

# 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](http://www.dcshipmodelsociety.org)

Winter Edition 2024

### SKIPPER'S CORNER

I want to welcome and celebrate all of our Washington Ship Model Society members and strikers into to a New Year! I hope your holidays were merry and bright. This year looks like we will have a number of exciting events and club meetings in which to participate, as well as some opportunities to connect with and possibly recruit prospective members. Our club has done very well over the past several years in attracting and recruiting new membership, so I think it is incumbent on all of us to continue to seek out and encourage new membership into the club. Model shipbuilding is a wonderful hobby that incorporates woodworking, plastics, painting, electronics, craftsmanship, 3D printing, machine work, milling, and a variety of other talents and skill sets into each project. The level of expertise and workmanship by many of our members is unmatched in the community, and several members have published articles, given lectures, and have served as ambassadors for the hobby. I believe this year will provide some great opportunities to showcase our talents and our subject-matter expertise, which will appeal to others interested in the hobby.

This year I thought I would try my hand as the newsletter editor. Since Covid, it has been difficult for the club to consistently publish a newsletter for various reasons. The Lynx has been an effective conduit to keep members informed of our events, and share information, photographs, tips and techniques with our members who are unable to travel or

participate in club activities during the year. Accordingly, I feel it is important to attempt some production of The Lynx during this year, and hopefully for many more years to come. In order to provide enough time to collect information and encourage participation, we will attempt publication once every quarter: Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. We will also attempt to include more information about our club meetings and presentations which occur every month. Also, we will attempt to incorporate some information about various events of shows which the club participates in. As always, anyone with content, articles, photographs, or items of interest for the newsletter, please email them to the Skipper and we will consider them for inclusion in future editions. I hope this new year will bring each of you plenty of opportunities to work on your projects and, most enjoyably, share them with your fellow shipwrights and the public at large.

*/s/Larry Valett  
WSMS Skipper*

### CLUB MEETINGS

*Our next club meeting will be held on **February 10, 10 a.m. – 12 noon at the Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 7730 Bradley Blvd, Bethesda, MD 20817.** 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*

between Baltimore, Maryland, and Stafford, Virginia, to select and participate in various meetings closer to home and perhaps more convenient to each other. Generally, our Virginia meetings are held at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria, VA. 22308. (Room #216 or #217). Our Maryland meetings are held at the Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 7730 Bradley Blvd, Bethesda, MD 20817, in the lower floor meeting room. All participants should check our website and group email reminders on dates and details about each meeting. To the extent possible, we generally can schedule a Zoom meeting during inclement weather. Link details and information is sent to members by email. Some highlights of our January 13, 2024 Virginia Meeting are as follows:

During the Seven Years' War she served both as a sloop and as a bomb vessel, and participated in naval operations off the coast of France and in the West Indies. When the Navy sold her in 1763, she became the mercantile Prince Frederick. Around 1775 she became the whaler Prudence, sailing in the British northern whale fishery. Around 1781 she became a government transport and was wrecked on 20 May 1782 on the coast of India. John W. purchased this kit from a producer in China, and has been relatively pleased with the communications, support, and quality of the model.



John W. shared his current project, a plank on frame wooden kit of the Granado gun boat. The HMS Granado was launched at Harwich in 1742, during the War of the Austrian Succession as a sloop-of-war. During this war she captured a French privateer.

As can be seen, much detail is included in the kit such as mortar balls, hinges, galley stove brickwork, and much more. John has given special attention to the woodwork fitting, staining, and glueing process which has created a beautiful patina on the model. Once completed, this model will be a show piece.

Rick Y. has been working on a hand crafted, plank on frame model of the Sea Witch. Rick has researched his plans, and diligently hand crafted each frame, affixed to the working board, which he has recently planked over, to a large extent, while leaving a small viewing portion of the frames.

designed by naval architect John W. Griffiths for the China trading firm of Howland & Aspinwall. She was launched at Smith & Dimon in Manhattan on December 8, 1846.

