The Lynx

WASHINGTON SHIP MODEL SOCIETY – SINCE 1929

NEWSLETTER

"For the Mutual Benefit of Model Ship Building; For the Exchange of Ideas; and to Preserve for Posterity Scale Models of Historic Vessels, We Associate Together to Form this Washington Ship Model Society."

www.dcshipmodelsociety.org Summer Edition 2024

SKIPPER'S CORNER

It seems fitting to me that this particular edition of The Lynx be dedicated to WSMS Member Lou Husser. Lou passed away in June 2024, and his lasting impact on the Washington Ship Model Society will not soon fade away. Lou was a long time member of the club, and is greatly responsible for the success and comeraderie of the WSMS Crew. Over the years, Lou has served in various officer roles, and particularly served as the editor of the WSMS Newsletter The Lynx for many years. In edition to the newsletter, it was Lou who helped put together the years of wonderful and informative club brochures, business cards, banners and announcements which have reached the public and built the club into the Nation's most successful (and oldest) model ship society, still going strong since 1929. It goes without saying that Lou was a great guy and talented model shipwright, who loved working on unique family heirlooms and model restorations for others to help preserve not just the model, but family memories as well. Lou was always friendly, helpful, and a wealth of knowledge about maritime history and craftsmanship. His enthusiasm and sense of humor were contagious, and he was always a joy at monthly club meetings and events. So, it stands to reason that The Lynx continue in his memory, as part of his legacy to foster the hobby and be informative to other model shipwrights.

As a reminder to all crew, July is typically when DUES are DUE! If you have not heard from our purser by email, or missed him at our monthly meetings, please email the skipper to connect and mail in your annual dues. Currently, dues are only $20 and serve to help cover the few costs we have in website, advertising, business cards and posters, and catered food for annual auctions, picnics, and other events.

All members and interested parties are encouraged to present any demonstration or powerpoint presentation on ship model topics of interest. We have had some great presentations in the past to include those given by naval architects, historians, and archaeologists. If you know of other subject-matter experts, bring them to a club event! The same is true for our quarterly newsletter! All topics of interest are welcome. Just email your write-up and any photographs of builds, history, projects, techniques, etc, to the WSMS Skipper and we will be sure to include them in upcoming editions.

As always, we will try to announce all events early in our newsletter, before they occur, but sometimes the dates or details may not be available prior to publications – so check our website and keep a weather eye out for our group email reminders. I hope you enjoy this Summer Edition of the Lynx. And remember, for any interested model shipwrights out there, we welcome you to any of our meetings held each month! Bring a project to share, and join the crew for novel and interesting meetings!

/s/Larry Valett
WSMS Skipper

CLUB MEETINGS

Our next Virginia meeting will be Saturday, July 13th. 10am-12 noon, at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria, VA, (Upstairs Room 217). Officer elections are planned for this meeting. Any member interested in holding office, please notify the Skipper by email so he can inform the crew.

Generally, the Washington Ship Model Society meets in person between 10 a.m. and 12 noon, during the second Saturday of each month. Our club meetings are alternately split between Virginia and Maryland, which allows many of our members to select and participate in various meetings closer to home. Generally, our Virginia meetings are held at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria, VA. 22308. (Room 217). Our Maryland meetings are held at the Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 7730 Bradley Blvd, Bethesda, MD 20817, in the lower floor meeting room. All members and interested parties should check our website and club email reminders to confirm dates and details about each meeting. **Some highlights from our May 11, 2024, Club Auction & Picnic are as follows:**

Tim R, and the crew inspect his RC Sailboat

As usual, our annual club auction was a huge success, with more money raised at this auction compared to previous years. We have Lou Husser to thank for his time and effort in arranging the auction at the venue on beautiful Lake Barcroft in McLean, Virginia! With a catered Bar-be-Que, tons of models on the auction block, and unlimited magazines to give away the WSMS Crew had a great time. Special thanks to the Husser Family for making this particular event a fun and successful afternoon!

WSMS Member Brion B. gets ready to launch his RC Gunboat, Shiloh.

Several members of the club have been involved in RC boating for many years, and efforts are made to facilitate RC demonstrations when we can. During one club meeting, our fellow shipwrights from the Shrewsbury PA model RC club gave a presentation on RC boating and displayed several models, including some very large submarines! The Shrewsbury crew have opened their Fall pool events to members of WSMS, as discussed later in this

newsletter under Upcoming Events. Furthermore, any modelers who are interested in RC modeling are invited to come to any WSMS meeting and present to the club. We are always willing to broaden our horizons in the world of ship modeling, and there are some amazing RC products and models out there to explore.

A successful launch of Shiloh! This RC Model is a masterpiece, with three removable decks, working engine room display, officers and crew quarters, interior lighting, working anchor, and a main deck gun that fires!

WSMS Members run small RC race boats through the gauntlet of Shiloh's cannon.

UPCOMING EVENTS

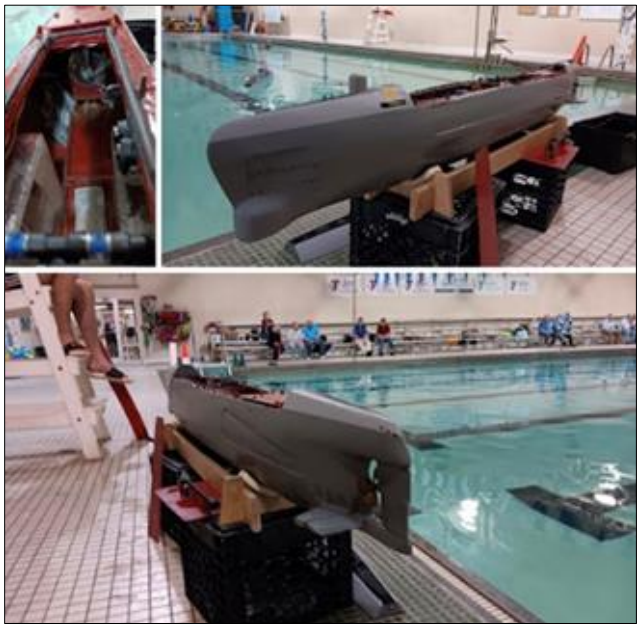
Our next WSMS Club Event scheduled for Summer 2025 will be the amazing Philadelphia MODELCON6, held in partnership with the Battleship New Jersey Museum. There is no fee for participants, and parking is free. Interested WSMS Members who would like to participate in this event can feel free to contact Philly Club Officer Joshua Fichmann at fichmann@yahoo.com or otherwise see the flyer below.

