



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.

May 2026

Learning the Ropes

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 May 16, 2026

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

May Presentation

Bill Bixby presents The Iceland Cod Wars.

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: June 6, 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

Cargo Hold	1
Skipper's Log.....	2
April 18, 2026 Meeting	2
Rockler Woodworking Display Cases	5
Rocky Mountain Train Show	5
The Unconventional Building Methods of Ships in Bottles	6
Show and Tell	8
History of Ships In Bottles	11
May 2, 2026 Workshop	12
May 16, 2026, Meeting Agenda.....	15
Rocky Mountain Shipwrights Meetings are Streaming.....	16
Rocky Mountain Shipwright Online Presence	16

Model Ship World Site.....	16
Get Your Swag	17
Sources of Tools, Supplies & Services.....	18
Useful Websites	18
Online Suppliers.....	19
Local Sources	20
Selected Informational Resources for Model Builders	21

Skipper's Log

We had a highly successful weekend at the Rocky Mountain Train Show. We made new friends and found new contacts which we hope will be able to enjoy in the future. A massive thank you to Alice for her huge efforts to set the booth up. And thanks again to Dave, Steve, Terry, and Ralph, who joined me over the weekend at the show.

Unfortunately, the website is still down as of this date. Hopefully, that is getting close to being resolved after huge efforts by Dave, Hugh, and Martin.

We are actively meeting with the Wood Turner's Guild about future joint activities and adding to the audiovisual technology available at Rockler's. I will have more information at the May 16 meeting.

I am seeking a couple of motivated individuals to help address the inventory of plastic model boat kits currently in our storage. It has come to my attention that these kits may hold significant value, and therefore, it is important that we take a thorough and responsible approach to managing them.

Our first task should be to conduct a detailed inventory of all the kits and research their potential value. While I initially believed these were small, inexpensive \$10 kits, I have since learned that many are larger, high-value models.

Once we have a clear understanding of what we have, we should actively seek out interested modelers who would appreciate and make beneficial use of these kits. Our goal should be to responsibly connect these valuable kits with those who are enthusiastic about building them, ensuring they find a proper home within the modeling community.

I am looking forward to Bill Bixby's presentation about the Great Icelandic Cod War at the May 16 meeting. I hope many of you will make an extra effort to come and enjoy that presentation and perhaps a Skipper's lunch afterwards.

Finally, a huge personal thank you to Jeff Ross for 3-D printing replacement parts for my Thomas W Lawson repair job. I am not sure what I would have done without his expertise given my lack of technology skills.

Fair winds and following seas.

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

April 18, 2026 Meeting

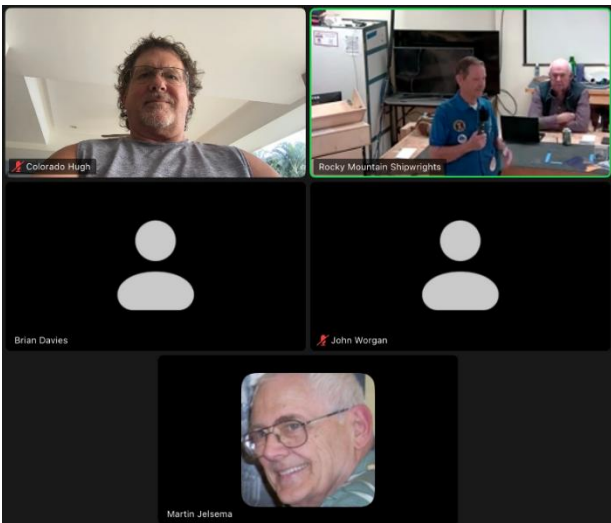
There were twenty-five in attendance, including 2 guests (g) and 4 online members (z) for the meeting. They were Fred Bell, Ralph Buckwalter, Michael Caramia, Erik Collett, Brian Davies (z), Martin Jelsema (z), Steve Lofshult, Hugh Long (z), Jerry and Mary Ann Mastenbrook (g), Jay McKeown, Dennis Newman, Dave Niss, Marv Olson, Mark Persichetti, Jay Phillips, Jeff Ross, Bob Rushforth, Alice Sampson, Dan Siemens, Chuck Stroble, Martin Ters, Phil van der Heydt, James Webster, and John Worgan (z).

Skipper Phil vdH called the meeting to order at 9:33am and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

After the Skipper's and Purser's reports, any new member introductions, the new and old business items of the club were discussed. Until the website is back up, members can contact the [club](#) for the full minutes.