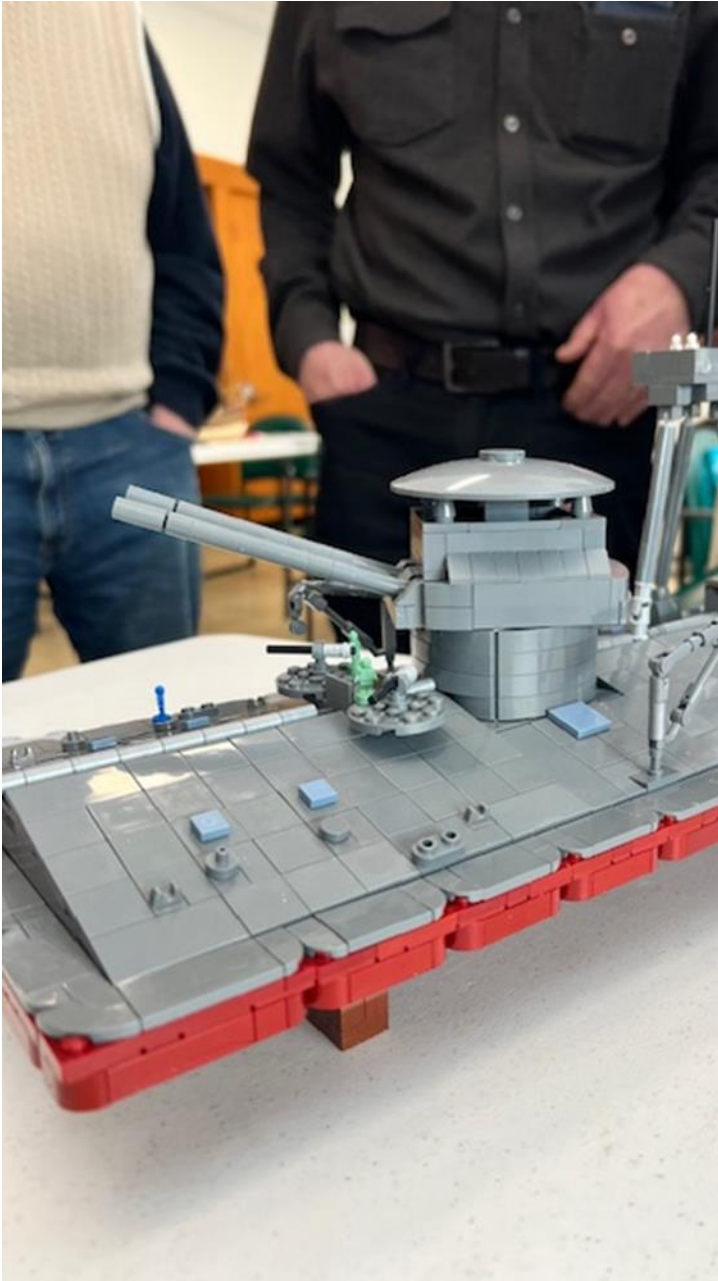


Rick stated his intention is to copper plate the hull. Accordingly, Rick used appropriate wood filler to fill and sand smooth the entire hull, then paint using acrylic paints to complete and mark his hull lines. In the coming months, Rick will copper plate over the red portion of the hull. Rick has been working on this project for nearly two years, amidst his many other projects, and enjoys conducting research on the vessel. Sea Witch was an American clipper ship

Rick will continue to give us updates on his project. At this point, he plans to fully rig the ship...as time allows! Once again, this model will be worthy of showcasing to the many fans of the Washington Ship Model Society.

Many of our club members like to focus of ships of various eras, to include wooden vessels, fishing boats, steel navy, etc., and prefer various model mediums to include plastic, wood, and paper. However, club member John (the other John) has found a unique niche by building ships out of Legos. Lego building blocks are readily available on the web, and Lego produces thousands are various shapes, patterns, colors, and functions which John has explored to create some amazing ship models which he has shared with the club over the past

couple of years. John designs each model on his own, drawn by hand, after researching his interest, then he sits at the workbench with drafting pencil in hand and creates a blueprint of the model he intends to build...and figures out how to construct it from individual Lego pieces.



John's recent project is a model he designed and build of the Italian monitor, *Faà di Bruno* which was an Italian monitor built during World War I. Completed in 1917, the ship played a small role in

the 11th Battle of the Isonzo later that year. She was decommissioned in 1924, but returned to service as the floating battery GM 194 at the beginning of World War II and was towed to Genoa and where she spent the rest of the war. The ship had her guns disabled when the Royal Navy bombarded Genoa in 1941. GM 194 was captured by the Germans after the Italian Armistice in 1943 and was turned over to the Italian Social Republic that they installed afterward. She was scuttled at the end of the war and subsequently scrapped.



John looked for resources and various photographs, then built his model to proportional scale which he calculated or which otherwise was revealed in research. This model is built at "Lego Scale" so consistency in the size of each piece and Lego figure (if any) is a determining factor in the size of the model. John's small fiat car is also a determining factor in how large of a model he can transport to any club meeting or any show!

John stated that, being a Lego enthusiast, he has attended many Lego shows and events over the years, and many Lego builders are now building ships of various shapes and sizes, to include large, scale replicas of battleships and cruise ships!



*Faà di Bruno*

As a model medium, Lego bricks and pieces now present a unique challenge, and opportunity for many modelers to showcase their talents.



Alan S. brought in a new project he is working on which is a replica dry dock, which can be used to showcase a variety of Alan's models. Currently shown in the photograph is an old model of the Reuel

Kearsarge Civil War ship at 1:96 scale. The USS Kearsarge, a Mohican-class sloop-of-war, is best known for her defeat of the Confederate commerce raider CSS Alabama off Cherbourg, France during the American Civil War. Kearsarge was the only ship of the United States Navy named for Mount Kearsarge in New Hampshire. Subsequent ships were later named Kearsarge in honor of the ship.



Alan began his plans for the drydock by researching various plans and photographs, then mapped out his plans on foam board. He subsequently cut each piece of foamboard out to lay on top of each other, creating the depth of the dry dock. As he progresses. It is his intention to cover over the drydock with realistic scenery replicating concrete, wood, earth, scaffolding, horses and wagons, work sheds and other representations of a dry dock in operation.

