Forecastle Report

Newsletter of the Midwest Model Shipwrights ◆ www.midwestmodelshipwrights.com ◆ April 2018

● Scuttlebutt ●

COMMODORE, **Bob Filipowski**, opened the meeting at 7:15 with a loyal crew of 20 on deck. Bob started out by re-introducing and welcoming back **Ed Morris**, who had taken a three year pause in his modeling activity. Great to have you on board again, mate.

Another noteworthy event was the "launching" of two models at the same meeting; an event that doesn't happen very often. **Ken Goetz's** scratch-built *Bluenose* and **Richard Romaniak's** *Armed Merchant Brig* were honored by everyone as truly beautiful accomplishments!

We had a fun time with the door prize drawing this evening, as there were a number of items from which to choose. **John Hirsch** took home a fine 3/8" cordless drill featuring a keyless chuck.

Kurt Van Dahm's updated presentation on resin casting was recorded and Bob hopes to have a video available for sale at the April meeting. $5.00 a copy.

New videos are also available on Doc William's *Scrapers* presentation, as well as Bob Filipowski's *Gudgeons & Pintles*. Let Bob know, if you would like a copy and he will have one ready at the next regular meeting.

Kurt Van Dahm gave us an update on both the Manitowoc Model Contest and the NRG Conference in Las Vegas. On the Manitowoc contest, some shuffling of presenters has had to take place, but Kurt assures us that there will be a full program offered. There is already a good size registration and many models lined up. The Friday activities will consist of two afternoon guided tours (1:30 and 3:00) of the Wisconsin Maritime Museum's archives (a rare look behind the scenes) followed by dinner at the "Harbor Inn" and the Museum for ice cream. Sounds great!

At the NRG Conference, October 25-27 in Las Vegas, a lunch has been scheduled on a boat plus a tour of Hoover Dam. Kurt also advised that the *Sharpie* plans can now be ordered on the NRG web site and are going fast. The price to NRG members for the plans is $65 plus shipping. (save shipping by taking delivery from Kurt at our meeting).

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April Meeting Notice

Scratch-built Chain Plates

by Bob Jensen

We are really fortunate to have Bob Jensen bring his presentation on scratch-building chain plates to our meeting this month. Bob is a very talented model builder and his work is known for its great attention to detail. So be sure and come to learn all there is to know about this very important modeling technique.

Our next meeting will be at 7:15 p.m.
Wednesday, April 18, 2018
The South Church
501 S. Emerson Street
Mount Prospect, IL

● Resin Casting ●

By Kurt Van Dahm

Kurt is a master at resin casting and his presentation left no doubt in anyone's mind that we got the best information available. We learned all about the reasons for making castings, the materials used in the process and the steps needed to create great looking duplicate parts.

The reasons for making castings are obvious: it is an easy way to make duplicates and it is economical. Also, it's really tough to make a lot of the same thing by hand and have every one look alike. When they are molded, they all look exactly the same.

The steps involved in Basic Resin Casting are:

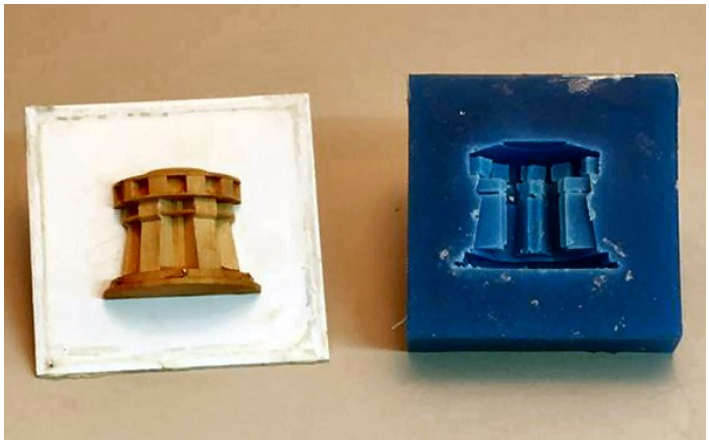
- Make the master part(s)
- Make a mold
- Make resin parts

What is "resin"? Urethane resin, as marketed by:

