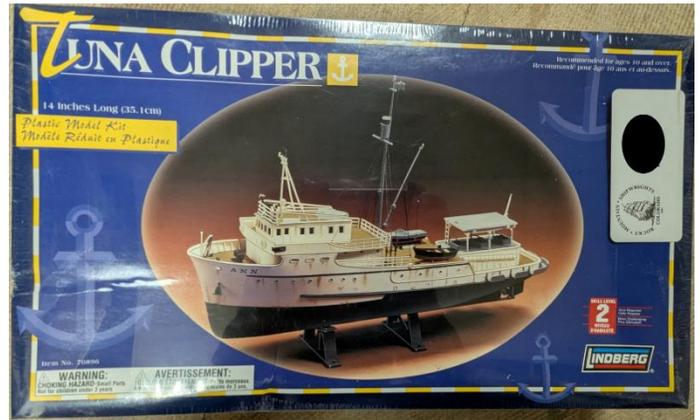
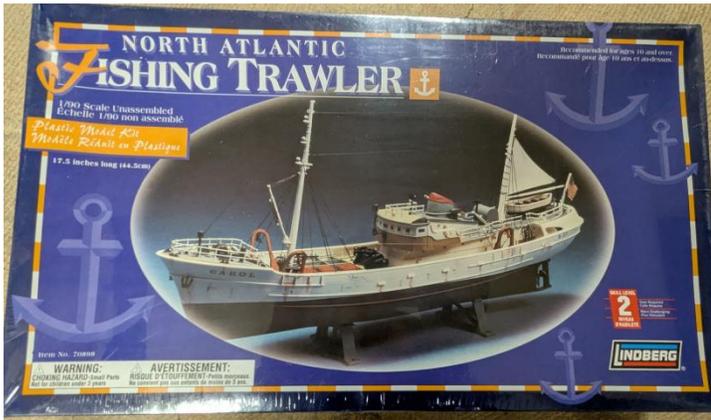


Kits in the Auction

Here are pictures of some of the kits that will be in the auction.







Tulsa Kits for Sale

And if you have not added to your stash enough at the auction...

Bob Fivehouse recently received an email from a club in Tulsa, OK. One of their modelers passed away recently and the club is helping his widow liquidate his stash. The kits are mostly ships - plastic, resin and a few wood. The prices are half or less than they recently sold on eBay or other online marketplace.

If you are interested, contact [Greg Kittinger](#), and he will connect with each modeler individually to secure payment for any particular items (Venmo, CashApp, or PayPal).

Scale	Name	Manufacturer	Kit/Model	Additional Items	Media	eBay	Price
??	USS Arizona	Revell	H-302		Plastic	47	24
1/100	Bell UH-1H Gunship	04983	Revell		Plastic	18	9
1/144	US Navy Landing Ship Medium	Revell	05123		Plastic	45	23
1/15	Phantom 710 Classic American "Runabout"	Billing Boats			Wood & Plastic	215	100
1/150	Passat, 4 masted windjammer	Heller	80888		Plastic	189	65
1/16	Limber Ammunition Chest	MS4002	Model Shipways		Metal	40	20
1/16	Yeoman Warder "Beefeater"	ICM	16006		Plastic	32	16

