

ESCORT



WELCOME !
**TO THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
SMALL WARSHIP
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
INTERNATIONAL PLASTIC
MODELLERS SOCIETY (UK)**

ISSUE 78, December 2007

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If you would like to look at the index of previous issues, please visit the website - www.smallwarshipgroup.org.uk

Firstly, many thanks to all of you who brought along one (or more) models to ScaleModelworld this year. We didn't have quite so many models as last year but the display was still very impressive – and particularly 'the convoy'! This exhibit was much admired by many people and received a lot of favourable comments. There was much interest as to the source of the merchant ships – so perhaps there is a fresh market here? I know that in 1:1200 scale, Len Jordan, who specialises in merchant ships (usually armed), has received much custom from all over the world – his resin mouldings are first class.

So, what about next year? I have heard a 'fleet review' suggested. This of course could include cruisers, battleships and aircraft carriers (depending on the chosen



year). I think the organisers of this year's effort need a little rest before they start on any new project. Now we have seen the basic idea, perhaps more members would like to contribute to future displays? Perhaps another member might like to take on the organisation of a future display? Any suggestions, please let me know and do watch this space for more details.

I have been asked to consider whether one or two members might be willing to help with the show organisation next year? – just an hour or two over the weekend. There is no doubt that the organisers for IPMS put in a lot of effort (as do many of the branches and SIGs who help set up) and so perhaps we could do our own little bit – as well as displaying our models, of course! Please think about this and I will ask once again nearer the time.

My thanks to Mike Davey who, prompted by the last newsletter, visited his loft and found three SeaKings. [I am rather disappointed that more of you did not notice my deliberate mistake in the last newsletter (and the one before that). It was entitled **Ensign** Newsletter rather than **Escort** Newsletter but only one person pointed this out to me. Either you didn't read it or you did and were too polite to point it out – I wonder which?] Anyhow, back to the SeaKings. As you can see, one is based on the County Class Destroyers and one on the Jeanne D'Arc Helicopter Carrier but the third is more of a mystery. Mike brought these along to ScaleModelworld so that I could have a look – thanks.



There was plenty to look at at Telford but one thing that did particularly interest me was some work being carried out by the magazine Scale Models International. They are hoping to release some 1/72 scale resin mouldings in early 2008 to correct the many errors in the old Revell Vosper MTB. The hull is incorrect but this may be left as is – particularly if you are making a waterline model. I saw the new deck, torpedo tubes and twin gun mounting – all very impressive. The torpedo tubes are moulded in just three resin parts and look as detailed as those from Great Little Ships without all the hassle – and probably cheaper(?). If the first releases sell well, there may be more to follow!

Finally, a warm welcome to the new members who signed up at Telford. I hope you find the contents of **Escort** interesting and may feel you want to contribute yourself? – we would be pleased to hear from you.

Well, I think that is enough from me for now. Don't forget, although **Escort** is now appearing only four times a year, more articles are very welcome. As with this issue, I hope to increase the size a little to make up for the reduced frequency – but please don't expect three times as much!

Regards
Les

A tip from the Tamiya Model Magazine – looking for masking tape? Then try Cammett Limited (www.cammett.co.uk) who sell 'Micro-Tape' which is extremely flexible and available in widths from 0.5mm to 5mm.

COASTAL FORCES IN PAPER

A different approach from Horst Murell

Something a little different – from one of our own members, Horst Murell. Horst has produced some card models and if you have a particular interest in Coastal Forces, you will certainly be interested in these!

They are at a scale of 1:250, a little larger than the majority of plastic or resin kits, but considering the types of vessel modelled, the models are small. There are six models available – a 105ft Motor Minesweeper, two variants of the Harbour Defence Motor Launch, two variants of the Fairmile A Motor Launch and,

the most recent addition, a Fairmile C Motor Gunboat. Further data can be found on Hurst's website – www.cfp.muerell.de – which is available in both German and English – just pick on the appropriate flag. Not only are there details of the models (including a copy of the building instructions in pdf format) but there are also a number of other features giving technical details and more about the original vessels – a lot of research here!



Each model is supplied in an A4 booklet containing illustrated (colour) detailed building instructions on two and a half pages followed by the model proper. Here is the clever bit – the model is printed on two sheets of different thickness card and it is coloured grey – no white edges which require colouring as is common with most card models. Not surprisingly, construction starts with the hull – waterline base, centreline profile and numerous ribs to ensure an

accurate hull form. The deck and transom are added next. After locating some of the deck hatches, the hull sides are added – this is where care is needed to maintain the accurate hull form. Superstructure and deck details require more patience.

As indicated, the basic card is coloured grey and other colours, such as the red and green of the navigation lights, are printed on where necessary. The guns are certainly a challenge – fine wire is used for the barrels of the smaller calibre mountings. Some modellers may prefer to use suitably sized plastic rod rather than rolling the paper for items such as bollards.





