

The Greenwich Hospital Barge of 1832

and methods of building open boats

by David Antscherl

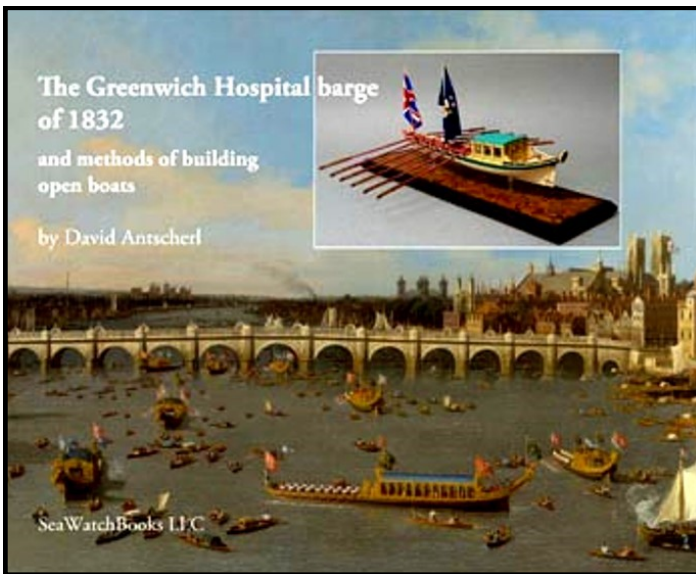
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In his opening remarks, David Antscherl makes quite a revelation. Apparently, he was once intimidated by the prospect of building small open boats.



This is hard to fathom when one looks at his latest work, *The Greenwich Hospital Barge of 1832 and Methods of Building Open Boats*. This offering from SeaWatchBooks, LLC provides a fresh view on a subject that has not been written about in over 47 years.

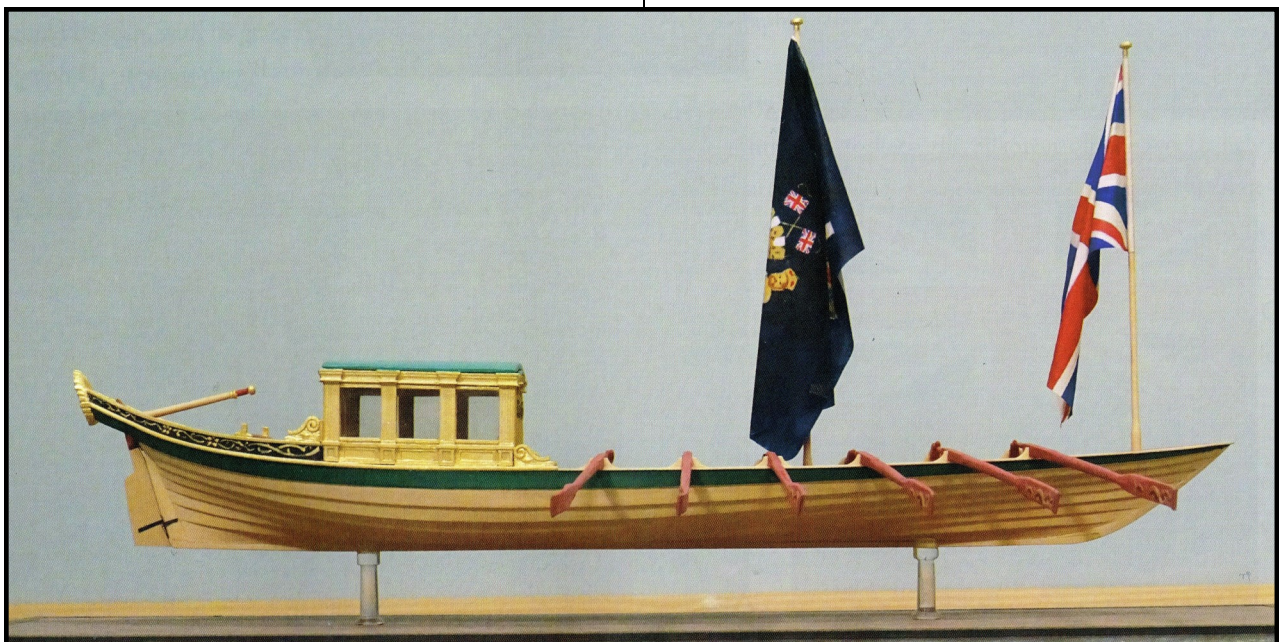
Antscherl begins this excellent treatise with a brief, but fascinating history on these beautiful craft. He also lists the various plans that are available through the Royal Museums Greenwich.



The construction of the barge starts with the customary carved plug. However, due to its complex shape, Antscherl offers his own wrinkles on this tried and true method, which provides a more accurate form for building the hull.

