

THREE SHEETS TO THE WIND

Newsletter of the Winnipeg Model Boat Club



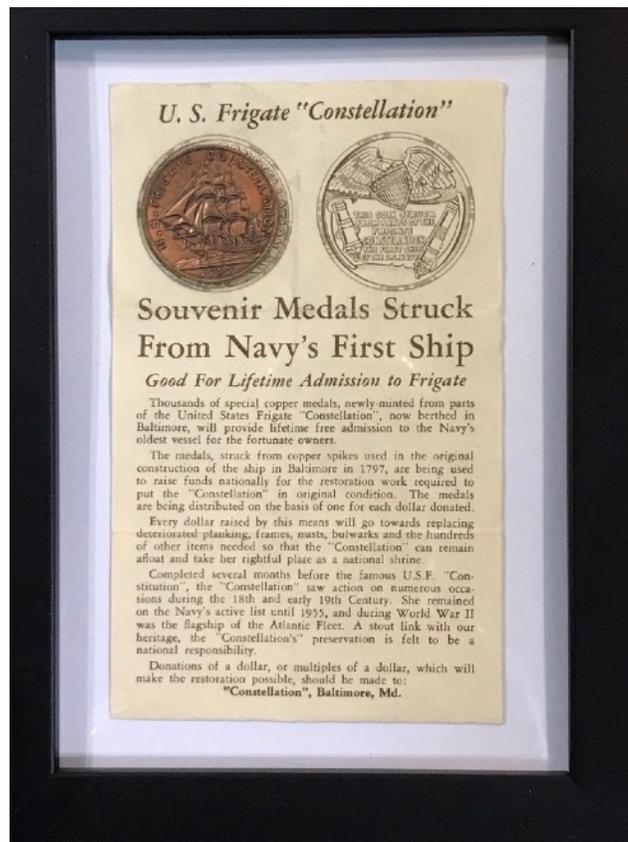
Not only is spring just around the corner, but we are having our AGM meeting 7 March 2022 at the usual time and place. Please wear your masks as these requirements have not been changed until March 15th when they will only be recommended rather than mandatory under public health orders. As we move into the future and we hope out of the worst of the pandemic and into the endemic stage I think we all still need to make wise decisions for ourselves and others. Also, please remember a TIN for the BIN.

We will be holding our long delayed AGM and elections for President, V/President and Events Co-ordinator. Despite often repeated veiled (and outright threats) of press ganging people to run for the executive the Impressment Service will be not functioning this year. Please consider running for a position on the executive. It's not that onerous and the previous executive will assist in the transition.



Quotes from the Quarterdeck

A while back, I was looking through a box of my personal memorabilia and came across an object that brought back several memories. It was a copper medallion that I got when I was around 10 years old, back in 1956. I was so taken with discovering it again, I put it and its accompanying certificate in a picture frame that sits in a place of honour in my model boating workshop.



From an early age, I was always interested in things that move...cars, trains, ships and planes. I started building models around the age of 8. We didn't have a lot of money in those days, so I was only able to buy model kits once in a while. I became especially fascinated by old sailing ships like the "Santa Maria", the "Cutty Sark" and the "Bounty".

One day I happened to see an ad that promised, for a donation of at least one dollar, a commemorative medallion and lifetime admission to the U.S. Frigate "Constellation" originally built in Baltimore in 1797. The medallion was minted from one of the original copper spikes found in the ship's hull. I was really taken with this notion and somehow found a dollar and sent it off to the "Constellation", Baltimore, Md. Sixty-six years later, I can't remember where I got the dollar from or whether I sent them Canadian or U.S. currency. I'm certain my parents must have helped me with this one way or another. And, a dollar was a lot of money in those days...the equivalent of over \$10.00 today! Sometime later after mailing my donation simply addressed to "Constellation", Baltimore, Md., I received my coveted medallion in the mail. Boy... was I thrilled!



Here is some interesting history about this ship and the medal, that I recently discovered on line. With the Naval Act of 1794, Congress created the U.S. Navy and authorized the construction of six frigates. The first one to put to sea was the US Frigate "Constellation" in 1797. It was the first ship of the U.S. Navy and the first U.S. ship to engage and defeat an enemy vessel. It was decommissioned and broken up for scrap on June 25, 1853 at the Gosport Navy Yard in Norfolk, Va.

