



# Forecastle Report

Newsletter of the Midwest Model Shipwrights ♦ www.midwestmodelshipwrights.com ♦ September 2016

## ● Scuttlebutt ●

**COMMODORE, Bob Filipowski**, opened the August 2016 meeting at 7:15 with a dedicated crew of 24 on board. **Art Carlson** was welcomed as a guest of Ray Oswalt. Art has been previously active in our club and is known for building large-scale models of steel navy warships. The last one seen here a few years ago was a model of an LST. Our mate, **Tim Riggs** was welcomed back on a visit from his new home in Texas. Tim showed us the progress he's made on his miniature English brig and brought along a fine "Heller" kit of the HMS *Victory* for our door prize. Thanks, Tim, that was very generous. Another of our mates returned to the fleet tonight, **Jerry Reed**, and immediately won the door prize drawing! What a great welcoming back that was!

A real highlight of the business portion of our meeting was the award Bob Filipowski presented to our mate **Sidney Wotman**. As a founding member back in 1981, Sid received a lifetime membership to honor his many years of loyalty and contributions to the success of our club. Please see Sid's comments on page 4. Congratulations, mate, and all our best wishes for the future.



**Kurt Van Dahm** let us know that registration for this year's NRG Conference is still open and announced that **Tom Ruggerio** was appointed a new Director and **Mike Draper** the new Secretary of the NRG. For those of you who would like to own back issues of the NRG Journal, they are now available for sale on the NRG web site. The current issue of the NRG Journal is set for 8/1/16 delivery.

Kurt also gave us a heads up on a new "Rockler's Woodworking Store" at 139 S Webber Rd, Bolingbrook, IL.

### 2015 OFFICERS & STAFF

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## September Meeting Notice

### Laying Out a Transom

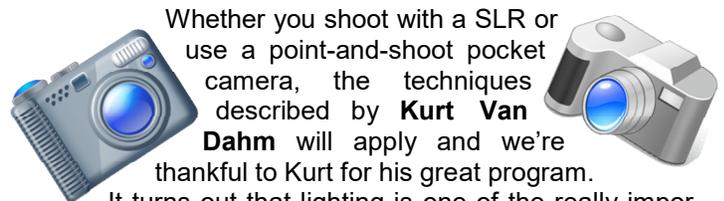
by John Mitchell & Bob Filipowski

If you are now, or ever plan to be, building a ship from scratch, then you need to be with us for this presentation. You will learn how transom views on the ship's plans are not always what they seem and how to redraw them to arrive at its true size and shape.

Our next meeting will be at 7:15 p.m.  
Wednesday, September 21, 2016  
**The South Church**  
501 S. Emerson Street  
Mount Prospect, IL

## ● Photo Hints & Tips ●

by Kurt Van Dahm



Whether you shoot with a SLR or use a point-and-shoot pocket camera, the techniques described by **Kurt Van Dahm** will apply and we're thankful to Kurt for his great program.

It turns out that lighting is one of the really important things that separates great photos from all the others. Shadows and light; back light, side light, front light, all help create the visual definition of the image. It's all in how you place the lighting and its intensity.

After you've solved the lighting puzzle, the rest is relatively easy; background, foreground, cropping, focus,



camera angle, format. We'll cover the easy tasks later, but first let's try to understand lighting principals and what we'll need for equipment to take our photos.

See "Photo", Page 2

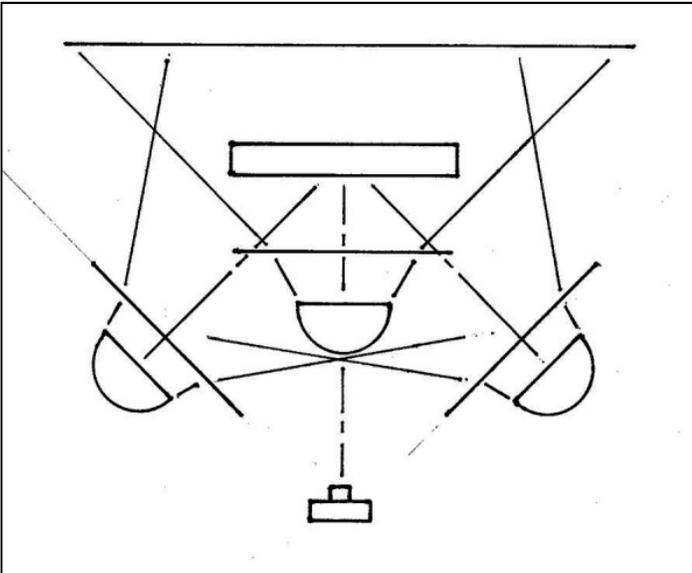
## The Forecastle Report, Sept. 2016 - P.2