James W, Marv O, Dennis N, Erik C, Fred B, Mark P, Mary Ann M, Jerry M, Chuck S, Steve L, Jay Mck, Michael C, Jeff R, and Martin T



Online Attendees – clockwise from top left: Hugh L, <meeting/Ralph B>, John W, Martin J, and Brian D



James W, Marv O, Erik C, Dennis N, Fred B, Mark P, Mary Ann M, Jerry M, Steve L, Chuck S, Michael C, Jay Mck, Ralph B, Dan S, Martin T, and Jeff R



Mark P, Erik C, Steve L, Ralph B, Chuck S, Martin T, Michael C, and Dave N



Phil vdH and Steve L



Martin T, Jeff R, Dan S, Ralph B, Mary Ann M, Jerry M, Chuck S, Jay Mck, Michael C, Alice S, Marv O, Dennis N, Steve L, and Fred B



Marv O, Bob R, James W, Dennis N, Mary Ann M, Jerry M, Erik C, Fred B, Chuck S, Martin T, Mark P, Jay Mck, and Jeff R



Martin T, Jeff R, Mary Ann M, Jerry M, Chuck S, Dan S, Marv O, Ralph B, Dennis N, Michael C, James W, Fred B, Steve L, Erik C, Mark P, and Dave N

Rockler Woodworking Display Cases

For the last couple of meetings, we have talked about the availability of the display cases on the stairs down to the basement of Rockler's. Here are the fruits of those labors. Please contact [Phil](#) if you are interested in adding a ship to the display cases.



Rocky Mountain Train Show

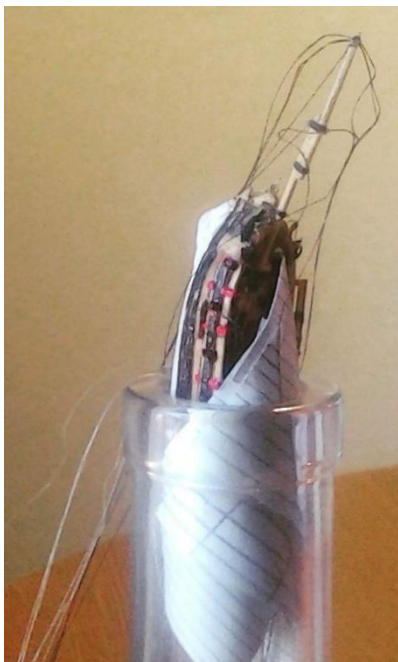
The [Rocky Mountain Train Show](#) was held on April 11th & 12th at the National Western Complex. Ralph Buckwalter, Terry Duffin, Steve Lofshult, Dave Niss, Alice Sampson, and Phil van der Heydt attended and staffed the booth.



The Unconventional Building Methods of Ships in Bottles

“The Unconventional Building Methods of Ships in Bottles” presented by Dan Siemens

- Is our hobby artistic or are we looking for accuracy? Dan discusses how we can do both, even down to 1/1200 scale!
- Bamboo skewers and paint brush bristles for masts and arms.
- Thread blocks help with lines and not drilling through yardarms.



There were many questions about the “unconventional” building techniques and Dan’s medium in general. Here are a few.



Where/how did you get your start?

My curiosity came from the Pirates of the Caribbean film. Jack asked why the Pearl was in a bottle and I started wondering how that was done. From there I dug around the Internet to find out. I did my first couple from scratch. They were not great. I eventually did a Woodcrafters kit that was simple but helpful. As I got into forums and into the ship in bottle community, I was able to get help from skilled builders. I also ran into the Rocky Mountain Shipwrights website and joined the club.

What comes first, the decision of the next ship, or the bottle which tells you the shape of the ship?

It is a little of both. Sometimes I have a ship in mind, and it is finding the right bottle for it. Sometimes I find a neat bottle and I decide what ship would really fit it. You do end up turning a lot of bottles sideways and daydreaming of what would look good in them.