1/192	USS Cairo	Flagship Models			Resin	100	50
1/192	USS Panay	ISW	4-003		Resin	65	35
1/200	Great Eastern	Schreiber Bogen			Paper	45	23
1/200	I-19 Japanese sub	Nichimoco	Not on box		Plastic	98	50
1/225	USS Oregon	Glencoe	08301	GMM PE, Nuttall barrels super set	Plastic	73	35
1/240	USS Olympia	Revell		GMM PE, Nuttall barrels super set	Plastic	58	30
1/300	German Imperial Navy Warship (1870s-1900s)	Kits Remembre	KRM30001		Plastic	40	20
1/32	UH-1D Huey Gunship	85-5536	Revell		Plastic	29	15
1/32	32-pounder gun deck	1523	Verlinden Productions		Plastic	60	30
1/32	USS Monitor turret	Verlinden	1751		Resin	140	55
1/35	11-inch Dahlgren Naval Gun with Figure	1422	Verlinden Productions		Plastic	90	45
1/35	Skoda 100mm VZ 14 Howitzer	35026	IBG Models		Plastic & Metal	38	19
1/350	Knyaz Suvoruv (Russian battleship)	Eastern Express		WEM PE	Plastic	40	20
1/350	HMS Eskimo Destroyer 1941	Trumpeter	05331		Plastic	65	33
1/350	Varyag (Russian cruiser)	Zvezda			Plastic	41	20
1/350	Kasuga (to be built as Spanish-Am War Spanish cruiser Cristobal Colon)	Combrig	kit 3506		Resin	200	70
1/350	HMS Tiger	Combrig	3534WL		Resin	400	130
1/350	USS Vestal (repair ship at Pearl Harbor)	ISW	4-103		Resin	175	60
1/350	USS Puritan (Spanish-American war era monitor)	ISW	4-141	Nuttall barrels	Resin	105	40
1/350	USS Avocet (seaplane tender Pearl Harbor)	ISW	4-110		Resin	50	25
1/350	USS Texas (1898 Spanish-American war battleship)	ISW	4-137	Nuttall barrels	Resin	200	70
1/350	USS Langley CV-1	ISW	4-102		Resin	400	120
1/350	USS Texas 1944 (Instructions not in box)	ISW	4-118	Nuttall barrels super set	Resin	325	100
1/350	USS West Virginia?? (Box says WV but instructions say Tennessee)	ISW			Resin	325	100
1/350	USS West Virginia (1941 Pearl Harbor)	ISW		Nuttall barrels super set	Resin	325	100
1/350	USS West Virginia (as rebuilt 1944)	ISW		Nuttall 16"-gun barrels, L'Arsenal 5"-gun barrel set	Resin	325	100
1/350	HMS Queen Mary (1915)	ISW	?	ISW brass barrels 13.5" guns	Resin	345	110
1/350	HMS Hood	ISW		Nuttall barrels	Resin	510	170
1/350	HMS Agincourt	ISW			Resin	220	80
1/350	USS Kennebec (AO-36)	ISW	4-107		Resin	195	70
1/350	USS Rudderow	ISW	4-070	PE set	Resin	125	45
1/350	USS Johnston	Yankee Modelworks	YKM-35098	Gun barrels	Resin	130	50
1/350	USS Helena	Yankee Modelworks	YKM-35122	Brass barrels	Resin	200	75
1/400	Bismarck	Heller	81078		Plastic	33	17
1/570	Queen Mary	Revell	05203	WEM PE	Plastic	82	40

1/60	Mayflower	Trumpeter	01201		Plastic	102	50
1/600	RMS Mauritania	Airfix	04207		Plastic	60	30
1/600	RMS Queen Elizabeth	Airfix	06201	WEM PE	Plastic	83	42
1/600	Queen Elizabeth 2	Airfix	??		Plastic	66	33
1/600	HMS Iron Duke (WWI British battleship)	Airfix		WEM PE	Plastic	24	12
1/700	Bismarck	Aoshima	42595		Plastic	30	15
1/700	USS Arizona	Hobby Boss	83401		Plastic	28	14
1/700	HMS Exeter	Matchbox	PK-162		Plastic	30	15
1/700	Prinz Eugen Wooden deck with metal chain, for Tamiya ship ONLY		31805		Plastic	29	15
1/700	HMS Hood Wooden deck with metal chain, for Tamiya ship ONLY		31806		Plastic	24	12
1/700	HMS Ajax (as HMS Achilles)	B-Resina			Resin	59	30
1/700	HMS Agincourt	Combrig	70264		Resin	95	45
1/700	HMS Tiger	Combrig	70285	WEM PE, Nuttall barrels	Resin	100	50
1/700	SMS Von Der Tann	Kaiserliche Marine		WEM general ladders and rails set	Resin	100	50
1/700	SMS Derfflinger	WSW	700-013		Resin	50	25
1/72	British Vosper torpedo boat	Airfix			Plastic	39	20
1/72	U-boat Type IIA (German submarine)	Special Navy??	72002		Plastic	90	45
1/72	40mm Bofors Quad Gun Mk. 2 (2 w/ instructions, 1 without)	72001	Black Cat Models		Plastic	79	40
1/72	40mm Bofors Quad Gun Mk. 2 (2 w/ instructions, 1 without)	72001	Black Cat Models		Plastic	79	40
1/72	40mm Bofors Quad Gun Mk. 2 (2 w/ instructions, 1 without)	72001	Black Cat Models		Plastic	79	40
1/72	German Schnellboot S-100	Revell Germany		WEM PE, Nuttall barrels super set	Plastic brass	42	20
1/72	USS Holland	ISW	4-020		Resin	80	40
1/72	"X" craft	Pavla Models	72068		Resin	100	50
1/72	WWII Gato class submarine...kit 85-0384	Revell			Plastic	220	75
1/75	Winston Churchill 706	Billing Boats			Wood & Resin	250	85
1/96	USS Weehawken	Old Steam Navy	?		Resin	250	85
1/350	USS Arizona	Banner	08801	Tom's PE, WEM ultimate PE set, Nuttall barrels super set	Plastic	71	36
picture	Merrimac						30
picture	Kidd						30
picture	Sunday Showdown						40
picture	Ship						20
picture	Arizona						20

