
*The St. Nectan on her maiden voyage.*

# St Nectan

## *Allan Miller completes his review of Mountfleet's Shelterdeck Trawler kit*

If you followed my article in last month's issue closely you will know that at an early stage I decided to add working navigation lights, and this in turn would mean a departure from the standard kit items. I understand the view of readers who want to know from a 'kit review' what they can achieve using only the items in a kit, but as the upgrade here is a very attractive option I hope they will indulge me on this deviation.

### *The Masts*

Although only the foremast is required at this time I decided to construct both fore and main masts simultaneously. As I have mentioned briefly I was going to substitute the mast dowels in the kit for brass tube that I had purchased. The biggest diameter tubing required has to fit into the foremast base, then the next diameter size down fits into that and so on until the diameter of the top of the mast is achieved. The size of each tube at a specific height is governed by the inside diameter of the fitting at that point, and both the plan and sketch are helpful throughout these constructions. One point to note if this method is to be used: do not insert each tube more than 25 mm because it will start to obstruct the wiring running from the lights.

When both masts have been constructed they were painted, the finishing colours being matt buff for the foremast and matt black for the main mast. Holes were then drilled into the tubes below each light to accept the wiring. 12-volt bulbs were used but extra lengths of wiring had to be added to them before the wiring was threaded down the masts. Then after checking each light operated correctly the glazing was applied to each light.

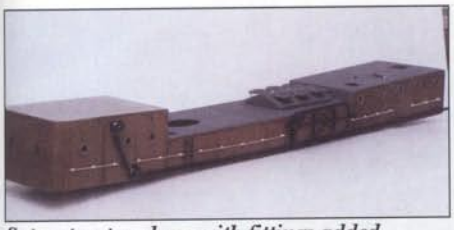
### *Rigging*

A few notes on rigging are given in the instructions and I go along with these comments for many a model's downfall is the rigging.

I prepared all the cordage beforehand by staining it using various shades of wood stain. The shades used depend on the thickness of the rigging and where on the vessel it is to be applied. When the cordage has been stained I then ran it through a beeswax block and there is one of these supplied in this kit. Once all the rigging material had been made ready, following the instructions it was applied to the model around the foremast area.

### *The Main Deck*

The largest feature on this deck is the trawl winch and this is a model within itself. All the parts were removed from the package and laid out in front of me and there are many parts, for this builds up into a very detailed model. There are approximately two and a half pages of instructions provided and these are quite easy to follow. I found that the most important part of this build is to pre-plan when to paint and when to



*Superstructure base with fittings added.*

*Skylight hatches are open to allow the Speaker sound to 'escape'.*

build. Using the flexi superglue I constructed so much then painted, then painted other parts before adding them to the construction and after a few hours work the assembly work was done. This left just the weathering to be applied and also the cordage to be threaded on. As normal I will at this stage give you the do's and don'ts during the construction. Do not glue the drums in situ because having them revolving freely means that it is an easier operation when adding the cordage. Do spray the whole winch matt varnish before this cordage is added. Because the cordage has to represent wire rope I applied some silver paint between the staining and waxing stages. Using a rag pour a small amount of silver paint onto it and then rub the cordage through the rag and this will give the appearance of wire rope. Finally, when all was completed I made the base for the winch, this was painted and when dry both items were glued to the deck.

Both stern gallows were constructed in a similar way to the forward ones, and when completed they too were glued in position along with the outer doors which had already been built.

## The Cod Liver Oil House

This is a fibreglass moulding that contains all the riveting details. This structure has to be made removable from the deck in case access is required to the rudder shaft at any time. The first thing I did was to file the base of the structure until I achieved a good fit with the deck. All the openings were then made for the doors, steering chain and the portholes. Also the holes for the stanchions were marked then drilled, along with the rear row of one-ball stanchions. Car filler was scraped around the interior and then sanded smooth. Anything that was to be the same finished colour as the structure was added before painting commenced, i.e. stanchions, rear rail, water tank and others. The whole unit was then given three coats of white primer, and the remainder of the fittings that had already been painted were attached.

