



Sydney Model Shipbuilders Club Inc.

CHATTERBOX

www.smsc.org.au

ISSUE # 101

MARCH 2025

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The CHATTERBOX INDEX is available at smsc.org.au

Please address all correspondence to SMSC and/or any members of the Executive Committee to the Secretary at secretary@smsc.org.au

All mail and contributions to CHATTERBOX to be sent to the Editors, Tom Wolf : tom@aces.net.au or Michael Bennett: mjbennett@ozemail.com.au



ENDEAVOUR GROUP S&T

The next Endeavour Group meeting will be held on

Saturday, 8th March from 10am to 12 noon

PLEASE NOTE CORRECTED DATE!!

hosted by Ralph Hannaford (If you wish to come along and need details of the address, please contact Ralph on 0414236913 or by email to <ralph.hannaford@clrv.org.au>

Members and visitors are welcome and are encouraged to bring projects for discussion

The Endeavour Group meetings are held in the informal atmosphere of a member's home.

SMSC CLUB S&T MEETING

The next SMSC meeting will be on

Sunday, 6th April 2025 at 6:30pm

at Wests Ashfield, 115 Liverpool Road, Ashfield
unless otherwise notified.

Members and visitors are welcome and are encouraged to bring projects for discussion.

Whilst catering for all standards, the problems encountered by beginners in selecting suitable projects and then completing them (along with other problems and pitfalls) will be addressed at this meeting

FORTHCOMING EVENTS IN 2025



EXPO: FESTIVAL OF MODEL SHIP BUILDING 2025

18-19 OCTOBER 2025

This event to be held at Wests Ashfield is open to all members, visitors and other modelling clubs to exhibit maritime and related models. Start preparing your models!



PORT MACQUARIE MODEL BOAT EXPO 2025

We've been advised that the date of the Port Macquarie Model Boat Expo at Port Macquarie Panthers Club will be held on **12-13 July 2025**.

SMSC will have a number of exhibit tables at this Expo, **your SMSC co-ordinator is Tom Wolf <tom@aces.net.au>, please advise him if interested and how many models you will bring.**



CANBERRA EXPO 2025

The Canberra Club will likely hold their Expo in September and we will keep our members updated **when more information is to hand**. For more information please contact: Bob Evans by email <rjeaevas@bigpond.com> or by phone 6226 8957



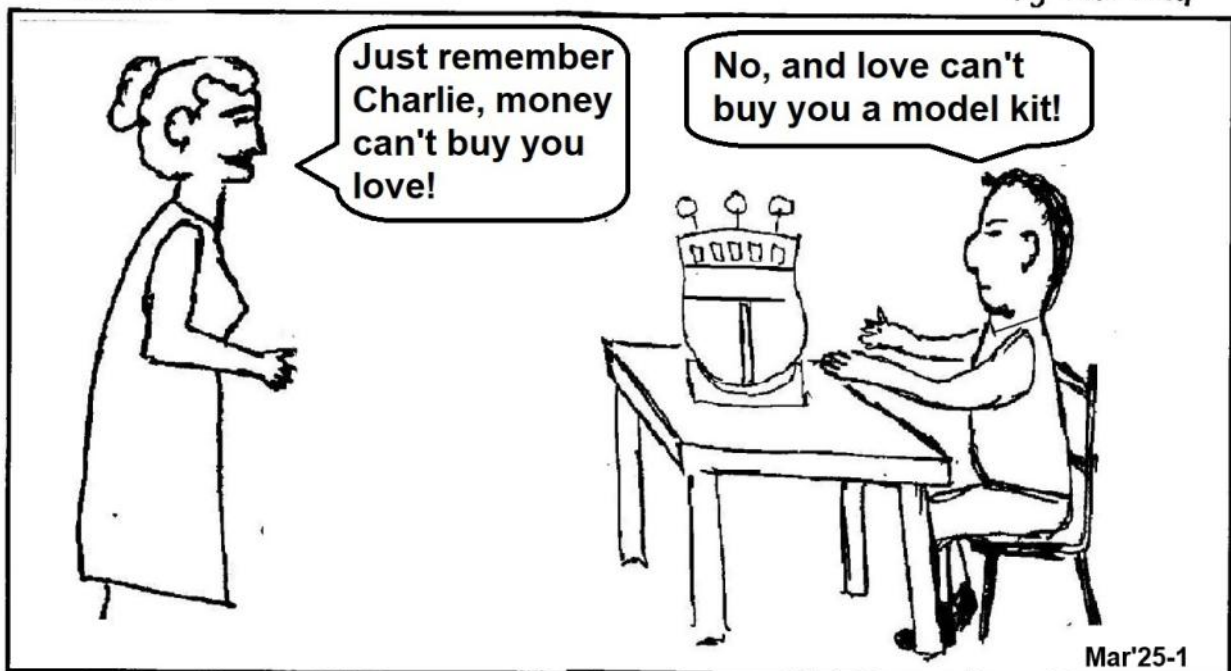
HUBERTUS MODEL BOAT CLUB EVENTS 2025

Our friends at Hubertus Model Boat Club have invited us to attend their events, we'll keep you updated with details of the events when known.

If you become aware of any other events in which our members may wish to participate, please let us know!!

Charlie

by Tom Wolf





FROM THE EDITOR

Newsletter Content Needed!

I'll need more content for future editions. (Always do!)

Take clean photos of your projects (part finished or completed). Any subject is welcome. Just take photos on a clean surface (eg: white towel, posterboard, etc) so people can see your project and not the clutter associated with building it (as in no pets, tools, paint spills, etc just the project). I also need some short and basic write up on what you built. It does not need to be a Pulitzer Prize Entry but just the basics. Basics are: subject, size, type of timber, paints used, plans or design sketches, and any issues encountered in completing your project. BUT no photos or material off the Net that may be subject to copyright!!.

If you have any tips or techniques you'd like to share with other readers, by all means send them to me. The Newsletter is only as good as the materials I receive.

Tom



NRG PHOTO COMPETITION

Here is something for members of SMSC to consider if they are also members of NRG!

