

January 14, 2017

9:00 to 12:00 AM

Fourteenth Meeting

Model Shipwright Guild of Western NY

Meeting Agenda:

- Greeting, Introductions, New Business 5 min

In attendance, Rusty, Lacy, Leonard, Bill E, Joe. Bob Dowd would have been there but there was a venue problem that day.

No new business was brought up from attendees

- The USS Confederacy From Scratch: Rusty Jones 60 min

Rusty had the group's full attention for quite some time with coverage of his model, The Confederacy. Rusty took us from the "top", so to speak describing how he ventured into this model and much about the model build.

As some of you are aware given the history of this ship there is documentation to support a modeler in building this vessel. That is the good news. The bad news (I guess) is there are at least 2 commercially available drawing sets for this frigate out there. If there is one thing we have learned is that just because something out there exists it may or may not be authentic. More on this at another time.

Rusty and Chuck Passaro have had a growing relationship for some time. If I have the retelling correct they had personally met at the NE Model Symposium after an earlier connection with scratch building the Syren (now available through Model Shipways). Rusty had posted his build, on MSW, and followed along with Chuck Passaro's work. Unfortunately, with the crash of the web site the only trace of Rusty's work are some re-posted pictures.

From that work Rusty was asked to work along with Chuck as the Confederacy came up from the drawing pages. Chuck developed the design and managed the interface with Model Expo. Chuck's model work appears to have been a bootstrap process. Using kit prototype parts, I believe, that would eventually be in the kit he began a kit build and progressively developing the instruction set. Meanwhile Rusty was building a relatively high level scratch version. One might call it a scratch hybrid as Chuck was supplying laser fabricated parts such as cast cannon, figurehead, ship wheel etc. to Rusty. Understandably Rusty was a few chapters behind Chuck. Another interesting way to prove a design.

The whole process of scratch building the Confederacy took about 2 ½ to 3 years Rusty relates. Rusty further relates it was his biggest challenge to date. He had never planked such a large model and because of its size his planking skill was on display for all to see so he was very careful. The bulkheads were fashioned from model aircraft plywood. The model itself is in all natural wood of boxwood, swiss pear, ebony, holly and bloodwood. The boxwood was used for all sub structure save the bulkhead frames, swiss pear was fashioned for many of the deck appointments, holly adorns the hull below the waterline with boxwood above. The bulkwarks are fabricated from bloodwood, a very nice application. The wales are laminated ebony. He utilized a 4 plank staggered hull pattern. He did not treenail the planks. Rusty conveyed that the plans are so well detailed he even followed Chuck's drawing for hull and deck planking patterns. CA glue was used for much of his work.

Below is a picture of his completed model. Other photos will be posted to the web site and Bill Emerson has provided the following Drop Box repository for us. . Forgive the slightly blurry bow on shot...my camera has limits.

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/o4cfb1y5oc7dh8z/AADgpNzeclmwGlelvxxwAMVa?dl=0>



It is a magnificent model and one to be admired by even the most critical on of lookers.

Rusty supplied the preface of the Model Shipways kit instruction set that gives a brief history of the vessel. He also supplied Douglas H Robinson's dissertation of the frigate. It is much more in depth describing ship physicals. I recognize the reprint as a Nautical Research Journal article dated; Volume 8, No. 2 March April 1956.

- USS Sassacus Water Wheel Construction: Bill Emerson 30min

Bill took us into his shop after the Confederacy discussion and spoke to his continued work on the Sassacus. He focused primarily on the development of the water wheels. Once again Bill, our technology pioneer, engaged Don Onley to produce the parts for the wheels. Bill has photos and some drawings of the wheel construct but turning that into scaled assembly for his model was a challenge. He seems to have mastered it using a well thought out process. Several pictures have been included showing, from the outside inward, the decorative external cover, the inner frame work, the wheel frame (there are three), the center hub design (there are two) and the assemblage. It is a clever assembly system and should be quite convincing in its final form. He also has designed and test fabricated laser parts for the two deck houses but must go back and rework the parts to satisfy his standards. Interestingly on a scratch build of relatively unconventional