**UPCOMING  
EVENTS**

Our next club event will be to participate at the February 24, 2024, IPMS Old Dominion Model Show, held inside at the Racetrack Grounds, 600 E. Laburnum, Richmond, VA. 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. There are over 70 model categories in competition, a variety of vendors and a huge kit drawing. For more details, go to <http://ipmsrichmond.blogspot.com> or contact Bob Walls at (804) 740-3736 or by e-mail to [robertwalls@comcast.net](mailto:robertwalls@comcast.net).



WSMS Members at IPMS Richmond, 2023

Robert and the crew at IPMS Richmond have been good partners with the Washington Ship Model Society, and each year have provided us with tables and space to showcase our club and a variety of ship models. IPMS Richmond became an IPMS/USA chapter in 1972, and since then have grown steadily to become the home for the scale modeling community in the greater Richmond area.

Locally, the IPMS Northern Virginia Show will be held on April 13, 2024 at Fairfax High School 3501 Lion Run, Fairfax VA. 9a.m.-5p.m.

**Northern Virginia Modelers  
Model Classic 2024**  
The Road to Victory  
80th Anniversary of D-Day  
June 6, 1944

Saturday, April 13, 2024  
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
Fairfax High School  
3501 Lion Run, Fairfax, VA 22030

General Admission  
\$10.00 Single Adult (18 and older)  
\$15.00 Family

Make & Take  
FREE for the Kids!  
(17 & under)

Confestants  
\$15.00  
Unlimited number of models

Award Sponsorships  
Category: \$30.00  
Best of Class: \$50.00

Juniors (17 & under) and Active Duty Military (with ID) FREE!

Vendor Tables \$30.00 per table

On Site Food Concession

**Super Raffle**

Tom Henderson 15491 Wheatfield Rd. Woodlands, VA 22193 (703) 650-9354 tomhenderson51@verizon.net

Jon Eiberton 6902 Briant Ave. McLean, VA 22101 (703) 445-4190 jon.eiberton@outlook.com

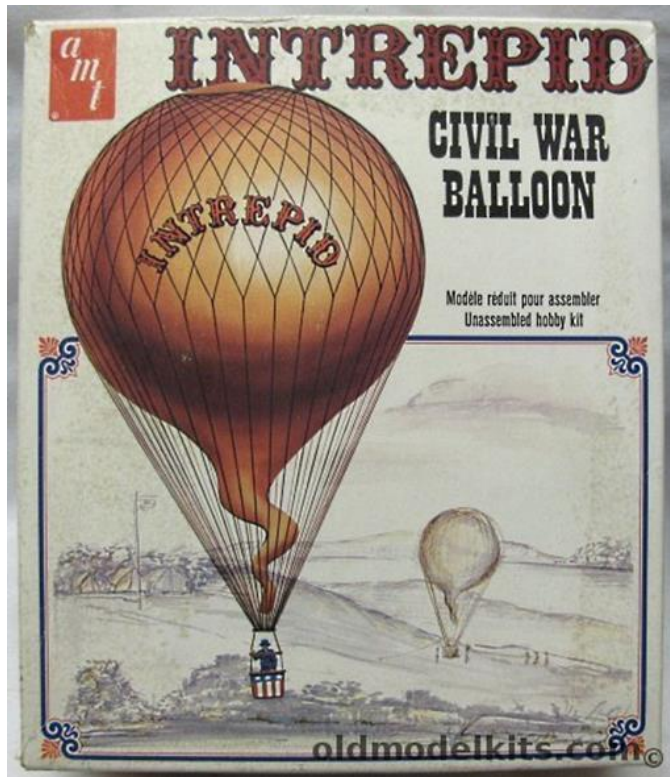
www.novaipms.org  
Show Sponsorship & Food Concession  
Fairfax High School  
PTSA All Night Grad Committee

IPMS NOVA has been a great event for the Washington Ship Model Society and has produced a lot of interaction and resulted in member recruitment in past years. We generally set up our table to showcase a dozen models to the public, and some members have entered past contests as well. See details at: <https://www.novaipms.org/model-classic>

**WSMS  
MEMBER  
ARTICLE**

WSMS member Larry V. completed a unique project this past year, which was a Civil War balloon model of the *Intrepid*. The model kit was produced in 1975 by AMT, and is a plastic assembly of eight pieces composing the balloon at roughly 1/57 scale. AMT, which stands for Aluminum Model Toys was founded in 1948 by attorney West Gallogly, in Michigan. The kit comes