The cod liver oil house interior detail was constructed next. This consists of a large tank divided into 4 sections containing lids and outlet pipes with valves for each. Apart from adding the coal scuttles and steering chain layout this deck detail was practically finished and as with the forward deck I applied the wash treatment before matt varnishing.

## Superstructure

The superstructure base is a fibreglass moulding and when it had been trimmed to fit neatly as well as correctly onto the deck I proceeded to drill all the holes required for the portholes, stanchions, lights and many other fixtures. Along with the holes openings have to be made for the rear door, the skylight, the funnel, the mast and other vents. All this work had to be carried out at the outset.

When all the holes and openings had been completed I progressed onto the painting. A light grey primer was first to be applied, then the sides were masked off and a matt dark grey was sprayed to the top area. When this had dried it was masked off so the sides could be done, now these sides had to be finished with a stained look, so for a base I sprayed them with a Humbrol matt number 63 as stated in the instructions. The staining was then done using a dark oak stain being applied with a broad paintbrush. I did need to have a few practice runs beforehand to enable me to master the correct technique. Another thing that I was concerned about was whether there would be any affect to the stain when coating it with matt varnish. I therefore tested this procedure a few times but no problems occurred.

When all the openings in the skylight had been removed the covers were added and secured in an open position. The reason for this is that I was fitting a speaker underneath this unit and by leaving the covers open the speaker sound could escape.

The speaker was fixed to two wooden beams which I had fibreglassed across the underside of the superstructure below the skylight area.

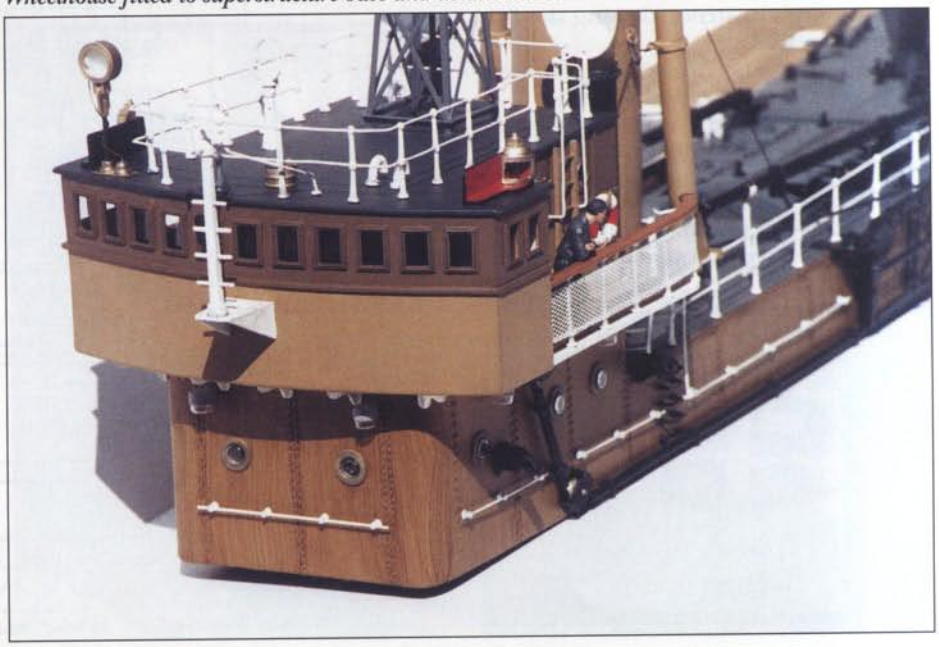
I now started to assemble, paint and attach the fittings to all four sides of this superstructure base and when completed I moved onto the wheelhouse.

## The Wheelhouse

I cut out all the pieces required for the wheelhouse from the plywood sheet in the kit making sure it was done accurately. The positions of the sides and partitions etc. are shown on the deck cut out. I removed all the openings for the window frames, doors and portholes from each

*Some of the interior detail in the wheelhouse.*

*Wheelhouse fitted to superstructure base and details added.*



*Funnel fitted to superstructure.*

*Detail added to boat deck.*

required part before assembly began. Using the same wood glue I used for the decks I started the build and each joint I taped until the glue had dried. The window frames were inserted before the front and sides were added.

