



January Report



(above) "The amazing fleet of Nichlos Katsuhiro's small ships. The build and finish of these tinny warships are astounding and we are glad Nichlos can attend our meetings, he proves that bigger is not always better

January, 2025 NBMMG meeting

Meeting was called to order with the following members present: Jim Gower, Jim Brode, Andy Fulcher, Steve Michel, Denny Cole, Dave and Debra Mahoney, Roger Brown, Denny Cole, Nicholas Katsuhiro, and Mike Hooper.

New Business consisted of: The Hobby Chest Hobby shop in Jacksonville, N.C. is changing ownership as Daniel is retiring. His shop is the only remaining Hobby Shop here in Eastern N.C. Fayetteville, N.C. (which may be considered a eastern location is 2 hours away from the New Bern area and remains in business.

We are contacting the new owners to ascertain as to what their mode of business will be, such as continuing a full inventory of kits and accessories along with the war game room which is a part of the shop. More later in a email announcement.

We were informed by Steve Michel, that the hobby room in the Beaufort Boat Building Shop

has been taken over by the Maritime Museum for storage as the main building is undergoing extensive upgrades to the Heating/Air/Humidity systems in the building. Fortunately, the room will be closed up to the first week in February. (Hopefully!!)

Steve Michel also brought in a box of plans of various ships and are free for the taking. Jim Gower also had a box of hand tools that he has acquired from other builders who have now passed away or given up the hobby, and are free for the taking. Plans and tools not taken will go to the model room in Beaufort for the modelers to use or take home with them.

Special thanks to Debra Mahoney for the homemade cookies that were a hit with everyone!

For Show and Tell:

Roger Brown presented his ongoing project of the Toulonnaise, a French frigate of 1823 at a

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scale of 1/75. Roger acquired this model from Denny Cole, which belonged to his father from the 1980's. Roger asked for advice on constructing the transom and Jim Brode and Mike Hooper gave excellent advice along with other members how the pieces should fit. Roger also is using his workmate stand as donated by Jim Gower some months back.

Mike Hooper presented his smart looking wooden runabout speed boat that he is building from scratch. The members voted for him to keep the seats in his runabout white in lieu of painting a different color. Note the windshield was a perfect fit, being cut from clear plastic containers.

Mike's second presentation was a box he has had for several years that had bone carvings that would be assembled into a small boat. These minute pieces had remarkable detail and Mike stated that prisoners had made the box and pieces. For some of our readers, Mike came from the Island of Bermuda, so the origin and date of the box and pieces should be an interesting follow up story in the future.

Nichlos Katsuhiro (cover photo) does remarkable miniatures of warships which are less than 2 inches in length. Nick presented several Brit-

(above) Mike Hooper's beautiful runabout is nearing completion, looks like only thing needed are USCG safety gear. In this pic you can see the box with bone pieces. The wooden hull is in the foreground and the bone pieces are the fittings.

(bottom) Roger Brown is happily making progress with his French Frigate "Toulonnaise". One might wonder if this is the "French Frigate" mention in Gilbert and Sullivan's humorous mention.



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ish warships with camouflaged painting. His aircraft carrier along with planes for the flight deck is a remarkable feat, and his brief description of how he made the planes and painted these was remarkable as well. Nicholas is our newest member and is graduating from High School shortly. This may explain his ability to build on such a small scale.

I also received this email and attached pictures from Jude Brown, who was not able to attend our meeting this month.

“Jim,
Attached are pictures of an ornament I made for Christmas gifts. Based on the Lake Erie Mailboat design and build process, just smaller. Took a full week working every day to build, paint and rig. Some details skipped as it was just too small as I started too late to meet Christmas date. I may be able to make it Saturday but no longer have the ornaments to show anyone. About 4 inches in length.
Jude”

*editor's notes:
The four photos have no captions but are shown here because these little things are so darned cute they have to be seen.*





I am going to spin you a tale dating back to the Great War about a British ship and a German ship and this tale is so strange that you will find the story hard to believe. But then I'll go further and tell you the rest of the story which is unbelievable enough that you will accuse me of too much Scotch.



RMS Carmania in happier times.

But that is exactly what I AM going to tell you and it is a fascinating bit of nautical lore. But first, a bit of background.

Before the (so called), Great War both the Royal Navy and the High Seas Fleet entered into agreements with various shipping lines. Both navies offered to subsidize new builds of "high speed" passenger liners provided that in the unlikely event of a naval war, (Don't worry, old boy, it would never come to that.), the respective navies could appropriate those ships for patrol and/or commerce raiding. Among other changes this involved reinforcing parts of the ships' structure to accept armament and provisions for a naval crew to man them.

So, of course, eventually the war did break out and also, of course, the Admiralties did come a-calling.

On the British side the story concerns the RMS Carmania, a 19,566 GRT, 20 knot luxury liner built for the Cunard line. She was launched in 1905 and served the Liverpool to New York service.

In August of 1914, after the outbreak of The Great War, Carmania was converted into an armed merchant cruiser, fitted out with eight 4.7 inch naval guns. She was re-commissioned as HMS Carmania, with the number M 55.

