

# THE CONNECTICUT MARINE MODEL SOCIETY



APRIL 2020  
NEWSLETTER

Here we all are: hunkered-down in our respective “safe places.” And I sincerely hope—for all members and their families—that everyone has been untouched by the terrible virus. This January, unlike many recent January’s before it, started off with the stockmarket at a historic high and an economy with record low unemployment (below 4%, which the Feds consider “full employment.”). In a head-spinning turnaround of less than 90 days, the *World Changed*. I won’t dwell on this much further since we’re all getting inundated daily with news and updates. I can’t add much to enlighten anyone on this dreadful situation. Since we haven’t been able to hold

meetings for the past two months, a few members have emailed me information about the projects they are working on; like March’s issue, I’m including more in this issue. I’ve also decided to report on an interesting story



Happier Days.

that appeared briefly in the news but was easy to overlook given the daily rush of news about the Covid virus. It’s about the intersection of a navy, a cruise ship and questionable behavior on the High Seas. Since there is not much club “News”—and no meeting minutes, I’m skipping the club’s normal *Secretary’s Report*.

Please do keep sending me photos and information about what you’re doing during our Long Quarantine; I’ll do my best to crank-out another couple Newsletters before the club closes down for the summer months.

Be Safe. Be Smart: this **Awful Bug** can go after us senior ship modeling guys—with a vengeance. *Ron, Your Editor*

[www.ctshipmodels.org](http://www.ctshipmodels.org)



# MESSAGE FROM THE CMMS PRESIDENT: APRIL, 2020



**All members should note that *May and June meetings are officially canceled.* The officers will notify everyone regarding the next scheduled meeting.**

***We all hope this can be in the month of September.***

“I’d also like to add that just because we are practicing social distancing it doesn’t mean we have to practice telephone distancing. So, frequently contact your friends in the club and chat about model building, health or anything you want to say — they will be happy to hear from you.

Since we can’t bring models to a meeting please photograph them, either completed or in progress, along with tips. Email this info to our secretary **Ron**, and he’ll get them out to the club via our club’s Newsletter.

**(send here: [sec@ctshipmodels.org](mailto:sec@ctshipmodels.org))**

...and, don’t just rely on Ron to create copy for you. Everyone’s got to contribute.

***Thanks and Stay Well.”***

Answers to last month’s Crossword puzzle. Sadly, there was no winner — so the Secretary will keep the Rum!

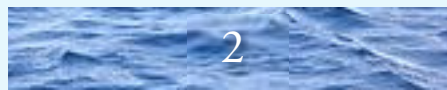
**Ships Ahoy**

**Across**

3. anchor hoisting arm
5. ship's navigation cabinet
6. wooden peg
11. additional sail attached to yard
15. vertical pole for deploying sails
17. windows in officers' quarters
18. large dock
20. upper hull structure
21. shroud tightening ropes
22. lifting rope
24. crows feet block
26. rearmost mast
27. cannon plug

**Down**

1. chief of sailing operations
2. shroud supporting planks
4. rudder component
7. front of ship
8. opening for anchor rope
9. alcoholic beverage
10. left side of ship
12. deck cleaning device
13. rudder controller
14. opening in a ship's hull
16. mast support rope
19. protects sail shroud lines
23. deck support beam
25. wooden strips on the deck





### Sopwith Camel F1 WWI British Fighter, 1917: A model by Bob Siegler



**Thomas O.M. Sopwith** built his first biplane in 1913 and founded the Sopwith Aviation Company. His early production focused on float planes. With the outbreak of the Great War (WW1), Sopwith's efforts turned to the defense of the United Kingdom.

The company's most famous creation was the F.1 Camel. As a successor to the Sopwith Scout (also known as the Pup), the first Camel's were delivered to Royal Naval Air Service squadrons in July of 1917 and later on to the Royal Flying Corps. It was designed to help the British gain control of the skies over the trenches of WW I. A total of 5,497 craft were pro-

duced, about 10% by Sopwith Aviation, the remainder under license to other British companies. Even with its late entry into combat, the Camel accounted for 1,294 victories, more than any other Allied aircraft.

Camel was a wooden frame, wire braced construction. An aluminum cowling surrounded the engine and an aluminum panel covered the first bay behind the engine. Plywood was then installed to the end of the cockpit. Remainder of fuselage and wings were covered in fabric.