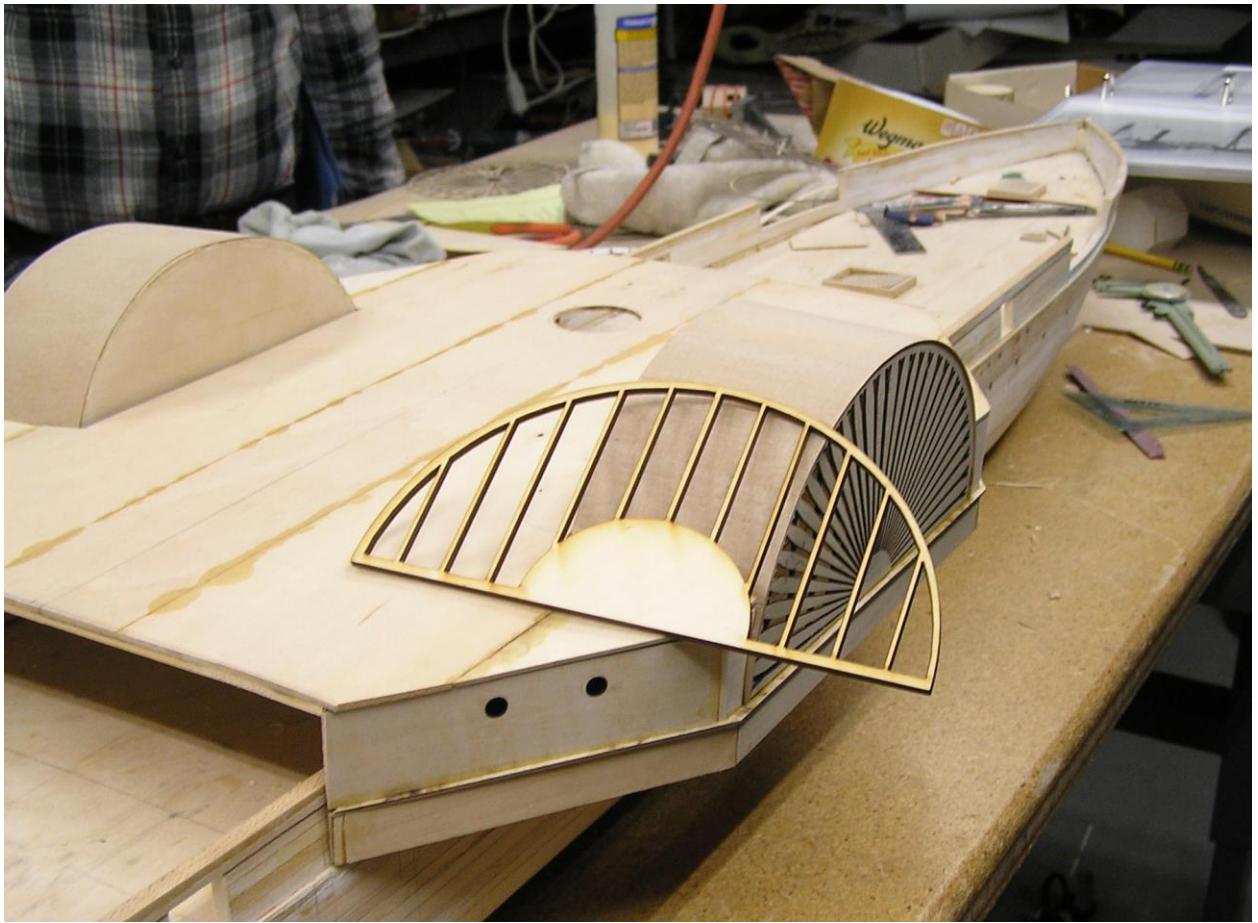
models I notice that Bill will mock up sub-assemblies to evaluate them. He is not reticent in using a mix of balsa, cereal boxes and other materials to approve a design.

Bill has said he enjoys the research as much as the build project. In witness to this he displayed one of his notebooks jammed with photos and drawings. Given, at times, the lack of definitive information Bill has had to rely heavily on photos to replicate certain aspects of the ship.

