



VOL. VII

NO. III

NEWSLETTER

<http://www.bmbg.org.au/>

Ensign's report 1st March 2014

It is with great regret that we learn that the reorganisation of the Yea Festival means that there won't be a model boats display this year. Let's hope in can be reinstated in future.

Fleet addition



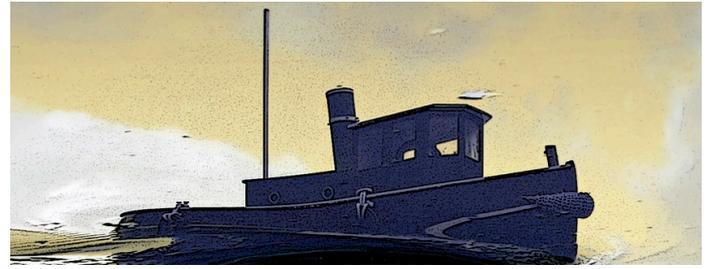
Vincent recently launched his battleship HMS Nelson. Along with the Rodney, this 1920s design carried its main armament of nine 16-inch guns grouped forward in an attempt to minimise the length of armour required. Well done Vince!

RAAF to the rescue

This is Alan's Halvorsen 38 cutting a dash on a recent rare outing. It is one of life's little ironies that you could join the air force to skipper a boat or fly an aircraft in the navy.



In praise of simple models



In any endeavour the largest, most complicated, most expensive or most detailed examples of workmanship naturally tend to attract the most attention. Modelling is no exception, but where a shortage of experience, money, facilities or time do not permit the construction of complex models then simple models must be the order of the day. Designing these simple models has challenges of its own.

A simple model is like a caricature; it is necessary to decide what the essential features are and capture them boldly, whilst removing or simplifying everything else. Here the experienced scale modeller is at a disadvantage. He agonises over whether an intake grille requires a mould or is better made from etched brass, and wonders where he can obtain the original paint specification to match its colour. The beginner, sketching out his model, has a natural 'lower resolution' outlook that ignores the vent completely, and is happy to paint his model with whatever reasonable paint he has on hand.

The level of detail decided upon and its execution need to be consistent throughout to produce a good simple model. Simplification can be achieved through omission, reduction in number, flattening of curves and adoption of basic geometric shapes. The skill requirement comes from the need to recognise when the simplification becomes a step too far and starts to detract from the model or make its generic type unrecognisable.

The reworked images depict a simple tug model that manages to capture the character of a classic small American tug well. There are no handrails, panel framing, life belts, goose neck vents, lights, rigging, ship's boat or other such detail yet the model is unmistakably a tug. To have left off the funnel or squared off the front of the wheelhouse would have been a mistake.



There is no excuse for sloppy construction just because a model is a simple one. With few features to distract the eye, lines need to be crisp and joints well fitting. There really needs to be a better word than 'simple' to describe these models as the term implies that they are second rate. It is more appropriate to think of them as being in a class of their own, one that brings pleasure to many people. If you don't think so, try designing a good 'simple' model and you may well change your mind!