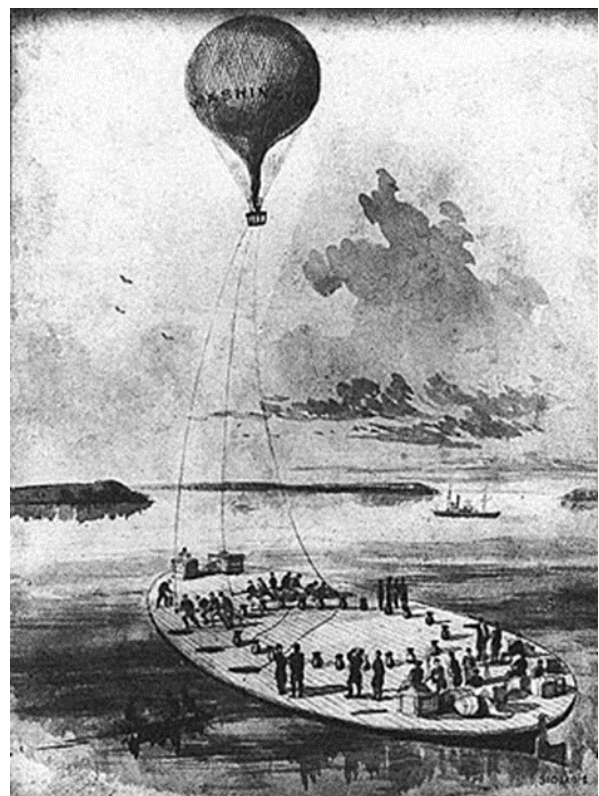
with some line and a scale figure, poorly cast, as well as a balloon basket. In general, the plastic balloon comes with sculpted ropework cast into the model. The modeler must first build 50% of the balloon, then add rigging line through pre drilled holes at the base of the balloon, knotting them so they don't fall out during the process, which are later connected to the balloon basket.



advanced theories in the meteorological sciences as well as his balloon building.



Lowe's scientific endeavors were cut short by the onset of the American Civil War, for which he offered his services performing aerial reconnaissance on the Confederate troops for the Union Army.



*Floating Barge with balloon.*

Why a balloon model at the Washington Ship Model Society you may ask? The answer lies in the history. In short, during the Civil War, the Union used the balloon corps as floating observation balloon affixed to large floating barges, then taken down the James River in Virginia during the Peninsula campaign of 1862.

In brief, Thaddeus Sobieski Constantine Lowe (August 20, 1832 – January 16, 1913), was an American Civil War aeronaut, scientist, and inventor, mostly self-educated in the fields of chemistry, meteorology, and aeronautics, and the father of military aerial reconnaissance in the United States. By the late 1850s he was well known for his

In July 1861 Lowe was appointed Chief Aeronaut of the Union Army Balloon Corps by President Abraham Lincoln. Though his work was generally successful, it was not fully appreciated by all members of the military, and disputes over his operations and pay scale forced him to resign in 1863.

scale, lightweight for easy transportation, with wooden decks and sufficient detail to garner interest. The balloon model currently sits on a diorama base of heavy wood for stability, but is removable. The balloon is affixed to a heavy grade tomato stake.



Ultimately, Larry wants to build the floating barge upon which the balloon was launched. That barge would be built to an appropriate and manageable

The balloon was spray painted with enamel color, weathered, and the molded netting was color matched to the rigging line. The balloon basket was hand made from scratch, and colored based on photos and research. The wagon was scratch built from wood, copper, and “sculpty” clay. Static grass was used with other model railroading landscaping material. The men were from the 28mm scale American Civil War Artillery kit by Perry Miniatures, cut/shaped and sculpted to form. The horses were taken from a 1/72 war games kit of Cavalry War of the Spanish Succession by Wargames Factory, each horse cut/shaped to mold.

It is envisioned this model and components can later be moved onto the barge for club shows and events, along with an appropriate description of this balloon, the first “aircraft carrier” in American history!



ARTICLES  
FROM THE  
FLEET

The following article comes from one of our fellow shipwrights at the Hampton Roads Ship Model Society, and was included in the 2024

edition of the Hampton Roads newsletter entitled the *Logbook*. The story tells of Stewart's experience in fixing up a whale boat given to a child, entitled *The Saga of the Green Whaleboat*.

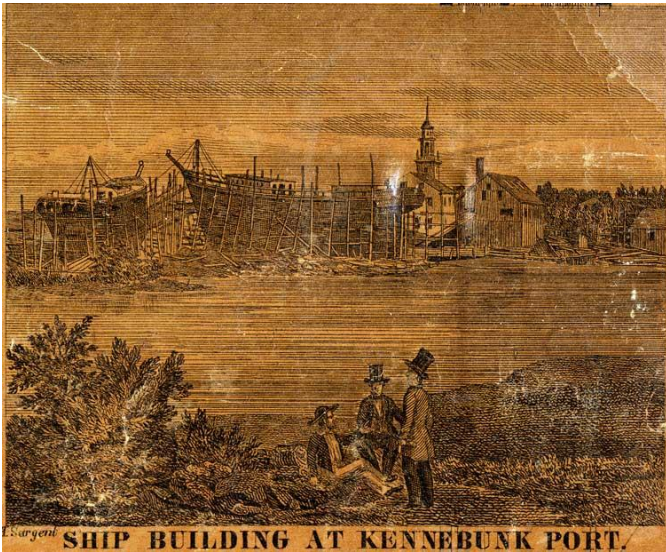
“After the last auction there was a box of several started but abandoned boats destined for the trash heap, and among them was an unfinished whaleboat which I fished out to see if it could be saved. While its construction was exceptionally solid, the planking job had gone astray and was beyond help as far as producing any realistic depiction of an actual boat. Even so, I took it home to see if I could find any possible use for it. While working the Taco Stand (i.e., Ship Modeler's Booth) I had a couple of occasions to hand one of our simpler models to a young visitor, and had noticed how their attention immediately brightened as they were able to experience the touch and feel of an actual model. But I didn't feel comfortable handing over a model that wasn't mine, and that someone else might feel was too valuable to entrust to young fingers. As I looked at the whaleboat, it occurred to me that if it was cleaned up a bit, it would be a very good example which could be used, imperfect as it is, as a “touchy-feely” example, without having to worry about it being damaged or even destroyed. It could even be given away if it might inspire the right person to take up the hobby. So, I set about cleaning it up. I stripped off the worst of the planking, plastered the hull with wood filler and sanded the hell out of it. I wanted to paint it a glossy white, but didn't have any so I used what I did have, which was a glossy bilious green! (Whoever heard of a green whaleboat?) Here are some pictures of it, the only ones that exist, taken in the Booth, where I left it along with a note explaining why it was there. I left it in the Booth on Friday, November 3, and the next day, Saturday, Dave Baker gave it to a young lad. – Stewart.”



