

Mike Ashey  
Productions

# BUILDING & DETAILING SCALE MODEL SHIPS

MIKE ASHEY



SCRATCHBUILDING GUNS, MASTS & RIGGING • SIDE KEELS • WEATHERING •  
WORKING WITH PHOTOETCHED LADDERS & RAILINGS • CREATING WATER DIORAMAS

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Mike Ashey resides in Tallahassee, Florida, with his wife, Kelly, and their two sons, Thomas and Gregory. Mike has been building models since the early sixties. His interests are primarily aircraft, ships, and armor. He has an undergraduate degree in Ocean Engineering from Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida, and aside from building models he enjoys writing, SCUBA diving Florida's coral reef systems, flying, staying in shape, and being a father to two future model builders.

Mike spent four years in the U.S. Marines and was honorably discharged as a sergeant. He worked for the Department of the Navy as a senior engineer and project manager, and his last assignment was as a technical advisor for the Navy's elite SEAL combat force.

Presently Mike is deeply involved in protecting Florida's aquatic and wetland resources, and he is a Bureau Chief for Florida's Department of Environmental Protection.

## ABOUT THE BOOK

This is the most comprehensive book on building and detailing scale model ships ever written. It documents with step-by-step detail, both in text and in hundreds of close-up photographs, how to turn an average ship model into a highly detailed masterpiece. This book contains hundreds of simple techniques that will teach you how to assemble and add detail to ship hulls, decks and superstructures, add real chains, and bore out kit-supplied guns.

It shows you how to scratchbuild guns, masts, propeller shafts, superstructure parts, and railings; how to improve the appearance of guns; how to work with photoetched railings; how to build up and detail photoetched cranes, catapults, and radar parts; how to work with resin ship models and white-metal fittings; and how to display ship models. This book also contains an entire chapter devoted exclusively to tips and techniques for seam removal, masking clear parts, and weathering. Whether you have been building model ships for years or are just getting started, this book is for you!

**MIKE ASHEY  
PRODUCTIONS**

# **BUILDING & DETAILING SCALE MODEL SHIPS**

**MIKE ASHEY**

**The Complete Guide to Building, Detailing,  
Scratchbuilding, and Modifying Scale Model Ships**

**MIKE ASHEY  
PRODUCTIONS**

*For my wife Kelly  
and  
my sons, Thomas and Gregory*

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## **MIKE ASHEY PRODUCTIONS**

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On the cover, top to bottom: INJ *Maya* (late war configuration) manufactured by Nichimo, Inc.; 1/500 scale kit built by Scott Weller. INJ destroyer *Kagero* manufactured by Classic Warships, Inc.; 1/350 scale kit built by John Ficklen. USS *Oregon* manufactured by Glencoe, Inc.; 1/225 scale kit built by Mike Ashe. Cover photos by Glenn Johnson Photoillustration of Tallahassee, Florida

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All photos are by Mike Ashe or Glenn Johnson.

## FORWARD

Over the years I have often wondered what it is about this hobby that makes it so special to me. I guess that, above all other reasons, it helps me to connect with my childhood and the many things that were so special about being a kid. It all started when my Dad took me along for a ride one warm summer day in 1964 and we visited a place called Vince's Hobby store in Clifton, New Jersey. I will never forget the impression it left on me. The store was a wonderland of electric trains, gas powered airplanes, which hung from the ceiling and were almost as big as me, and walls lined with plastic models of every type. On that special day we bought a ship model, which we built and floated in the tiny pool my Dad had set up for my brothers and me. I cannot remember how many times I broke and repaired that model, but it kept me occupied and it made me hunger for more.

I discovered that the local hardware and repair store, which was within biking distance, carried models and within a year or two my room was cluttered with Aurora, Revell, Hawk, Renwal and Monogram kits of every type. I spent every dime of my paper route money on models and long hours in the basement building them. As I got older I biked to every hobby store I could find just to stare at the finished models displayed in the glass cases.

As I look back on those years I have come to understand that building all those models served many purposes, besides keeping me out of trouble. Building models gave me an outlet to express my fledgling creativity which has developed to the point that now I can look at a plain, basic, stripped down model and picture it as a finely detailed model simply by changing the picture of it in my head. It honed my skills at following instructions to assemble things, which translated to following machinery diagrams and blueprints in my later years. It has allowed me to become very adept at discerning spacial relationships of equipment, buildings and site plans which comes in handy as a practicing field engineer. It developed my common sense problem solving skills and instilled in me a sense of symmetry and organization. All of these attributes that I now have and which serve me well in life I can attribute in some measure to quite a few 98 cent models and countless bottles of Testors paint and glue.