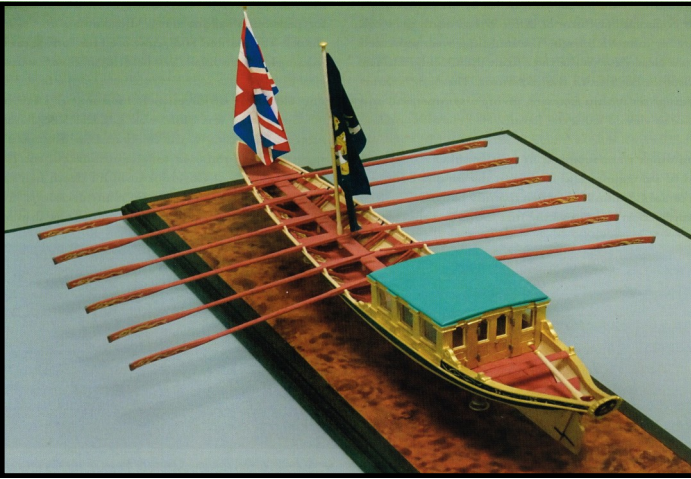
These barges were normally planked clinker style, and the author emphasizes the importance of accurately laying out the proportions and plank runs. He also allows for the overlap and offers a hint on how to incorporate the bevel along the edges of each strake. The "gain", where the strakes transform into carvel at the bow and stern, is also discussed.

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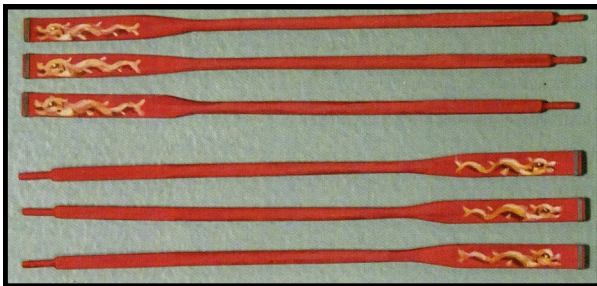
The Forecastle Report, Nov. 2016 - P. 6

Although an important aspect of clinker style planking, it is interesting to note that the author does not discuss spiling until later in the book where open boats are the topic. This appears to be a common trait in *The Greenwich Hospital Barge of 1832 and Methods of Building Open Boats*. No doubt it is due



to the fact that, in some cases, both types of craft require similar construction procedures, and, rather than being repetitious, the author will refer to other chapters for additional information.

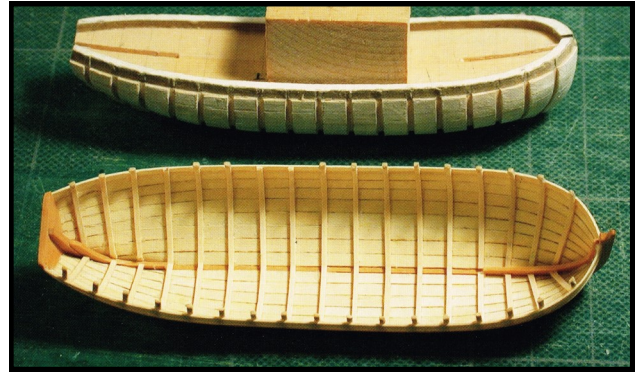
Nevertheless, as one reads this treatise, it becomes quite evident that ceremonial barges possessed some unique features not found on common open boats. These differences often offered challenges that the author had to overcome. Although there is extensive use of templates, sometimes it became a case of trial and error. On more than one occasion, the author admits to scrapping parts and starting over again!



The twelve sweeps, with their graceful curved blades and subtle changes in shape, are remarkably complex pieces, and the author devotes considerable effort outlining their construction and detailing. The two prominent flags are also discussed. Although condensed into several paragraphs, the hints and tips offered for making these standards might well be worth the cost of this book alone.

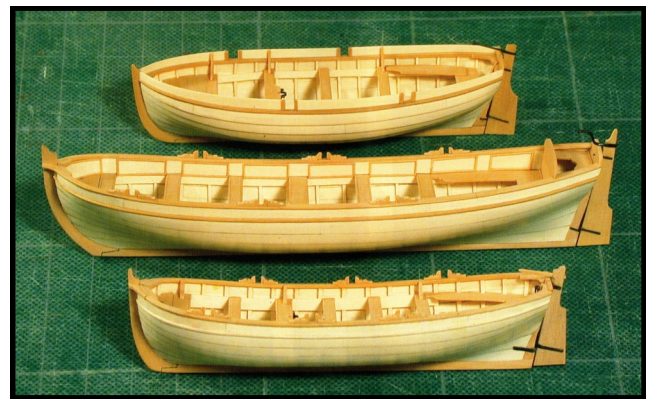
The final segment of this treatise, as the title implies, is dedicated to the construction of open boats. For those not acquainted with this aspect of ship modeling, Antscherl's construction sequence and excellent photos will be most useful.

Although very similar to other construction styles, Antscherl offers some innovative variations in the process that will insure a more accurately finished model. In many cases, he also provides the reader with options, and explains why he favored one procedure over another. For the novice/intermediate modeler, this is very beneficial since at least two categories involve frame bending and carvel planking.



Antscherl concludes this book with 8 very informative notes, and a glossary of terms used in open boatbuilding. The notes offer some very helpful hints, which include an economical way of extending the shelf life of rubber cement, making your own sanding sticks, stretching paper for painting, and gluing thin pieces of wood with PVA glue.

The Greenwich Hospital Barge of 1832 and Methods of Building Open Boats comes with two 1/4" scale drawings of the Greenwich Hospital Barge. They were adapted from the original draught held by the Royal Museums Greenwich, and were the basis for Antscherl's model.



One salient feature of David Antscherl's books has always been his ability to research little known facts about the period that his models represent. *The Greenwich Hospital Barge of 1832 and Methods of Building Open Boats* is no different, and provides the reader with a wealth of historical as well as modeling information. This book is highly recommended.

Reviewed by
Bob Filipowski