The Nautical Research Guild is proud to announce that there will be a Photographic Ship Model Competition in 2025. The last NRG model photo competition was held in 2021.

All files must be submitted on-line. Each entrant will receive a written review of their model. Gold, Silver and Bronze medals will be awarded for First, Second and, Third place models in three categories: Novice, Apprentice, and Master. A Best of Show medal will also be awarded to the best Gold medal winner.

The competition is open to all NRG members in good standing. If you are not currently a member, there's still plenty of time to join.

Entry fee will be US\$30 per model entered. Entries can be submitted starting on Monday June 16, 2025. Submittals must be made before or by Thursday, July 31.

Winners will be announced at the Annual Member's Meeting. Entry details will be made available soon.



If someone says that you have enough model kits, stop talking to them. You don't need that sort of negativity in your life!



SMSC Meeting and S&T

2nd February 2025 at Wests Ashfield

Report and photos by Michael Bennett

This was the first meeting of the year and 11 members attended. After the formalities it was time for S&T, six models were presented.

Tony Merriott is building a model of "**HMS Granado**", a Bomb Vessel of 1741. The kit's instructions were silent on planking procedure, so Tony visited the replica "**HMB Endeavour**", and adopted the planking visible when planking the bluff bow of the model. The lower runs of planking are swept up at the bow to become almost vertical and butt up to the upper horizontal planking. This may seem ungainly, but it works.



Mike Kelly brought two ships-in-bottle models.

One was a diorama in a square shaped bottle featured "**HMAS Bunbury**" and "**HMAS Bendigo**" side by side at a scale

of 1:350 complete with a Sea King helicopter. This was a commission model, and we may not see it again.

The other model was a **Fremantle Class patrol boat** in a decorative light bulb. This novelty item will be very popular when displayed at our upcoming EXPO.



Stan Brown brought the upper decks of the metallic "**RMS Titanic**", (right) the complete model being too difficult (and heavy) to transport. He is having difficulty with the wiring of its interior lighting, and **Ralph Hannaford** offered to help him work it out.



Michael Bennett brought his 1:600 scale model of "**HMT Dunera**" (left), which now has all of its deckhouses complete including the final version of the bridge and charthouse, which are hollow with full glazed individual windows. He can now focus on stanchions, railings lifeboat davits and deck fittings.

Darragh Christie brought two 3D printed versions of the tripod forecast of the first "**HMAS Sydney**", at a scale of approximately 1:80 and 1:90. He created the program for their printing having taught himself basic CAD. The long term project is to model the entire foredeck of the vessel, including the main gun turrets.

To assist at an exhibition of Mosman Maritime History to be held at his local library, he is looking for exhibits, and Jim Malone and Task force 72 were suggested as possible contacts.



The meeting concluded with an enjoyable dinner at which Harry Goeding's wife Bev was a welcome attendee.



AN APOLOGY (with explanation)

by Tom Wolf, some photos by Alan O'Neill

In the February 2025 issue of Chatterbox (issue #100), I reported on **HMS Bellerophon (1785)**, a third rater often referred to as "**Billy Ruffian**". In that report I used a photo (see right) of a figurehead as being that of that vessel.

On receiving the newsletter, **Alan O'Neill**, our Canadian friend of the Model Shipwrights of Niagara Club, wrote:

"I was pleasantly surprised to see the article on HMS Bellerophon... the singular ship I am fascinated by. Interestingly, the figurehead you show was not the original as it was quite ornate and lost to a collision in a storm. The one you show is from the 2nd ship of 1824. All that remains of the replacement figurehead of the first is just the head. I carved a figurehead from the description of the original for my 1:64 scale model and have attached a photo for your use if you wish."

Of course, Alan is quite correct.

HMS Waterloo, a second rater, was built in 1818, but was renamed **HMS Bellerophon** in 1824 and the image of the figurehead that I had illustrated (see top photo) is from that second ship, not the 1785 ship! it is on display at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

There are many reasons why ships are renamed, but I have not found the reason for this renaming. The photos sent by Alan are on the right.

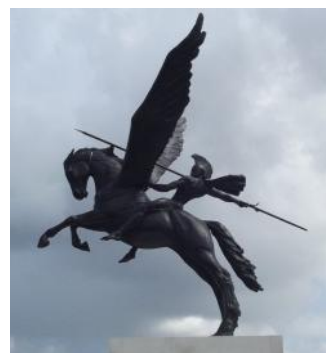
I apologise for the error and thank Alan for bringing the mistake to my attention.

Elsewhere on the internet, in a forum I discovered, Alan discusses the collision he refers to above, I also found a photo of Alan with the remains of the original figurehead.

The collision took place on the 18th of July 1793, SW of the Scilly Isles where HMS **Bellerophon** collided with **HMS Majestic** in gale winds. On his research, all Alan found was the following - <http://figureheads.ukmcs.org.uk/?p=1715>

"Before it was damaged the figurehead represented Bellerophon as a nude figure draped in a red cloak riding Pegasus, his right arm raised, holding a javelin. The horse's wings were spread. All that remains is the helmeted head. The figurehead would have been painted white during its time in service. In 1814 the Navy Board approved more use of gilding and colours for figurehead decoration."

Alan also discusses the design he has adopted as being based on sculptures/statues/stamp as being representative of what the figurehead may have looked like, but observes that he feels that the design would have been crowded around all the standing and running rigging at the bow.





"GRILLO CLASS" JUMPING BOATS

Report by Tom Wolf

In January 2025, I participated in a wonderful presentation and discussion led by **Dan Cicero** of the Nautical Research and Model Ship Society. Dan prepared a very interesting program about the "**Grillo Class**" **Jumping Boats** of WWI.

The Austro-Hungarian fleet was holed up in their base at Pola (now Pula, Croatia) but was a very substantial threat if it ever broke out into the Mediterranean. Italy wanted to attack the fleet but the defences of the base were too strong for them.

Part of the defence was made up of booms made of timber logs laid across a channel, it was strongly guarded with lookouts placed in strategically important places.

The Italian Navy came up with a very innovative idea, having seen the capacity of tanks with their continuous tracks to bridge gaps and climb over uneven land.