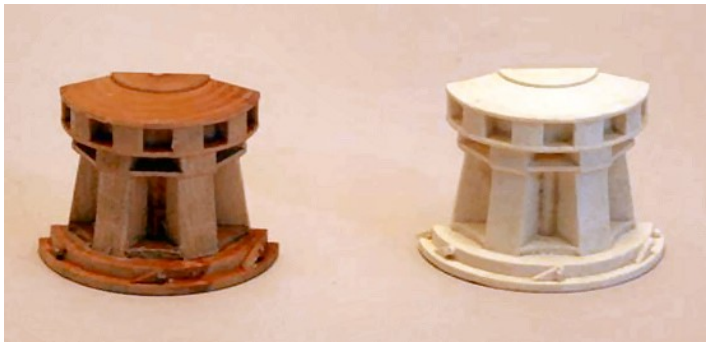
- "Alumalite"
- "Castolite"
- "Synor-Por A Cast"
- others

"Casting" , continued on Page 2

"Casting", continued from Page 1



Above is a master part (capstan) that has been used to make a one-part mold (blue block) and, below, is the master part and the resulting resin duplicate.



Molds are made of RTV silicone rubber, which is mixed by weight or volume (Polytek "Platsil" 71-15 by vol. A/B or "Dow" 10:1 by wt.) and makes a flexible mold allowing parts to pop right out.

Molds can be one-part, used for flat objects, or two-part used for dimensional objects. To make a mold, you first attach the master object to a base plate and then build a liquid-tight box around the base with enough depth to allow complete coverage of the object.

In a two-part mold, the mold box is filled with the rubber material up to the parting line of the master. After the rubber cures in the bottom half, several locator holes need to be cut or drilled into the rubber to create alignment pins.

The surfaces of the exposed master and rubber are then coated with "mold release" and the top half of the box is filled with rubber. After the rubber has cured, the mold box is disassembled and the rubber mold is extracted.

Note that the master in the mold box (right) is attached to one of the walls, not the bottom. When filling the box with rubber, you need to take care to work the material into all corners and around the master.

To complete the job, you now mix the part A and B resin material and pour into the rubber mold. Before filling the mold you need to coat the mold with a release agent (baby powder). Once the resin has been mixed, you have about a 3 minute working time. Leave the resin in the mold for 5 minutes or more before extracting. Cure times are longer for smaller molded parts than for larger pieces that generate more heat, which accelerates the curing process.

If you would like to see more information on the mixing and use of resin materials, you can log on to the "Alumilite" web site at www.Alumilite.com and you will be able to launch demo videos on many of their products.

PlatSil® 73-20 Silicone Rubber is a two-part, platinum-catalyzed, liquid silicone system that cures (RTV) to a blue translucent, Shore A20 rubber. Compared to other silicones in the PlatSil® 73-Series line, this option sets quickly with a demold time of 1 hour (at room temperature). For more information, see their web site at www.Polytek.com. ❖

Tri-Club News

The **Nautical Research and Model Ship Society** has made the following program plans for the months of April and May, 2018:

April 14 - Making a Plexiglas Case
May 12 - Making the Base for the Case

All are welcome to attend these meetings, which take place at 7:30 PM at the workshop of **Kurt Van Dahm**, 237 S. Lincoln St., Westmont, IL 60559.

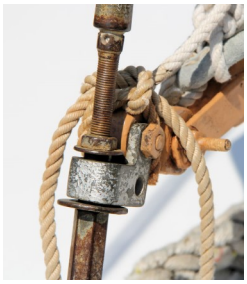
The **Deadeyes** have set up their schedule for the next 4 months, as follows:

May - Worming, serving and parceling
June - Manitowoc Model Conference
July - TBD
Aug - Half hull models

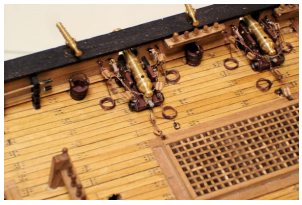
At their meeting April 4, **Rick Szydelko** presented an introduction to a handy, inexpensive book-tracking software. For more information on this subject, contact Rick at 847-438-6649 or szydelko@sbcglobal.net