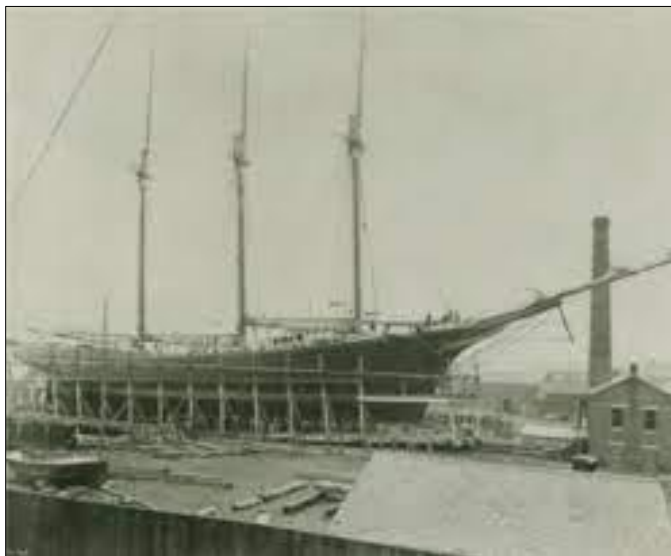
MARITIME  
HISTORY

At the height the shipbuilding industry on the Kennebunk River, Kennebunk, Maine, there were six shipyards operating. There were hundreds of ships that were built in these shipyards, estimated to be 400 to 600 large vessels which were constructed there. Unfortunately, much of the history and the exact location of these shipyards have been

lost. A recent trip to Kennebunkport piqued my interest in the history of ship building in this area. There, a bridge divides the Kennebunk River between upstream and downstream, with various shipyards existing, and surviving, dependent on their location along the river.



The Kennebunkport Historical Society has much information on this history, and more information about the local river and the various locations and details of all the large and small shipyards at: <https://kporths.com/2019/09/19/shipyards-in-the-village-below-the-bridge>.



*Ship at The Clark Shipyard.*

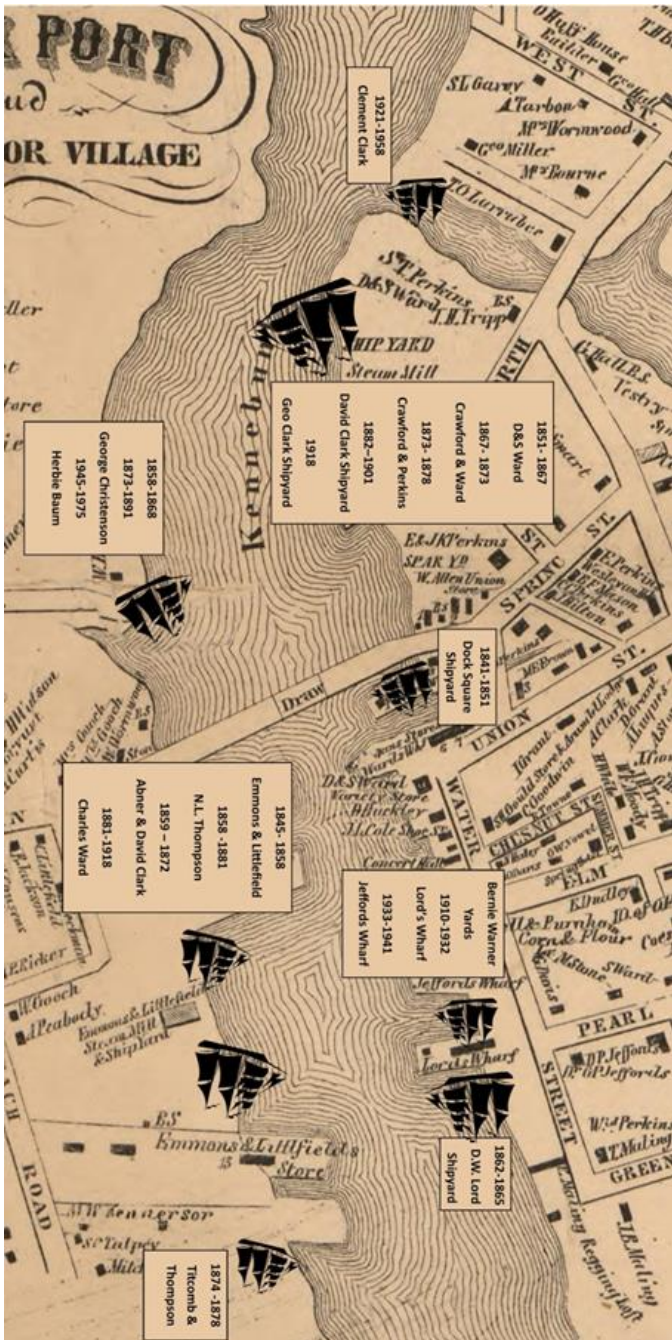
Interestingly More wooden sailing vessels were built in Maine in the 19<sup>th</sup> century than in any other state. Two miles upriver at The Kennebunk Landing, many firms and shipwrights built hundreds of ships between the 1760's and 1867. But as demand for giant sailing vessels with greater tonnage grew, shipbuilding downstream became more profitable.