*"Photo", continued from Page 1*

If you were to just shoot a photo of your model using a flash on camera, your results would look something like that pictured below. Notice how the shadows created by



the masts and booms appear on the background. This, of course, is very distracting. The setup may contribute to this problem, however, as the model is quite close to the background and this brings the background into focus. Moving the model away from the background some distance will help solve the focus problem but better selection and placement of lighting is needed to eliminate the shadows.



The drawing above shows how you can place three lights to create shadow patterns that will cancel each other out and result in a uniform background appearance. It should be noted that the middle light is not on the same level as the camera but positioned well above it and directed downward toward the subject.

The intensity of the lights (wattage) and color (cold white, warm, etc.) will dictate how far the lights should be from the subject to give you the correct exposure and color renditions.

The photo below is an example of this same model taken using the 3-light set up we just described.



Here, the model has good separation from the background and helps us focus all our attention on the subject alone. Shadow patterns on the model, itself, have also been eliminated, allowing us to see all the fine features.



The photo above is a good example of how proper lighting can help bring out all the details of a model. Note how well all the wood texture is depicted, the hawser detail is shown and the tree nails stand out.

In this day and age, all our photography is going to be done digitally. Images created by digital cameras can be saved in a variety of formats, but the most useful one is known as "jpeg". Use it whenever you are asked to indicate the format. And don't forget to back up your images on a flash drive or other media apart from your PC. Another must when taking photos is: Always use a tripod. It doesn't matter what size camera you have, a tripod will eliminate any of your shakes and give you a sharper image. Don't work without it. You can also increase your photo quality by learning how to work with a photo editing program. Remember: documenting your model **IS** modeling. Thanks, again, Kurt for an enjoyable evening.



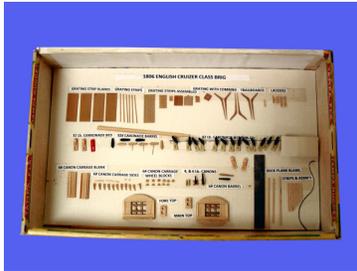
## ● Ships on Deck ●

**Tim Riggs'** beautiful workmanship on his 1:192 scratch-built model of an *English Cruiser-Class Brig* is always a



joy to see. He has recently added hammock netting, billet head, dolphin pedestals and built some spars.

The accompanying set of detail parts was a very well done display of his talents and a glimpse of the many fine additions to come. We all hope to see you again soon, mate. Meanwhile, do send us photos of your fine model and good luck at starting a club in "Big D".



**Bob Sykes** continues to amaze us with his diligence in building European kits to such a high level of excellence. This 1:75 "Correl" kit of the Swedish warship *Wasa* 1628 really has been brought to life by Bob. All the metal work has been finely mounted in a very authentic fashion and the balance of fine wood finish and painted surfaces is very pleasing.



To really set off this fine model, Bob has mounted her on a set of dolphins to give it a period feeling.

You can really tell that a lot of hours were put in to achieve this result. We can't wait to see how she'll look with all the masts and rigging aboard. Great job, mate.



**Gordon Field** is nearly finished with his 1:64 scratch-built model of a *longboat*. This one is destined for his "Model Shipways" kit of the privateer *Rattlesnake*. We're sure this longboat will far surpass any that the kit could have



yielded. Gordon built the hull over a carved wood plug, adding ribs, keel and transom and then planking. Much attention was also paid to the finer details, such as rudder gudgeons and pintles, oars and mast. The end result is a really first rate model in its own right. What an addition to the *Rattlesnake* this will make!



**Tim Foster** has scratch-built a number of Great Lakes Car Ferries, this being the *Ann Arbor* #2, using only photos for reference. This ferry was built in Toledo in 1892 and scrapped in 1927.

The propulsion for these craft was provided by coal-fired steam engines



turning twin screws.