The **Grillo class** was a class of torpedo-armed motorboats in service with the *Regia Marina* (the Royal Navy of Italy) during WWI. The notable feature of these vessels was that each was equipped with a pair of spiked continuous tracks, intended to allow them to climb over harbour booms and attack enemy shipping at anchor. The spiked tracks were driven by electric motors to make their movements silent (but the noise of the tracks climbing over timber booms could not be hidden). In 1918, two attempts to use them to penetrate Austro-Hungarian harbour defences both ended in failure.

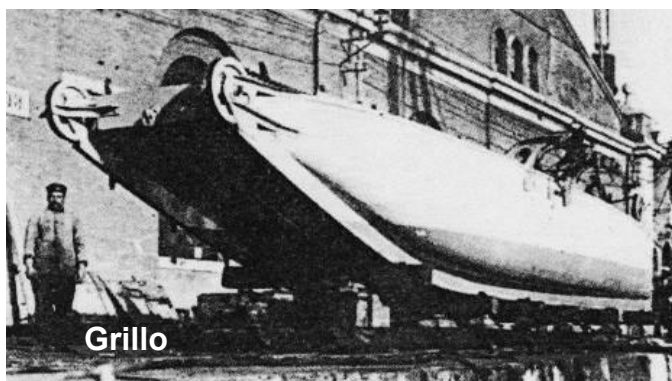
Originally designated **Barchino Saltatore** ("Jumping Boats") and named after jumping insects., four examples were built and were all commissioned in March 1918. They were named after various jumping insects ("**Cavaletta**" – Grasshopper, "**Grillo**" – Cricket, "**Locusta**" – Locust, and "**Pulce**" – Flea). The craft were also classified as *tank marino* (sea tanks) and *MAS speciale* by the technicians in charge of the project while being built at Venice's shipyard.

The first attack by these vessels was on 13 April 1918. Two boats, "**Cavaletta**" and "**Pulce**" were towed into position outside the harbour, but the length of time required by the slow electric motors had been misjudged and neither vessel had reached the boom by day-break, forcing their crews to scuttle the craft rather than let them be captured.

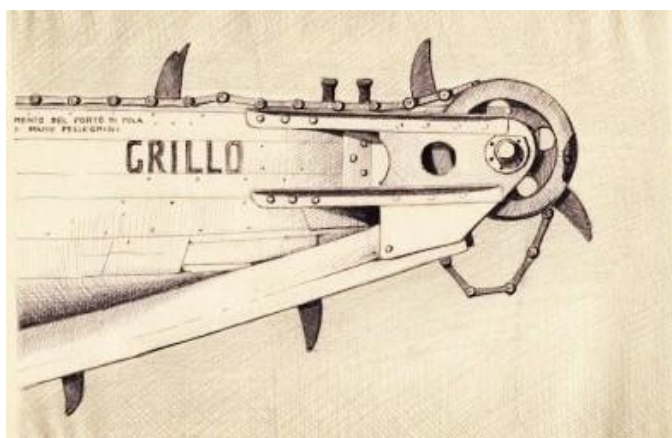
On the night of 13 May 1918, "**Grillo**" attempted to enter the harbour; however, while the engine driving the tracks was silent, the loud clattering noise made by the tracks while crossing the wooden boom alerted the defenders. "**Grillo**" had crossed four of the five booms before coming under heavy coastal artillery fire, and she either sank¹ or was scuttled but recovered by the Austro-Hungarians.

The fourth vessel, "**Locusta**" was not used in the attack and was scrapped after the war in 1920.

Despite the failure of the Italian effort, for reasons best known to them, the Austro-Hungarians began work on two copies of the recovered wreck of "**Grillo**" but didn't finish by the time the war ended.



Grillo



Austrian copy



"HMAS BUNBURY" IN A BOTTLE

By Mike Kelly

Named for the Western Australian city of that name, *HMAS Bunbury* (FCPB 217) was a **Fremantle-class patrol boat** of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN).

These patrol boats, designed by British shipbuilder Brooke Marine and constructed in Australia by NQEA, operated from 1979 to 2007 as coastal patrol vessels.

I was asked if I could put a model of *HMAS Bunbury* in a bottle, I agreed conditional on obtaining plans, but as an alternative, with the assistance of David Muir (from ANMM and a friend of SMSC), I purchased two 3D models of the ship which took a couple of months to arrive.

In the meantime I was able obtain plans and some Admiralty photos of the ship, so the 3D printed models were used only for reference. I photocopied the plans and cut out, stuck them to a chunk of wood to shape the hull and upper deck.

The *Bunbury* model is scratch built from wood, and the mast and aerials are made from different gauges of brass rod.

The four flags on the *Bunbury* are the flags taken from actual photos of the ship. They bear the pennant number 217.

The model is not built to scale, rather to fit into the bottle at no particular scale. It was fully built outside the bottle and the pieces were joined bit by bit inside the bottle. The photos illustrate the process.

The other ship in the bottle adjacent to *Bunbury* is smaller, even though it also represents the same class patrol boat (again, not to scale), is one of the 3D print ships I obtained.

I called it *Bendigo* for the sake of giving it a name as it bears the pennant number 211 on the bow, BUT the three flags on that model are not that ship's flags but rather spell **MJK**, for my name: **Michael John Kelly**.





SMSC has, over the years, developed a relationship with other Clubs from all over the world. In particular, we receive newsletters from the IPMS Orange County (USA) and by arrangement and their kind permission acknowledging the source and the author, we reprint the following article from their January 2025 issue (Volume 33, No.1).

JAPANESE IRON-CLAD SHIP

By Bob Penikas

"Iron-clad ships" are large Ataka-sen warships covered in iron plates.