When the whole structure had been completed I sprayed it all, interior and exterior with white primer. The interior was then masked off while the exterior was given its final colours. The whole of the interior was then fitted out including the installation of three lights (one in each compartment). The bulb that was fitted in the wheelhouse was red to simulate a night-light.

There are quite a lot of details featured on the wheelhouse roof, so I decided to construct these items and attach to the roof before gluing the roof to the wheelhouse. The most prominent feature is the radar tower and this was constructed using the following method.

I cut the former from the printed plywood sheet provided. Then I glued this to a piece of 5 mm balsa wood to add thickness to it. The angle strips were then laid along the edges, marked and then cut to length. I used a small amount of tape to hold the edges in place while the cross sections were marked, cut to length and glued in situ. When two end parts had been completed they were joined together with the guidance of the former. When the structure was completed the platform top was cut out and attached.

Before fitting the radar assembly and the rails I painted the structure. When the remainder of the parts had been painted and added it was ready to be positioned on the wheelhouse roof. So that a strong joint could be achieved I added 5 mm square pieces of 2 mm thick plywood to the base of each leg. The railings on the roof were assembled using the same method as previously stated.

*Sound and switch modules from ACTion as listed in text.*

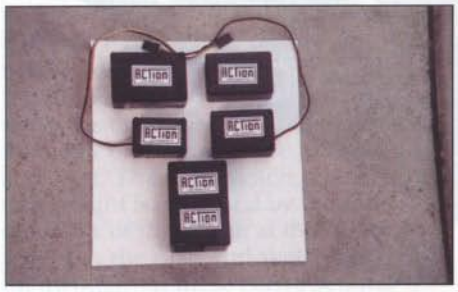
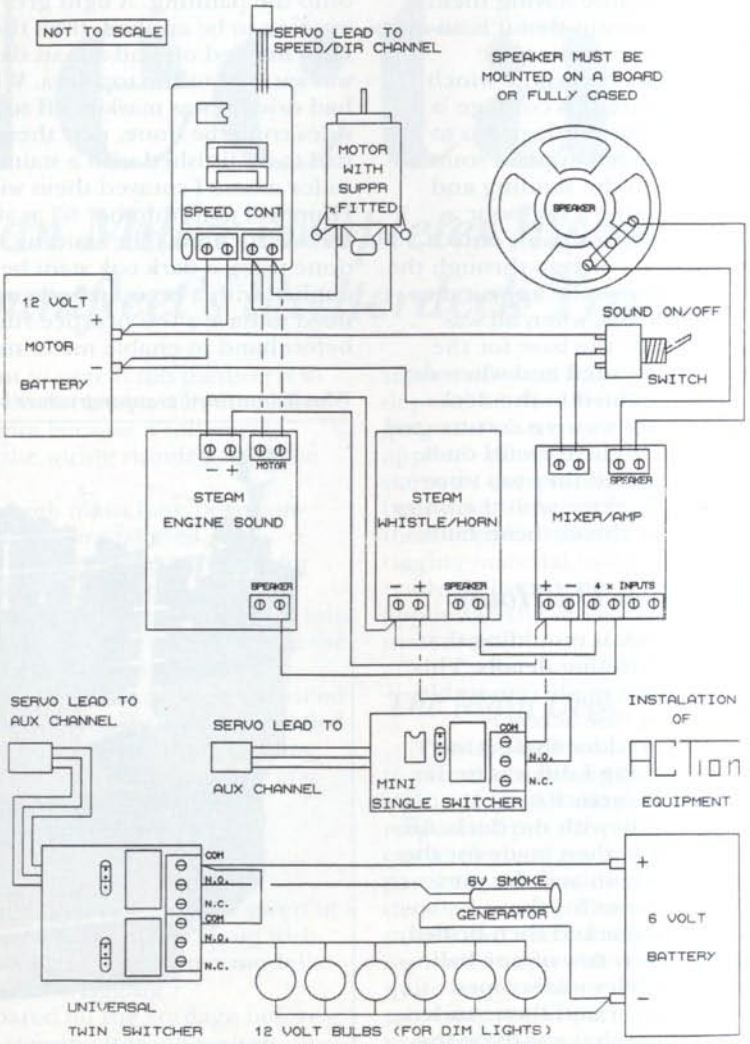



*Diagram no.3*



*The net prior to fitting to model.*

One point to note is the navigation lights are situated on this roof and with them being working the wires need to be threaded through the wheelhouse into the superstructure base along with the other lights. Before the completed roof was attached all the windows in the wheelhouse were glazed including the portholes. Because these windows are now glazed the choice of glue being used to fix the roof is important and I chose a two part quick setting epoxy.