Many of the fine details were added from Blue Jacket accessories. The model has a waterline hull and Tim says he has no plans to turn her into an R/C model any time soon. This is a really great historical treasure, mate.

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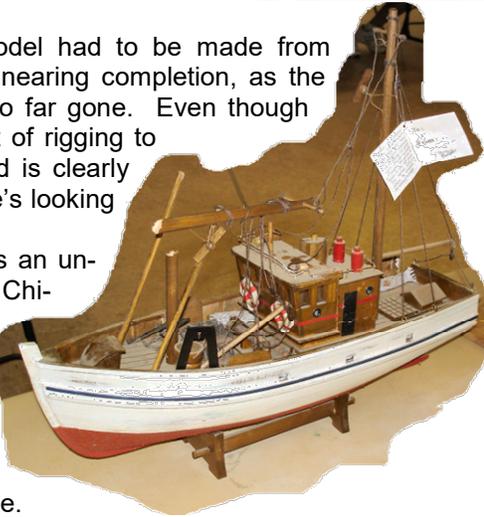
"Ships", continued from Page 3

**Doc Williams** has made significant progress on the 1:96 model of the USS *Constitution* that he is restoring for a client. Main stays on the fore and main masts have been rigged and now he will start on the mizzen mast. All the



yards for his model had to be made from scratch and are nearing completion, as the originals were too far gone. Even though there is still a lot of rigging to be done, the end is clearly in sight - and she's looking first class.

Doc showed us an unusual model; a Chinese made lobster boat, who's past and future is a bit uncertain. Hope you can sort it all out, mate.



**Kurt Van Dahm** brought in a new, solid hull kit from Blue-jacket; the *J/24-Class Sailboat*. The kit's laser cut parts are first class and it has many stainless steel photo etch parts, as well. Its metal mast has even been pre-cut for mounting the boom. Another neat addition is the red and white rigging line specially laid down on a ropewalk by Chuck Passaro for this kit.



- THANK YOU -

With your friendship and encouragement over the past 47 years, I've enjoyed model ship building. This hobby began at a model shop in Evanston, where I met the core members of the Deadeyes and went on to become a plank in the Shipwrights.

Some skeptics say it took 17 years to complete the *Charles W. Morgan* but in the remaining 30 years, I completed three other models. With the help of knowledgeable shipmates, I learned how to read plans and shape a solid hull. Thanks to your patient tutelage, I stayed with ship building.



Club meetings are always a source of advanced building techniques for me. These demonstrations on splicing, lathe set up and foot rope require a one-on-one tutoring session and numerous phone calls from this builder. Thanks to those who have not tired, or make calls for help. It is mentioned here that I have included names, for those who have not included names, for those who would require noting all three club rosters.



The NRG meetings and Manitowoc museum contest provide an opportunity to make long lasting friendships. Heartfelt thanks to four friends who gifted me with two beautiful paintings of the *Morgan*, several realistic ship flags and a tiny ship's boat.

This is not an end to my career of model ship building. I hope to use my experience to help others in the clubs as you all have helped me.

Again, with heartfelt thanks,

*Sidney Wotman*

### THE NAUTICAL RESEARCH GUILD "ADVANCING SHIP MODELING THROUGH RESEARCH"

Annual membership includes our world-renowned quarterly magazine, *Nautical Research Journal*, which features photographs and articles on ship model building, naval architecture, merchant and naval ship construction, maritime trade, nautical and maritime history, nautical archaeology and maritime art.

Other benefits include discounts on annual conferences, ship modeling seminars, NRG products and juried model competitions which are offered exclusively to Guild members. We hope you will consider joining our ongoing celebration of model ships and maritime history.

YEARLY  
MEMBERSHIP  
\$48.00 USA  
\$60.00 Foreign



For more information contact us at: [www.thenrg.org](http://www.thenrg.org) or telephone 585-968-8111

### ● A Photo Editing Primer ●

by John Mitchell

Following up on the information covered in **Kurt Van Dahm's** article, a little more detail is offered on the subject of photo editing. There are several very good software programs for PCs that will allow you to modify your digital photos to help improve their quality, change their appearance and prepare them for making hard copy prints on a color printer. You can also use them to reduce the number of "pixels" in the file (i.e. the amount of digital size), making them easier and faster to send as attachments on your emails, etc. The programs are easy enough to use without a lot of training. A little practice should be enough to get you going. Many public libraries offer PC support classes that can teach you how to use these programs, as well.