This model is a 1/150 scale reproduction of the "Atake Maru" of the Kuki Navy, which repelled the Mori Navy in the "Ishiyama Battle," a showdown between Oda Nobunaga and Ishiyama Honganji. It is said that this ship was armoured with iron plates



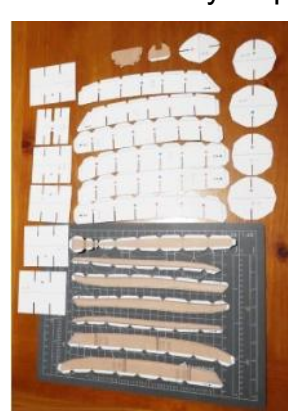
about 3 mm thick to protect against the "horokuhiya" (a grenade used at the time), a specialty of the Murakami Navy.

Oda Nobunaga's Armored Ship Paper Model In 1/150 Scale by Paper Model Studio.; may be downloaded free from: https://papermodel.jp/iron_reinforced-index.html

Created by Japanese designer and modeler Masahiro Kushima from the Paper Model Studio website, it is a 1/150 scale paper version of Oda Nobunaga's Ironclad Ship.

Mr. Kushima recommends printing the templates on A4 or Letter-sized sheets with a paper weight between 160 and 180 grams for the best results. The entire model occupies ten printed sheets, and the instructions are detailed and filled with photos of each assembly step.

I printed mine on 110 card stock. Oda Nobunaga's ironclad ship was one of the earliest attempts to create a warship protected by an iron "armour" in Japanese history, an innovative feat for the 16th century.



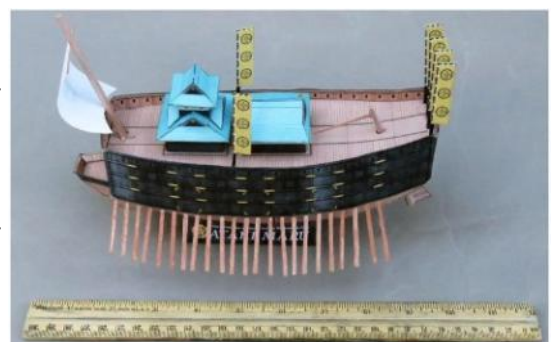
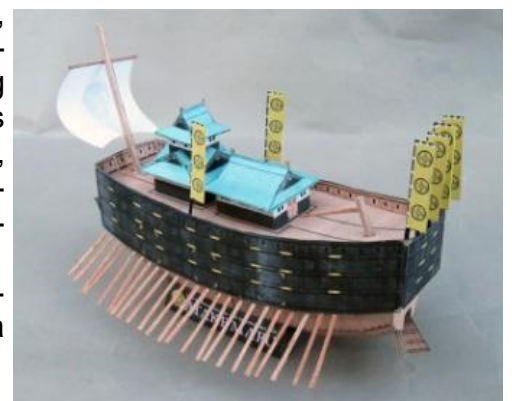
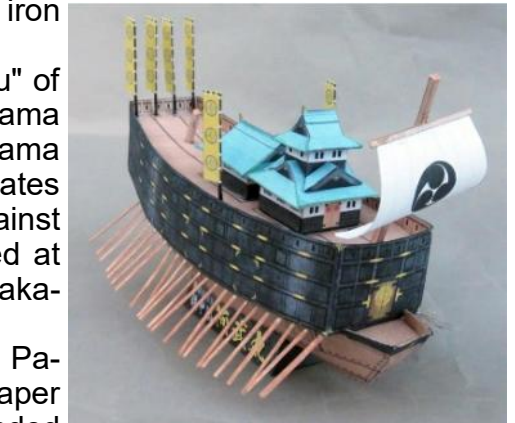
In 1576, the daimyo Oda Nobunaga, one of the most powerful figures in Japan during the Sengoku period (1467-1615), developed these armoured ships called atake-bune. The idea was to equip them with iron plates for protection against arrows and bullets,

which had been introduced by the Portuguese in 1543 and were becoming common in Japan. These ironclad ships were large, reinforced wooden vessels, and Nobunaga used them in naval battles to combat rival clans, such as the Mori clan, which possessed a powerful maritime fleet.

In particular, these ships played an important role in the battle against the Mori clan during the Siege of Ishiyama Hongan-ji, which lasted from 1570 to 1580.



Although they were not entirely bulletproof, these ships offered better protection for troops, providing a strategic advantage that helped Nobunaga consolidate his power in the region.





NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM OF IRELAND

Report and photos by Mike Kelly

Ireland's National Maritime Museum is housed in **Dun Laoghaire's** 180-year-old **Mariner's Church**, one of only a few purpose-built places of worship for sailors. It is directly opposite the new DLR Lexicon library and easily accessible by DART suburban train which runs every 15 minutes from Dublin rail station.

When you get out of the station and with your back to the sea looking into the town head for the church on the left.



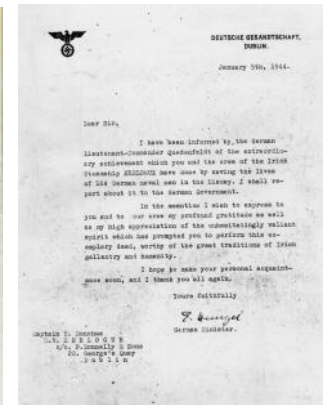
The museum is what you would expect of a maritime museum, full of marine artefacts, models and stories of Ireland's maritime history. Like so many other museums, the museum is manned by volunteers.



One story told is of the coaster "**MV Kerlogue**" which, on 29th December 1943, rescued 168 German sailors from a large destroyer and two torpedo boats. The survivors were taken to Cork where they were treated in Cork Hospital and later interned at the Curragh Camp.

Two letters of appreciation are displayed, one to the Matron of the

hospital and one to the Captain of the "Kerlogue". The rescue of the German sailors was only one of the incidents involving that small coaster. There is an exhibition dedicated to the "Kerlogue" with an interactive display, the letters and a nice model decked out in neutral colours.



Public Domain

Among maritime legends that Ireland claims as "their own" are **John Barry, William Brown and John Holland**.

Admiral John Barry was acclaimed along with John Paul Jones and John Adams as the father of U.S. Navy. He was born in 1745 in Ballysampson, Tacumshane, County Wexford. After the Revolutionary War, he became the first commissioned American naval officer, at the rank of commodore, receiving his commission from President George Washington in 1797.

cont. p.10

cont. from p.9

Admiral William Brown was one of the most important Irish military commanders in the Argentine War of Independence from Spain and in the war against Brazil, He was the founder of the Argentine navy, and was born in Foxford, Co. Mayo on June 22, 1777.