All the details on the exterior of the wheelhouse I made ready and then attached. The reason for doing this now is that when the cowl vents and funnel are in place there is not a lot of access area to the rear of the wheelhouse.

## The Funnel

The funnel is a fibreglass moulding and is a straightforward assembly job when reference is made to the plan and photographs. All the rivet detail is on the moulding and markings for all the holes required are also there. I started by filing the base to achieve the correct rake needed and once done it was attached to its cast metal base. The steam whistle pipe and the safety valve vent pipes were made up ready for fitting.

I next installed the smoke unit to the interior of the funnel. I fixed a piece of 1.5 mm thick plastic card across the funnel about 40 mm down from the top. In the centre I had drilled a hole to accept the oil reservoir tube. I extended the wires on the tube so they would penetrate through the superstructure base. All pipes along with the funnel were painted before assembly.

Before fixing the funnel to the deck I attached the railings that are positioned just aft of the funnel, for this seemed better done while the funnel was not in place. When the funnel was fitted I made three metal angle brackets from tinned sheeting and when the funnel was in position I glued these brackets to the inside of the funnel and the underside of the deck. When the glue had dried I added car filler to the interior of the base joint and around the brackets.

## The Main Mast

Ash chutes and railings either side of the superstructure were fitted before fixing the main mast in place. As the mast had already been constructed it really only required gluing in place. I attached a block of wood with the correct diameter hole in the centre, to accept the mast base, to the underside of the deck. When glue had been applied to the mast base it was placed into the pre-drilled hole and centralised. I kept an eye on it making sure the alignment remained correct until the glue had set. Now was the time to connect all the electrical wiring, because once the boat deck has been fitted it would be more difficult to lay the superstructure on its side while working on this wiring. I ran all the wires into connection blocks which were then fixed to the interior front section. When finished there were three sets of wiring running from the superstructure to connection points in the hull. One set for each of the lights, smoke unit and the speaker.

## The Boat Deck

The plywood deck was cut out and trimmed to fit around the superstructure. I had, when preparing the superstructure base, opened up the holes for the beams that fit across the underside of the boat deck. After fixing the strengthening beams to the underside of the deck and also removing the ladder access areas the deck was glued in position. With the cod liver oil house in situ, the rear of the deck should fit flush with the front edge of the house.

After adding the deck edging I masked off the appropriate places and sprayed the underside and edges of the deck white. The overlay deck was next to be fitted and this should then make the deck flush with the superstructure. To achieve this allowances have to be made when marking the holes in the superstructure for the cross-beams. I painted all the cast metal supports before introducing them to the model and then when I did each one was cut and trimmed to length before being fixed.

All the items that were to be seated on the boat deck I constructed and painted away from the model and not until they were finished were they fitted in place.

## Davits and Lifeboats

The main items on the boat deck are the lifeboats and davits. So starting with the davits, which are constructed from cast metal parts, I made them up in pairs. Again there is an exploded drawing provided to make their building quite easy. When all had been made they were painted white, slightly weathered and then varnished. Yes I was still applying some weathering to the model as I progressed along, but the further aft you progress there is less weathering to be applied.

Both lifeboats are a fibreglass moulding and the builder has a choice of whether to show them as covered or leave them open and add the interior detail. I preferred to cover them, as they probably would have been when the vessel was at sea.

*Net and figures in place on model.*


*Frank Hinchcliffe of Mountfleet looking at my model.*

The cast metal bilge keels were fitted firstly, then the hull exteriors were sprayed white followed by a coat of matt varnish. Next I made the lifelines from cordage that had been stained and to help keep the loop consistent I fixed a length of tape around the hull as a guide.