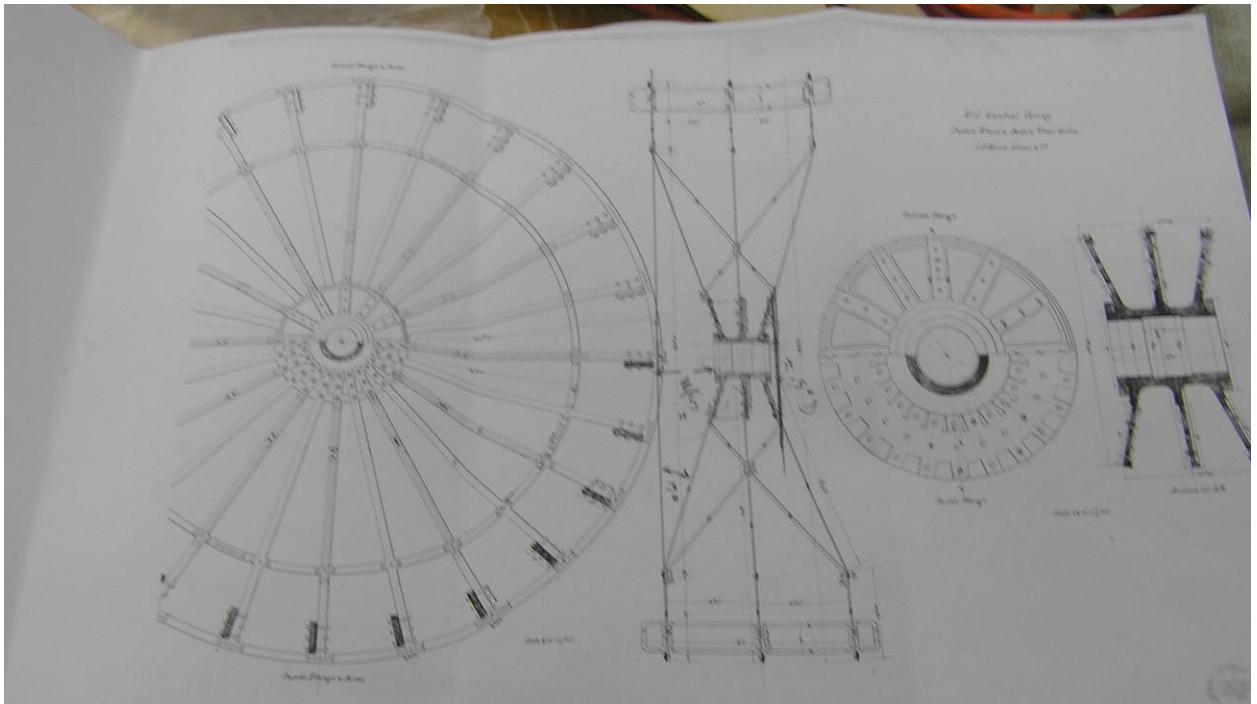
Below are some of the photos.