The next model to appear at CFP will be the small armament carrier "Mortar", featured by James Pottinger in one of the Model Shipwright issues, also the basis for the motor minesweeper. The kit will be published end of November – see the two pictures of this beautiful vessel. Next will be the Fairmile B, to be represented by four vessels, an anti-submarine escort, a minelayer, a torpedo boat and a rescue launch and these should be

ready during the first half of 2008.

Horst will soon be able to offer completed models from his kits for those, who don't want to deal with awful small paper parts. More information will appear on the website when these are available – keep watching!

I am no expert in card modelling and have not finished any of my models yet, but I strongly urge you to investigate this low-cost form of modelling before spending out on that new resin model, you will be surprised!

PROFILE MORSKIE 79, KAMUFLAZE NISZCZYCIELI TYPU FLETCHER

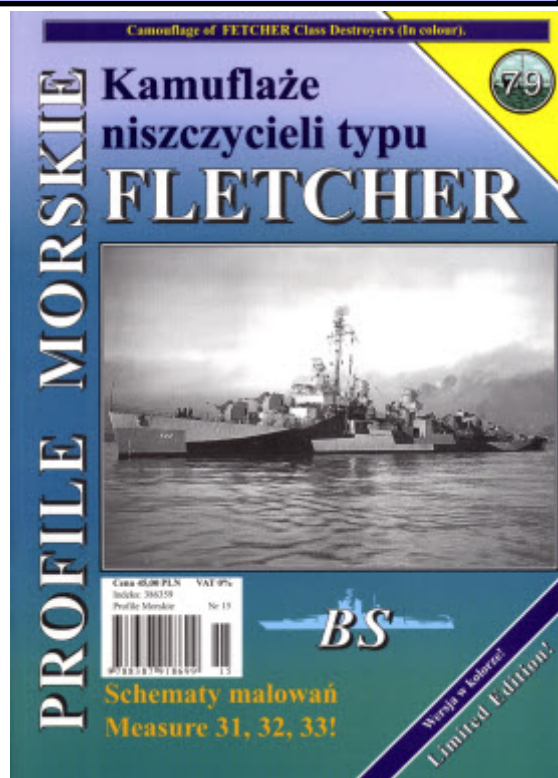
Author Slawomir Brzezinski

Published by BS Firma Wydawniczo-Handlowa, Poland, ISBN 83-87918-69-5

Different content to other books in this series – no detailed drawings, just lots of colour artwork and black and white photographs. As you can see from the title (I feel sure you all speak fluent Polish), this book is a study of camouflage.

The main content is both port and starboard side view and deck plan of standard USN camouflage patterns. No scale is given for the drawings, they are sized to fit the A5 pages and hence come out not far from 1:700 scale. The drawings are just standard schemes and so ship's names are not generally given but the photographs do illustrate vessels in each of the schemes. The one exception is the back cover which shows USS *Lucy* (DD-522) in Ms 32v11/18D camouflage in 1944.

The schemes illustrated in colour are entitled – Measure 31-32-33 Design 1D; Measure 32 Designs 3D, 6D, 7D, 9D, 11D, 13D, 14D, 16D, 21D and 24D; Measure 31 Designs 10D, 22D, 23D and 2C. I am no expert in these patterns but the book certainly provides plenty of scope for variation when modelling.



Visits to HM Naval Base Devonport

By Mike Davey

In mid-September 2007 whilst in Plymouth visiting my father we spent an afternoon on a tour of Devonport Naval Base which included a 90 minute visit to HMS Chatham, the Type 22 frigate.

These tours, run by the Royal Navy in partnership with DML, are free of charge and operate Monday to Thursday with two tours a day. The tours are designed to give anyone with an interest in what happens behind the Naval Base wall and in the Royal Navy around the world the rare opportunity to see a working base in action.

These tours are unique in the UK to Devonport – a fact that our guide mentioned more than once when stressing ‘Devonport’s superiority over Portsmouth in all ways’ – I quote his views which might have been slightly bias given his strong West County accent!

We booked ourselves in on ‘ship visit’ tour – there are also ‘submarine visit’ tours and ‘heritage sites’ tours and the weekly rota of visits is driven by both customer demand (ship visits being the most popular) and the availability of suitable vessels. The only downside to visiting this operational base was that cameras were obviously banned.

Our tour started at Mount Wise in Admiralty House, a Grade 2 listed building previously the headquarters of Devonport’s Command. The reception area has static and audio visual displays telling the story of the Naval Base, models of current Devonport based ships and of the nuclear submarine refuelling complex and a very good display of future ships of the Royal Navy.



Our tour by bus, led by a Royal Navy CPO who gave the commentary and answered questions, started with a drive through the historic South Yard with its 1,000 foot long Ropewalk building (which contains the Hangman’s Cell with the last operational gallows in the UK!) and then on to the ‘newer’ North Yard with glimpses into the Frigate Complex.



We passed several ships 'at a crawl' including HMS Ocean, Type 22 and Type 23 frigates, a visiting German frigate, various submarines both in commission and laid up and even a couple of RNLI lifeboats in the base for refits.