Rocky Mountain Shipwrights Meetings are Streaming

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 [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).

Rocky Mountain Shipwright Online Presence

In addition to the [Rocky Mountain Shipwrights website](#), we also have a [YouTube channel](#).

Please let us know how you would like either of these platforms to improve, as well as how you would like the Scuttlebutt improved.

Please let us know specific topics you would like to see.

Other Online Content

With today's access to the web, there is a huge amount of useful information available to ship modelers. In addition to the list that will be at the end of the newsletter on an on-going basis, we will include links we found recently.

As always, please let us know what links you have found helpful.

Build Logs

We've probably all heard of them, and more than likely we have read or watched a number of them, but to create and manage one does take some work and time. Writing one is not for everyone, but for those of us that do write them, there is a certain amount of pride and accomplishment in them.

For me it is a chance to help others as builders have done for me.

The two largest forums that I know of are Model Ship World and Ships of Scale, but there are also tons of video build logs on YouTube. Some are posted by "everyday" builders, while others are created by kit manufacturer like OcCre, but they may be others.

I am comfortable with the written logs, but there is no way I could do a video log – But I am glad that others enjoy creating in that medium.

I am not aware of any club member that posts a video log, but please let us know if you do. Here is a list of club members and links to their respective builds. If you have a build log and would like to add it to this list, please send me your information. I plan to make this section an on-going topic every few months or so. If you or your build log is not shown, I apologize. Please send me your information and I will include it next time.

In the meantime, click on the links below and give these members their due props! There have been a bunch of updates plus [Thom Scheerer's](#) build on Ships of Scale has been added.

[Model Ship World](#)

[Ships of Scale](#)

Brian Davies - [bdgiantman2](#)

Doug Graham - [Dgraham](#)

Martin Jelsema - [MartinJel](#)

- Models built:
 - Ranger Revenue Cutter - Corel
 - Charles W. Morgan - Scientific

- CSS Alabama – Mamoli
- Harvey - Artesania Latina
- Dresden (plastic – Revell)
- Models on Process:
 - Rattlesnake - Mamoli
- Model on the shelf
 - USS Essex (large solid Hull) - Model Shipways
 - Blockade Runner (plastic) - Lindberg

Hugh Long - [HughLo](#)

- Current builds:
 - [Bluenose 1:64 by Model Shipways - Build log - Colorado workshop](#) (last update on 1/24/26)
 - [Buccaneer 1:100 by Occre - Build log - Vallarta workshop](#) (last update on 12/9/25)
- Waiting in the wings:
 - [Build Log: Model Shipways 1:32 Willie Bennett Skipjack](#) (last update on 1/24/26)
 - La Real (Dusek)
 - Wasa (Corel)

Jay McKeown - [CO Jaybird](#)

- [USS Constellation - 1797](#) (last update on 1/3/26)
- Current build
 - ZHL Le Soleil Royal
- Completed
 - ZHL Black Pearl Golden Edition 2016

Will Pearson - [niwotwill](#)