Past MODELCON events have been attended by several WSMS members who have stated it is a fun venue with lots of guests and a chance to promote WSMS club activities and modeling interest in league with our fellow shipwrights at the Philly Club. Be sure to attend this summer, or at least take the family up for the day!

The National Capital Model Soldier Society Annual show is also scheduled for Saturday, September 7, 2024 at the Springfield Hilton Hotel, 6550 Loisdale Road, Springfield, Virginia. This is another fantastic event with lots of public interest and a great afternoon to explore the modeling talent and artwork of fellow craftsmen.

Finally, don't forget about SHIPS & SUBS, beginning this Fall! Our fellow shipwrights in Shrewsbury Pennsylvania host SHIPS & SUBS Technically, the club is called "SubCom" East, and they rent the YMCA pool the second Sunday of the month, from October thru April. (Dates to follow). We meet at 10:00, run boats until 1:00, then the entire crew docks at a local sub shop to eat some great food, solve the issues of society, and have fun! As always, a few basics for the new folks, or as a reminder to the rest of the gang: SCALE electric power only. No steam, gas, etc. NO FAST ELECTRICS. If your boat cannot be operated in a safe manner among possibly 10 other ships plus submerged submarines, please

Ships & Subs RC Models ready to launch!



leave it at home. The cost of the pool rental is split among the captains. This usually works out to between $7 and $10 each. Spectators are always free. Beginners are not only welcomed, but encouraged. We love nothing more than being able to mentor someone just starting out in the hobby. Bring your kids / grandkids! A number of our group have kid friendly boats that they are most willing to allow the youngsters to run.

RC boats in action.

The Shrewsbury YMCA address is 100 Constitution Ave, Shrewsbury, PA., 17361. There is a small parking lot on the left as you enter the drive, just past the Post Office. That's the best place to park, as it's directly across the drive from the pool entrance door. Be aware that it does fill quickly, as many members of the church which uses the building park there, especially in bad weather. If that lot is full, just continue on to the main lot. Further information can be gathered by contacting Sub Club Officer Jim Butt, at emailjimbutt@gmail.com.

WSMS MEMBER ARTICLE

Attached is a segment from one of several articles WSMS Member Rick Y wrote for the Nautical Research Guild, regarding the construction of his model, *Equator*. This particular segment concerns **Coppering the Hull**. – *By Rick Y.*

Having "successfully" planked and trunneled the hull, I approached coppering the hull below the waterline. Self-sticking copper tape seemed perfect for the job. At 1:48 scale, I thought the copper plates should have a texture indicating the nail heads. I have seen coppering on models where they were embossed to indicate nail heads, looking more like rivets than nails. That did not seem right to me. From my own experience in nailing copper flashing to a chimney, I noticed the nail heads tend to make indentations in the metal sheet rather than standing proud. Visiting Mystic Seaport I checked out an example they had of coppering and noted the nails indentations (See Photo 1 below).

Photo 1

The photo shows some patina around the nail heads making them look raised but they are in fact indented My next task was to figure out a way to indent the copper tape many times, on many, many segments. I got an idea from Bernard Frölich's, The Art of Ship

Modeling, (an excellent book) wherein he showed how fine steel rods could be imbedded in epoxy to make a stamp to emboss the copper. I designed and built a jig (actually a few jigs until I got a good one) to indent the copper tape in some kind of mass production fashion; in this case, three at a time. I first developed a respectable pattern of nail heads loosely based on the example at Mystic. The pattern was drawn with Computer Aided Design (CAD) software, printed, and pasted to wood (two sandwiched temporarily layers one ¼" thick and the other 1/32" thick).

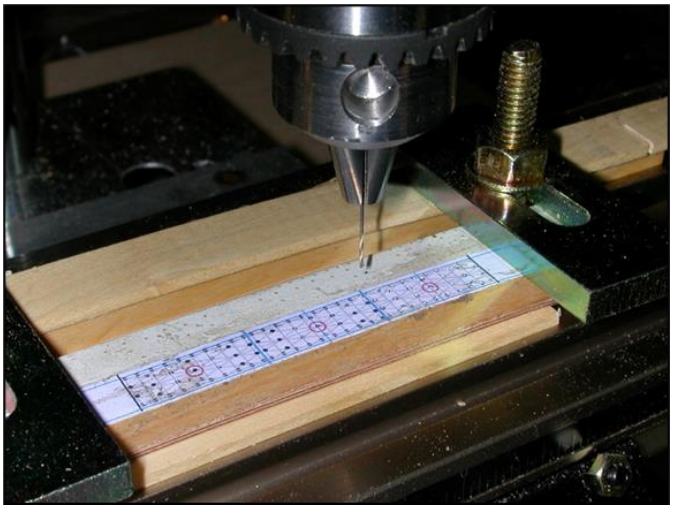
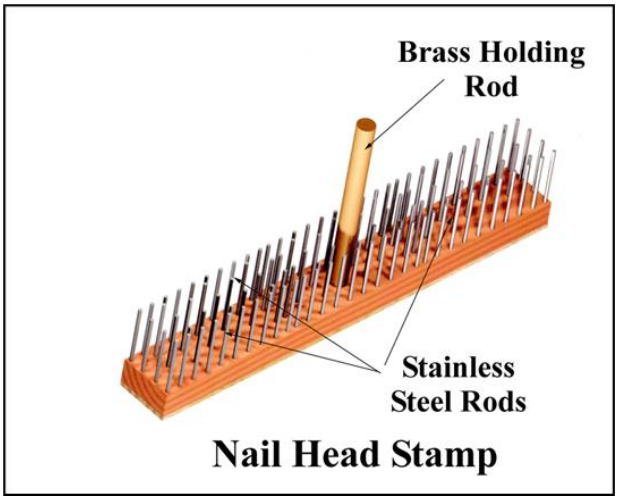