The highpoint of the tour was the 90 minutes on board HMS Chatham which was very much a working ship as she had just completed her last afternoon on basin trials (testing out the engines, steering, radar, etc) before she deployed to the Mediterranean the following Monday morning as we waited to board. Storing ship was in full swing

as we left her whilst a working party were at the top of the mainmast attending to the radar so it was definitely not a case of a 'spit and polish' presentation as on Navy Days!

Our tour of the ship led us from the quarter deck to the gun turret, up to the bridge, down to the messdecks and even a quick look inside the funnel! The only area 'out of bounds' was the operations room which was on exercise whilst we were on board.

The CPO who led the tour was a long service guy (in since 1982!) who was a natural 'tour guide' with a fund of suitable stories and interesting facts by the dozen! Until that visit I never imagined that Devonport Dockyard has 105 listed historic building within its walls, 20 miles of railway track and an annual gas and electric bill of £9.6m (think of the Nectar points on that bill!).

As well as the obvious enthusiasm of the RN guide our tour was enlivened by my Dad's memories of his days as a boy stoker on the dockyard tugs between 1936 and 1940 and the changes he could see over the last 60 years.

All in all an excellent afternoon visit and Dad did as told and did not sign on for 22 years despite Chatham being 'mixed manned'.

Details of these FREE tours can be found on either -

<http://www.justplymouth.co.uk/events/navytours.php> or
<http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/server/show/nav.5517>

Alternatively, phone 01752 553941.

For those travelling further afield the Canadian Naval Base at Esquimalt on Vancouver Island runs similar tours from June to August – does anyone know of any other naval base which offers a similar insight?

The three photographs included are all of H.M.S. Chatham, a Type 22 frigate.

TOWN CLASS DESTROYERS

1:400 scale plastic kits from Mirage of Poland

First, before moving to the model, a few words from Peter French on some little known actions in the earlier part of the Pacific War involving U.S. Navy 'four-pipers'.

BALIKPAPAN BAY (21st January 1942)

Four old 'four-pipers', *John D Ford* (see right), *Pope* (see next page), *Parrot* and *John Paul Jones* (pennant numbers were hastily painted out) intercepted a Japanese invasion force attempting to invade and seize Borneo's oilfields at Balikpapan Bay, sinking four of its transports and their escort PC 37, a 750 ton patrol craft, with torpedoes and gunfire. The Americans escaped unscathed, winning a tactical victory here but the force applied by the Japanese later soon succeeded in capturing the oilfields of Balikpapan, and indeed Borneo.



BATTLES OF BADOENG STRAIT (February 1942)

This series of clashes between the ABDA forces, the Dutch/American vessels comprising just *Java*, *de Ruyter* (both light cruisers) and *John D Ford*, *Pope* and *Piet Hein*, and the Japanese occurred when the ABDA forces came upon the returning Japanese invasion ships from the Bali landing, *Sasago Maru* and *Sagami Maru* escorted by *Ushio* (Fubuki class) and *Asashio* (name ship of the class). *Ushio* was flying the flag of one Captain Abe, leader of DesDiv8, a name which the Americans were to encounter frequently in the coming year to their cost.

The ABDA force spotted the Japanese coming out of the strait on February 20th and opened fire at 10:25am, to which the two Japanese destroyers replied quickly and accurately, hitting the *Java* on her stern with 5" gunfire but not seriously hurting her. At around 10:50, the *Ford* and *Pope* spotted the *Sasago Maru* with *Ushio* leading, crossing the Dutch/US 'T' and fired torpedoes at the transport, before opening gunfire on both. Their gunfire missed the *Ushio* but hit the transport together with a "fish" from either *Ford's* or *Pope's* spread. Unusually for this period of American torpedo performance, it detonated, bringing the *Maru* to a stop.

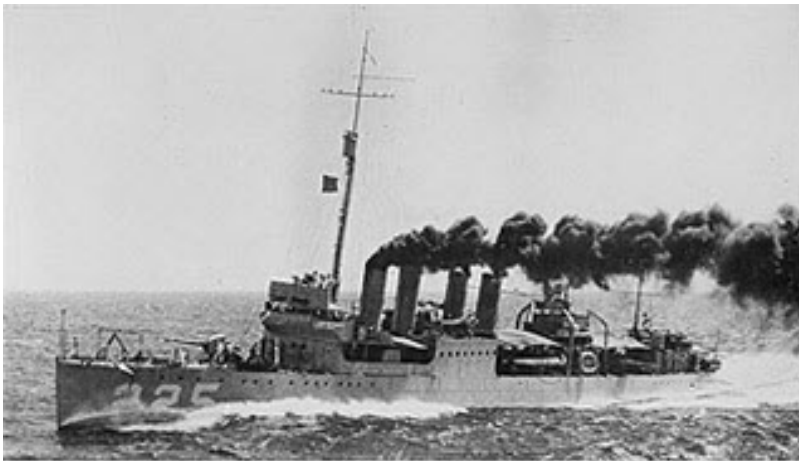
Asashio meanwhile had doubled back towards her consort and charge, seeing an Allied destroyer, *Piet Hein*, at which she fired a single 'long lance' torpedo. Soon afterwards, this deadly torpedo hit *Piet Hein* which burst into flames and stopped, dead in the water, sinking.