- Current Build:
 - [HM Cutter Cheerful 1806 by niwotwill - Syren Ship Model Company - scale 1:48](#) (last update on 1/2/26)
- On Hold:
 - Syren by pearwill Model Shipways 1:64 scale
 - [Washington 1776 by niwotwill - scale 1:48 - Row Galley - NRG plans #121](#) (last update on 3/21/21)
- Completed Build:
 - [Erycina 1882 by niwotwill - FINISHED - Vanguard Models - scale 1/64 - Plymouth Fishing Trawler](#)
 - Charles W. Morgan by Artesania Latina circa 1988
 - Lowell Grand Banks Dory 1:24 scale by Model Shipways
 - Norwegian.Sailing Pram 1:12 scale by Model Shipways
 - Muscongus Bay Lobster Smack 1:24 scale by Model Shipways

Jeff Potter - [Cosair](#)

- [Corsair H.M.S. Enterprize Build Log](#) (last update on 1/18/26)

Thom Scheerer - [Tommy S](#)

- [Essex by Tommy S](#) (last update on 1/23/26)

Scott Shilling - [Scott Shilling](#)

- [San Felipe 1690 from ZHL](#) (last update on 11/18/24)

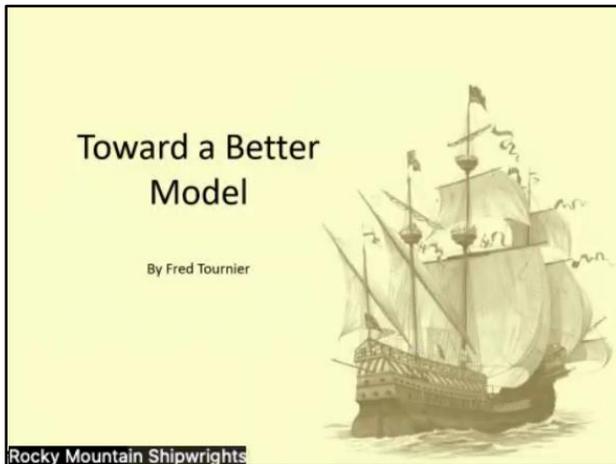
Brad Voigt - [BradNSW](#)

- Current Build
 - [Bomb Ketch Salamandre 1:48](#) (last update on 1/18/26)
- Built and shown in a log:

- [Bonhomme Richard - Pear Cross section kit \(with scratch duplicate using alder\) Unicorn Model](#)
- [HMS Serapis - Scratch Build \[COMPLETED BUILD\]](#)
- [Shortest and Cheapest Build Log Ever? semi customized lifeboat from Model Shipways](#)
- Artesania Latina Kits built in the 1980s (no construction log):
 - 1987 - USS Constellation 1:85
 - 1986 - King of the Mississippi River Boat 1:80
 - 1986 - Scottish Maid 1:50

Towards a Better Model

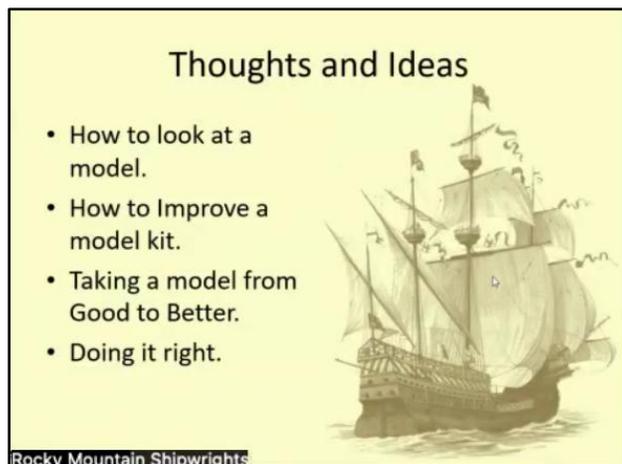
By Fred Tournier with introduction by Hugh Long