Photo 2

Using a drill press with a bit in the upper 70's gauges, I drilled through both layers of wood (See Photo 2 above). I was able to get some fine gauge steel ¾" long stainless-steel rods from a local hobby store.



These were inserted through the layers of wood to make a nail head stamp (See Nail Head Stamp drawings above and below).

Once the Nail Head Stamp was completed, I made the entire Stamping Jig. The drawing below shows the completed jig, into which you would then slide the copper tape until it stops. The First few inches of tape would be sacrificed unstamped and sliced off with a razor. I tapped the stamp to indent the tape. The strip of cardboard absorbed the shock of the stamp and the slice of the razor. Then the tape is pushed in to the stop and cut the exposed portion in three equal lengths equally creating three individual indented copper plates.

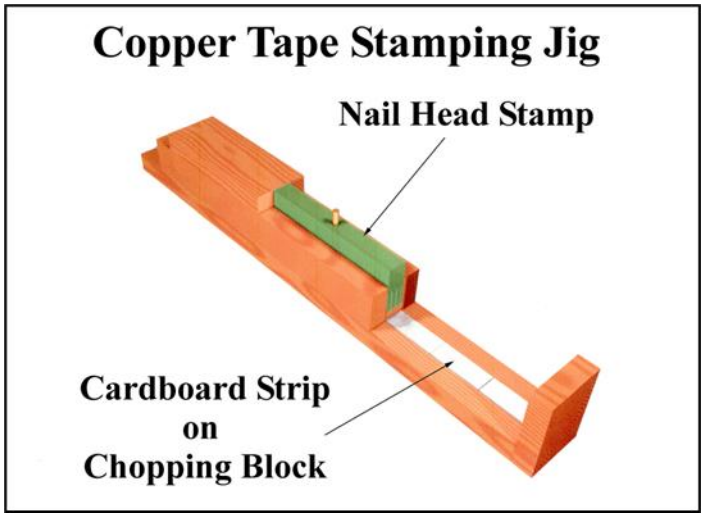


Photo 3 (below) shows how the jig is employed along with the tools and material. Once I had a gross of these copper plates I added a light patina to the individual plates. I found the most difficult and tedious part of coppering the bottom to be peeling the paper off the sticky side of the tape before adhering them to the hull. I usually needed the help of a razor blade.

Photo 3

You can see from Photo 4 (below) the finished product. I think this hull looks reasonably authentic. I left a few strakes of planking off on the port side to expose the frames and planking. These are some of the cant frames I was so concerned with getting it correct, as related in the previous article.

Photo 4

The last photograph (Photo 5 below) shows the completed stern, which I thought was the most difficult part of the hull construction. Fabricating the rudder, pintles, and gudgeons was fairly straight forward and not difficult. The lettering is not hand done, as my nerves would not allow it, but are press-on letters. Regarding the patina, I know that copper immersed in sea water will stay pretty shiny, but as I believe ship modeling is an art form and because esthetics are important in art, I cannot abide a brightly shining hull on a ship model. Perhaps it is more accurate but to me it looks garish and out of scale. I prefer some form of distress or weathering.

Photo 5

Regarding the painted portion of the hull, I was also not happy with available paint whites. When it comes to house paint there are a thousand and one variations of white. With model paints there seems to be just one WHITE! Once again, my esthetic sensibilities were offended. After numerous tries of various paints, I was able to find a commercial can of spray paint that I found a much more pleasing color, though my model painting skills are not what I wish they were.

ARTICLES FROM THE FLEET

The following article comes from our fellow shipwrights at the Philadelphia Ship Model Society and was published in the March 2024 edition of Quarterdeck.

Steel Navy Trickery: Sowing Confusion Amongst Enemy Submarines

Dazzle camouflage, also known as razzle dazzle or "dazzle painting," is a family of ship camouflage that was used extensively in World War I, and to a lesser extent in World War II and afterwards. Credited to the British marine artist Norman Wilkinson, though with a rejected prior claim by the zoologist John Graham Kerr, it consisted of complex patterns of geometric shapes in contrasting colors interrupting and intersecting each other.

Cargo ship, USS West Mahomet, served as a Navy Auxiliary, 1918-1919

Unlike other forms of camouflage, the intention of dazzle is not to conceal but to make it difficult to estimate a target's range, speed, and heading. Norman Wilkinson explained in 1919 that he had intended dazzle primarily to mislead the enemy about a ship's course and so cause them to take up a poor firing position. Dazzle was adopted by the Admiralty in the UK, and then by the United States Navy.