In the same yard, construction was started on a new ship, a sloop-of-war, which would bear the same name. This second ship was named the USS "Constellation" and was launched on August 26, 1854. It was the last sail powered warship built by the U.S. Navy. It was decommissioned on Feb. 4, 1955 and taken to its permanent berth in Baltimore's inner harbor.

In 1955, the city of Baltimore apparently started promoting the second ship as a rebuild of the original 1797 frigate. The city issued medals and sold them for \$1 each to raise money to restore the ship and turn it into a museum.

The reverse of the Constellation medal states "THIS COIN STRUCK FROM PARTS OF THE FRIGATE CONSTELLATION THE FIRST SHIP OF THE US NAVY".

The promotion caught the attention of historians and a heated debate ensued. The controversy continued until 1999 when evidence was uncovered during the restoration that conclusively proved it was the ship launched in 1854. What the city of Baltimore had was the sloop-of-war that was a completely different design and built new from the keel up. Its name was the only connection to the original frigate launched in 1797. Quite a boo-boo, I'd say!

I was a little disappointed to learn that my medal doesn't contain any parts from the original frigate. While there may be some parts of the 1797 frigate "Constellation" that have survived in one form or another, none of them appear to be in the medal that I bought those many years ago. It does make for an interesting story though. And the medal still turned out to be a "good investment". It is currently selling on eBay for anywhere from \$30.00 to \$300.00 plus shipping. But I have no intention of getting rid of it. It still is a piece of the 1854 USS "Constellation" and it is full of good memories for me.

Fair winds and following seas,

Leo Steinfeld, President WMBC

Popeye's Workshop

You all know the **DRILL**, but here is a **BIT** of information!

Let's start off with a little humor (VEEEERY little...)

Son: Dad, can you lend me a cordless drill?

Father: Sure, son. Here you go! (hands over the following tool)



Ok, by now you have probably figured out this month's topic- drills, and the all-important drill bits! First off, let's talk about drill bits. There are several types, and each type has its pros and cons- let's get started!

High speed steel (HSS) bits – this is the most common type of drill bit, and pretty much everyone has a set of these kicking around somewhere. They consist of a chisel tip, a tapered cutting edge, and a twist to remove the waste material out of the hole. HSS bits are good for metals as well as softer material like wood or plastic, but they tend to splinter the edge of the hole when used on wood. More on this later in the article...

Fun Fact: when you see "Titanium" HSS drill bits for sale, they are not actually made of titanium! They have a titanium oxide coating (which gives them a gold color), which is a bit harder than the carbon steel (black) HSS bits but cannot be sharpened by hand- the steel underneath is softer than carbon steel so once the gold color is gone they won't hold an edge. Recent years, titanium bits have become very common, and replacements are readily available- I buy 300 pieces refill sets from a local Canadian store that specializes in Tires when it goes on sale.

Another note about HSS drill bits- there is a type of set which I find invaluable- a **machinist bit set**. Unlike the conventional bit sets which go up in 1/16" increments, a machinist set has bits that are measured in thousands of an inch, and go up accordingly. It makes it far easier to get a better and more precise fit than drilling with a standard home use set.



There are several different styles of wood specific drill bits called **spade bits**. The differences are minor, but a quality set is well worth the price. Watch the center tip- one style has a taper twist, which will pull your work into the bit faster than you may want- the chisel point style (see pic below) is far easier to control. Sizing increments are not as varied as HSS bits (the sizes of spade bits go up by 1/8 inch steps generally), but they work better for holes in wood without splintering the edge. I have a few sets, and they all actually has a sharp tiny chisel edge on the outer edge of the tip, which scores the wood and virtually eliminates any splintering. It does so by drilling the center of the hole, scribing the edge of the hole (with that knife edge), then planing out the material in between.



The next topic is how to make a drill bit create a hole... All bits need to spin, or twist to make a hole. There are several tools to do this, and each tool works for its special scenario...

First type of tool- the **powered hand drill**. A hand drill can be corded (plugs in to the wall) or cordless (running off a battery). As we want to make precisely located holes, I recommend that the drill you use has variable speeds- there are on/off drills and as drill bits can wander on your surface before digging in, this can spell disaster! It is far easier to start your hole with a slowly spinning bit. Corded vs cordless is up to you- there are pros and cons to both (think of the cord in the way of your work versus the battery is always almost dead any time you need to drill a hole).