*Titcomb Shipyard, upriver at The Landing.*

From Kennebunkport, ships could launch in a wider channel and enter the water closer to the ocean. Many shipbuilders, including D&S Ward, Emmons Littlefield, Christensen, and Clark could launch their ships more cost effectively. A swing-bridge design which allowed access to the sea became vital and was built at Kennebunkport. Shipbuilding declined by 1918 and the bridge swung open for the last time in 1984. Hundreds of ships built upstream passed through the bridge here. For a time, trying to remain competitive with downstream yards who could launch bigger ships more easily, The Landing's upriver shipwrights built a lock which existed there from 1849 to 1867. The lock raised water levels allowing ships to float to the ocean.

In 1889 the Clark Shipyard build the schooner *Julia Frances*. Unfortunately, during WWI, the Atlantic Coast was patrolled by German U boats. U-152 was actively employed in the Atlantic during the last year of the war. Among her victims were two American schooners, *Julia Frances* (sunk on 27 January 1918) and A.E. Whyland (sunk on 13 March 1918).



Map of various shipyards above and below the bridge in Kennebunkport.

A trip to Kennebunkport is well recommended for anyone who has not been. There is great information about the history of the town, and its involvement in American shipbuilding over the years.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

The following article was presented by Stan Ross, a member of the Model Shipwrights of Ohio, which was included in their November 2023 issue of their newsletter, the *Ropewalk*, entitled *Making Waterline Ships Look Like They Are in Water*.

Stan started his presentation with three questions: What waters is the ship in? (Deep water or shallow, lake or ocean, southern or northern). Is the ship in motion or at anchor. Is the sea to be calm or windy?



Resin, paints, and stiff brushes used.

The answers to those question impact how the ship model display will look. The first question impacts on the color of the sea. The water color found in Lake Erie is a different than that in the Caribbean, the North Atlantic or the Mediterranean Sea. The



Ship's wake modeled in resin and paint.

second, defines the wake of the ship or lack of it. The third indicates whether there are white caps and

waves, (i.e., a ship under bellowing sails would have white caps). Stan mounts his waterline models in



*Paddle wheeler wake in white acrylic or resin.*

cases with a lip in which the sea is painted and installed. His first step after determining how the model will be mounted, is to paint the base the color of the sea chosen. Lake Erie green or Ocean blue.