"Dazzle Ships In Drydock Liverpool" Artist: Edward Wadsworth, 1919

Each ship's dazzle pattern was unique to avoid making classes of ships instantly recognizable to the enemy. The result was that a profusion of dazzle schemes was tried, and the evidence for their success was, at best, mixed. So many factors were involved that it was impossible to determine which were important, and whether any of the color schemes were effective. Experiments were carried out on aircraft in both World Wars with little success. Dazzle attracted the notice of artists such as Picasso, who claimed that Cubists like himself had invented it. Edward Wadsworth, who supervised the

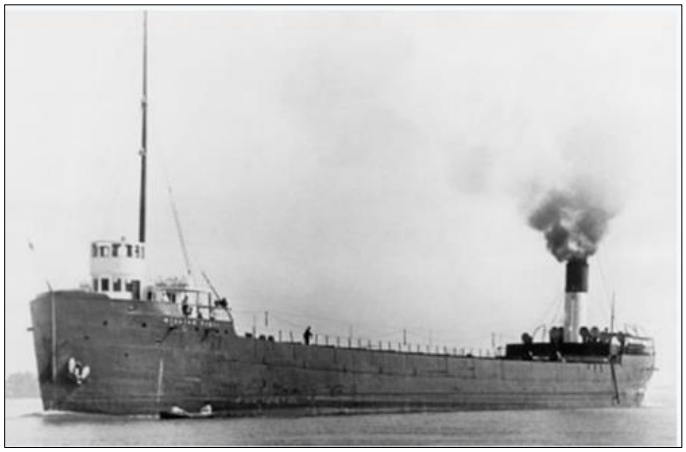
camouflaging of over 2,000 ships during the First World War, painted a series of canvases of dazzle ships after the war, based on his wartime work. – *Source Wikipedia*

MARITIME HISTORY

Lake freighters have nine lives; or two, or three, at least. This scene (right) shows the wreck of the steamer *Mataafa* being pumped out after being wrecked in a storm. This vessel was fortunate to be wrecked near a harbor where the water depth was shallow enough to allow the scuttled vessel to be salvaged. The full story of the Mataafa was provided in the March 2024 edition of the Hampton Roads Club Newsletter, the Logbook, *written by Tim Woods*. An excerpt is provided as follows:

November storms on Lake Superior have no equal. Mountainous seas, subzero temperatures, blinding snow and hurricane strength winds these storms have caused the greatest destruction and tragedy among sailors of the Great Lakes. The last days of November of 1905 were particularly wicked. On November 26, Lake Superior was relatively calm. The previous week had unleashed a severe snowstorm keeping vessels in port. A break in weather was a welcome relief. Dozens of vessels steamed out into the lake hoping to make one more trip before the end of the season. On the morning of November 27, the weather forecast called for cold and fair conditions. At Duluth, Minnesota, the steamer *Mataafa* was preparing to set sail with its consort barge *James Nasmyth*. In command of the *Mataafa* was Captain R. F. Humble. Captain Humble had spent sixteen years sailing on the Great Lakes and had great confidence in his vessel. At 3:30pm, the *Mataafa* cleared the Duluth harbor piers with her barge. Both vessels were fully laden with iron ore destined for the steel plants along Lake Erie. Although the weather had worsened as winds began to gust with some snow flurries.

Captain Humble had some reservations about the weather, but the *Mataafa* was a young staunch steamer that had already weathered many storms through its six years in service. The *Mataafa* and the *Nasmyth* made good progress, but the weather conditions continued to deteriorate.



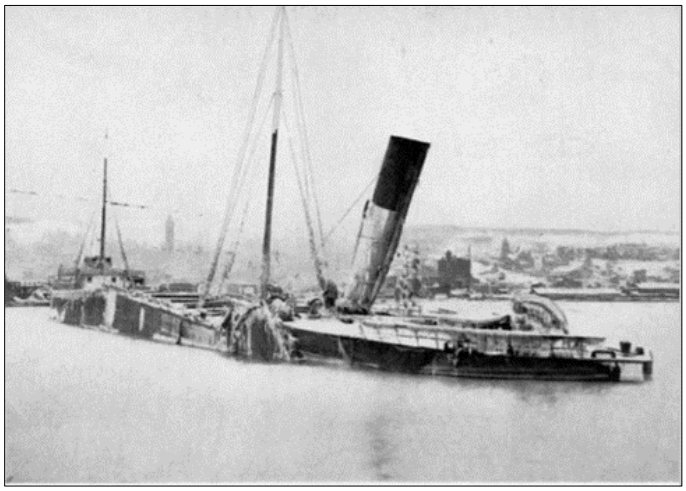
The gusts of wind and snow had turned into a raging blizzard. Waves crashed over the spar deck swirling down the length of the vessel. Captain Humble began

to have great concern for his vessel. By 7:30pm, the two vessels were off Two Harbors, Minnesota, when the storm's full force struck the *Mataafa* and the barge *Nasmyth*. Massive waves crashed over the pilothouse and the already limited visibility dropped down to nearly zero. Crewmen down below struggled to stay on their feet. Firemen continued to shovel coal into the boilers while the chief engineer throttled the engine as the screw was lifted and fell back into the rolling waves.

On the morning of November 28, the *Mataafa* was still being punished by the storm. Although the vessel had been steaming for over 10 hours, the *Mataafa* and *Nasmyth* had made little headway. Captain Humble ordered the vessels to turn back to shelter of Duluth. This would require the *Mataafa* to fall into the trough of the waves then swing her bow around. After successfully completing the maneuver, the two vessels headed towards Duluth.

Over the next several hours, the vessels inched their way along the north shore. After noon, Captain Humble was able to see the shoreline as the snowfall let up. As the *Mataafa* caught sight of Duluth, Captain Humble caught sight of two vessels entering the harbor. The vessels were the steamer *R.W. England* and the steamer *Isaac L. Ellwood*. The *R.W. England* had approached the Duluth Ship Canal when her master realized that the England was not going to make the piers. The steamer attempted to turn back into Lake Superior, but the giant waves pushed the *England* ashore. The *R.W. England* crashed ashore and eventually ended up high on the beach.

