



# *Knots & Splices*

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The above painting, by an unknown artist, is of Captain George Vancouver's flagship HMS *Discovery* somewhere off the west (presumably British Columbia) coast. The ship in the background is not identified, but was probably HMS *Chatham*, *Discovery's* consort on the voyage. See Page 2 for more about the ships.

## THE SHIPS USED IN CHARTING CANADA'S WEST COAST

The first accurate charts of the northwestern coast of North America were prepared in the last half of the eighteenth century. Two British expeditions accomplished most of the work, producing charts which were still the basis for navigation through those waters until well into the twentieth century. It wasn't until James Cook's third voyage to the Pacific, beginning in 1776, that he undertook the mapping of the west coast. His work filled in the previously unknown (to Europeans) area between the Spanish in the south and the Russians in the north, or roughly the coast between California and Bering Strait.

Cook's first exposure to seafaring was his nine year apprenticeship with John Walker, a shipowner in Whitby, Yorkshire. This may have influenced his preference for the ships typical of that area. At any rate all five of the vessels chosen for Cook's three Pacific voyages were former Whitby colliers. One of these, the *Marquis of Granby*, had been built in 1770 and converted to an expedition ship named HMS *Resolution*. She was 462 tons burthen, 110 feet in length with a beam of 30½ feet beam and a draft of 13 feet. Her armament included 12 6-pdr and 12 ½-pdr swivel guns. *Resolution* did not last long after returning to Britain in 1780. She was captured by the French in 1782 and her ultimate fate is a matter of dispute.



*Resolution* was accompanied on the third voyage by HMS *Discovery*. She had been built at Whitby in 1774 as the collier *Diligence* and bought by the Royal Navy in 1775. After conversion was completed in 1776 she was commissioned HMS *Discovery*. Smaller than *Resolution*, the *Discovery* was about 300 tons burthen, 91 feet long with a 27½ foot beam and 11½ foot draft and was fitted with eight guns. After her return to England in 1780 *Discovery* was fitted out as a transport but soon became a dockyard craft until she was broken up in 1797.

The picture on the left is from a contemporary painting of *Resolution* and *Discovery* near Tahiti.

George Vancouver made his career in the Royal Navy, beginning as a midshipman at the age of thirteen. He sailed the next year with Cook on his second expedition and then continued in HMS *Discovery* on the third expedition. In 1791 he was given command of

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## LAST MEETING

Captain Lorne welcomed the nine members and one visitor in attendance. Our visitor, Alec Smith, has moved recently from Vancouver. His interest is in radio controlled models, including ships.

Neil Lund advised that he will have to retire from producing “Knots & Splices” effective in September. He suggested the format for the newsletter be set at four pages per issue with the understanding that this could be increased to five or six whenever there was enough material to fill the extra pages.

Alan Thain reminded members of the upcoming Wild Rose Antiques show.

## ON THE WAYS

Bob Reeves described the problems he was having with the finish on the stern panel of his *Norske Love*. Bob received several suggestions from the assembled multitude, at least one of which may work.

Steve Swystun reported that he had found some wider copper tape which enabled him to cap the keel of his USS *Constitution*. He is now starting to paint the rest of the hull.



Peter Chapman brought an interesting kit for a model of a New Bedford whale boat of the late nineteenth century (left) which he bought in Victoria about 15 years ago. This type of kit was more common before World War II. The manufacturer was the Marine Model Company, Inc. The kit includes a partly shaped mahogany hull, spars and oars (of basswood?), a box of brittania metal parts plus the plans, dated 1937. (Editor's note: There is some interesting information if you google "Marine Model Company" including bids on

eBay of \$75 to \$112 for the same whale boat kit that Peter has.)

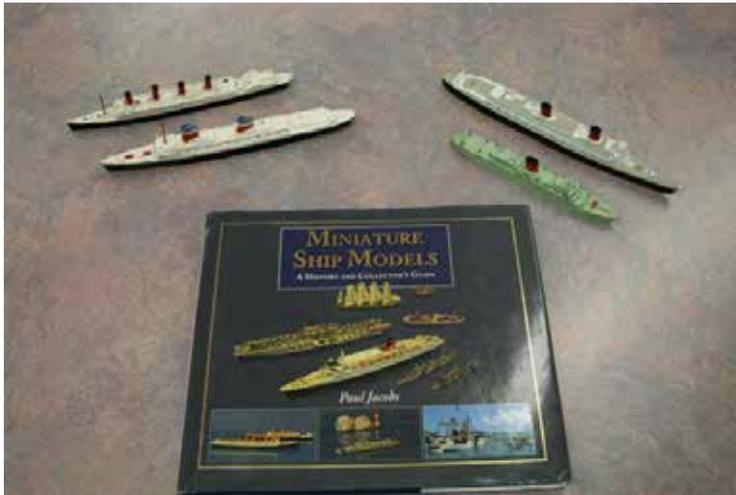
Campbell Ross is working on the standing rigging for his HMS *Unicorn*. He did bring in some interesting items including a framed copy of a painting of a ship broaching which he bought at the Maritime Museum in Madrid and a couple of books, one by Sam Willis about the "fighting *Temeraire*" and the other about the pursuit of the American raider USS *Essex* in the Pacific Ocean by HMS *Phoebe*.