About 1,300 of the aircraft were powered by a 130 hp Clerget 9-cylinder rotary engine, producing a





## GOOD STUFF FROM THE BENCH

maximum speed of 101-113 mph. at 10,000 ft. Performance fell off somewhat at altitudes between that and its absolute ceiling of 24,000 ft. Other Camels had either a Gnome, LeRhone or Bentley engines.

The Clerget 9B powered Camels had a wingspan of 28 ft and a length of 18 ft 9 in. The aircraft weighed 957 pounds empty and 1,455 pounds loaded. Fluid capacity of 26 gallons of fuel and 5.75 gallons of castor oil allowed 2.5 hours of flying time. Rate of climb was 5 minutes to 5,000 ft and 12 minutes to 10,000 ft.

The Camel had wicked torque and was difficult to fly. *In fact, more men lost their lives learning to fly than using it in combat.* The tight grouping of all the

weight, including the pilot, between the propeller and the center of the wings made the plane unforgiving in the hands of an inexperienced pilot at low altitudes, but highly maneuverable at high altitudes.

The Camel was the first British fighter to mount twin synchronized .303 Vickers machine guns in front of the cockpit, each fed by a disintegrating belt holding 250 rounds. *A fairing surrounding the gun installation created a hump, giving the Camel its name.*

The model was designed for **Model Airways** by *Microfusioni-modellisimo* of Milan, Italy.

Model Scale is 1:16 (3/4" to 1 ft.)

Wingspan: 21" Fuselage Length: 14 1/16"

— **Bob Siegler**





## GOOD STUFF FROM THE BENCH



A model by  
Rick Abramson

### USS New York BB-34 A1:350 battleship by TRUMPETER

“At the New London model ship conference last year I purchased the new *Trumpeter* model of BB-34, *USS New York*. My main interest in US naval ships is prior to WWII when all the classic battlewagons still retained their cage masts and some modernized with the tripod masts. Needless to say, by the time of Pearl Harbor many of these ships were already rendered obsolete with the introduction of the North Carolina class in 1940. Yet, after Pearl Harbor, all but 2 battlewagons, Arizona and Oklahoma were raised, modernized and returned to service. Some sailed into Tokyo Bay!

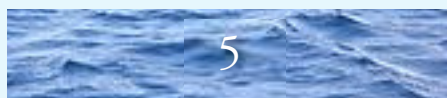
The USS New York was the class ship comprising herself and the USS Texas. Her keel was laid 11 September 1911 and was placed in commission 15 April 1914. She was among the first US battleships to be fitted with 10, 14” guns in 5 turrets. She was rated at 21 knots and displaced 27,000 tons.

In November, 1917, New York sailed to reinforce

the British Grand Fleet in the North Sea. On 21 November 1918, New York was present for the surrender of the German High Seas Fleet at Scapa Flow. In 1926-27 she was completely modernized at the Norfolk Navy Yard where the most visible change was the substitution of tripods for the old-fashioned cage masts.

At the outbreak of war on 7 December 1941, New York was undergoing a major overhaul at Norfolk. Within 2 months she entered the European theater of operations. In January of 1945 she was transferred to the Pacific where she eventually participated in the pre-invasion shelling of Okinawa.

With the war's end on 2 September 1945 New York proceeded to New York City to participate in Navy Day on 19 October 1945. She joined USS Missouri and USS Enterprise. Following this, she sailed to Philadelphia to be prepared as a target ship for the Operation Crossroads atomic tests. She arrived and was anchored in Bikini Lagoon on 15 June. She survived the fury of the test on 1 July 1946. She was then towed





## GOOD STUFF FROM THE BENCH

out to sea 40 miles from Pearl where she turned turtle and sank.

The model is a very faithful representation of the prototype. Two particular items impressed me with this model. In the past in building ships with a 2-piece hull, I have had to make transverse stiffeners to reinforce the hull. This model has hefty transverse bulkheads spaced throughout the length of the hull.

The model comes with photo-etched railings, ladders and catapults. In the past you had to measure the length of a railing to bend it at the proper location. The railings with this model have small, properly spaced detents where the railing(s) get bent. This was a major time saver, and also eliminated the possibility of having to re-bend a railing which is not a good thing. The model has 840 parts including the PE parts. Prior to building the model, I ordered the laser cut wooden deck. In the past, I used wooden decks made by **Artwox** in Australia for my *Arizona* and *QM-2*. They were excellent. The only wooden deck I could get for the *New York* was from some Chinese outfit. It was terrible. Most of the deck openings were not sharply

defined and had to be cleaned out using an *X-Acto* No. 11 blade. This consumed an unbelievable amount of unnecessary time.