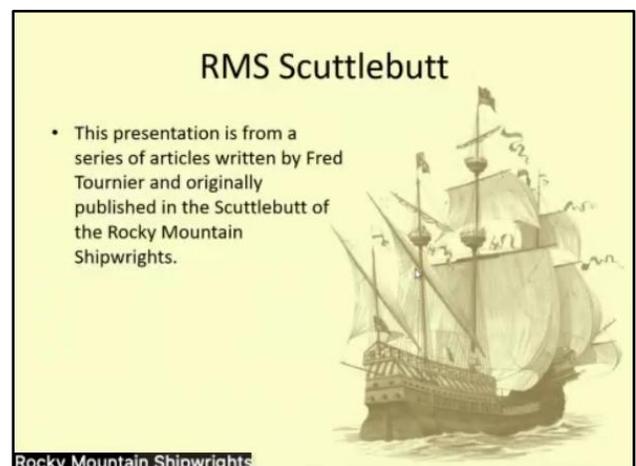
About ten years ago Fred Tournier, a founding member of the Rocky Mountain Shipwrights, put together a series of articles for the Scuttlebutt.

These articles were originally in the 2015 January, February, and March issues. They explored how to look at your models and how to improve a kit. He wanted members to be able to take their models from “good” to “better.” And it started with just “doing it right.”

Over the next few months, we will be revisiting these articles starting with Rigging. Next month we will look at Cannons, and then in April we will conclude the series by improving planking.



Look at papers or articles and look for the subtle differences that make your ship different from others from the era. Look to see if the ship underwent any refitting, and if it did, which version are you modeling your ship after? This is a suitable time to look for any build logs for your ship. Look at how others approached their build, and if they ran into any problems that you could potentially avoid.



To get to better, we must look at ship. This means some basic research past what is written on the box or instructions.

While scouring through the Shipwrights library is still a viable option, online searches work too.

The more informed you are, the greater the likelihood that the build of your model goes smoothly.

Looking at a Ship



Rocky Mountain Shipwrights

Looking at a Ship



Rocky Mountain Shipwrights

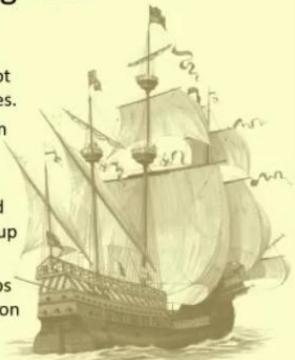
Rigging

In this month's Scuttlebutt we will explore how to take your good rigging to better rigging, with Cannons and planking covered over the next couple of issues.

One of the most common mistakes in ship modeling is the use of over scale blocks and rigging, which will give the model a heavy and busy look. The ship model which is rigged with the same heavy line from top to bottom loses the "look" of a real ship. The rigging should have a delicate, spider web appearance.

Rigging Line

- Kit line size commonly .017" - .021" (5" - 6" at 1/8" scale) not small enough for use as ratlines.
- Ratlines were usually 1" - 2" in size.
- Proportion of line varies from heavy line at lowers masts and spars to lighter line as you go up the mast or out the yards.
- Also, lines on 16th century ships were a lot heavier than those on 18th century ships.

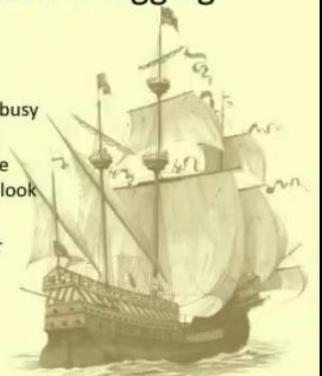


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The small line often found in kits is usually .017" - .021" (5" - 6" at 1/8" scale) in size which is not small enough for use as ratlines. Ratlines were 1" - 2" in size, which would put them at .003" - .0065" at 1/8" scale or .005" at 3/16" scale.

Oversize blocks and rigging

- The scale effect is lost when rigging is oversized.
- Gives the model a heavy and busy look.
- Rigging with the same size line from bottom to top loses the look of a real ship.
- Should have a delicate, spider web appearance.



Rocky Mountain Shipwrights

The smaller sizes of line are easier to rig and thread through the blocks. They also hold much more securely when used as seizing than the larger diameters.