The *Mataafa* and *Nasmyth* reached the entrance to the ship canal at 2:15 p.m., but conditions prevented bringing the consort *Nasmyth* through the narrow ship canal. Captain Humble ordered the towline dropped a few miles before the harbor entry piers. The barge dropped its anchors.



Luckily, the anchors held and the *Nasmyth* rode out the storm. Captain Humble then ordered the *Mataafa* at full steam ahead towards the entry piers. When the steamer approached the piers, a giant wave lifted the vessel so high that the bow of the *Mataafa* stuck bottom.

The blow sent the vessel's stern careening into the north pier. Another wave forced the *Mataafa* to turn perpendicular to the pier. Although the steamer still had full power, it seemed to be immobilized. Captain Humble realized that her rudder had been sheared off when the vessel struck. The *Mataafa* was now disabled and at the mercy of the storm. Wave after wave pushed the steamer against the concrete pier until another large wave pushed the steamer outside the pier onto nearby shallow water. After the *Mataafa* struck hard aground, it began to break in two. The stern section began to settle lower in the water. Waves washed over the sinking stern extinguishing the boilers and the only source of heat and power on the vessel. With the temperature nearly thirteen below zero and the stern breaking apart, the crewmen aft were in desperate shape.

The second mate, who had been aft to help with releasing the towline earlier, decided to risk crossing the open deck to the forward section. Along with three other crewmen, the men made their way along the railing. Icy waves crashed over them nearly breaking their grasp of the thin wire railing, but three men reached forward. One crewman, after nearly being washed overboard several times, elected to join the eight other crewmen on the stern section. These men had little protection from the elements. As the winds peaked over 60 miles an hour, these sailors sought refuge under the smokestack.

The remaining fifteen crewmen took refuge in the forepeak. Conditions were little better than at the stern as water careened through broken portholes and through broken doors. The men had only the heat from a few lamps. There was no food so some broke off icicles and sucked on them. Captain Humble ordered the men to stay on their feet even though they were all exhausted from the ordeal. Humble's gamble of entering the ship canal had gone disastrously wrong.

However, there was some hope for the crew of the *Mataafa.* They could see the bonfires blazing along the shore through the snowstorm. Nearly forty thousand people from Duluth had gathered along the piers and beaches keeping a vigil. The Coast Guard had attempted to get a line aboard and rig a breeches buoy, but the line quickly froze and broke. No lifeboats or any other attempts would be made while the tempest still raged on Lake Superior. The morning of November 29 brought better weather. The wind and seas had decreased, allowing the Coast Guard to launch their boat out to the *Mataafa*.

Captain Humble and the other crewmen forward were quickly taken off. Before Captain Humble left his steamer, he ventured back to the stern. There he sighted several aft crewmen frozen to death. Their bodies were encased by ice and had to be chopped free to be taken off the vessel. In all, nine crewmen in the stern section died of exposure or were washed overboard.

The barge *James Nasmyth* was towed into port. Although it was battered, the vessel and crew survived the storm. Although the *Mataafa* was broken in two and was severely damaged, the

steamer was recovered some six months later. In 1906, the *Mataafa* was rebuilt at a cost of nearly $100,000, but it resumed a long career on the Great Lakes. In 1958, The Nicholson Transit Company purchased the *Mataafa*. They fitted out the 60-year-old steamer into service as an automobile carrier able to carry 500 vehicles from Detroit to Buffalo route. The *Mataafa* exchanged hands several times before purchased by Marine Salvage, Ltd. in 1965. That same year, *Mataafa* passed down the Welland Canal under her own power for the last time. On July 19, 1965, the *Mataafa* arrived at Hamburg, Germany to be scrapped at the shipbreakers, ending its career. "Even though the tragedy of the late November storm of 1905 was infamous to all along Lake Superior, it has been known ever since as the "Mataafa Storm"

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

The following tip was provided by Eckley's Art & Crafts website, Australia: Model shipwrights use a variety of techniques in painting models. Certain pieces require intricate painting of transoms, bulwarks, decorative scrollwork, figureheads, cabin and galley glass, stern lanterns and other features. To ensure realism, we must first understand how light - and subsequently shadow - interacts with an object, figure or landscape. To translate this into any painting, highlights are used to portray the areas where light hits an object, whilst darker hues are used to illustrate the contrasting shadows. Here are a few tips to get you started on depicting light and shadow through a painting.

1. Understand how light behaves: Depending on what you're painting, it can be tricky to depict shadow if you don't have one single light source. Light behaves predictably; it always travels in a straight line. Painting the illusion of form when there's multiple light sources is difficult because the effect of the lighting is less defined, softer, and can introduce shadows that don't behave consistently with the object in focus. The easiest way to learn to paint form and shadow is to have one harsh source of light shine on the objects in focus. Shadows will be clearly defined, and it will become obvious when a light source produces shadows with a sharp or blurred edge, which can be translated into realistic paintings. As a general rule, harsh light will create shadows with sharp, crisp edges, whilst softer light will produce shadows with blurred edges.

2. Sketch and define: Now that the main focus and lighting angles of the painting are defined, you can start filling in the surrounding elements. Don't overwhelm yourself trying to sketch every single detail of the painting; keep it simple, as there are still more steps to come. This exercise is just to keep defining light and shade.