• Ships on Deck •

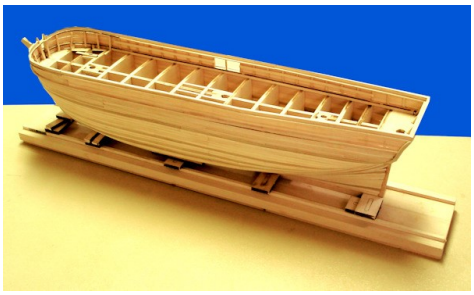
Kurt Van Dahm sent in these photos of the work he is doing on the details for his model of the sailing yacht *Splash*. Since this is going to be a museum piece, Kurt is anxious to get all the fine details just right. His work on this "jib/club boom" fitting is a great example of the kind of metal work he is capable of doing. The only thing that bothers him is the real boat uses galvanized metal and he intends to upgrade to brass. Fair enough, mate, your work is spot on.



Bob Sykes had a change of heart and decided to finish this old kit of the *Revenge* c. 1577 rather than sell it or give it away. This kit was partially completed and Bob has really brought out the best results he could, considering the lack of detailed plans. His deck work is very neatly done and the brass cannons were thankfully true to scale. Nice job on the base stand, too, mate. A beauty!



Ed Morris, our returning mate, has selected the "Model Shipways" kit of the whaler *Charles W. Morgan* as his entry back into ship modeling and she's looking very fine. Ed is also thinking ahead with questions on how to add copper sheathing to the hull - a very good move for sure. Also in his planning is a decision on whether to add sails or not. Next up in this project is to plank the deck. We'll look forward to seeing that done soon.



Richard Romaniak brought in his 1:64 plank on solid hull model of an *Armed Merchant Brig* - one of two "Launchings" this evening. This is a beautiful job of modifying a c. 1785 - 1800 Baltimore Clipper into something much more interesting. Rigging is especially finely done with hand made blocks and deadeyes. The addition of a ship's launch tied alongside is a very nice touch, as are the crew figures. Should be a prize winner for sure, mate!

Ken Goetz showed us his just completed 1:128 scratch-built model of the *Bluenose* schooner. To accomplish this task, Ken utilized plans from "Model Shipways", which he reduced by 50% to get to the desired finished size. A complete set of to-scale sails really adds to the beauty of this model and the case now under construction will make this a first class competitor in Manitowoc. Great job mate!

A Generic East Coast, Late 19th Century Oyster Sharpie

Circa: 1880 — 1890

An Introduction to "Scratch Building"

Monograph & Models by Bill Strachan

Plans by Al Saubermann

Distributed by: The Nautical Research Guild

www.thenrg.org/, info@thenauticalresearchguild.org

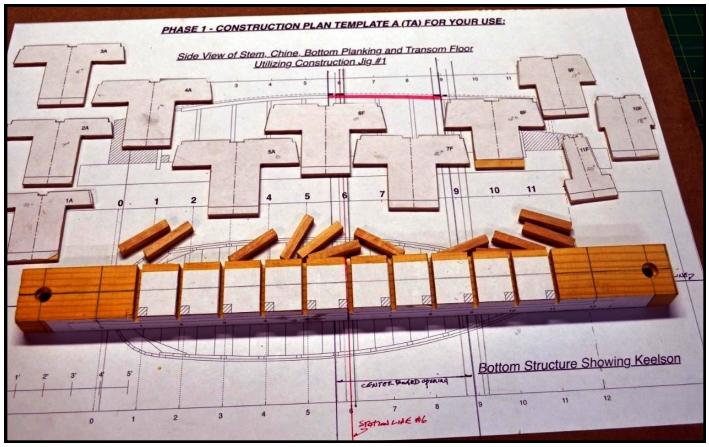
This monograph and plans is the second such offering by the Nautical Research Guild. You may recall that the first was the Continental Galley *Washington,* which, although billed as an intermediate level POF scratch build, is still a somewhat more complex vessel. Bill Strachan and Al Saubermann have done a masterful job of providing the novice and intermediate modeler with a subject that definitely fills the gap between kit models and a first time scratch building effort.