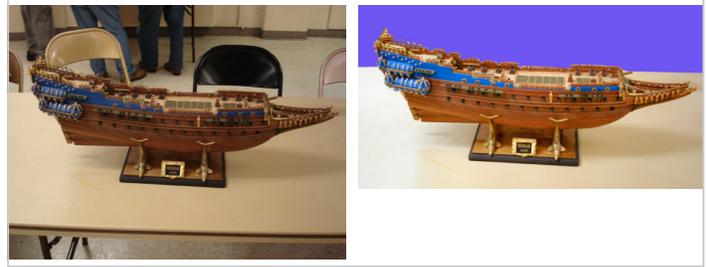
Here are two versions of the same photo. The photo on the left was taken at our last meeting on August 17th. The only illumination was from the overhead fluorescent lights in the meeting room. No flash was used. Camera angle was set to capture only the surface of the table, thus eliminating any other distracting background. As you can see, deep shadows obscure most of the hull detail and color rendition is almost non-existent.

In the second photo, right, the image has been cropped to eliminate some of the unwanted background and foreground, a photo enhancement program was run to correct the lack of proper contrast and a "fill flash" program run to highlight the foreground. In addition, a special color enhancement program was run to bring up the hull color.

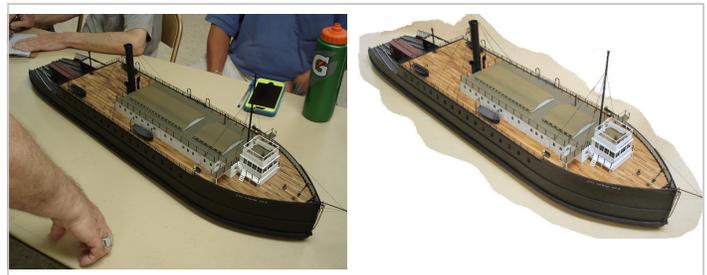
What you are seeing is the fact that all the information on this model's image was present in the original photo but could not be seen without doing some enhancements. No detail was added, it was just manipulated to create the kind of image we wanted. If proper lighting had been used in the beginning, this job would have been much, much easier.

In this case, "Jasc, *Paint Shop Pro Studio*" was used in a PC running Windows 7 on an Intel CORE i3 processor. Other photo editing software currently available include:

- Adobe, *Photoshop Elements 14*
- Nova, *PhotoExplosion Delux v.5*
- Corel, *Paint Shop Pro X8 Ultimate*
- Encore, *Print Master Platinum*
- Summitsoft, *Photo tools 2*



In these two photos, the image on the left was the original and the one on the right was the same photo after editing. As you can see, I was able to totally eliminate the unwanted background and replace it with a color panel. In addition, selective cropping was used to eliminate some of the unwanted image. Image enhancements were also employed to improve contrast and color.



Here, I've not only enhanced the image but also selectively copied a small, irregular element of the image and created a new image free of all distractions as well as backgrounds.



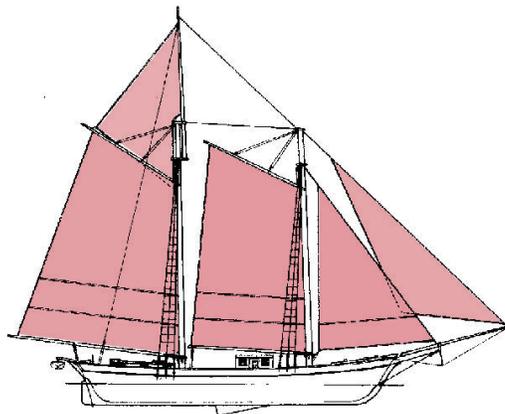
Another example of image enhancement, cropping and, in this case, detailed enhancement. I was able to digitally outline just the outside surface of the boat's hull and apply additional enhancements to just that portion of the image to bring up the contrast and color (the foreground shadow remains dark but the hull is many shades lighter).

So, when you take photos of your model, be encouraged by the fact that you are capturing all the detail that your eye sees but you may need to use some PC magic to get it to show up on your prints as you originally saw it.

Using the correct lighting setup from the beginning will likely eliminate many of the editing requirements you would have to go through to get a quality image. Follow Kurt's advice and you will be a much happier modeler and a lot better photographer ❖



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