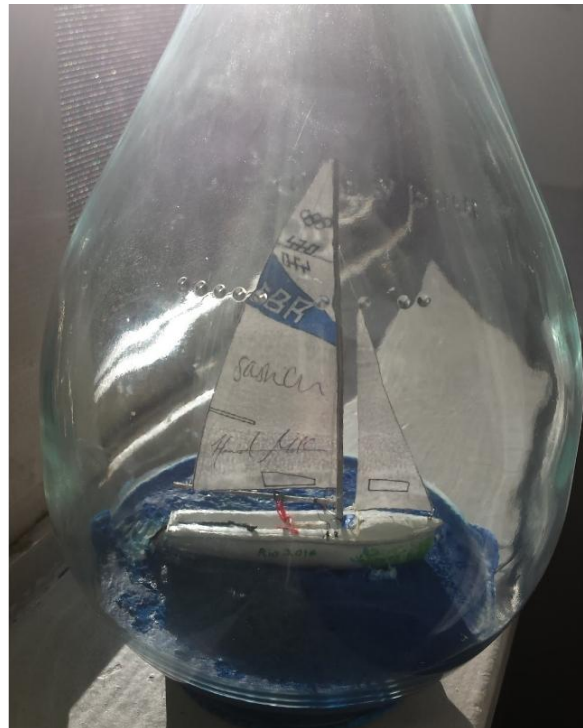
How long does it take to make one?

It depends on the complexity. On a full-sized bottle I will put 40 hours or more into getting all the details. Tiny ships take just a few hours but have far less detail.

You mentioned apple barrel paint being used for deadeyes. Can you explain?

Apple Barrel is a very inexpensive brand you can find at Walmart or Target. It is super cheap and it is thick, so it does work with modeling globs of paint like tiny deadeyes.

Here is a small (pun intended) sampling of Dan's ships.





Show and Tell

Dan Siemens

- Jerry and Mary Ann Mastenbrook's father made this Flying Cloud around 50 years ago and came to the last club workshop looking for someone who could repair it as the bowsprit had broken. Dan took on the task and replaced part of the bowsprit with bamboo which he stain to match the original wood.
- More information and pictures on the project can be found in the April 2026 issue of the Scuttlebutt.



Martin T, Dave N, Mary Ann M, Jerry M, Phil vdH, Ralph B, and Dan S

Phil van der Heydt showed a walnut base for his restoration of the Thomas W. Lawson. The base was made by the Woodcrafters.

- More information and pictures on the project can be found in the February 2026 issue of the Scuttlebutt.



Martin Ters

- Martin gave a review of the Type S (AD1 Plus) 4-in-1 electric air duster. He felt it is a versatile, portable cleaning tool that blows air, vacuums, provides LED lighting, and acts as a power bank. It features rechargeable USB-C functionality, multiple attachments for cleaning crevices in electronics or cars, and a lightweight design suitable for home or office use. Electric air duster & vacuum. All for between \$49 to \$70.



Jay McKeown

- Jay McK is finishing up his plastic IRN Borodino. He intends to convert it into a water diorama.
- The Borodino was the lead ship of her class of five pre-dreadnought battleships built for the Imperial Russian Navy in the first decade of the twentieth century. The ship was sunk during the Battle of Tsushima in May 1905 due to explosions set off by a Japanese shell hitting a magazine. There was only a single survivor from her crew of 855 officers and enlisted men.



Jay Phillips

- Jay is beginning work on the USS Gambier Bay (CVE-73). He has scaled it from 1:200 to 1:400 and now it's about 16" long.
- The USS Gambier Bay (CVE-73) was a Casablanca-class escort carrier and a key member of the heroic "Taffy 3" task unit during the Battle off Samar on October 25, 1944. During the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the ship was sunk by Japanese cruiser gunfire, making it the only US aircraft carrier lost to surface ship gunfire during WWII.



Skipper's Lunch next door at [BoHeo Pho Kitchen](#)

- Around 8 people took advantage of the lunch.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:47am.

Until the website is back up, members can contact the [club](#) for the full minutes.

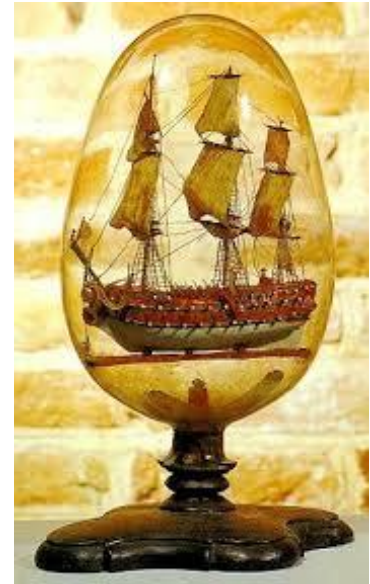
History of Ships In Bottles

The art of building ships in bottles traces its origins to the late 18th century, though the practice of placing objects in glass containers is even older. While earlier "impossible bottles" often featured religious scenes or puzzles, the first documented ship in a bottle was crafted in 1784 by a Venetian artisan named Giovanni Biondo.