The painting diagram for the model is for the camouflage pattern she wore during WWII. I opted to paint her in the pre-war “Navy Gray.” The details in the plastic kit are neat, sharp and well defined. I air-brushed the model with **TruColor** US Navy colors. These are a new addition to their line of RR colors.

The directions have a parts layout diagram which makes finding each of the 840 parts easier. The parts sprues are labeled A,B,C,D, etc.

While this model is very labor intensive — as most are — it is a great addition to what used to be referred to in the USN as “The Gun Club” when battleship duty was considered to be the most prestigious. The *New York* ties in perfectly with my pre-war 1:350 *USS Saratoga* and the *USS Arizona*. It is my hope that **Trumpeter** will eventually make in 1:350th scale the great pre-WWII battlewagons with cage masts like *West Virginia*, *Tennessee*, *Maryland* and *California*.

— **Rick Abramson**



## GOOD STUFF FROM THE BENCH

The *California* was a sister ship of the *Charles W. Morgan*. Built by the Hillman Brothers Shipyard in New Bedford, Massachusetts and launched in 1842. She was the next ship laid down after the CWM.

The *California*'s career spanned 65 years until 1907. She was broken up in 1908 in Oakland, California.

The *California* was virtually identical to the CWM except for painted gun ports carried on her waist planking. The aft placed hurricane house did not reach the taffrail so I moved it forward.

The model is a 1:96 **Marine Model** kit I purchased in 1970, and I did not start until my daughter noticed it in my workshop. We worked on this together until she became a teenager. I have left it sitting for 10 years but with this quarantine felt it was time to get back to her.



During the California Gold Rush, when eggs cost \$1 each and a sack of flour sold for \$100, competition for trade was fierce. Great Clipper ships, known as *California Clippers* were built for speed. The *Flying Cloud* (pictured, next page) was built in East Boston in 1851. She sailed from New York to San Francisco in 89 days and 8 hours, a record that still stands.

I salvaged this model out of **Duff's** dumpster. The model was a complete disaster. All the rigging was cut; the mast and spars were broken, both the bow & stern were crushed. On top of that the entire model was coated in a tar, nicotine gum. I tried to clean with 70% Ethyl Alcohol but ended up sanding the it down to the bare wood. I kept the deck furniture but again had to take the paint off.

She is turning out, but still needs some TLC.

— James McGuffick



—continued, next page





# GOOD STUFF FROM THE BENCH

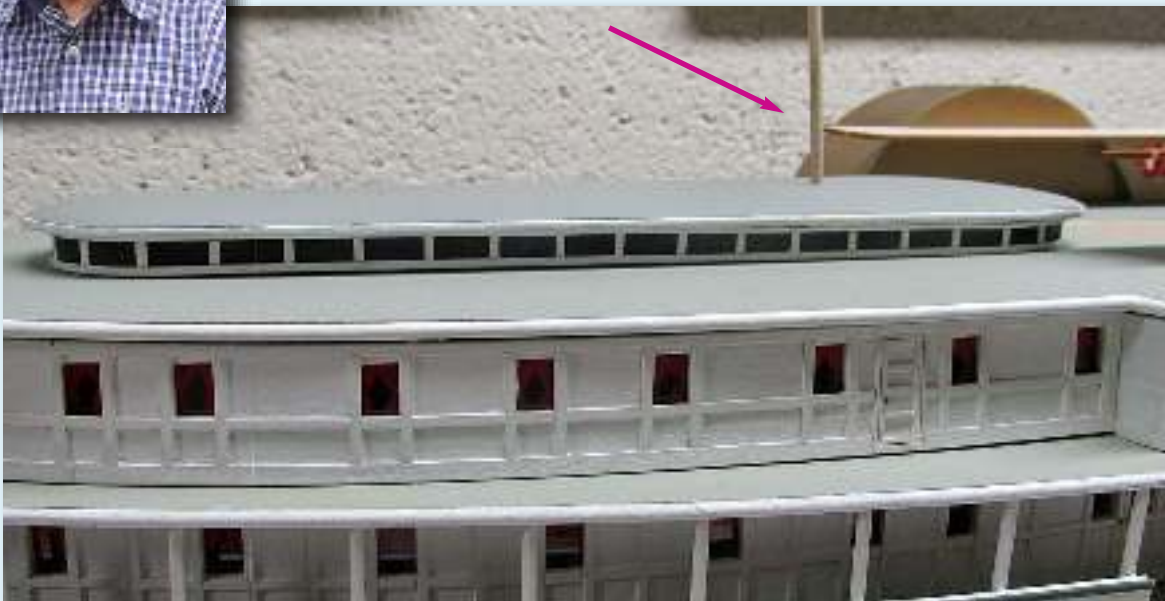


**The Flying Cloud Clipper Ship**  
(A "resurrection project" by James courtesy  
of Duff Griffith's dumpster)



An update from **John Elwood**. Members will recall from last month's Newsletter that John explained how he was going to approach the task of getting the mast positioned and mounted correctly. To my eye, John's has successfully accomplished this task with his model of the steam sidewheeler, **Portland**.