Doubling back again in a tight circle, *Asashio* then encountered *Ford* and *Pope*, soon being joined by *Ushio*. A brief exchange of gunfire began, before *Ford* and *Pope* laid smoke and retired southward toward the coast of Nusar Besar in order to be less visible to the two Japanese destroyers. To no avail however (no doubt due to the excellent night vision and training of Japanese destroyer men) for the two opposing destroyer pairs were soon running parallel to each other, trading 5" and 4" gunfire.

After six or seven minutes with no serious hits on either side, the Americans turned sharply and crossed the Japanese 'T', firing their last torpedoes at the *Ushio*, but all missed. However, in the confusing avoiding melee, *Ushio* mistook her sister bursting through the smoke for an enemy (unlike the Japanese, as events were to show) and opened fire on her . . . to which *Asashio* replied. In the

confusion now reigning, the two 'four-pipers' slipped away westwards out of the strait. The two Japanese destroyer crews soon realised their mistake and ceased fire. Luckily neither had been hit and they rejoined their charge, the *Sasago Maru* – still afloat, to resume their escort duties. *Ford* nor *Pope* re-engaged.

Unfortunately for the Japanese, the second Dutch/American force, consisting of the cruiser, *Tromp* (with 5.9" guns), and the four stack destroyers *Stewart*, *Parrott*, *John D Edwards* and *Pillsbury* (all with 4" guns and torpedoes), was entering the strait at this time. *Asashio* and *Ushio*, still full of fight, rushed to meet this new threat, this time the *Ushio* challenging with searchlight. *Stewart*, in the van, replied by illuminating her with searchlight and opening effective fire with her 4" guns. The first salvos were short, the second over but the third and following salvos hit *Ushio* with bright red flashes. Rushing up to join the fray, *Edwards* tried to launch four torpedoes at the Japanese but only two would leave their tubes and those missed both the Japanese destroyers. It has to be said at this point that it is quite possible that hits were made but the Americans were to waste six months before they learned of their sub-standard torpedo exploders, which persistently failed to detonate the warhead, and this information came from their submarine arm.



However, to return to the fight, *Ushio* and *Asashio* were by now giving the 'four pipers' better than they were getting, not surprisingly as they had 5" guns. *Stewart* was first hit, then *Parrott* and *Pillsbury* badly hit with splinters. *Binford* in *Stewart* broke off hard to starboard, *Parrott* and *Pillsbury* nearly colliding trying to follow. This clearing the ring allowed *Tromp* a fine view of *Ushio*, who she promptly hit with a 5.9" salvo on her bridge. Seven men were killed but neither Commander Yoshikawa nor Captain Abe was seriously injured. In the

style that Japanese destroyer men would repeatedly display in the coming night battles around The Solomons, both *Ushio* and *Asashio* coolly took aim on the bright blue glow of *Tromp's* searchlight and scored several damaging hits on their larger foe before the action was broken off by a mutual turn away. It is almost certain, with hindsight, that neither Japanese destroyer had any 'long-lance' torpedoes left with which to decisively end the engagement in their soon to be feared way, but it is not at all certain why *Tromp* did not finish both of these destroyers off, standing out of range!

As the two ABDA forces made their separate ways up the Lombok Strait, they ran into new trouble. Earlier in the night the Japanese main force had learned of Abe's action against superior Allied warship groups and Admiral Kubo had turned the flag cruiser, *Nagar*, around taking the destroyers *Wakaba*, *Hatsushiho* and *Nenohi* with him. He was too far away to get there in time but he had *Arashio* and *Michishio* escorting the damaged transport *Sagami Maru* back to Macassar, who could. These were ordered to leave the transport and head for Badoeng Strait at maximum speed, which for Japanese destroyers was around 34 knots. They arrived at the strait's northern entrance at 2.19 am, just in time to meet De Meester's group of *Tromp*, *Stewart*, *Parrott*, *John D Edwards* and *Pillsbury* head on!

Closing to point-blank range, *Stewart* and *Edwards* exchanged "vicious salvos of shells and torpedoes (Japanese side only) and expletives" with *Arashio* and *Michishio*. *Pillsbury*, at last getting into the action, came-up on the port quarter and landed a full broadside of 4" shells squarely on *Michishio*, but held on to her torpedoes. The stricken Japanese destroyer swerved to starboard . . . squarely into the trajectory of another 4" shell, this time from *Edwards*, which her skipper, Cmdr. H.E. Eccles "followed with my eye as it arced through the night sky and landed with a bright

explosion on *Michishio's* starboard superstructure" (from U.S. Navy In WWII). *Michishio* was reeling from these hits when *Tromp* arrived and gave her a passing broadside of 6 x 5.9" shells. *Michishio* was left shattered, burning and dead in the water with 96 of her crew dead, but she did not sink. She was repaired and met her end two hard years later in the Battle for Leyte Gulf! (Suraigao Strait element).