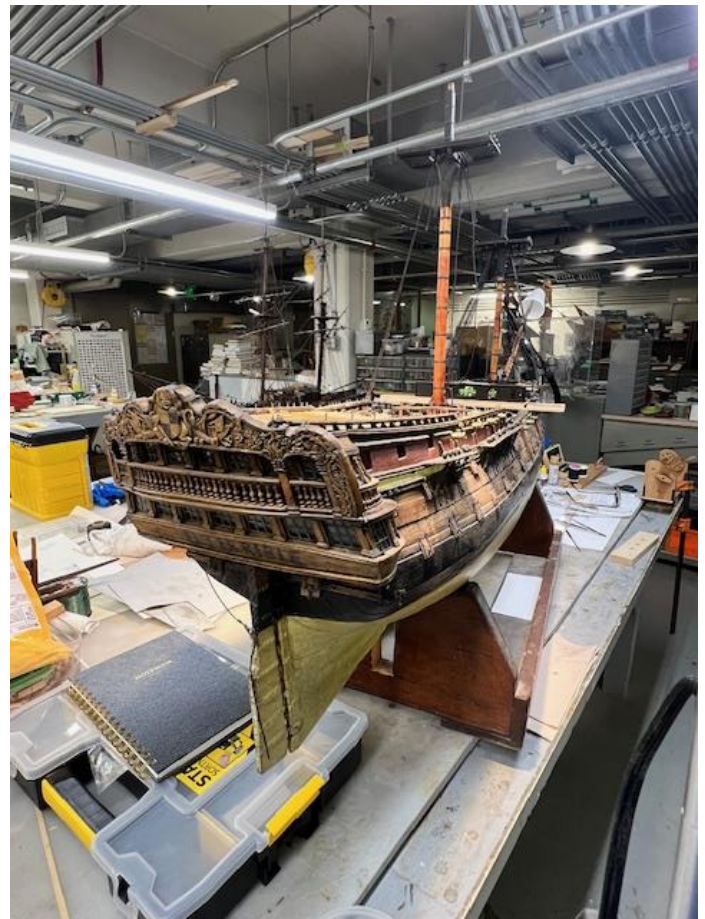


*In harbor, still green water. Demonstrates shallow.*

The color chosen for the sea is purchased at your local hardware store in sample quantities. After the base is painted to your satisfaction, mount the model, and then coat the base with resin. The tools used to create the implied movement, wakes, white caps and waves are: three colors of oil paints: Winsor Newton Oils Viridian blue, Zinc white and a tone of green; plus oil paint stiff bristled brushes and most important - patience. – Stan Ross. *Ropewalk*, 2023.

FROM THE  
WORKBENCH

Several WSMS members participate with the volunteer workforce of model shipwrights at the U.S. Naval Academy Museum in Annapolis, Maryland. One project on the workbench which has been continuing for many years is the ongoing restoration of the *El Terrible*, a model from 1754, which is part of the Col. Rogers collection. The model's restoration began with dismantling the rigging, then cleaning and restoration of the hull and woodwork. Rigging has begun this past year.



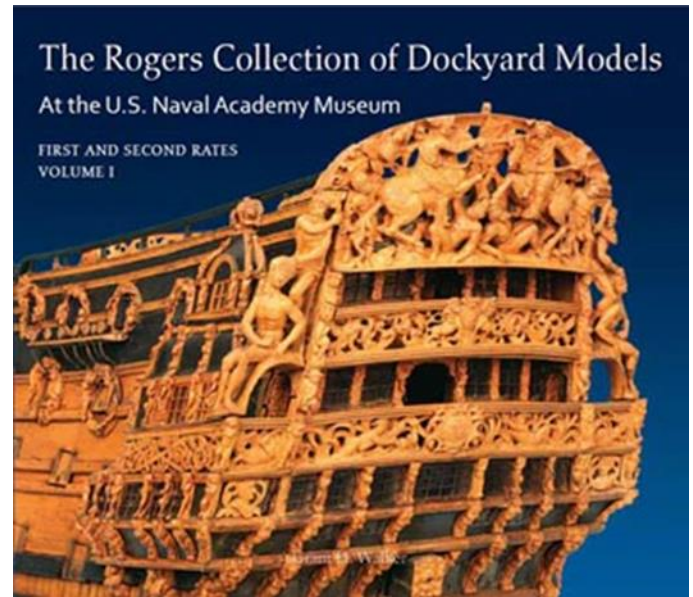
More can be learned about the model in the book *The Rogers Collection of Dockyard Models*, by Naval Academy Historian, Grant Walker, and published by SeaWatch Books. The photos here show what a beautiful model she is, and the scope of work to fully restore her has been exciting and

challenging. The man-o-war was English built, but part of the Spanish Navy.



Many references were used in the preparation of rigging plans, to include various resources detailing Spanish and French rigging of the period. Rigging will be completed consistent with the original photographs of the model and related details, as can be observed. The model itself had some anachronistic rigging components consistent with mid-19<sup>th</sup> century features, but will be restored, and rigged in continental fashion c. 1795, under the guidance and direction of the curator.

The U.S. Naval Academy Museum is located in Preble Hall on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Academy. The Museum offers two floors of exhibits about the history of sea power, the development of the U.S. Navy, and the role of the U.S. Naval Academy in producing officers capable of leading America's sailors and marines.



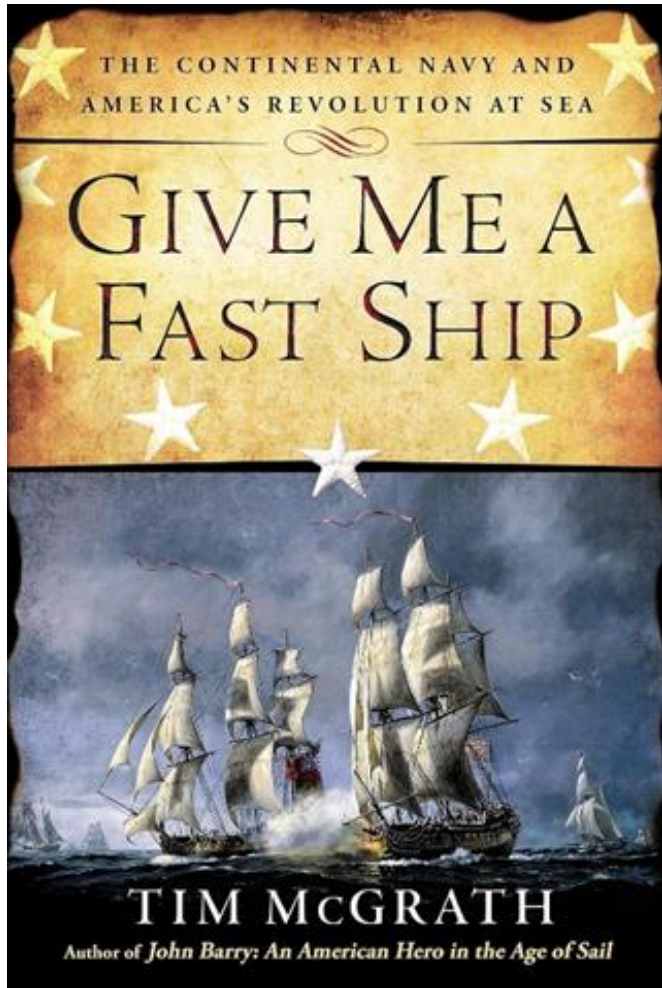
The museum combines historical artifacts with video and audio technology to bring to life the stories of the men and women who have served their country at sea. For any members who have not yet been, a visit to the museum is well worth the trip!