3. Choose the right color shades: As we touched on previously, getting the color right when painting highlights involves time and thought. For shadows, most of us may think that black is the go-to color for depicting shadow, however this isn't the case. When choosing colors to paint shadow, the complementary color to the object will depict the most realistic shadow. Usually dark greens, purples and blues are

the best, so whichever one complements the subject at hand should be used. If you think that a shade of black will work best, make sure it is a mixed chromatic black rather than true black, as this will provide more depth and realism. For creating highlights on the subject of your painting (to which you are adding light), you will need to experiment a little to get the tones correct. For example, if you're adding highlights to a red object, a dash of yellow might work well to depict the light source. You can also add white to lighten a color, but keep in mind that this can reduce the vibrancy, so play around with your palette to see what works best.

4. Putting theory into practice: Now that you've sketched and defined your palette, it's time to start painting. Start with blocking out the subject, for example, if you're focusing on painting an autumn tree amongst a landscape, start by painting the reds, yellows and oranges of the autumn leaves. Everything outside of this is secondary, so it's important that the autumn trees are the brightest to remain the focal point. Before adding colors to the secondary areas of the painting, it might be useful to paint an edge around the trees that marks the transition between colors. Then blend these edges into the background – or secondary – areas of your painting. Squinting is a good way to assess your progress with the painting. It'll help you understand and pinpoint what stands out the most; is it the focal subject and the lighting? If it is, then you know you're on the right track. If secondary areas and shadows are what stands out the most, tweak the piece so it's focused on light rather than shadow.

5. Finishing off: After you've completed all the steps outlined above, finishing off the painting shouldn't be a lengthy process. You can add little touches of paint here and there, maybe a tad of yellow to brighten up some of the enlightened objects of the painting, and perhaps some additional shadows if you're painting a scene with lots of elements.to the wood. Once dry, it can be waxed over if desired to provide added protection. Color can be added to

FROM THE WORKBENCH

In this newsletter edition, we celebrate the workbench of model shipwright Ethan Davis, a modeler from West Virginia who posted his work on the Facebook group Ship Models. Ethan reported that he is actually new at modeling tall ships. He generally enjoys building aircraft carriers and armor models, but thought he would try his hand at a sailing ship.

Ethan has been working on the Revell 1:96 scale USS Constitution plastic model kit. This is the second build of this model as he was unhappy with the first attempt and wanted to apply some new ideas. Ethan said "I just tried to apply what I know about modeling to this project, and I like the look so far."

Ethan has used all of the kit parts so far, but expects he may seek out some aftermarket parts for rigging the ship. When asked to explain how he achieved the unique and realistic deck color, Ehtan said he used Future acrylic floor coating mixed with a few different shades of Vallejo reds and browns applied in very thin over lapping coats "leaving it streaky intentionally."

For the weathered highlights of the belay pins and crevices in the bulwarks, he used Tamiya panel line wash (brown) which Ethan said is his "quick and easy go to for weathering"

He was able to fill a gap in the transom with glazing putty and is happy with the results. According to other hobbyists on *Finescalemodeler* ship forum, the key to the transom problem is to trim the end of the lower deck, which is a little too long and causes the gap upon assembly. Ethan said he studied plans and information about the USS Constitution beforehand, and attempted to match the green colored bulwarks using Tamiya cockpit green which was his closest match to the Hull model in the Peabody Essex Museum, which he is using as a color reference. The blue colored stern windows were as they appeared in the war of 1812, which were believed to be the period correct colors according to the Hull model in the Peabody Essex Museum which, Ethan reports, is regarded as the most accurate representation.

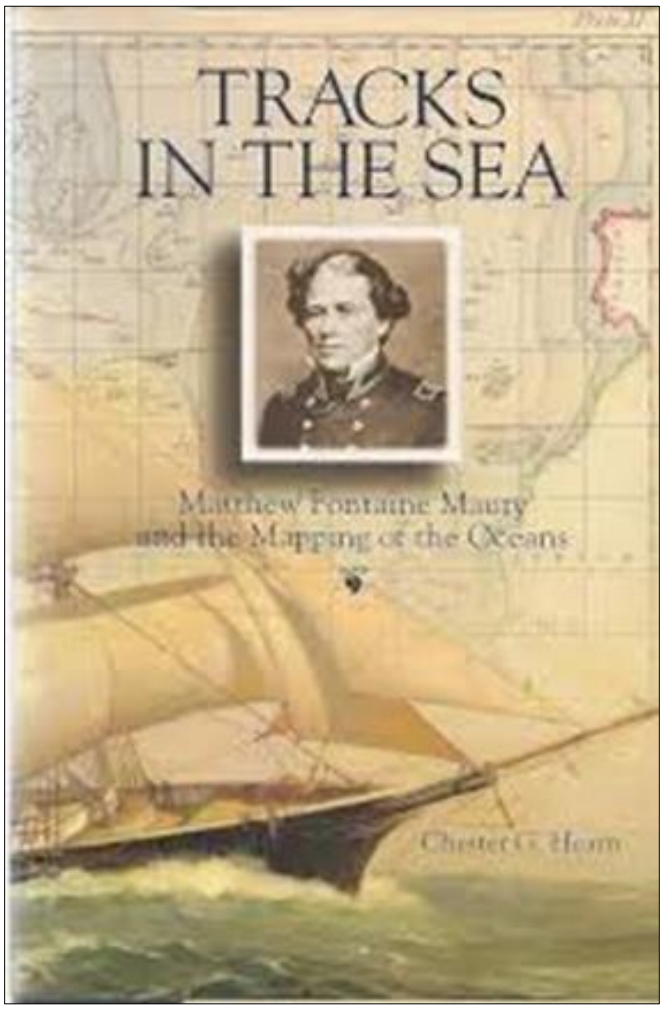
The Peabody Essex Museum is located at 161 Essex Street in Salem, Massachusetts. It is a successor to the East India Marine Society, established in 1799. It combines the collections of the former Peabody Museum of Salem and the Essex Institute.