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## ON THE WAYS

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Lorne Yacuk reviewed his adventures with his model of the *Mayflower*. The instructions seem to have been written by a Philadelphia lawyer with a rather tenuous grasp of model building. (And this was to have been a simpler model!)



Alan Thain showed a few samples from his collection of die cast models of famous liners, (clockwise from upper right in the picture, left, RMS *Queen Elizabeth*, RMS *Caronia*, SS *United States* and RMS *Aquitania*). He brought the book shown in the photo which describes many miniature ship models. Alan also recommended a 3 DVD set by Timothy Spall titled “Somewhere at Sea”.

Patrick Henry has finished most of the construction for his model of the Japanese Navy submarine IJN *I-400*. The remaining work includes cleaning, painting, adding a few small parts and final assembly. Patrick also brought several books to show.



Dave Andersen began his presentation by demonstrating a material he has found which he can use to make rigging and lines for his model of the Norwegian whaler/escort vessel *Narvik*. The package is shown in the photo (left) – it is meant for telephone and power lines and fencing on model railroads, but is ideal for his purposes. EZ Line is made by Berkshire Junction of Adams, Mass. Dave went on to show plans and a DVD he had bought from the Norwegian Navy through eBay. These give a lot of helpful detail about the ship, both as a whale catcher and as an

escort. Dave has taken the lines off and showed plywood bulkheads he had then laid out.

Inspired by his great grandfather, who is still interested in radio controlled models, our visitor Alec Smith has taken up the hobby. He brought in a couple of examples of his great grandfather’s work. One was a duck (driven by a propeller rather paddling feet) and the other was a speed boat with a hull built of hardened papier mâché. Alec put both

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## ON THE WAYS

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models through their paces (without the benefit of water!). A photo of the duck and the speedboat, together with the two controllers is shown at the left. We hope that Alec found our meeting interesting and that he might consider joining our club.

## NEXT MEETING

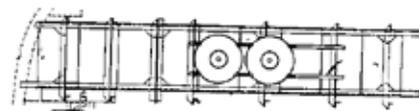
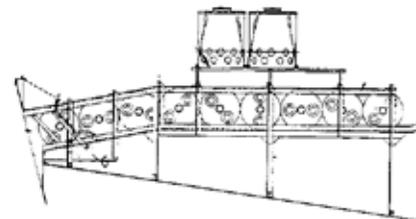
The next meeting of the Alberta Ship Model Society will be held on 21 May at 7:00 pm at McNally Senior High School.

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## FLOATING SMOKE POTS

(by Neil Lund)

During the open discussions after our last meeting a question arose about some objects shown perched on top of the depth charge rails in Dave Andersen's newly acquired drawings of the *Narvik*. I knew they had something to do with smoke, but a little research yielded the following information. They are smoke pots (or candles, canisters, floats or bombs, depending on your source). The photo shows them on board HMCS *Sackville*, the Flower Class corvette preserved in Halifax, while the drawing shows them mounted above the depth charge rails on HMCS *Agassiz*. The canisters are about 21" diameter and 24" in height, the upper half being sealed as a float chamber and the lower half acting as a support skirt, perforated with 3" holes. The projection on top is the igniter below which is the actual smoke bomb extending through the can.



## THE SHIPS USED IN CHARTING CANADA'S WEST COAST

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a different HMS *Discovery* and sent back to the Pacific with the task of charting the north Pacific coast of North America.

This *Discovery* had been built in 1789 at Rotherhithe (part of London) as a survey ship for the Royal Navy and was named after Cook's *Discovery*. Vancouver's ship was a little larger than Cook's, being 99 feet in length by 28 foot beam and rated at 330 tons burthen. She was armed with 10 4-pdr and 10 ½-pdr swivel guns. In 1795 after her service in the Pacific she was sent to the Napoleonic Wars, where she was from time to time a bomb vessel, a prison ship and a hospital ship. She also took part in naval actions and gained battle honours at the first battle of Copenhagen (1801). After the war *Discovery* was returned to convict duty until she was eventually broken up in 1834.

HMS *Chatham* accompanied HMS *Discovery* on the Pacific survey. *Chatham* was a brig, built at Dover in 1788. She was 80 feet long, 22 feet beam, rated at 135 tons burthen and armed with four 3-pdr and 6 ½-pdr swivel guns. As part of the survey she ascended the Columbia River beyond today's Portland. A plaque erected by the State of Oregon marks the spot. *Chatham* was sent back to England with dispatches in 1791, arriving almost two years later. She had suffered severe wear but after a refit was returned to service until 1830 when she was sold in Jamaica.

A brief survey didn't find any references to kits for models of any of the ships mentioned in this article, unlike HMS *Endeavour*, Cook's flagship on his first expedition. Kits for his ship are advertised by Mamoli, Corel, Constructo and Artesania Latino and no doubt others. This is probably because Cook became famous for his discoveries and for his circumnavigation of the globe on that voyage. It seems that if any member is anxious to build a model of a ship from this article, he will have to resort to scratch building!

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### Alberta Ship Model Society

Society Website = [www.albertashipmodelsociety.ca](http://www.albertashipmodelsociety.ca)