So ended the successive battles of Badoeng Strait. Whilst this article is mainly to illustrate the hard fought actions of some of America's obsolete 'four piper', flush decked destroyers in the early desperate years of WWII in the Pacific, one must not forget the *Reuben James* – first U.S. warship sunk in WWII, by German U-boat in the Atlantic, playing an incalculable part in hardening America's attitude to the German war.

EPILOGUE: *John D Edwards* survived the war, to be scrapped in 1945.

Parrott - irreparably damaged in a collision with SS John Norton, 1944.

Stewart - lost in dry dock, Soerabaya 1942. Salvaged by the Japanese and put into service as PC 102. Returned to U.S. 1945 and sunk as a target.

Pope – sunk by Japanese aircraft in the Java Sea, 1st March 1942.

Pillsbury – sunk by Japanese warships, south of Java, 1st March 1942.

John D Ford – survived the war, scrapped 1947.

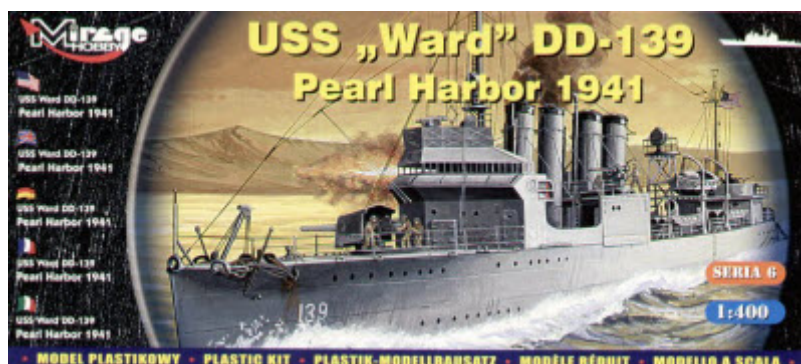
John Paul Jones - survived the war, scrapped 1947.

The Polish firm of Mirage Hobby have recently released four variants of the same basic kit – the famous four stacker destroyers built for the U.S. Navy in World War I. Fifty of these vessels were transferred under lend-lease to the Royal Navy in World War II to assist with the dramatic shortage in escorts and all four kit variants represent vessels in World War II. There is U.S.S. *Ward* (DD-139) as at Pearl Harbour in 1941 (40601), U.S.S. *Noa* in April 1940 (40604), H.M.S. *Montgomery* as in April 1940 and H.No.M.S. *St. Albans* as in November 1942 (40609). H.M.S. *Campbeltown* as modified for the raid on St. Nazaire is also promised as a future release.



I elected to build H.M.S. *Montgomery*, originally the name ship of the 'Wickes' class built at Bath Iron Works, being launched in 1918 and scrapped, after an eventful career, shortly before the end of WWII. The instructions are pictorial but also include a History of the Ship and a table of Tactical & Technical Data (in both Polish and English).

The kit comprises five grey sprues, the two larger sprues ('X' and 'H' - see photograph) being identical in each kit with the variations being included on two of the smaller sprues and the base for the model on the third. The plastic used by Mirage is rather 'soft' and so care is required when



cleaning up the parts and using plastic glue. There are many very small parts, a point that soon becomes very obvious in stage 2 when building the anchors, and the various masts and other similar parts are very finely moulded.

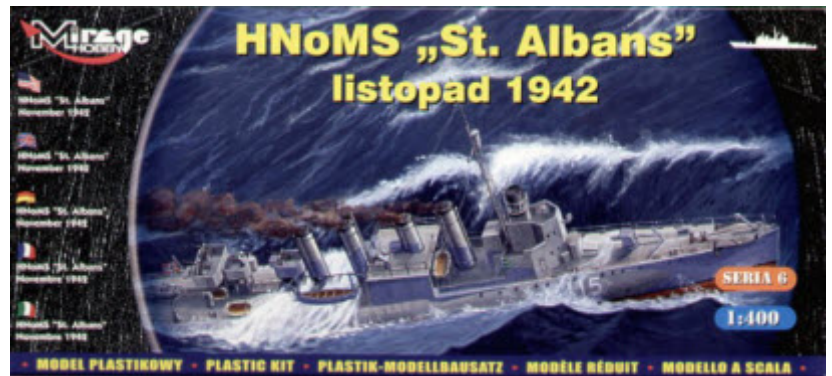
The hull and deck both come in two parts, the after deck section being one of those parts which change between the different variants. The deck fits over the sides of