Similar to a power hand drill, the second type is a **drill press**. A drill press has an adjustable work surface, and a power head that comes down to contact and drill into your work. There are benchtop and floor standing models. Pros – very precisely placed holes can be drilled both perpendicular to your project or at a precise angle (the work surface can be adjusted to any reasonable angle). This also allows for drilling to an exact depth as well, and holes can be duplicated easily. Cons- a drill press is not really mobile, so drilling something poolside due to testing or modifying a boat is not an option. Also, there is a limit as to how far from the edge of your work that a hole can be drilled due to the frame of the drill press.



The third type of drill I wanted to mention is not even called a drill- it is called a **pin vice**! It basically makes a drill bit screwdriver, which is very handy for making small and precisely placed holes in your model. I have also used a pin vice as an extension on a power hand drill for drilling in a tight area where the drill cannot fit – the body of the pin vice can be tightened into the bit and add a couple of inches of length to the drill bit. Normally, you operate a pin vice by spinning the shaft back and forth between thumb and index finger.



Finally, some advice on drilling the perfect holes...

First, do not try and sharpen your HSS drill bits unless you have been doing so for many years. It is a skill, and an improperly sharpened bit can screw up your model, from not digging into the material to making an oversized or oval hole. Replacement bits are cheap, and even with having the skill, sharpening the small bits we use for models is more frustration than it is worth!

Second, drill a pilot hole. I do this all the time, using a pin vice! Make a small hole exactly where you want the larger hole to be placed, from that small hole drill a hole that is at least as large as the tip of the bit for the final size. Then the center of the larger bit will be centered properly. This is for HSS bits- if using a spade bit, just have a pilot hole large enough for the tip of the spade bit.

Third, if using an HSS bit to drill thru wood, try to drill partway from one side of the wood, then drill from the other side. Splintering from using an HSS bit is more severe when the bit gets to the bottom of the hole, so if you drill from both sides you will get far less damage. Also, go slow! The more aggressive you push, the faster the bit will remove material and this will cause more damage.

Fourth, if you need to drill into steel or iron... use some oil. I know- it makes a mess, and paint won't stick but oil is needed! It lessens the heat caused from the steel on steel abrasion and your bit will last longer. Suck it up, use oil, and clean your material thoroughly with alcohol or lacquer thinner before priming/painting. Oil will cause fish eyes in your paint. Also, spade bits WILL NOT work on metal! Do not even attempt it!

Well, that is it for this month. You know the drill, and now have the hole picture on how to drill. Pun ya later!

From the editor

My apologies for the small newsletter this month. I was hoping to do a photo update on the antique "mystery model" that Barry Solomon obtained. Bill Wersch has been doing a brilliant job in its rebuild, but I managed to get into a hopeless tangle as usual trying to resize the photos and seemingly "lost" them somewhere on my Mac. I know they are not lost - I just have to spend the time searching and finding them.

Having said this, a huge thanks to Leo Steinfeld and Glen Seifert for stepping up and contributing the two interesting and helpful articles that are in the March 2022 newsletter.

We have had no Classified ads this month.

I have touched base with Mega Trains organizers Susan and Maurice and advised that we would again be interested (pending confirmation by the new executive) in doing our usual display in September 2022.

I have also contacted the St Vital Ag fair about another display in August but have yet to hear back from them.

The Red River Exhibition is apparently planning their regular June exhibition and in addition another Fall Fair. Both of these events are a considerable amount of commitment and work. The new executive will need to confirm our attendance at one or both.

I'm sure we are all looking forward to a better season of sailing and getting together.

I think I can speak for the rest of the outgoing executive when I say that it is very reassuring to know that we still have considerable interest in the club by new and old members despite everything that the last 2 years has thrown at us. We thank the each and every member for this and know that we all will strive to make the club more interesting and give value for the membership dollars. It has been a pleasure working with Leo, Dick, Owen, Colin, and Doug Stephens our dedicated Sailing SIG coordinator who is successfully promoting r/c sailing. Paul Morissette has taken on the very important function of webmaster and he will be also working closely with the new executive.

The WMBC has been around for a long time. Our first official meeting was in 1994. Our 30th anniversary will be in 2 short years. For a long, long time we were just a small group of enthusiastic model boat builders - a club in name only, but with a shared passion for the hobby and a friendship that has stood the test of time. We lost some members that moved on with their jobs or to pursue other interests. Most sadly of all we lost Matt Clinke, Ed Titus, Jock Oliphant, Don Frohwerk, Larry Forbes who have all passed away. All fine gentlemen who loved building model boats.

As Porky says, That's all folks. See you at the meeting and I will do a better job on the April newsletter.

Bob Russell.

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