**BOOKS OF INTEREST**

*Give Me a Fast Ship*, by author Tim McGrath was a fun and fantastic, as well as an entertaining,

read about the beginnings of the Continental Navy and the various challenges it faced in the early days of the nation. I read it, and agree with Amazon Review which states, “America in 1775 was on the verge of revolution—or, more likely, disastrous defeat. After the bloodshed at Lexington and Concord, England’s King George sent hundreds of ships westward to bottle up American harbors and prey on American shipping. Colonists had no force to defend their coastline and waterways until John Adams of Massachusetts proposed a bold solution: The Continental Congress should raise a navy. The idea was mad. The Royal Navy was the mightiest floating arsenal in history, with a seemingly endless supply of vessels. More than a hundred of these were massive “ships of the line,” bristling with up to a hundred high-powered cannon that could level a city. The British were confident

that His Majesty’s warships would quickly bring the rebellious colonials to their knees.”

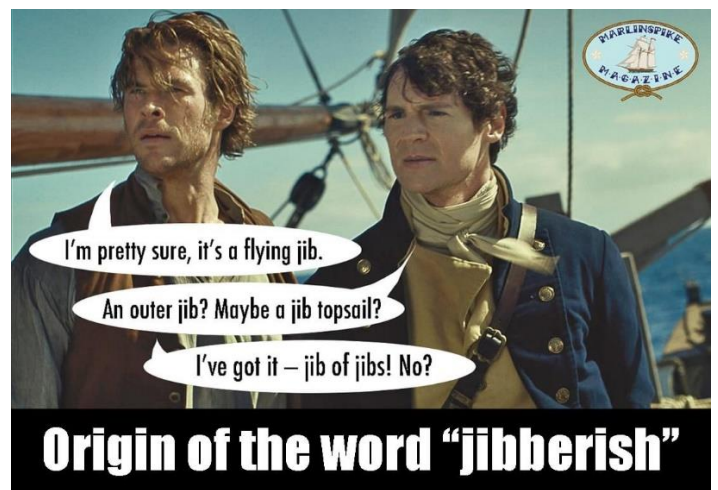


“They were wrong. Beginning with five converted merchantmen, America’s sailors became formidable warriors, matching their wits, skills, and courage against the best of the British fleet. Victories off American shores gave the patriots hope—victories led by captains such as John Barry, the fiery Irish-born giant; fearless Nicholas Biddle, who stared down an armed mutineer; and James Nicholson, the underachiever who finally redeemed himself with an inspiring display of coolness and bravery. Meanwhile, along the British coastline, daring raids by handsome, cocksure John Paul Jones and the “Dunkirk Pirate,” Gustavus Conyngham—who was captured and sentenced to hang but tunneled under his cell and escaped to fight again—sent fear throughout England. The adventures of these men

and others on both sides of the struggle rival anything from Horatio Hornblower or Lucky Jack Aubrey. In the end, these rebel sailors, from the quarterdeck to the forecandle, contributed greatly to American independence. Meticulously researched and masterfully told, Give Me a Fast Ship is a rousing, epic tale of war on the high seas—and the definitive history of the American Navy during the Revolutionary War.”

**CAN YOU NAME IT?**

As ships became faster and more manageable at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, more sails and components were added in the name of speed and efficiency. What are the names of these three sails? (You are on your own to research and find the answer. Good luck!)



**Origin of the word “jibberish”**

*From Marlinspike Magazine*

WSMS WEBSITE

Be sure to check out our website! Interested parties and members as well should continue to check in and visit the Washington Ship Model Society website at [www.dcshipmodelsociety.org](http://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. Washington Ship Model Society Mugs are in limited supply, and members can purchase them for the low price of \$5 by emailing the skipper before attending a meeting, at which time your mug 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

Of interest from the *Tall Ship Lynx* Facebook page, some updates on the annual restoration of the ship are reported as follows: "2024 Finds Tall Ship Lynx in the above water phase of annual maintenance.



Here you can see the heavy yards have been sent down to deck and will receive inspection and maintenance. All these skills are done by the crew under the watchful eyes and leadership of the captains. It is all hard work with a total focus on safety. The course yard weighs in at 1,600 pounds.



The year-round extreme conditions and our environment absolutely require constant inspection of the gear aloft. Every two years topmasts and yards are returned to deck to go through this rigorous maintenance.