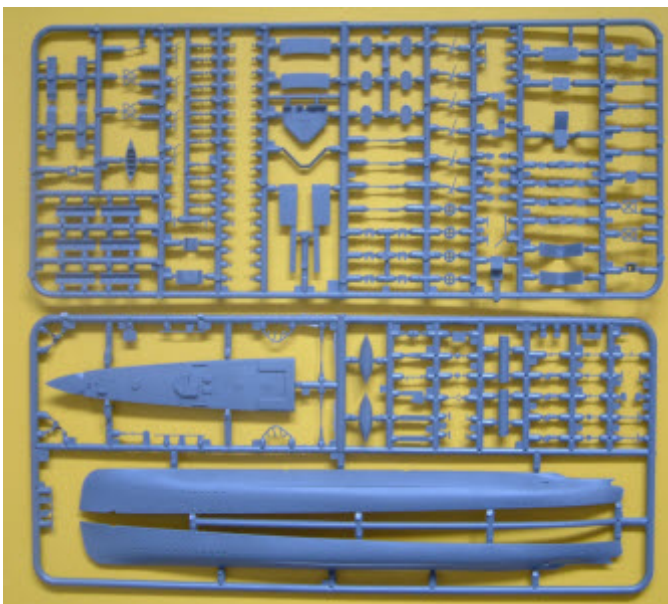
the hull and the forward section, which includes the anchor cut-outs, should be fixed first. It is worth spending some time in obtaining a good hull/deck joint. The ports are clearly moulded along the side of the hull but I still drilled them out as I think they look better that way.

Having produced a satisfactory waterline hull by sawing off the underwater section of each side, joining the hull halves and deck and adding a plastic card waterline, I fitted the rather pronounced propeller guards, although the instructions do not call for this to be done until much later. There are no location marks on the hull so symmetry was achieved to the best of my ability by eye. The braces for the guards have to be provided by the modeller from plastic rod – no lengths given! I then sprayed the complete hull white before masking off appropriate areas and painting the camouflage scheme. This was done by hand and mainly used paints from WEM's large range of camouflage colours.

The ability to build different variants of the same basic model, whilst maximising the number of common parts, does lead to some complicated assemblies. This shows in the large number of components used for some assemblies, the lower forward superstructure being a good example. The model includes some detail which is virtually impossible to see when the model is completed, such as the locker located inside the superstructure port side.



The level of detail is again well shown in the gun armament – four pieces for each main mounting and two pieces for each of the smaller mountings! Four mountings are supplied for the main armament but only one (plus the shield) is required for this variant. The U.S. variants, such as U.S.S. *Ward*, only carried the four main guns, with a shield on the forecastle mounting, but no AA armament. These mountings are a great fiddle to construct but the final result is quite pleasing.



The funnels are, not unusually, moulded in two halves with a separate grill but there are no location 'pips' on the halves so accurate alignment is essential. The grill mouldings are good on one side but rather heavy on the other side – unfortunately this is the top and so it is necessary to clean this side up before fixing to the funnel. The steam pipes are moulded separately and are very thin. These are joined to the main sprue in three or four places making cutting them off, without breaking, almost impossible. I therefore replaced mine with plastic rod of a suitable diameter. The detail fitted in the upper superstructure/enclosed bridge area (parts H29 and H31) are virtually invisible when the open deck above (part M4) is fixed. The various bollards etc.



are fitted on the forecastle at this stage – another example of some very fine work. One thing I did find surprising, considering all the detail, is that the engine room vents (part H17) are moulded solid and hence can be improved quite significantly by drilling out. The

bollards and fairleads have two very short pins on their underside and there are two very small recesses in the deck at suitable locations but these do not always align with the positions shown on the plan camouflage drawing.

I was very disappointed by the four legs supporting the two small gun platforms (part B2) as these look more like inverted pyramids! These do really need thinning down or, preferably, replacing, possibly with etched brass. The drawing of H.M.S. *Montgomery* that was included in 'Warship Perspectives – Flush Deck Destroyers in World War Two' shows these legs to have cross braces and many photographs in this book support this construction also on other vessels. The precise orientation of some of the structures, such as the lockers, is not immediately obvious but close examination of the part, locating any doors moulded onto the surface, and the assembly diagrams will normally result in a satisfactory conclusion.

The representation of the Hedgehog anti-submarine mortar just forward of the superstructure is very poor – just the base with no mortar bombs or back shield. The latter can be represented with a piece of plasticard but a search of the spares box was necessary to find suitable mortar bombs. I actually used a 1:700 scale accessory from Niko – maybe a little small (although the horizontal area matches the part supplied in the kit) but definitely overscale for 1:700. I am also suspicious about parts of the camouflage scheme shown. The profiles seem to check well with some photographs I have found but the plan view of the Hedgehog shows it white on the port side and light grey on the starboard side – as it does for the gun shield on the forward mounting. Many of the deck lockers are light grey, with light grey tops, which seem alright but one is white with a white top? Whilst these colours were most probably used for the vertical surfaces, it seems most unlikely that they were extended onto the horizontal surfaces. I chose to paint the horizontal surfaces to match the decks.

There is a small error in construction diagram XV, where it calls up two part M12's but this should actually be M11. The ladders are moulded separately and, whilst not quite so fine as etched brass, are a great improvement on the 'Aztec steps' which were a familiar feature of many earlier plastic ship kits. The pennant numbers on the decal are a mid-grey and do not show up well with the camouflage scheme as background.