Good Job, John!





# AI! CARUMBA!— CRUISE LINER SINKS VENEZUELAN WARSHIP

The RCGS Resolute  
Antarctic Cruise Ship



Nicholas Maduro,  
Venezuela's El Presidente  
(and Commander-In-Chief)



The Naiguata  
Venezuelan Navy Warship



## AI! CARUMBA! — CRUISE LINER SINKS VENEZUELAN WARSHIP

In early morning of the 30th of March 2020, the cruise vessel **RCGS RESOLUTE**, a five-star ice-strengthened expedition cruise ship was subject to an act of aggression by the **Venezuelan Navy** in international waters, approximately 13 nautical miles from *Isla de Tortuga* with 32 crew members and no passengers on board.

When the encounter occurred, the cruise vessel Resolute had been drifting off the coast of the island to conduct routine engine maintenance on its voyage to its destination at *Willemstad/Curaçao*, a Dutch island off the coast of Venezuela. As maintenance was being performed on the starboard main engine, the port main engine was kept on standby to maintain a safe distance from the island.

During the high seas encounter, the cruise vessel was approached by the armed Venezuelan navy vessel **Naiguata** (GC23) which — via normal radio communications — questioned the intentions of the Resolute's presence and gave the cruise liner the order to follow the navy vessel to *Puerto Moreno* on *Isla De Margarita*. Since the Res-



olute was sailing in international waters, the Captain needed to reconfirm his compliance with this particular request with his ship's home port management; to comply with the navy request would have resulted in a serious delay and deviation from the vessel's scheduled route.

While the Captain was in contact with the head office in Europe, gun shots were fired by the **Naiguata** and, shortly thereafter, the navy vessel approached the starboard side — at speed — and purposely rammed the Resolute's bow (see above picture). The navy vessel rammed the starboard bow repeatedly in an apparent attempt to turn the cruise ship's head toward Venezuelan

territorial waters.

While the Resolute sustained minor damage and the ramming did little to affect its seaworthiness, the Venezuelan navy vessel suffered severe damage while making contact with the ice-strengthened bulbous bow of the ice-class expedition cruise vessel. **The Naiguata took on water and sank.**

Ready to lend support, the Resolute remained in the vicinity for more than an hour and reached out to the *Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) Curaçao*. This is an international body which oversees maritime emergencies. All attempts to contact those on board the Venezuelan navy ship were unanswered.

After receiving the order to resume safe passage towards her destination at Curaçao by the MRCC and that further assistance was not required, the cruise ship continued sailing and is now safely moored in the port of Willemstad. No lives have been reported lost. A full investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident is now underway.



Here is a link to book your next trip for an exciting  
**Antarctic Peninsula Adventure:**  
<https://www.oneoceanexpeditions.com/vessels/vessel-rcgs-resolute>





## GOOD STUFF FROM THE BENCH



A restoration by  
Tom Kane

“a couple years ago I was commissioned to refurbish this scratchbuilt schooner model. I don’t recall the name on its nameplate, but I do remember that it had a tag taped to the underside of the base that read: “*Made By Inmate Maine State Prison,*” It’s since been delivered to its owner, a Connecticut resident. He picked the model up while traveling in Maine and asked me to restore it and to provide a case. After making the sails and rigging and generally cleaning-up the hull, I built the wood base; my glass shop made the enclosure. I only use glass for

my cases and this one is 3/16” thick, my preferred choice for large cases.”

The other photo below the schooner shows a commissioned model restoration that I’ve since inherited. I recall that this mess was picked up at a tag sale and I

initially thought it was a model of the *U.S.S. Constitution*. I’ve since learned that it isn’t. So, I can call it whatever I want now. I’ve been working on restoring it for several years.

I’ve decided to give her an appropriate name: “**My Own Punishment.**”

— Tom Kane



Guess the name of this ship!