Public Domain



Public Domain



HOLLAND SUBMARINE No. VI
 LATER U.S.S. HOLLAND (SS-1)

Launched 1897 at Elizabeth, New Jersey
 Length 53ft 3ins. Breadth 10ft 3ins. Height 11ft 6ins.
 Tons 65 Power Otto Gas Engine, 45hp Electric, 75hp
 Armaments Originally two pneumatic guns One torpedo tube three torpedoes and six projectiles

John Holland formed the Holland Torpedo Boat Co as a private venture to build the *HOLLAND No VI* free from the official interference which was delaying construction of No V the *PLUNGER*
 After a long period of testing *HOLLAND VI* was purchased by the U.S. Government for \$150,000 and commissioned on Oct.12th 1900 as *USS HOLLAND*

John Philip Holland (born February 24, 1841, Liscannor, County Clare, Ireland—died August 12, 1914, Newark, New Jersey, U.S.) was an Irish inventor who designed and built the first submarine accepted into the US Navy.

The museum has a nice collection of **ships in bottles** (right)



Model of the "**Royal George 1833**" (left)



Something for the miniaturist of the club, unfortunately it was not titled. (right)



Tucked away neatly under the stairs is a complete ships radio room. Radio officer, **Arthur Jeffries**, lost his life on **RMS Leinster**, on October 1918, transmitting SOS. Being from the parish of Dun Laoghaire, his memorial is in the church, now the Museum, on the wall on the side of the altar.

Being out of the city the museum is a bit remote and does not get the publicity it deserves nor the recognition for the volunteers who do a great job and are friendly and informative.



CAPTAIN FREDERIC "JOHNNIE" WALKER - HERO OF WW2

Mainly from Wikipedia

Captain Frederic John Walker, CB, DSO & Three Bars (3 June 1896 – 9 July 1944), known popularly as "Johnnie Walker" (for the brand of whisky), was a British Royal Navy officer noted for his exploits during WW2. Walker was the most successful anti-submarine warfare commander during the Battle of the Atlantic.

He joined the Royal Navy as a cadet in 1909 (at age 13) and was educated at the **Royal Naval Colleges at Osborne and Dartmouth**. First serving on the battleship "**HMS Ajax**" as a midshipman, went on to join the destroyer "**HMS Mermaid**" in 1916 and then as a sub-lieutenant "**HMS Sarpedon**" in 1917. Following the end of WW1, he joined the Queen Elizabeth-class battleship "**HMS Valiant**".

When WW2 began in 1939, Walker's career seemed at an end. Still ranked as a Commander, he had been passed over for promotion to Captain despite expertise in antisubmarine warfare that was doubtless indispensable in the Battle of the Atlantic.

In 1940 he was appointed as Operations Staff Officer to **Vice-Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay**, and in that role took a pivotal role in Operation Dynamo, the evacuation of Dunkirk. He was "**Mentioned in Despatches**" for his work during this operation.

Finally, Walker received his own command in October 1941, taking control of the 36th Escort Group, commanding from the Bittern-class sloop "**Stork**". The escort group comprised two sloops ("**Stork**" and "**Deptford**") and six corvettes and was based in Liverpool, the home of the Western Approaches Command. Initially his Group was primarily used to escort convoys to and from Gibraltar.

Walker's first chance to test his innovative methods against the U-boat menace came in December when his group escorted **Convoy HG 76** (32 ships). During the journey five U-boats were sunk, four by Walker's group, including **U-574** which was depth-charged and rammed by Walker's own ship on 19 December.

The Royal Navy's loss in the Battle for **HG 76** was one escort carrier "**Audacity**" (formerly the German vessel "**Hannover**"; one destroyer, "**Stanley**", and two merchant ships. This is sometimes described as the first true Allied convoy victory in the Battle of the Atlantic.

He was given the **Distinguished Service Order** (DSO) on 6 January 1942, "For daring, skill and determination while escorting to this country a valuable Convoy in the face of relentless attacks from the Enemy, during which three of their Submarines were sunk and two aircraft destroyed by our forces". Walker's group succeeded in sinking at least three more U-boats during his tenure as commander of the 36th Group, and was awarded the first **Bar to his DSO** in July 1942.

During 1942, Walker left the 36th Group and became Captain (D) Liverpool, which granted him some time to recuperate. He finally returned to a ship command when he became Commander of the 2nd Support Group in 1943, which consisted of six sloops. Walker led from "**Starling**", a newly commissioned Black Swan-class sloop. The group was intended to act as reinforcement to convoys under attack, with the capacity to actively hunt and destroy U-boats, rather than be restricted to escorting convoys. Walker had suggested the innovative idea to the Commander-in-Chief Western Approaches Command, **Sir Max Horton**. The combination of an active hunting group and a charismatic, determined, and innovative anti-submarine specialist such as Walker proved to be a potent force. One eccentric aspect of his charismatic nature was the playing of the tune "**A Hunting We Will Go**" over the ship's Tannoy when returning to its base.



cont. p.12

cont. from p.10

In June 1943 Walker's own ship "**Starling**" was responsible for the sinking of two U-boats. The first, **U-202**, was destroyed on 2 June by depth charges and gunfire, and the other, **U-119**, on 24 June by depth charges and ramming. Another U-boat, **U-449**, was sunk by his group on the same day. On 30 July, Walker's group encountered a group of three U-boats on the surface (two were vital type XIV replenishment boats known as "Milk Cows") while in the Bay of Biscay. He signalled the "General Chase" to his group and fired at them, causing damage that prevented them from diving. Two of the submarines, **U-462**, a Type XIV, and **U-504**, a Type IX/C40, were then sunk by Walker's group, and the second Type XIV, **U-461**, by an Australian Short Sunderland flying boat. Upon his return to Liverpool, Walker was informed that his son, **Timothy Walker**, had been killed when the submarine "**HMS Parthian**" was lost in the Mediterranean in early August 1943.