Sharpies are a type of hard-chined sailboat with a flat bottom, extremely shallow draft, and straight, flaring sides. With centerboards and shallow balanced rudders, they were well suited to sailing in shallow tidal waters where oysters could be found. These craft are believed to have originated in the New Haven, Connecticut region of Long Island Sound. Their use would eventually spread up and down the Eastern seaboard of the United States.

Strachan begins by offering some encouraging words for the first time scratch modeler, and how "peer pressure" should not influence one's enjoyment or satisfaction with what they have accomplished. He also provides his own philosophy when it comes to model ship building, which is very practical and reassuring for those not capable of going "full scratch" due to equipment or skill limitations. In many instances, he offers alternate methods for fabricating parts that were made with power tools.

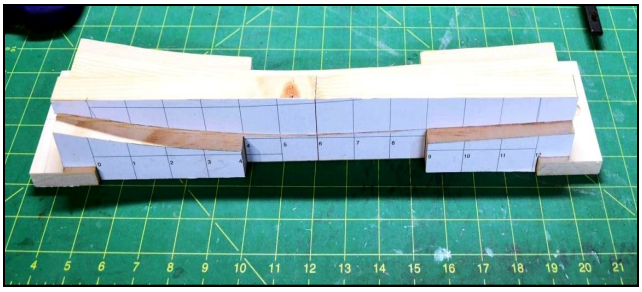
The monograph is broken down into five phases. Early on, the author utilizes abbreviations that identify various components used in the construction. Examples would be "BB1" for building board, and "ST" for station template. At first, you might find yourself referring back to these lists often, so making a separate reference sheet might be helpful.

The first phase addresses constructing a jig that allows the bottom framing and planking to be built upside down,

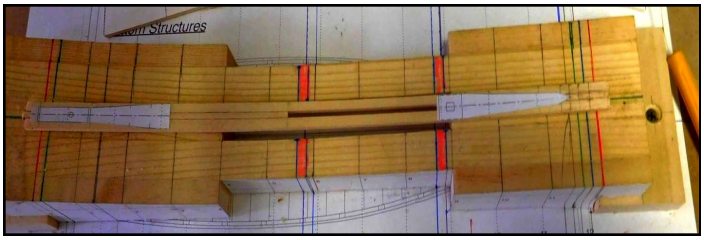


which simulates actual practice. One critical aspect of this segment is the fabrication of the 11 station templates with their various notches and bevels. Paper templates supplied in the plans help ensure accurate results during this step.

With the chine line actually rising above the waterline at the stem, the sharpie hull has a very distinctive shear As a result, the keelson has a sloping shape that gently curves from its point of greatest draft amidships up to the bow and stern.



Phase 2 addresses this with the fabrication of a second building jig, which utilizes the "press method" for shaping the strips that form the keelson. Although composed of only four pieces of wood, Strachan goes into considerable detail while fabricating the keelson. Again, templates help insure the correct shape at the bow and stern of this key assembly.

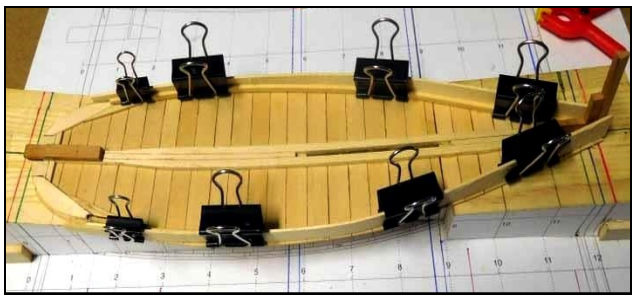


Other components addressed in this phase include the chines and bottom planking. Concerning this last item, the bottom planks can be a combination that varies from 4" to 8" in width, as long as the final result comes out even! The author stresses that test fitting all the pieces before gluing is the key.