According to scalemates.com, the Constitution Revell kit was first produced in 1965, and then again in 1978 with the latest rendition of new parts.

BOOKS OF INTEREST

For WSMS members who did not know, Matthew Fontaine Maury (January 14, 1806 – February 1, 1873) was a distant relative of WSMS Skipper, Larry Valett. He was an American oceanographer and naval officer, and his work left a lasting impact on modern charts and navigational aids today. He wrote extensively on the subject, and his book, The Physical Geography of the Sea (1855), was the first comprehensive work on oceanography to be published. As a young officer, Maury began to study the seas and devoted his time to studying navigation, meteorology, winds, and currents. He became Superintendent of the United States Naval Observatory and head of the Depot of Charts and Instruments. Maury studied thousands of ships' logs and charts and published the Wind and Current Chart of the North Atlantic, which showed sailors how to use the ocean's currents and winds to their advantage, drastically reducing the length of ocean voyages. Maury's uniform system of recording oceanographic data was adopted by navies and merchant marines worldwide and was used to develop charts for all the major trade routes.

This book Tracks in the Sea, by Chester G. Hearn was written in 2003 and tells the interesting story of Maury's life and times, and the challenges faced by early mariners in a new America. The book points out that "the navigator had to know his latitude, know the accurate time, and be able to accurately shoot the sun, moon, or stars with a sextant. With that, the navigator had the basis for fixing his longitude...if he understood how to use Bowditch's tables. To reach that level of knowledge, a sailor required hands-on instruction from an experienced seaman, and most seafarers during Maury's time were not well educated." According to *Goodreads*, "navigation at sea was a matter of guesswork until well into the 19th century. Changing that became the obsession of Matthew Fontaine Maury. While others built railroads, Maury mapped highways of wind and current over the seas. Hearn uses Maury's career as a window on America's maritime development in the 19th century, including the clipper-ship era of the 1850s, the rise of steam and steel, and the Civil War."



One reader stated "…I was quickly fascinated by the story of how Maury collected enormous amounts of data on ocean currents, winds, weather conditions and turned them into useful guides for 19th century shipmasters. Up until that time ships had no way of knowing how currents might help them choose better routes - especially around Cape Horn and Cape of

Good Hope…The astonishing thing is the amount of opposition he received from those in the Navy who were set in their old ways, in spite of the fact that their ways led to shipwrecks and a great waste of time and money on the part of shipowners who were never sure when or if their ship and cargo would arrive…Shortly after he resigned his commission in the Navy, his successor at the Naval Observatory ceased publishing his guides for seamen, out of jealousy at his renown. This didn't last, however. In 1885 the Hydrographic Office revived all of his work and continued to publish unfinished work until 1915, when sailing vessels finally yielded the field to diesel and coal powered ships during World War I."

CAN YOU NAME IT?

This forward portion of shaped planking connects from the wale to the stem below the head. What is the name of this structure? (You are on your own to research and find the answer. Good luck!)

WSMS WEBSITE

Be sure to check out our website! Interested parties and members are encouraged to frequently check the Washington Ship Model Society website to see the latest news. See www.dcshipmodelsociety.org to learn more about our organization. We have various items identified in the ship's store, and appropriate links are provided for members to purchase WSMS apparel. As a reminder, Washington Ship Model Society commemorative plates are available in limited supply for $25. Members can purchase them by emailing the skipper before attending a meeting, at which time your plate will be hand-delivered to you!

As a reminder, all members can post and upload their own photographs and workshop builds onto their page at the website. If you need a reminder or tutorial on how to accomplish that, please email Alan S. at the top of every club group email. For members wishing to contribute to future editions of The Lynx please email the Skipper with any of your photos, ideas, or articles of interest, including books and links to other exciting or interesting findings in the

world of model ship building. Tips and techniques are of particular interest!

LYNX & CONTACTS

The Washington Ship Model Society does not endorse any vendor or commercial website. The following links are provided for information purposes only.

A great website to explore is HisModel, Historic Ship Models for historic ship models and accessories, to include plans, Laser cut wooden decks crafted for plastic kits of the Victory, USS Constitution, Thermopylae, Cutty Sark and many others. Tons of items including marine figures and sailors, blocks, line, sails, Photo-etched rails, guns carriages, blocks for rigging, hooks, flags, and more.

See more at: https://www.hismodel.com, or email: message@HiSModel.com. The company is the Czech Republic located at outfit B. Nikodéma 4476/15 708 00 Ostrava Czech Republic.

A variety of laser engraved deck plans are available at HisModel.

MARITIME MUSEUMS

By Greg S. WSMS member Greg S. served as a curator for maritime museums in his former life.

He is an avid explorer of national maritime museums and has found several of interest, including the Franklin D. Roosevelt model ship collection, located in Hyde Park, NY. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was well known as an avid collector of many things. For example, between 1910 and his death in 1945, the President amassed a collection of over 400 ship models and approximately 6,000 naval- and maritime-related prints and photographs. His interest in naval and maritime issues came from both branches of his family's history. On his mother's side, the Delanos were active maritime traders. They operated clipper ships, but were also involved in privateering. The Roosevelts invested in ships and shipping, owned ships, and even built ships. Several models in the collection have a direct link to his family.