Key Historical Eras

The Early Period (Late 1700s)

Early models were often expensive, large-scale works commissioned for the aristocracy or navies. Biondo's 1784 piece, a three-masted warship, was housed in an egg-shaped bottle displayed upside down on a pedestal.



The Sailor's Craft (Mid-1800s)

The hobby exploded among sailors during the Age of Sail. On long voyages, seafarers whittled wood, bone, and discarded scrap to pass the time. These "folk art" versions were often traded in waterside pubs for tobacco or beer.



Technological Shift (Late 19th Century)

Before 1850, glass was often thick, green, or filled with bubbles that obscured the view. The introduction of clear, mass-produced bottles—like the short-necked Johnny Walker square bottle or the Haig Dimple—made the craft accessible and visually striking.



The Manufacturing Boom (1970s–1990s)

In the UK, a boom in demand led to tens of thousands of glass ships being produced, often by highly skilled scientific glassblowers.

The Evolution of the "Folding" Technique

Early models were sometimes built piece-by-piece inside the bottle using long-handled tools. However, the most iconic method, the "flatpack" or folding approach, became standard in the 19th century.



Preparation

The hull is carved to fit the narrow neck, while masts are attached with tiny hinges.

Insertion

The ship is slid into the bottle with the masts and sails folded flat against the deck.

Deployment

Once positioned on a "sea" of blue or green putty, the builder pulls "control threads" to raise the masts into an upright position.

Today, this tradition is preserved by specialized groups like the [Ships-In-Bottles Association of America](#) and highlighted in major exhibits, such as the [National Maritime Museum's massive collection in Greenwich](#).

May 2, 2026 Workshop

There were eight club members at the Ma workshop. The attendees were Jim Brooks, Ralph Buckwalter, Steve Lofshult, David Niss, Jay Phillips, Jeff Ross, Phil van der Heydt, and James Webster.

Here's what everyone is working on:

- Jim Brooks: Yankee Tender
- Ralph Buckwalter: Berbice Baltimore Clipper
- Brian Davies: Brig Eagle 1814
- Terry Duffin: Scottish Maid
- Martin Jelsema: Rattlesnake Frigate
- Steve Lofshult: Purser duties
- David Niss: NRG Half-hull Planking Model
- Jay Phillips: WWII Baby Flat Top Casablanca Class
- Jeff Ross: Flying Cloud
- Phil van der Heydt: TW Lawson re
- James Webster: HMS Beagle