# IMPORTANT NAVY NEWS

Over a dozen sailors on an American navy destroyer (**USS Kidd**) tested positive for Covid-19. The ship is in the midst of a counter-narcotics effort in the Caribbean. Earlier in April, *Thomas Modly*, America's acting secretary of the navy, was forced to resign after making controversial remarks about a coronavirus outbreak on an aircraft-carrier in the Pacific, the U.S.S. *Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71)* — *Reuters*

## French carrier surpasses Theodore Roosevelt with over 1,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 — unabridged story from the *NavyTimes.com* by *J.D. Simkins*

Nearly 60 percent of the crew from the French carrier **Charles de Gaulle** have tested positive for COVID-19. (MC2 Ford Williams/Navy) Recent reports out of France say that more than 1,000 sailors aboard the country's aircraft carrier, Charles de Gaulle, have tested positive for COVID-19, a number that could continue to surge as the crew awaits approximately 930 more test results.

The outbreak onboard the French navy's flagship forced leadership to call off the remaining two weeks of the carrier's scheduled deployment to the North Atlantic. The ship, which carries a crew of nearly 1,800, pulled into port last week at Toulon Naval Base in southern France.

In all, 1,081 crew members from the Charles de Gaulle naval group have tested positive for the novel coronavirus. That total comes almost entirely from the carrier, and includes at least two U.S. sailors who were assigned to the ship as part of the U.S. Navy's Personnel Exchange Program. The American sailors have since been removed from the ship and "are receiving excellent host nation medical care at French facilities," Navy officials said. The declining health of one French sailor, meanwhile, necessitated a transfer to the intensive care unit.

Partially complicating the early detection process onboard Charles de Gaulle was the rate of asymptomatic carriers. Of the confirmed cases, nearly half showed no symptoms, according to a New York Times report.

Additionally, masks were not made available until late in the ship's deployment. This, coupled with a mid-March stop in the port city of Brest in which sailors disembarked and visited bars and restaurants — prior to the mandated national lockdown ordered by French President Emmanuel Macron — is believed to have accelerated the virus' spread throughout the ship's tight quarters.

The debilitating spread of the virus onboard Charles de Gaulle, France's lone carrier, has sparked concern about the nation's ability to remain ready to fight.

Unlike the U.S. Navy, which touts 10 other active carriers in addition to the coronavirus-stricken Theodore Roosevelt, losing the Charles de Gaulle for an extended period could cripple France's nuclear deterrence capabilities, the Times report said.

That vulnerability has ignited criticism of how the ship's commanding officer could have better prepared the ship and its 1,800-person crew in the weeks leading up to the outbreak.

With over 1,000 confirmed cases — nearly 60 percent of the ship's crew — the Charles de Gaulle has now far surpassed the infection rate and total of the outbreak onboard the 4,800-person carrier Roosevelt. As of Monday, 678 Roosevelt sailors have tested positive for COVID-19. Personnel from U.S. Naval Hospital Guam, where the ship has been ported since March 27, have tested 94 percent of the total crew.

Eight sailors have been hospitalized, with one requiring a move to the ICU "for increased observation due to shortness of breath," officials said.

Aviation Ordnanceman Chief Petty Officer Charles **Robert Thacker Jr.**, 41, died April 13 at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam due to COVID-19 complications. Thacker was moved to the ICU on April 9 after being found unresponsive by other quarantined sailors. He is the first Theodore Roosevelt sailor to succumb to the virus. Navy officials would not specify whether Thacker had any preexisting medical conditions that made him more susceptible to the virus.





**NEXT MEETING  
TO BE ANNOUNCED  
(LET'S HOPE FOR THIS  
SEPTEMBER)**



CMMS Club Meetings are the  
second Saturday of the month  
September thru June  
† 10:00 AM to Noon  
**The University of New Haven**  
**Westside Hall**  
West Haven, Connecticut

**RON NEILSON, EDITOR**

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*Cover Photo:* The **U.S. Coast Guard** didn't provide a lot of details on this photo. What I did learn is that the sleek vessel in the foreground is a drug-running "banana boat" and it was seized by the USCG in international waters somewhere near Southeast Asia. **SEE PAGE 12 for related BREAKING NEWS.**

*Rear Photo:* The **USGS Resolute** plying iceberg-laden seas. The Cruise liner is scheduled to make 30 voyages to arctic regions this year and next. It remains to be seen whether or not taking cruises will remain a viable option for those who can pony-up \$22,895.00 each for a 17 night cruise. For those interested, here's the company's online link to *One Ocean Expeditions*:

<https://www.oneoceanexpeditions.com/vessels/vessel-rcgs-resolute>

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