I used more superglue in this kit than I have done in any other plastic model – partly due to the soft plastic which is easily melted by normal liquid glue and partly due to the lack of positive locations with only very small contact areas. I did find it very frustrating fitting all the bollards and fairleads - thank goodness a couple of spares were provided! I think that next time I shall fit all the bollards and fairleads immediately after assembling the hull and deck when there are no other details in the way. These kits certainly have the potential to produce very good, detailed models without requiring etched brass (although some etched brass guard rails will certainly add that something extra) but do require a lot of patience and not a little skill.

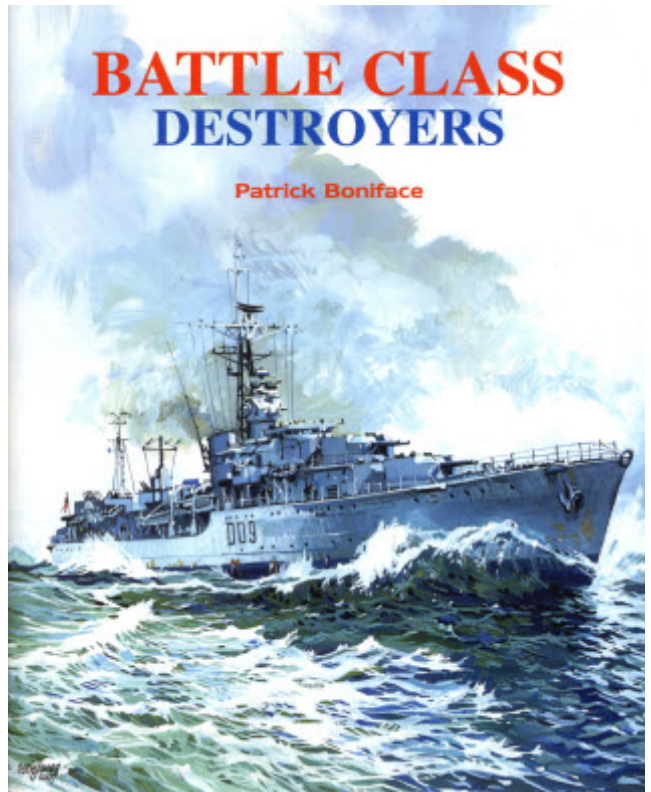
BATTLE CLASS DESTROYERS

By Patrick Boniface

**Published by Maritime Books, Liskeard, Cornwall,
ISBN 978 1 904459 28 6**

This is a hard-back book, measuring 10" by 8" and containing 258 pages. It contains a wide selection of black and white photographs, the majority sized to occupy full page width, from many different sources – the 'usual' sources of MOD/Crown Copyright, Portsmouth Royal Navy Museum, Maritime Photo Library together with a significant number from 'private' collections. The photographs are all very well produced and include some close-up on-board shots as well as general shots of each vessel.

The book starts with an introduction which gives the design history and technical details of the design. Individual ship histories follow, starting with the '1942 Programme' destroyers. The histories are generally in the form of single line entries giving details of ports visited, exercises, refits and anything else of interest. Some of the more interesting or noteworthy events are given a short description, frequently provided by crew members. Often, the section finishes with some memories of past crew members. Destroyers of the '1943 Programme' follow. The individual histories vary between four and ten pages in length.



Next comes the two ships of the Royal Australian Navy, noticeably different because of the mounting of the twin 4.5" Mk.6 turret in 'A' and 'B' positions. The Australian vessels are given both a full textual style history as well as the 'single line' style included for the other vessels. Appendices contain lists of the Build Programme, a Technical Specification, results of trials and details of the secondary armament carried by the ships at various times in their careers. Details of some 'Previous Vessels of the Name' and 'Squadrons and Flotillas' follow. The fates of the vessels (including some photographs) complete this interesting book.

Although published in 2007, this book has obviously been in preparation for some time. In the description of H.M.S. *Sluys*, later sold to the Imperial Iranian Navy as I.I.S. *Artemiz*, there are some comments by Ray Freeman who was involved in the conversion work. The notes state that Ray is 'now Chief Combat System Engineer at Vosper Thornycroft'. I know Ray well and worked with him for many years but he retired some years ago, quite a time before VT moved to their new facilities in Portsmouth Dockyard.