Jim B, Ralph B, Jeff R, and Phil vdH



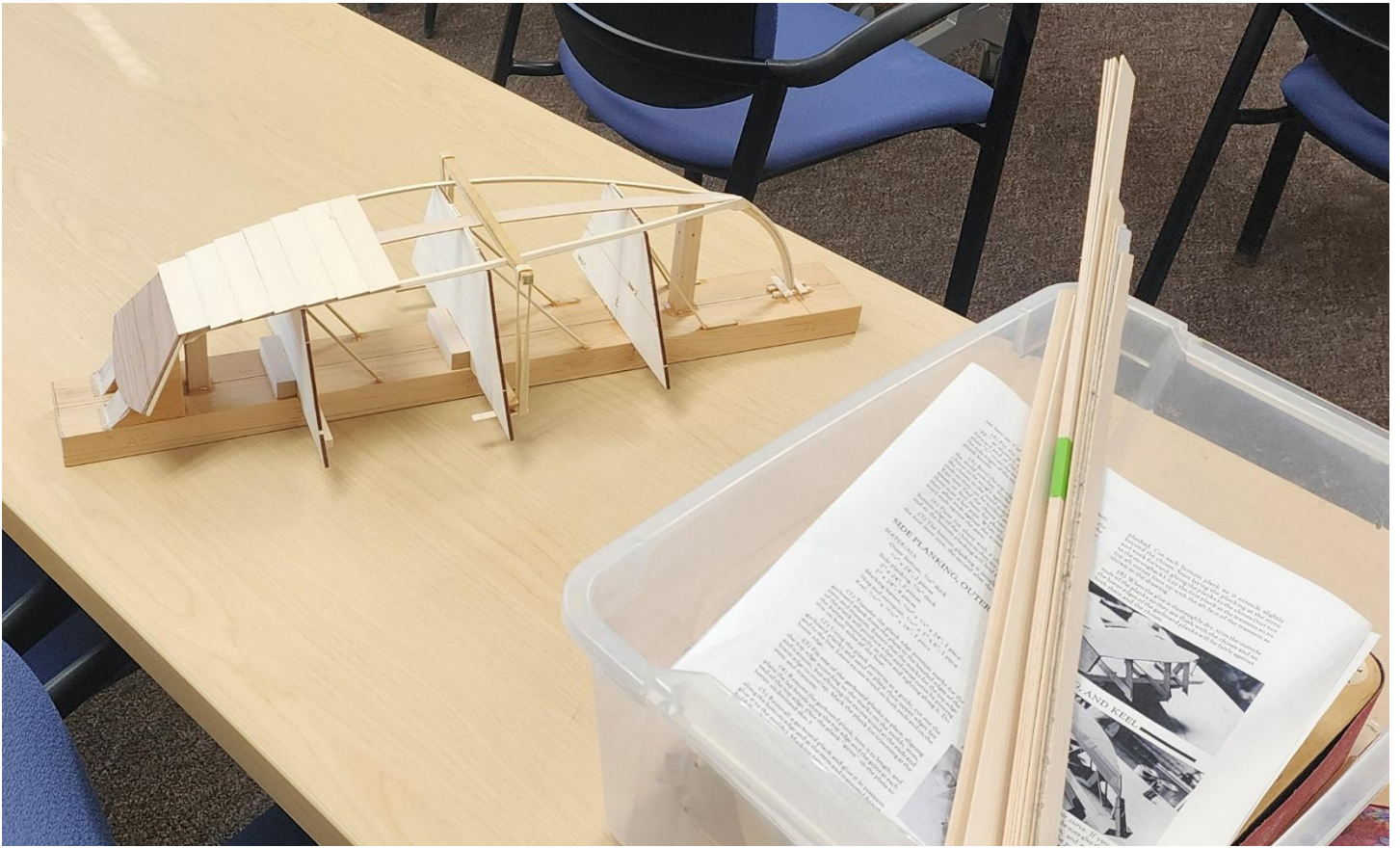
Phil vdH and Steve L



James W looking at the copper plating of Jeff R's Flying Cloud
James' HMS Beagle will have copper plating.



Jim B, Jeff R, and James W



Jim B's Yankee Tender



Jim B, Ralph B, and Dave N



Ralph B, Dave N, Phil vdH, Jeff R, Jim B, and James W



Jay P and his WWII Baby Flat Top Casablanca Class

May 16, 2026, Meeting Agenda

Please join us on Saturday May 16th 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](#)

- Flag Ceremony
- Skipper's Report
 - Update on website
- Purser's Report
- Old Business
- New Business
 - Plastic model inventory
 - Innovative technology for meetings and on-line attendees
- BREAK
- Presentation
 - Bill Bixby: The Iceland Cod Wars
- Show and Tell
- Adjourn
- Skipper's lunch: Bo Heo Pho

Rocky Mountain Shipwrights Meetings are Streaming

Within the next few months, we will be switching Zoom accounts to the Club's Zoom own account, which will change the link and log in information. There is nothing to do right now, just know that it is coming. As we get closer to the change, more information will be sent out.

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

As mentioned in the Skipper's Notes, our website is currently down. We are working towards getting the site up and working again.

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.

Model Ship World Site

Completely unrelated to our site being down, the Model Ship World site has been taken offline due to a cyber-attack.

Please spread the word.

If you have saved copies on any personal build logs, please wait until MSW determines their approach to rebuilding or restarting their site. Again, this is completely unrelated to our site issues.

Below is the official statement from MSW Administrator Jim Hatch and the NRG Board of Directors:

In the last three days, there has been a global issue regarding the software that operates computer servers. This has impacted websites and servers around the world. An unscrupulous group of hackers had found a way around server security and had broken into many servers, destroying data.

Unfortunately for us, Model Ship World's server was one of countless to be affected.

Over the last 36 hours, our host had taken our server offline to apply software patches which would secure our server, but by the time they did this, it was too late.

The attackers not only deleted the files from our primary disc, housing MSW, but also deleted the three backups we had on a secondary, separate drive.

Model Ship World does not exist in any form. All files, photos, structure, posts, and data have gone.

This was out of our control, and there will be many sites around the world, including corporate/business sites, which will also be destroyed.

All we can do from this point is to move on. It will take us some time to recreate the site as members knew it. However, it will NOT have the posts, topics, and photos etc. It will be a fresh start.

Please bear with us while we look at this task, as our staff also have other regular jobs and need to fit this into their schedules.

We will be back though. Please bear with us at this time and give as much support as you can.

— Jim Hatch, MSW Administrator, and the NRG Board of Directors

Get Your Swag

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



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