Not too terribly far away similar stories were being played out by other navies and here is where the story takes a decidedly strange twist. The passenger liner SS Cap Trafalgar was built at the AG Vulcan Shipyard on

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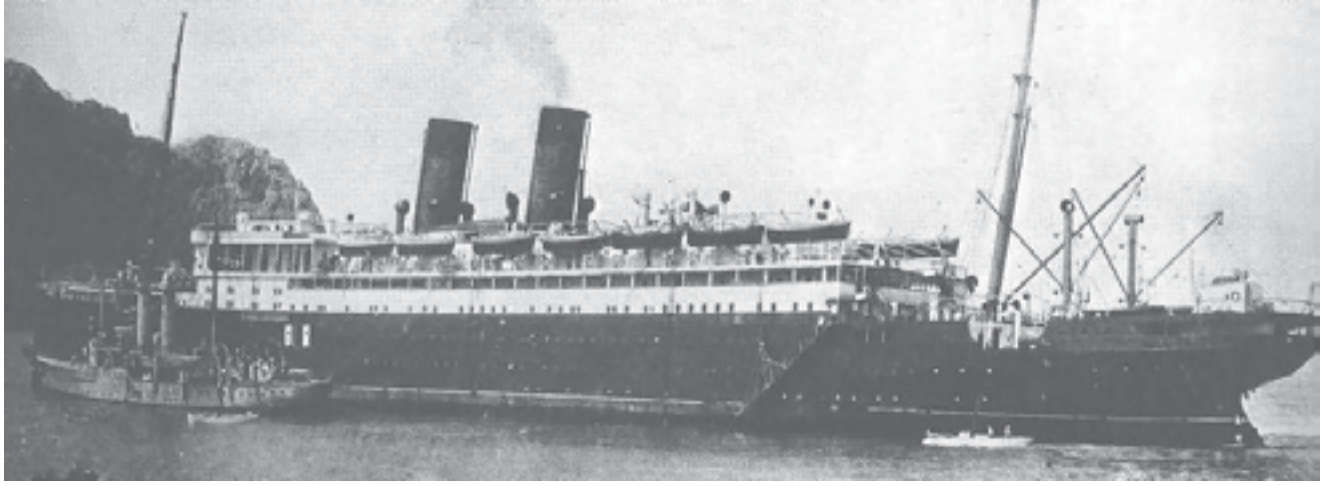
SEA HUNT

by Alan Welch



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the Elbe River in Hamburg, Germany. She was commissioned for the Hamburg-South America Line for their service between Germany and the River Plate (you who are familiar with naval warfare history will no doubt recognize that name from a later, much more highly publicized naval confrontation).

(above) SMS Cap Trafalgar alongside SMS Eber as she takes on the tools of war and additional crew.

Slightly smaller and slower than Carmania at 18,710 GRT and 17 knots, she was still a fine addition to Germany's merchant fleet and, in time of war, (Mach dir keine Sorgen, alter Junge, so weit würde es nie kommen.), a valuable auxiliary addition to the High Seas Fleet. Ironically, she was named in honor of the Spanish Cape Trafalgar, scene of the famous British victory at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805.

When war was declared in Europe in August 1914, Cap Trafalgar was awaiting orders in Buenos Aires. The German Imperial Navy had already requisitioned
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(below) When Leviathans clash, a painting of the action as these two luxury liners fought.





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her as an auxiliary cruiser. On August 18 she had arrived in Montevideo for coal and then sailed to a remote Brazilian island, Trindade, 500 miles east of the Brazilian mainland. Here she rendezvoused with the gunboat SMS Eber, which transferred officers, crew, ammunition and armaments to the liner.

And here is where the story spirals into the decidedly bizarre range.

To aid in her clandestine operations the Carmania's captain chose to disguise his ship as a German liner and he chose none other than the Cap Trafalgar. And legend has it that the Cap Trafalgar had disguised herself as the Carmania to escape British scrutiny. So, in effect, they found, and fought, each other.

To be fair, this is the tale that has been told for the last hundred or so years although this version has recently been challenged by Wikipedia. (They claim Carmania was the only vessel to change ID and Cap Trafalgar maintained her identity)

I'll leave it to the reader to decide for himself which version is true. Although for my own part I choose to believe the original tale. I believe Carmania's appearance was, indeed, altered to resemble Cap Trafalgar. And I think, to evade the much larger Royal Navy, Cap Trafalgar was reconfigured into a Carmania clone as it makes more sense and is a much better sea story.

There are so many coincidences and the story is so steeped in irony that it sounds almost as though it was conceived by a B movie script writer. But in reality, it was the outcome of solid, strategic thinking by two adversarial Navy departments. But then, if it weren't for the tragedy of brave men killing one another, war would be a funny thing indeed.

And for the outcome of the battle, Carmania came out slightly the better as she remained afloat although suffering grievous damage and casualties while Cap Trafalgar was unfortunately sunk. ❁

-Alan Welch



Hoping you and yours had a great new year's eve and are looking forward to a wonderful new solar circumference.



New Bern Maritime Modelers Guild.

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Meeting Schedule for New Bern Maritime Model Guild 2025

All meetings start at Noon, at
The Shop Class Building,
406 Guion St., New Bern.

- Feb 15, 2025 *Tentative due to
New Bern Train show*
- March 8, 2025
- April 12, 2025
- May 10, 2025
- June 14, 2025
- July 12, 2025
- August 9, 2025
- Sept 13, 2025
- October 11, 2025 *Tentative due to Fun
Run at Rocky Mount Lake R/C Warships*
- November 8, 2025
- December 13, 2025

Meeting dates for the Carolina Maritime Model Society in Beaufort:

All meetings suspended pending completion of the museum's renovations.
North Carolina Maritime Museum
315 Front Street
Beaufort, NC 28516

Remember to support our local
hobby shops whenever possible.
They support us.



And don't forget,
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and on facebook at:
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