Belayed and Coiled



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Rigging Size Chart

(dia.)	(dia. at 1/8" scale)	(dia. At 3/16" scale)
1"	.0032"	.0043"
2"	.0066"	.0088"
3"	.0098"	.0131"
4"	.0132"	.0176"
5"	.0166"	.0221"
6"	.0199"	.0265"
7"	.0232"	.0310"
8"	.0266"	.0354"
9"	.0298"	.0397"
10"	.0331"	.0442"
11"	.0365"	.0486"
12"	.0397"	.0529"



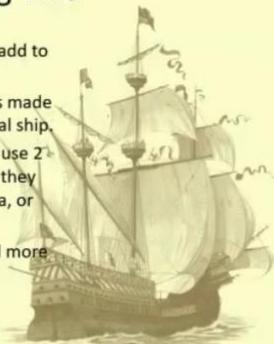
Rocky Mountain Shipwrights

The lines used on ships in the 16th century were larger in size than those of the 18th century primarily because they were not as strong.

Another common error occurs when a grossly oversized line is rove through a block too small for it. This can be seen when you look closely at a line which does not lie close in the sheaves but instead makes a bulge around the block. Rope can only be bent around a block of sufficient size so as not to crush the fibers in the strands.

Rigging Line

- Many sizes of lines and blocks add to the charm of a good model.
- Looks better if some attempt is made to follow the practice of the real ship.
- Beware of manufacturers who use 2 or 3 sizes of line for all the kits they produce regardless of scale, era, or vessel type.
- Nothing will ruin a good model more than fuzzy rigging or seizing.



Rocky Mountain Shipwrights

The Lifts, Sheets, and Braces were

much heavier than the Buntlines and Reef lines on the same yard...due to their much heavier loads and stresses.

The many sizes of lines and blocks add to the charm of a good model. There are tables available of the rigging sizes for different types of ships. For instance, a frigate has a much heavier rig than a merchant ship, while the cutter, a much smaller ship, has a lighter rig still. The problem when buying a kit model is that the line furnished is usually only 2 or 3 sizes and is included for all the models that manufacturer produces. The rigging of these models is easier and looks better if some

attempt is made to follow the practice of the real ship.

Nothing will ruin an otherwise good model, than large fuzzy rigging and seizing. No matter how well the rest of the model is done the scale effect is lost when the rigging is oversized. There were certain rules concerning line / block proportions as shown in the following table (based on line sizes for the "Sunny South," a medium clipper ship).

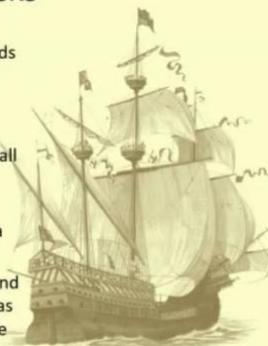
Rigging



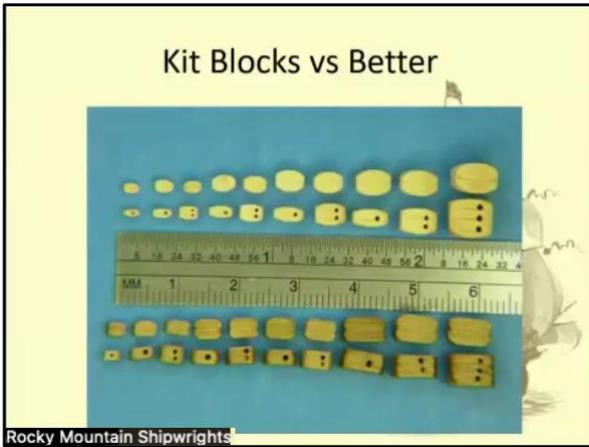
Rocky Mountain Shipwrights

Blocks

- Having many sizes of blocks adds to the charm of a good model.
- Size in proportion to rigging.
- Avoid forcing oversized line through blocks that are too small for it.
 - Line must lie close to the sheaves instead of making a bulge around the block.
 - Rope can only be bent around a block of sufficient size so as not to crush the fibers in the strands.