John Aspinwall, the President's great-grandfather, was a New York City merchant. His sons, William Henry and John Lloyd Aspinwall, owned a ship building firm, Howland and Aspinwall. In 1845, the company launched Rainbow. Rainbow was an "extreme clipper ship", built for speed rather than cargo capacity. Once Rainbow entered commercial service, it became known as the fastest sailing ship in the world. During a 1933 sailing trip along the New England coast, the President received a model

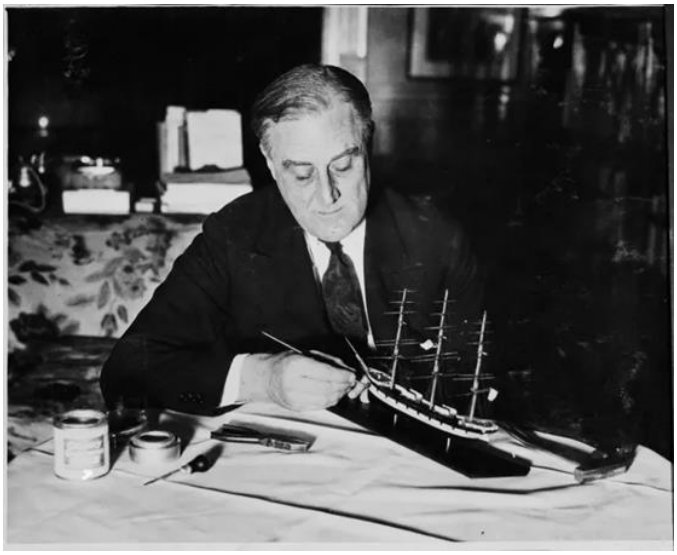
of Rainbow. FDR wrote to the donor, saying, "I take great interest in ships and ship models, and have spent many happy hours with my collection to which the 'Rainbow' becomes a valuable addition."

The collection

The President was made an honorary life member of what was then the "Ship Model Maker's Club" (SMMC) on February 27th, 1933. SMMC would later become the Washington Ship Model Society, or WSMS. Although there are archival pictures showing the President painting a ship model, there is only one ship model that is documented to have been built by the President.

The President built this wood model of an unidentified 19th century schooner. It measures 9 ½" from stem to stern and has 17 canvas sails. He gave it to his long-time secretary, Marguerite "Missy" LeHand and it remains in the possession of her relatives today.

The President had a strong interest in the frigate Constitution. In 1914, while serving as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, he purchased the below model. He also collected numerous paintings, prints, books and manuscripts about Constitution. During his tenure as Governor of New York (1929-1933), he personally re-rigged the model, indicating confidence in his skills, at least in this area of ship modeling. FDR displayed the model in a prominent place in his private study at the White House. The President donated the model to his Library just months before his death.



Schooner Model

FDR personally designed his Presidential Library on the grounds of his home in Hyde Park, NY. When the Roosevelt Library opened in 1941, one of the highlights was the large "Naval Room", where FDR displayed models from his collection. The President hand-picked the models and artwork for display in the "Naval Room", which, despite the name, prominently displayed both military and civilian ship models.

The author visited the FDR Presidential Library on June 22nd, 2022. Honestly, the ship models are not well described and many of them are difficult to see. In fact, the ship models are in what is known as a "visible storage area." This is 'museum speak' for artifacts that are not on display, but can still be seen while in storage. There is a good YouTube video that

shows several of the models and provides background information.

Most of the models in the "visible storage area" were in glass-fronted cases along the back wall, visible only from about a 10-foot distance through a glass door, making good photography difficult at best. Even the models in the front cases were difficult to photograph. Fortunately, good quality photographs of most, if not all of the models in the "visible storage area" seem to be available on the Presidential Library website at https://fdr.artifacts.archives.gov/collections/6590/ship-model-collection/objects/images.

Surcouf

According to the text panel at the Presidential Library, this submarine model, loosely based on the real French submarine *Surcouf,* can fire its guns, submerge, and launch torpedoes. French General Charles de Gaulle gave the model to FDR during a July 1944 visit to Washington, DC. The President tested the model in the David Taylor Model Basin, which is now part of the Carderock Division of the Naval Surface Warfare Center, in Carderock, MD, not far from where WSMS meets in Bethesda, MD.

FDR's ship model collection is international in scope, containing models of American, British, German, French and Japanese ships, as well as ships and craft from smaller nations around the globe. It includes famous ships such as the WWII Battleship *USS Iowa* (BB-61) and *USS Hartford* from the American Civil War, but also smaller craft including canoes, amphibious landing craft, and native-designed craft from across the Pacific.

Constitution

Many of the models in FDR's collection were purchased by him. Others, like the model of *Rainbow*, were gifts from friends or admirers. Many of the models from the library's collection were displayed in the White House. Today, only part of the collection is on public display at any given time, and the collection is no longer a centerpiece of the library. There is at least signage directing visitors to the ship model collection. The FDR Presidential Library website has details on only 161 of the 400 models in the collection. Because the Library doesn't have full descriptions of the entire collection online, there seems to be an opportunity for additional archival research.

TALL SHIP LYNX

News from the Tall Ship *Lynx* Facebook page and website: Interested shipwrights, crew, and "arm-chair sailors" can learn more about the mascot ship of WSMS at

https://www.tallshiplynx.org/. The Tall Ship *Lynx* is an educational organization dedicated to hands-on programs that teach the history of America's struggle to preserve its independence. The ship is an interpretation of an actual privateer built in 1812. The maritime challenges during the War of 1812 are

Lynx at Marthas Vineyard

taught aboard *Lynx* utilizing a comprehensive, interactive program designed to enrich personal achievement through teamwork and the discipline of

Nantucket Sailing!

sailing. A recent Facebook post stated that Lynx is currently in Vineyard Haven, Martha's Vineyard, with Egan Maritime Institute and the Nantucket Shipwreck & Lifesaving Museum, as part of the "Sea of Opportunities-Nantucket" 8th grade programs teaching kids about seamanship and other nautical experiences. If you are inspired and committed to maritime preservation, interested parties are encouraged to consider a donation to the Lynx Educational Foundation, a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization, or by purchasing a ticket for sailing at www.tallshiplynx.org.

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