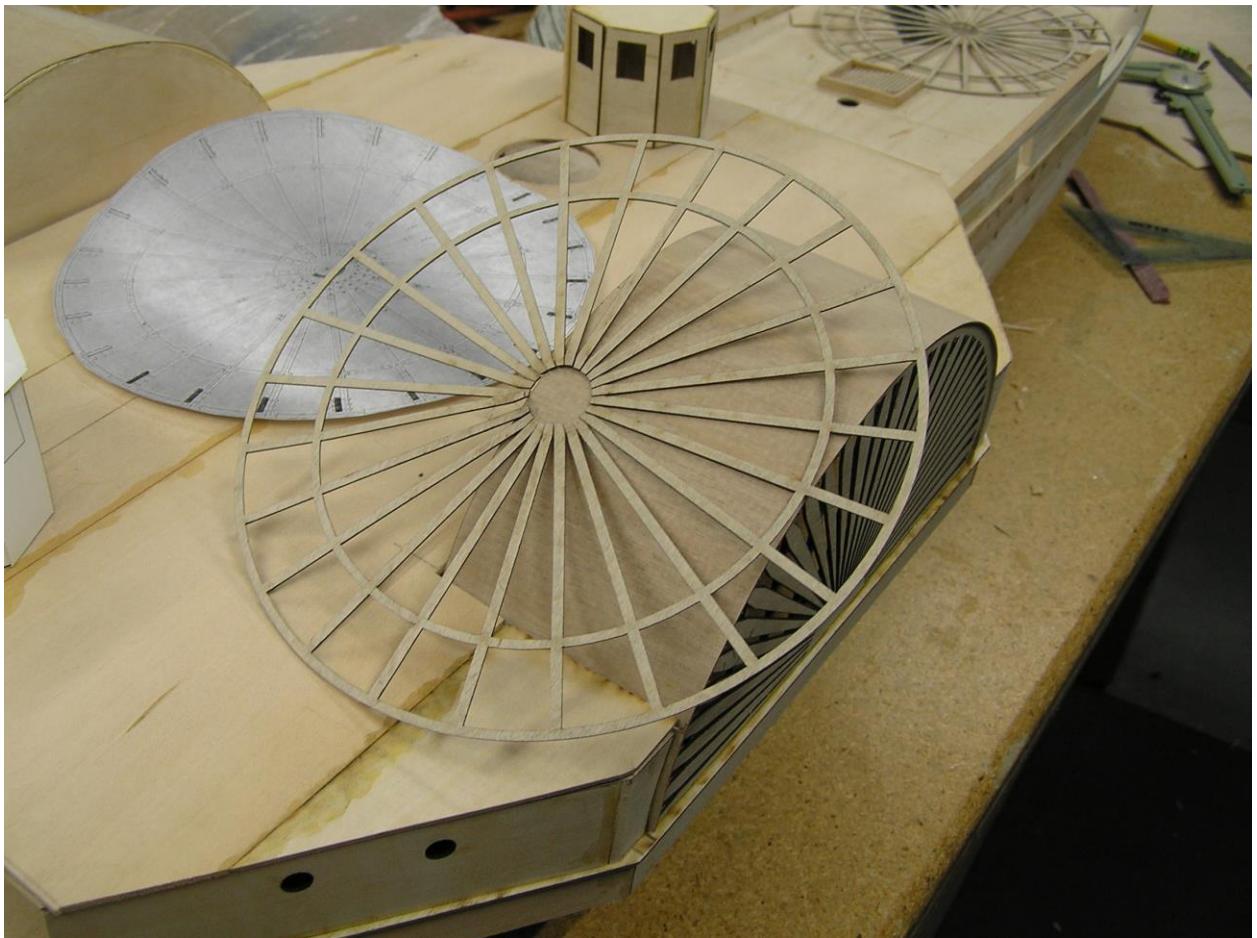
General picture of the stage of construction and the paddle wheel superstructure. The decorative wheel house fan had already been assembled



This is another paddle wheel house component framework just behind the fan.



Detailed drawing of the paddlewheel subsystem that Bill is replicating



One of the three paddle wheel frames that house the actual bidirectional paddle wheel systems.

- The New Web Site: Joe 15min
Joe reported that work continues on the web site with more shop note additions. He is working on collating the meeting minutes by quarter. This is a staging for the quarterly newsletter that has been asked for by the NRG Secretary.

The web site has received a number of compliments from external sources and has drawn in 2 new queries as well as one being a potential future member.

We discussed adding in a "Classified" element to the web site and the group voted to affirm the creation.

In regard to web site costs. Indeed, our domain name is registered for the next 2 years. However, our web site public access and maintenance is for 1 year. We discussed how to handle future costs as the solicitation of the \$13 fee request was only about 80% effective. Had it not been for 2 generous members I would not have adequately covered the expense. The group discussed the situation and we concluded that we will have to charge yearly dues. It starts this year and the fee will be in the range of \$25 to \$35 per year.

- Future meeting Style: Joe 15min
We talked about a new addition to our format for some meetings. Starting in February we will try out a workshop. The first one will be on planking, primarily hull planking. It will be a combination tutorial/demonstration and as suggested we may have a DIY session incorporated. The first workshop is envisioned to span 2 meetings. Some have suggested a "take home" assignment. Future workshops could be coppering, rigging and other aspects such as research methodology.

- The Model Donation Next Steps: All 10min
The kit sales have stalled. That can't be a surprise to anyone. So I (Joe) responded to Model Expo's broadcast offer that they will buy any complete kits sitting on our shelves. John Garcia, of Model Expo, responded back positively to the spreadsheet I sent him. I hope to hear back before next meeting and we will discuss this further since Chuck Baylis was not available for this meeting.