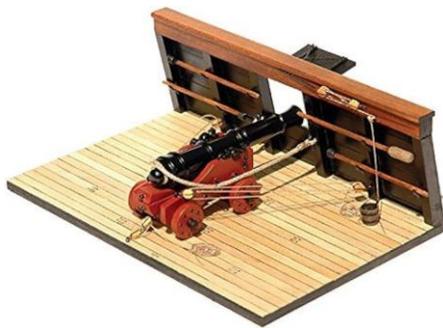
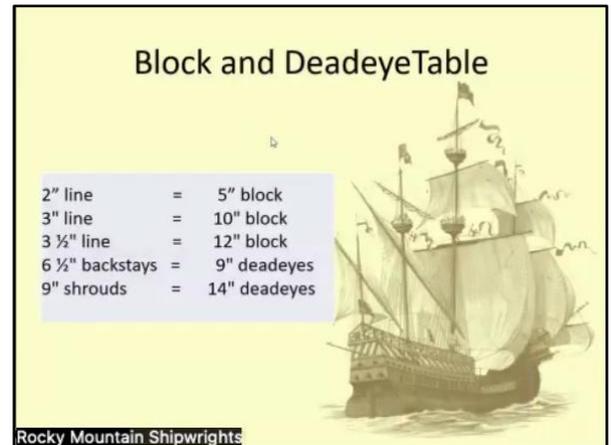
Rocky Mountain Shipwrights



How often have you seen the Ratlines rigged with the same size line as the Shrouds? These Ratlines need to hold the weight of a man, while the Shrouds braced the masts against the pull of the wind in the sails.

In a similar fashion the 1 ½" lines used for Ratlines would not be strong enough to hold up an 80' yard, a 3 ½" line and 10" blocks are needed for the Lifts on this yard. Picture the difference when using scale rigging from the examples above, for instance a 9" Shroud with 1 ½" Ratlines, in 1/8" scale use .032" Shrouds and .004 Ratlines!

In short, the same size rigging used throughout a model will rob it of the gentle proportions, the subtle grace and beauty that all sailing ships possess.



Next month Fred will explore taking our cannons from good to better.

Members Checking In

Bruce Bollenbach sent us the following about **Bob (Arthur) Roberts** who was an original member of the Rocky Mountain Shipwrights. He spent years researching and constructing a model of the [USS Kearsarge](#) and published his findings in the December 1999 Nautical Research Journal.

The ship can be seen in the video of the RMSW's first ship show which was detailed in the November 2025 Scuttlebutt. The video can be found [here](#).

Dr. Roberts had been scratch building ship models for over twenty-five years until his death in 2015. His nautical research focused on documenting the construction and armament of U.S. Navy Ships during the period of transition from sail to steam.

The USS Kearsarge ship was on loan and displayed at the Maine Maritime Museum and The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Other models have been on display at the Coastal Discovery Museum in South Carolina. and some other ships donated to Nautical Museums on both the East coast and West coast of the United States.

The ship is now for sale on eBay. While out of my price range, the [pictures on eBay](#) are amazing.



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

The website is now broken into content that needs a password, and content that is open to the public.

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 and in video as well, but these will be password protected.

In addition to the normal write up of the Presentation and Show and Tells, most 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.

If you do not know the password, please reach out and it will be sent to you.

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's**).

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 RockyMountainShipwrights1991@gmail.com and they will be added to the lists. With your contributions, we can make these lists a more comprehensive and valuable resource.

Useful Websites

With today's access to the web, there is a huge amount of useful information available to ship modelers. Here is a brief list that was pulled from Ships Of Scale.

Please send any links that you find useful, and we will add them to the list.

[Ship plans of the Royal Museums Greenwich](#)

- 3000 contemporary ship plans, 800 of which are high resolution.

[Royal Museum Greenwich collection of contemporary ships plans](#)

- Royal Museum Greenwich collection of contemporary ships plans (low resolution for free), paintings, contracts, and more.

[The Elements and Practice of Rigging And Seamanship, 1794, by David Steel](#)

- David Steel's book on rigging and seamanship.

[A primer on planking](#)

- Planking tutorial by David Antscherl

[Textbook of Seamanship, 1891](#)

- Textbook on seamanship 1891

[The Rigging of HMS Invincible](#)

- A study of the rigging of HMS Invincible

[Photographing Scale Models](#)

[Universal Dictionary of the Marine](#)

- Useful for maritime definitions, both English as well as French sea terms.

[Original contracts of various ships and eras](#)

[Library of Congress](#)

- Library of Congress – Search from home page for detailed plans and photos.

Online Suppliers

Nautical Hobby Shops

[Agos 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