CASTLE CLASS CORVETTES

Compiled by Norman Goodwin, edited by Steve Bush

Published by Maritime Books, Liskeard, Cornwall

ISBN 978 1 904459 27 9

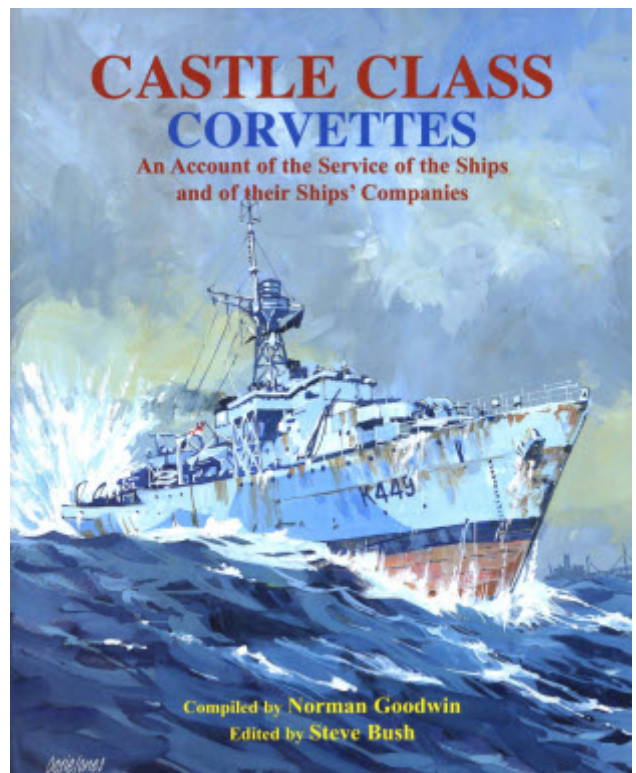
Another book from the same publisher, again 10" by 8", but because of the large number of Castle Class Vessels (at least compared to the number of Battle Class destroyers) a much thicker book, 530 pages in total. Having served on both *Tintagel* and *Allington Castle*, Norman is an active member of The Castle Class Corvette (Frigate) Association which was formed in 1989. This book is similar to that of the Battle Class destroyers, being sub-titled 'An account of the Service of the Ships and of their Ships' Companies'.

Following a short 'Foreword' and some 'Acknowledgements', Section One describes the ship and its equipment, starting with a picture of a Flower Class corvette, which puts the design of the Castle Class in perspective. The description of the A/S system (ASDIC and SQUID) is very interesting but there is one printing error. In a number of places, a digit is followed by an'?. After looking at a few of these, I concluded that it should have been '½' rather than '?'. Section Two is entitled 'Service at War and Peace' and gives a very interesting insight into anti-

submarine warfare of WWII and, in particular, the protection of merchant convoys and the problems faced by the escorting warships. One section is entitled 'Significant Contacts with the Enemy' and describes the few minutes of excitement (sinkings of both U-boats and members of the Castle Class) among the many boring hours spent at sea. This leads into some details of what happened to these vessels after the war plus a mention of members of the class as rescue and weather ships.

Section Three contains the 'Ship Histories' and this is similar in format to those of the Battle Class destroyers but frequently contains more details of particular actions and events in which the vessels were involved. There are a significant number of on-board photographs, the majority coming from the association's own archives. Section Four is a collection of reports from various Escort Groups and there then follows twenty-five appendices. These cover such topics as production, commanding officers, sample standing orders, specific convoy operations and a number of other very interesting topics.

This book is certainly a worthy tribute to the ships and the men who crewed them.



SWAN HUNTER BUILT WARSHIPS

By Ian Buxton

Published by Maritime Books, Liskeard, Cornwall

ISBN 978 1 904459 29 3

Although from the same publisher, this third book is in an entirely different format – 11” by 8”, landscape. The author is well known and provides a brief (just three pages) but interesting history of this company from its beginning in 1860 until its final closure in 2006. The company built both warships and merchant ships (including the *Mauretania*) but this book is limited to warships only – or at least vessels built for the Admiralty.

The first ‘ship’ built for the Admiralty, and the first one included in the photographs, was completed in 1902 and was, in fact, a floating dock. The first real warship was the

Hope, a destroyer ordered in September 1909. The First World War was a busy time for the company and many of the vessels are featured in the photographs. The photographs are all black and white (it’s a pity that some of the vessels built more recently were not featured in colour) and each occupies a full page, providing great clarity of detail, which will be useful to any modeller. Each photograph is accompanied by a brief but interesting caption. Some of the photographs show the vessel under build, being launched or on trials, hence providing a different view to the more general picture of ships at sea, frequently at speed.

Some of the more notable vessels built by the company include *Roberts*, a 14” gunned monitor, and *Comus* and *Coventry*, ‘C’ class cruisers, as well as many destroyers and submarines. Life was more difficult between the wars but *Sydney*, a cruiser for the Royal Australian Navy, was built in the mid-1930’s. More smaller vessels followed, including the Tribal Class destroyers, *Tartar* and *Somali*, and the ‘J’ and ‘K’ class destroyers *Janus* and *Khartoum*. The company also built cruisers – including *Edinburgh* and three of the Colony class - and a battleship, *Anson*. Aircraft carriers also featured, as did landing craft and many more destroyers.

Repair work occupied much of the company’s facilities after WWII but warships such as the destroyer *Daring*, the cruiser *Lion* and the aircraft carrier *Albion* also feature in the list of warships built (or at least completed) by the company after the war. Moving more up to date, construction included Leander Class frigates, County and Type 42 Class destroyers. Two very significant vessels were *Illustrious* and *Ark Royal* and these were followed by both Type 22 and Type 23 frigates. Swan Hunter also built a number of auxiliary vessels after the war but it was two of these craft, *Largs Bay* and *Lyme Bay*, which eventually led to the demise of this famous company.

This book contains a fascinating story and some wonderful photographs of some wonderful warships.

SWAN HUNTER BUILT WARSHIPS



Ian Buxton