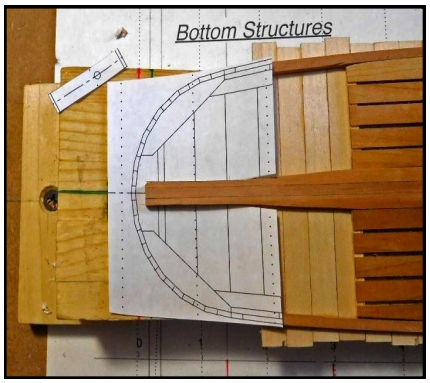
(continued)

Phase 3 continues with the forward bottom planking, but also addresses the stem assembly, mast step block, mast logs, rudder related items, removable flooring, center board and trunk, lower side sheer plank, and vertical planked stern. This last item is a unique feature on these craft. The author provides two options, one being more difficult than the other. Nevertheless, both produce acceptable results if one follows the author's detailed instructions. Can you imagine trying to spile planks that will conform to that transom?

Speaking of spiled planks, the sharpie had three of them on each side of the hull. Again, the author provides templates for each one, which saves a lot of time and headaches. It is also interesting to note that the three planks are glued to each other along their edges and at the stem, before the frames are installed. Lots of clamps, and one of the station templates, are used to help with proper alignment.



The modeler is offered two choices when constructing the transom flooring. One reflects a construction method used in North Carolina, while the alternate layout, shown on the right, portrays a New Haven sharpie. It's quite evident throughout this monograph that the author believes in giving the modeler options.



Although considered a novice/intermediate project, the sharpie does present one challenge. Many of the various scantlings possess subtle bevels and angles. The author makes extensive use of disk and oscillating sanders when dealing with these pieces. He tries to minimize this challenge by providing the actual angles that the sander table should be set at.

With the hull structure essentially complete, Phase 4 gets into a lot of the interior scantlings and detail work This includes mast partners, deck beams, deck planking, false wale, and rub and toe rales with scuppers.

gets into a lot of the interior scantlings and detail work This includes mast partners, deck beams, deck planking, false wale, and rub and toe rales with scuppers.

In addition to all items relating to the rudder, painting and weathering are also addressed. This last item is one of this writer's favorite segments. The author uses a "layer upon layer" technique that involves using lots of Q-tips, one of three different black India solutions, paint washes, chalks, pastels, sharpie markers, and color pencils. In most cases, he recommends that they be applied to components as they are being made. Practicing on mockups first is highly recommended.

The final phase, number 5, addresses masting, rigging, and saw horses as a way of mounting your model. The author provides two masting and rigging options, a gaff rig and a simple sprit rig. This last phase concentrates on the gaff rig for the most part, since it is the more complex style. The authors technique for fabricating shackles and stropping blocks with galvanized 28-gauge wire is especially noteworthy.

There are other handy tips offered in this monograph. Examples are an easily made container for soaking wood strips, miniature clamps made from Acco paper clips, and plank joints "caulked" with a brown Sharpie pen.

One nice touch concerning this 277-page monograph is the fact that you can download the instructions off the NRG website at no cost. This will allow you to review Strachan's work, which is richly illustrated with 441 color photographs and detailed diagrams. References and other sources are also clearly footnoted for the modeler, and the documentation includes a full bibliography.

If the Sharpie interests you, a set of plans can be ordered from the home office. The cost is $65.00 plus S&H for members, and $80.00 plus S&H for nonmembers.

You will receive 11 sheets. Three of these drawings are used as templates, and include a full-size building board pattern. The plans offer three options for completing your model. As a result, the sharpie provides the modeler with a wide range of options for detailing, paint schemes, sailing rigs, and weathering. *Reviewed by Bob Filipowski*

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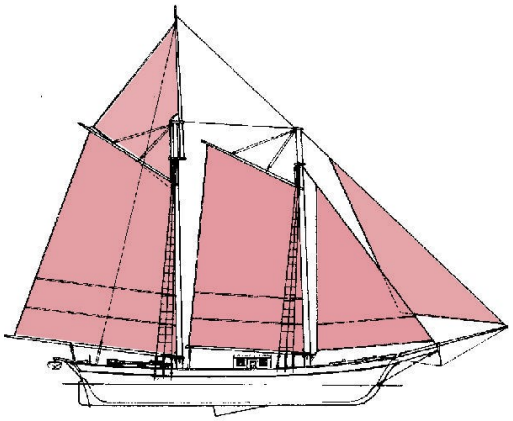

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