On 14 September 1943, Walker was appointed as a **Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB)** "for leadership and daring in command of HMS Starling in successful actions against Enemy submarines in the Atlantic."

On 6 November 1943 Walker's group sank **U-226** and **U-842**. In early 1944 Walker's group displayed its efficiency against U-boats by sinking six in one patrol. On 31 January 1944 Walker's group gained its first kill of the year when it sank **U-592**. On 9 February his group sank **U-762**, **U-238**, and **U-734** in one action, then sank **U-424** on 11 February, and **U-264** on 19 February. On 20 February 1944 one ship of Walker's group, "**HMS Woodpecker**", was torpedoed and sank seven days later while being towed home. All of her crewmen were saved. They returned to their base at Liverpool to the thrilled jubilation of the city's inhabitants and the Admiralty. The First Lord of the Admiralty was present to greet Walker and his ships. Walker was promoted to Captain and awarded a **second bar to his DSO**.

In March 1944 Walker's group provided part of the 32-ship escort force for an Arctic convoy of 49 merchant ships, codenamed **Convoy JW 58**. The powerful escort also included two escort carriers and two flotillas of fleet destroyers, as well as the U.S. Navy light cruiser "**USS Milwaukee**" which was on its way to Russia as part of the Lend-Lease programme. The whole force was commanded by **Rear-Admiral Frederick Dalrymple-Hamilton** on the cruiser "**HMS Diadem**", who initially tried to direct Walker's ships into a tight screen, but soon allowed him to independently command the two support groups from Western Command. Walker's own ship "**Starling**" sank the **U-961** on 29 March, the group's first day with the convoy, and subsequently the ships under his command sank **U-360** and **U-288** before they arrived at Murmansk without the loss of a single ship. The groups returned with the 36-ship **Convoy RA 58**, but despite intelligence of 16 U-boats in their path, no contacts were made due to adverse conditions affecting the ASDIC (sonar).

Walker's last duty was protecting the fleet from U-boats during the **Normandy landings**, the immense Allied invasion of France. This he did successfully for two weeks; no U-boats managed to get past Walker and his vessels, and many U-boats were sunk or damaged in the process. During this concerted effort Walker's dedication to his tasks was tremendous; he took no respite from his duties, which ultimately contributed to his death. He was awarded the **third bar on his DSO** on 13 June 1944, and was again **Mentioned in Despatches** on 20 June 1944.

One highly successful tactic employed by Walker was the creeping attack, in which two ships would work together to keep contact with a U-boat while attacking. Another approach was the barrage attack, in which three or more sloops in line launched depth charges to saturate the area where the submarine might be. Walker was also adept at the 'hold down': after making contact with a U-boat, keeping it at a depth below depth charge detonation range until it was forced to surface and become susceptible to attack by running out of air or battery power.

Walker was the most successful anti-submarine commander of the Second World War, being credited with 20 U boats destroyed, from various ships.

Walker suffered a cerebral thrombosis on 7 July 1944, and he died two days later at the Naval Hospital at Seaforth, Merseyside, at the age of 48. His death was attributed to overwork and exhaustion.

His funeral service, attended by about 1,000 people, took place at the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral with full naval honours. A naval procession followed by a funeral at sea aboard the destroyer "**HMS Hesperus**".

A final honour was a **posthumous Mention in Despatches** on 1 August 1944.



ROYAL NAVY TORPEDO BOAT No.80 (1887-1920)

Report by Tom Wolf

The subject of this Torpedo Boat arose during a presentation by **John Greenwood** at the meeting of the **Northern Chapter of SMSC** in February 2024. John presented the meeting with working plans that will enable him to make a model of TB.80

TB.80 was built by Yarrow and Company Shipbuilding Works, Isle of Dogs in May 1887, it was a **1st Class Torpedo Boat** of 135ft length by 14ft beam, speed on trials was just under 23 knots

After a lengthy service (including WW1), it was sold for scrap 22 October 1921.

The **1st Class Torpedo Boat** was a type of steam-powered torpedo boat built for or acquired by the British Navy between 1876 (the date on which the Admiralty ordered the first torpedo boat to carry the self-propelled Whitehead torpedo) and 1905.

After 1905, later steam-turbine-powered torpedo boats from 1906 to 1908 (**2nd Class Torpedo Boats**) were originally rated as coastal destroyers and are referred to as **Cricket-Class Destroyers**, while torpedo boats introduced later still during WW1, powered by internal combustion engines, were called **Motor Torpedo Boats**.

Ever since the first use of spar torpedoes in the American Civil War and the Russo-Turkish War (1877–78), the world's sea powers continued to refine the small torpedo craft concept to employ the new automobile torpedoes (**Whitehead torpedoes**) that could continue the legacy of small and relatively inexpensive vessels able to challenge much larger vessels. The Royal Navy purchased 1st and 2nd class torpedo boats for offensive and defensive combat roles, respectively.

1st class torpedo boats were designed for independent inshore operations. They were small, but large enough to patrol coastal waters and enjoy some limited endurance beyond their supporting port or tender. Nevertheless, they were deployed overseas, notably to the Mediterranean, and eventually worldwide.



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WHITEHEAD TORPEDO

The **Whitehead torpedo** was the first self-propelled or "locomotive" torpedo ever developed.

Many inventors had tried to achieve a working self-propelled torpedo, but **Robert Whitehead** (1823–1905) and **Giovanni Luppis** (1813–75) would make the most promising advances, perfecting it in 1866. The former was an English marine engineer, and the latter had been an officer in the Austro-Hungarian Navy.

After moving to Trieste, Whitehead worked to refine and adapt marine steam engines. In 1856, Whitehead became the chief engineer of a company that built engines for Austro-Hungarian Navy warships in the empire's Adriatic coastal town of Fiume

(present-day Rijeka, Croatia).

The 1866 (first successful) version was driven by a three-cylinder compressed-air engine invented, designed, and made by **Peter Brotherhood**.

