

Scratch Building the Yacht

Utrecht

Instructions and Plans by
Gilbert McArdle

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There is no doubt that Gilbert McArdle has become one of the authorities of our time on the construction of models representing Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Century vessels. Mr. McArdle's latest book outlines the

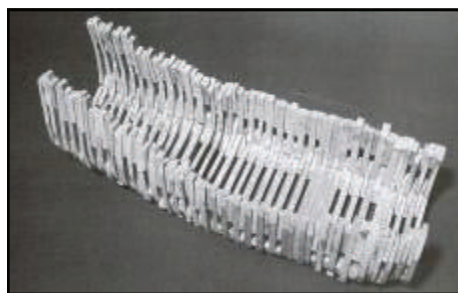


building of a model of *Utrecht*, a Dutch yacht from 1746. The author's inspiration was the result of another Sea-Watch book written by Ab Hoving and Cor Emke, *The Staten Yacht Utrecht*, which describes the construction of a full-size replica.

Chapter 1 deals with hull construction. McArdle utilizes a technique that can be applied to any model when constructing a framed up hull is desired. As far as *Utrecht* is concerned, the author has supplied a set of frame drawings that will save the modeler considerable time. The author also explains how these frames were obtained from a half-hull based on the body plan in Hoving's book.



The use of a modified Bruckshaw jig, which is simple to construct, ensured hull accuracy, yet allowed frames to be initially over-size, which minimized construction time.



The second chapter deals with interior construction. Subjects include the forecastle deck, bunk bed partitions, crew compartment, galley and floral wall designs. One of the more complex assemblies discussed is a spiral staircase, which has to be fitted around varying bulkhead contours and an ascending floor. No doubt, the tips shared here could apply to many vessels from this period!



Some of the more intricate items covered in this chapter include the elite bunks with drapes, the fireplace and dish cabinet. The author's solution for simulating the drapes is especially innovative, and presents a realistic appearance!

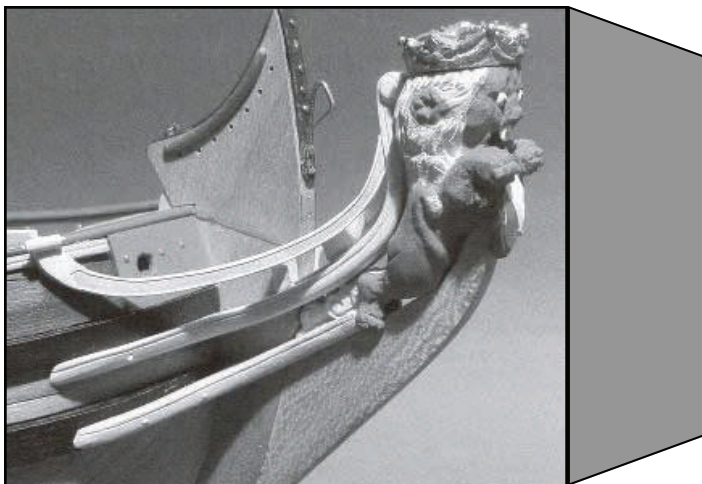


One of the most striking features on this model is the pavilion, which is covered in chapters 3 and 4. This



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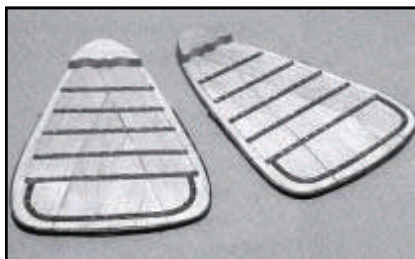
includes framing, inboard planking, window frames and



some excellent carvings, which are dealt with in a number of ways using different woods and materials.

The fifth chapter is short, but very important. It deals with bow construction, and those finicky head rails, upper and lower cheek rails, and the transverse bow timbers. The author provides sketches of the true shape for these items, which is a huge plus! Carving the figurehead is also discussed, and how it impacts the upper stem piece. Some excellent advice is provided here that can save the modeler a lot of grief.

Chapter 6 is probably one of this writer's favorite segments since it deals with so many different intricate parts and modeling techniques. Appropriately, it is titled "Deck Fittings and Sundry Parts." A few of the items discussed include the construction of skylights, the windlass, the leeboards with their edge-bent brass strips, the pavilion cushions, and decorative carvings.

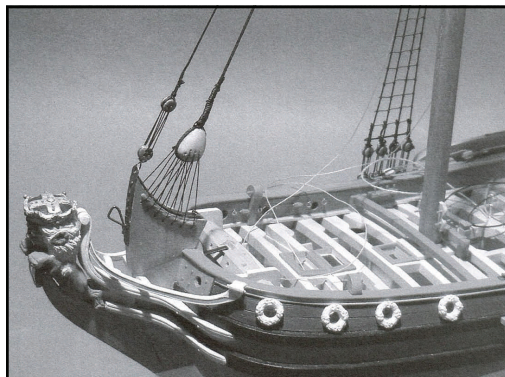


Items that often cause modelers some frustration are the stern lanterns. McArdle's approach is simple, and produces excellent results. The procedure can certainly apply to any model ship that has them.



The rigging on Dutch yachts was not especially complicated, but they did possess some peculiarities. Chapter 8 covers mast and yard construction, as well as the rigging of the model.

Mr. McArdle considered silk suture thread for portions of the rig, and then reconsidered. He explains why, and it may not be good news



for those of us who have rigged models with this type of line.

The final chapter, number 9, deals with the cradle and case. These are not subjects often covered in other books. The author shares tips for using a carved dolphin to cast a full set that will be used as pedestals.

Scratch Building the Yacht Utrecht is profusely illustrated, and contains over 225 photos and sketches. This includes a special section featuring 12 full-color images of the completed model. At the back of the book, there is a 1:48 scale plan showing the frame positions as laid out by Mr. McArdle. Lastly, there are two sheets containing the frame drawings, which can be easily removed from the book due to its unique spiral wire binding.



This book contains a number of typographical errors that may confuse the reader/modeler, but *Scratch Building the Yacht Utrecht* still represents a good value. This is especially true since SeaWatch Books is currently offering this book and *The Statenjacht Utrecht* by Ab Hoving and Cor Emke at a combined cost of \$75.00. That represents a savings of \$27.00! For more details, go to www.seawatchbooks.com.

Reviewed by
Bob Filipowski