After fixing a piece of wood to run lengthways from the stem post tops to the stem post tops on each boat they were ready for covering. The covering material is provided and it is 'Solartex' aircraft covering. Having cut all the parts required I glued them in place and (when my wife had gone to visit her mother) I used the iron to run over the material. This not only binds all the parts together but also makes the material taut giving it a good finish. When using the iron do not have the heat too high and replace it before the wife returns, otherwise you might end up doing your own shirts!

After the davits, boats, railings and the rest of the finished parts had been fixed in place the deck was treated in the same manner as the others. Now it was time to complete the rigging and there was still plenty to be done including the main mast.

## Radio Installation

As I have already mentioned I had planned to install sound and smoke units to enable the model to look and sound natural upon the water. I contacted ACTion, one of the companies that produce sound modules, and explained to them what I required. I also explained that I would like it all to work using just a 4 function radio set. As the electrical side of things is not my strong point I asked ACTion if it was possible for them to draw me a wiring diagram so it would make things a little easier for me this they kindly did. (See diagram Number 3, courtesy ACTion, for module and wiring diagram)

So with the modules and the wiring diagram at hand I was able to install and successfully operate all the units. The final set up on the transmitter was as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| CH1 | Rudder |
| CH2 | Steam whistle |
| CH3 | Motor throttle |
| CH4 | Lights and smoke unit |

## The Net

When the photographs I took of the model on her maiden voyage returned, one thing that struck me was that there was no net aboard.

I had planned to fit personnel onboard so why not a net? It would then look as if it was heading for the fishing grounds.

After making a few enquiries a friend of mine told me to contact a gentleman in Hull who owns a Company called 'Net Maker'.

This I did and explained which model I had built and what scale it was and asked if he could make me a net to suit. Everything was agreed and a few weeks later it arrived, it was fitted on board along with the crew figures.

## Sailing and Handling the Model

I have to admit the first time I sailed this model I had the assistance of a friend. He was going to sail the model while I did the photography, so with both of us being in attendance I added the weight and batteries before placing it upon the water.

I was really amazed at how graceful and how manoeuvrable it was and it is at this time that the 'feel good' factor kicks in. After all the hours of constructing and creating to be able to see finally sailing upon the water makes for good feeling. We both gave her a good sail around and neither of us could spot any vices.

When the next fine day came along I thought I had better put my theory into practice and go sail this model alone, after all that is the way it had been planned. I took along a table and set this up near the poolside. Next the batteries and weight boxes, were placed on the floor near to the pool's edge. I then removed the model from the back of the car and placed it onto the table along with the transmitter. After removing the superstructure I lifted the hull using the cross beams and placed onto the water. Each weight container was then installed, the batteries added and connected, before finally replacing the superstructure. There are a couple of pieces of rigging to then connect before retrieving the transmitter and switching it on. The aft fish hatch cover is then removed to expose the two switches that have been installed. After activating the switches, replacing the cover it was full steam ahead.

Yes, I can honestly say that this launching method works, so there is no need to have to depend on other people's assistance when planning a sail.

## Summary

This is one of the most detailed kits I have ever reviewed. I enjoyed every minute of the construction and the icing on the cake is its sailing performance. As mentioned throughout this review it is a large model but following a few of my ideas on ballasting at the lakeside can simplify the handling of it for the lone modeller.

Detail is in abundance, making the finished model a definite show pleaser. I would not recommend a beginner to tackle this kit but for those who have already gained experience this model will give hours of pleasure and pride. (mm)

## Kitbox Data

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|---|---|
| **St. Nectan** | **Shelterdeck Steam Trawler** |
| | **Requires minimum 2 funstion RC and large electric or steam plant** |
| **Scale:** | **1:32** |
| **Length:** | **1730 mm (88")** |
| **Beam:** | **268 mm (10.5")** |
| **Manufacturers:** | **Mountfleet Models, Laurel Mount, 79 Holmfirth Road, Meltham, Huddersfield, HD9 4DA.** |
| **Tel/Fax:** | **01484-851569** |