Many naval services procured the Whitehead torpedo during the 1870s, including the US Navy. This early torpedo proved itself in combat during the Russo-Turkish War when, on 16 January 1878, the Ottoman ship **Intibah** was sunk by Russian torpedo boats carrying Whiteheads. though this story has been said to be disputed.



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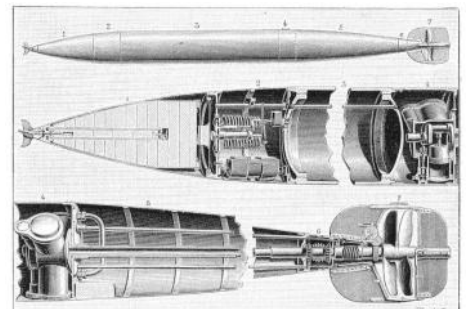


Fig. 1. — Torpille autoguidée Whitehead. — 1. Mousin. — 2. Chaudière à vapeur. — 3. Réservoir d'air comprimé. — 4. Chambre des moteurs à air comprimé. — 5. Distributeur ou chambre de distribution. — 6. Mécanisme de manœuvre de rotation de la torpille. — 7. Hélice et gouvernail.

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THE HALIFAX EXPLOSION OF 1917

The outbreak of WW1 brought the Canadian coastal city of Halifax back to prominence. As the Royal Canadian Navy had virtually no seaworthy ships of its own, the Royal Navy assumed responsibility for maintaining Atlantic trade routes by re-adopting Halifax as its North American base of operations.

German Imperial Navy U-boat operations meant that trans-Atlantic ships had to sail in convoy and Halifax became the convening point for these convoys.

Additionally, as a security measure, all neutral ships bound for ports in North America were required to report to Halifax for inspection.

On **December 6, 1917**, the Norwegian ship **SS Imo** collided with the French munitions ship **SS Mont Blanc** which was loaded with supplies for the war in Europe, including tons of TNT.

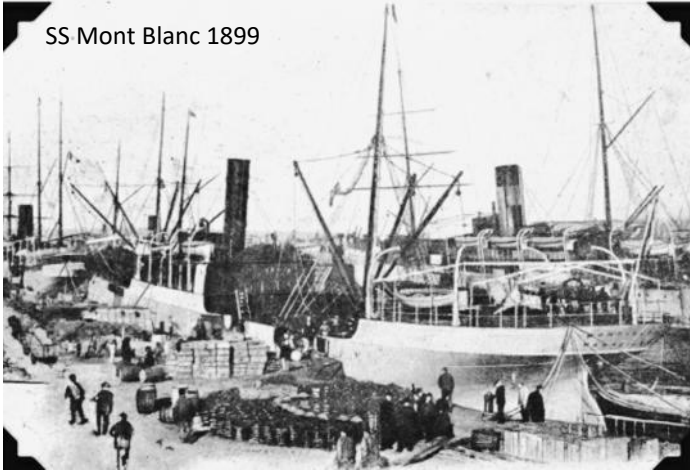
The blast was the largest human-made explosion up to that time.

More than 1,600 persons (the exact number is not known) died, and a further 9,000 were injured (of whom 300 died later).

SS Imo 1915



SS Mont Blanc 1899



Imo was unladen, but **Mont Blanc** was carrying her cargo from New York via Halifax to Bordeaux, France, and the impact damaged benzol barrels stored on her deck causing vapours to leak which were ignited by sparks from the collision.

After about 20 minutes, **Mont Blanc** exploded releasing the equivalent energy of nearly 3 kilotons of TNT.

The smoke cloud after the explosion

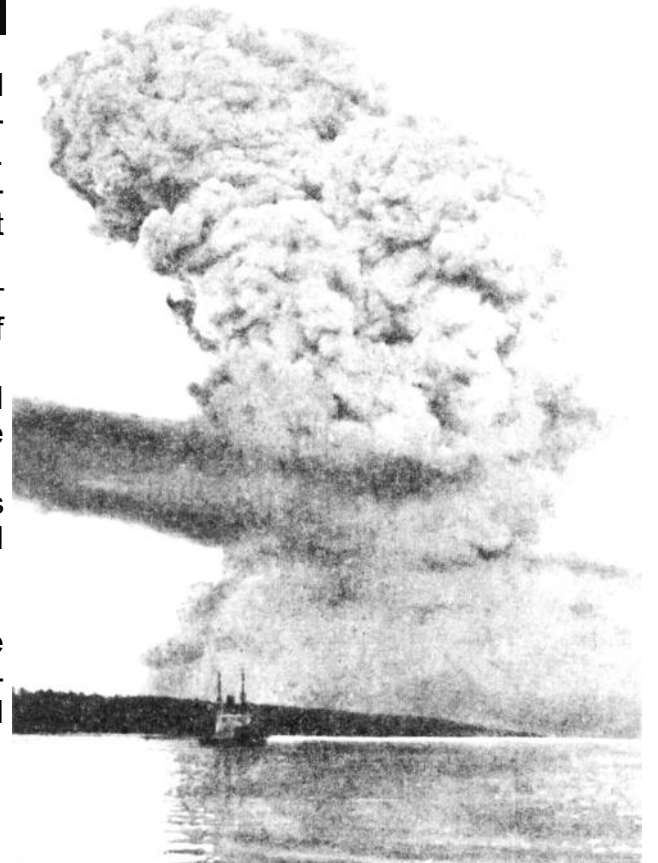
She was completely blown apart and the powerful blast wave radiated away from the explosion initially at more than 1,000 metres per second. Temperatures of 5,000 °C and pressures of thousands of atmospheres accompanied the moment of detonation.

A cloud of white smoke rose, and the harbour floor was momentarily exposed by the volume of water that was displaced.

A tsunami was formed by water surging in to fill the void, rising as high as 18 metres above the high water mark.

Nearly all structures within an 800-metre radius were obliterated and the ensuing tsunami caused by the explosion destroyed much of the city.

