

Knots & Splices

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**The *ALMA* sailing past the Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco, California, USA.
For more information see Pete Chapman's story on page 2.**

The 1891 Scow Schooner Alma

When in San Francisco take time to head down to the San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park located at the Hyde Street Pier. In the visitor centre you will find very well done interpretive displays that include a number of ship models. At the museum pier you will find eight historic vessels ranging from the 1866 square rigged Balcultha to the 1915 steam schooner Wapama. Also in the collection of vessels is the 1891 scow schooner Alma. Scow schooners were used extensively in the bay area for general cargo hauling, because of their shallow draft and ability to rest upright on the bottom during low tide. The Alma is a two masted gaff rigged schooner eighty feet in length overall, and sixty feet on deck.

The best thing about the Alma is that it is coast guard certified and takes passengers for three hour cruises on the bay. At a mere \$40 for adults (\$30 for seniors) it has to be the best deal going. I couldn't pass that up when there last June and immediately booked a cruise for my wife Lorraine and me.

We boarded the Alma at 1:00 pm on a nice sunny day, and as usual for that time of year the wind picked up to about 25 knots blowing in from the Pacific through the Golden Gate Bridge. A great day for sailing on the San Francisco Bay! After a briefing from the National Parks staff and crew of volunteers, we were invited to help raise the two large gaff rigged sails the time honoured way. No winches, just muscle power. Two teams were formed to haul on the throat and peak halyards, and in a short but strenuous time all sails were up. The captain motored out of the pier, the sails were sheeted in and we were off.

The San Francisco Bay was everything it is cracked up to be. Cold, wet, windy, and fun! Well, I thought the cold, wet, windy stuff was fun. Lorraine and most others wisely took shelter on deck wherever they could. The Alma took off across the bay on a surprisingly fast beam reach, past Alcatraz and into the more protected waters near Sausalito. We cruised there at a more sedate pace and were able to take in the scenery before charging back across the bay to San Francisco. The big treat for me was being able to take the helm for a while as we approached Alcatraz. As expected, it had a fair bit of weather helm, and you had to concentrate to keep it on course. Quite a change from my Laser, and just as much fun! We cruised very close to Alcatraz and then along the harbour front back to the Hyde Street pier. The three hours on board went surprisingly fast.....well for me anyway. Some of the shivering passengers seemed quite happy to be back on shore though.

From a ship modeling aspect, I got to thinking that the Alma would be a good subject for an easy to build scratch built model. Plans are available, the hull form is as simple as it gets, and there is lots on information online. If you get stumped about rigging details, just head down to San Francisco, check out the real thing, and go for a sail to see how it all works.

It just might be my next project....we'll see. Pete Chapman

Editors note: The construction of the *Alma* is unusual, in that her bottom planking is arthwartships (meaning side-to-side) instead of fore to aft. It was referred to as "log built" because of horizontally laid "quite thick" planks. This was a trade-off of speed for ease of repair. For a very good read and an excellent historical account of the *Alma*, search San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park, California, at www.nps.gov, or just Google, Alma - San Francisco Boat. Thank you Pete, for the article and pictures (see next page).

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The Alma

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The following are Pete's photos taken while onboard the *Alma*:



Looking aft



Pete & Lorraine



Passing by Alcatraz

LAST MEETING

There was a lot of discussion regarding the promotion of the club, and how to attract new members. Some of the ideas put forth by members in attendance, are:

- Lorne brought up the idea of posters in the hobby shops (this was actually tabled at the last meeting). Discussion followed regarding the content and size of the poster.
- Tim brought forth Brian Small's email regarding our website and had some ideas for future "On the Ways" articles such as kit reviews and member's current projects.
- Alan brought up an idea for advertizing in various model magazines, such as "Ships in Scale". He also promised to get information on the spring Wild Rose Antique Show, to see if we would benefit from a booth there.
- Pete suggested we reach out to the local R/C boat club.
- Alan and Tim will look into getting involved with the model train folks to set up a booth at their next show.
- Patrick mentioned that his wife suggested we place a few ads on Kijiji.

ON THE WAYS

Tim Ruptash: Tim has been unable to get time at the work bench.

Neil Lund: In his words, he is "foot loose and fancy free".

Campbell Ross: Campbell has made progress on the *Unicorn*. He has finished the shrouds and ratlines on all 3 masts and is now working through the standing rigging. He is also looking for a book titled "Rigging Period Ship Models" by Leonard Peterson. If anyone can help, please let us know and we will pass it on to Campbell.

Bob Reeves: Bob is working on the prow and wales of his *Norske Love*, and trying to figure out the railings. Next....the deck.

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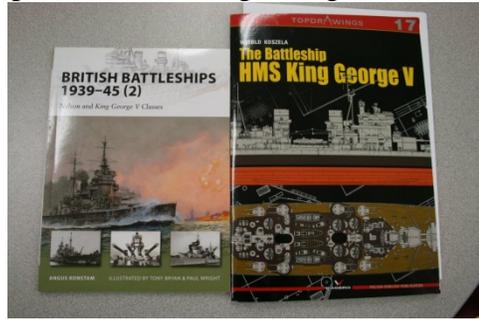
Gerry Kercher: Gerry just acquired a Billings kit of the *African Queen*.

Peter Jaras: In his words, he is "Too busy doing nothing to model".

Alan Thain: Is not building models, but he did treat us to his photo album of the club's history.

Pete Chapman: Pete brought in a sailing skiff, which started life as a Midwest Models Skiff Kit. He scratch built the center board, rudder and sail. He also informed us that the small line in front of the main mast is used to tension the sail and is referred to as the 'Snotter'.

Patrick Henry: Showed photo-etch and resin for use on his Trumpeter kit of the *USS Alabama*. He also showed a couple of new books: 'British Battle Ships' and 'HMS King George V'.



Pete's sailing skiff

Patrick's photo-etch and resin bits

Two new reference books

Lorne Yacuk: Has changed the name of his *Mayflower* to *Maybe*. He is having a tough time making sense of the plans provided and he is also grouping the wood bits according to size.

**NEXT MEETING - 19 NOVEMBER 2014
7:00 PM
MCNALLY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

Alberta Ship Model Society
Society Website – www.albertashipmodelsociety.ca