Postscript: **Imo** was carried onto the shore by the tsunami, and although her superstructure was severely damaged by the blast, she was repaired and returned to service in 1918





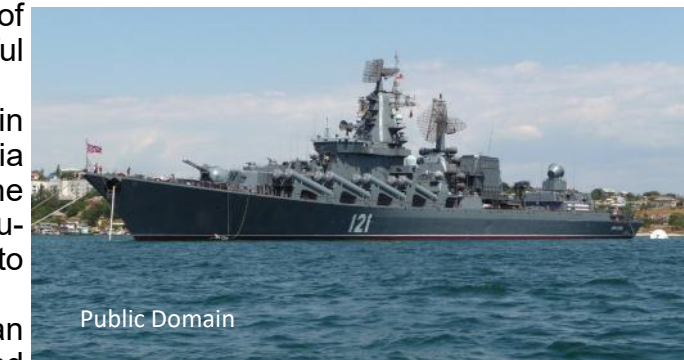
RUSSIAN CRUISER "MOSKVA"

Moskva was a guided missile cruiser of the Russian Navy. Commissioned in 1983 in the Soviet Navy as **Slava (Glory)**, she was renamed in 1995 after the city of Moscow and recommissioned into the Russian Navy in 2000.

With a crew of 510, **Moskva** was the flagship of the **Black Sea Fleet** and the most powerful warship in the region.

The cruiser was deployed during conflicts in Georgia (2008), Crimea (2014), and Syria (2015). She led the naval assault during the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, from February 2022 when the cruiser left Sevastopol to participate in the attack.

The ship was later used against the Ukrainian armed forces during the attack on Snake Island (in the Black Sea), when **Moskva** famously hailed the island's garrison over the radio and demanded its surrender, and was told "Russian warship, go f--k yourself". After this, all contact was lost with Snake Island, and the thirteen-member Ukrainian garrison was captured.



In the late hours of 13 April 2022 it was reported that Ukrainian forces had hit **Moskva** with two **R-360 Neptune anti-ship missiles** and set her on fire. A radar image showed the ship was south of Odesa around and sank before 03:00, 14 April.

The Russian Ministry of Defence said that a fire caused a munitions explosion, and the ship sank in stormy seas while being towed to port, Russian authorities have not admitted that the sinking was caused by enemy action. It is however generally accepted that the fire was caused by the ship being hit by missiles.

Moskva is the largest Russian warship to be sunk since WW2, when German aircraft bombed the Soviet battleship **Marat**, and the first loss of a Russian flagship in wartime since the 1905 sinking of the battleship **Knyaz Suvorov** during the **Battle of Tsushima** in the **Russo-Japanese War**.

Charlie

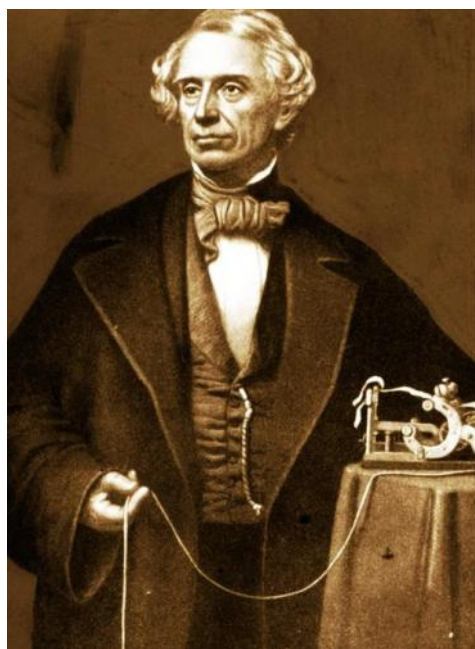
by Tom Wolf





SAMUEL MORSE

Samuel Finley Breese Morse (April 27, 1791 – April 2, 1872) was born into a devout Calvinist family and went to Yale College to study religious philosophy, mathematics, and science.



While at Yale, he attended lectures on electricity but supported himself by painting. In 1810, he graduated from Yale with Phi Beta Kappa honors. After having established his reputation as a portrait painter, and he went to England in 1811 to further his studies

While returning by ship from Europe in 1832, Morse encountered Charles Thomas Jackson of Boston, a man who was well schooled in electromagnetism. Witnessing various experiments with Jackson's electromagnet, Morse developed the concept of a single-wire telegraph and patented it.

Another pair of inventors, William Cooke and Professor Charles Wheatstone, patented the electrical telegraph using multiple wires in May 1837, and within a short time had provided the Great Western Railway with a 13-mile (21 km) stretch of telegraph, so they are credited with the first telegraph.

However, within a few years, Cooke and Wheatstone's multiple-wire signalling method would be overtaken by Morse's cheaper single wire method, as well as the signalling code that Morse developed.

In time, the Morse code that he developed in 1837 would become the primary language of telegraphy in the world. It is still the standard for rhythmic transmission of data, the commercial use of telegraphy.

On January 11, 1838, Morse together with his partner Alfred Vail, jointly made the first public demonstration of their telegraph system at the Speedwell Iron Works in Morristown, New Jersey.

Without a repeater, Morse devised a system of electromagnetic relays. This was the key innovation, as it freed the technology from being limited by distance in sending messages.

Much litigation followed with claims for some or all of Morse's patents being disputed. In the USA, Morse held his telegraph patent for many years, but it was both ignored and contested.

In 1853, The Telegraph Patent case – **O'Reilly v. Morse** came before the US Supreme Court where, after very lengthy investigation, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney ruled that Morse had been the first to combine the battery, electromagnetism, the electromagnet, and the correct battery configuration into a workable practical telegraph.

However, the Supreme Court did not accept all of Morse's claims. The Court held that Morse could properly claim a patent monopoly on the system or process of transmitting signals at any distance by means of the repeater circuitry indicated above, but he could not properly claim a monopoly over any and all uses of electromagnetic force to transmit signals.

In spite of this clear ruling, Morse still received no official recognition from the United States government.

However, he did however receive recognition in Europe.

In 1858 he was awarded the sum of 400,000 French francs (equivalent to about US\$80,000 at the time) by the governments of France, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Piedmont, Russia, Sweden, Tuscany, and the Ottoman Empire, each of which contributed a share according to the number of Morse instruments in use in each country.