Although the model industry is better now than it has ever been before, something has been lost. Amongst all the fancy high tech kits, accessories and photoetched parts we have lost the true sense and pleasure of the hobby. Many models are expensive almost to the point of being absurd, and many aftermarket products cost as much or more than the kits themselves. Somehow along the way we forgot about the kid on the bike who yearns to expand his or her creativity and let his or her imagination run wild. The future generation of our hobby is growing up on electronic games and most of them will never experience all the positive attributes that this hobby has instilled in us adults. As a result, they may never benefit from all the by-products that model building can bestow upon a young mind and propel a young man or woman to success.

I cannot say enough good things about those kit manufacturers that strive to seek a balance between all age groups and offer low cost models to our children. I wrote this book in an effort to reintroduce to the modeling community the art of creativity, imagination and ideas and to remind all of us that to invest in the kid on the bicycle is the best investment we can make.

**MIKE ASHEY**  
**PRODUCTIONS**  
PRESENTS  
**BUILDING AND DETAILING**  
**SCALE MODEL SHIPS**

**Computer formatted**  
**Into**  
**ADOBE FILE TITLES**

**Each chapter of the book is contained in a separate Adobe file**  
**For easy access, viewing, enlarging and printing.**

**General Book Information**

Cover, Dedication, Preface, Index, Manufacturers and Suppliers

**Chapter 1**

Modeling Tips and Techniques

**Chapter 2**

Hull and Main Deck Assembly

**Chapter 3**

Superstructure Assembly and Photoetch Railings and Ladders

**Chapter 4**

Guns, Cranes, Catapults, Small Boats, Radars, Masts and Rigging

**Chapter 5**

Scratchbuilding Ship Parts

**Chapter 6**

Displaying Your Models

# MANUFACTURERS AND SUPPLIERS

Badger Airbrush  
9128 West Belmont Ave.  
Franklin Park, IL 60131  
(Airbrush equipment)

Bare Metal Foil Company  
P. O. Box 82  
Farmington Hill, MI 48024  
(Plastic polish, plastic scribes, small parts placers, and resin)

Bluejacket Ship Crafters  
P. O. Box 425  
Stockton Springs, ME 04981  
(Ship models and fittings)

Borden Inc.  
Department CP  
Columbus, OH 43215  
(White glue)

Classic Warships  
P. O. Box 57591  
Tucson, AZ 85732  
(Resin models and detail sets)

Commanders Series Models/Iron Shipwright  
551 Wegman Road  
Rochester, NY 14624  
(Resin models)

Creations Unlimited Hobby Products  
2939 Montreat Dr. N.E.  
Department 169  
Grand Rapids, MI 49505  
(Flex-I-File and Flex-I-File sanding sticks)

Devcon Corporation  
Danvers, MA 01923  
(Two-part epoxy)

Dremel  
4915 - 21st Street  
Racine, WI 53406  
(Drill bits, cutters, drill presses, and drill press vises)

Evergreen Scale Models  
12808 N.E. 125th Way  
Kirkland, WA 98034  
(Plastic shapes, sheeting, and rod)

Flagship Models  
2204 Summer Way Ln.  
Edmond, OK 73013  
(Photoetched railings and detail sets)

The Floating Drydock  
Kresgeville, PA 18333  
(Ship plans and drawings, documentation, photos, and ship fittings)

Floquil Polly-S Color Corporation  
Amsterdam, NY 12012  
(Paints, Plastic Prep, and paint/decal remover)

Gold Medal Models  
12332 Chapman Ave., No. 81  
Garden Grove, CA 92640  
(Photoetch sets and ship decals)

Gulfstream Fine Scale Models  
2070 Wildridge Dr.  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
(Distributed by Marco Polo Imports)  
(Resin models and detail sets)

K & S Engineering Co.  
Chicago, IL 60638  
(Sandpaper, brass rod, and tubing)

Loctite Corporation  
Cleveland, OH 44128  
(Super glue)

MB Models/Blue Water Navy  
P. O. Box 8241, Festival Center  
Charleston, SC 29418  
(Resin models and detail sets)

Micro Mark  
340-1513 Snyder Ave.  
Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922  
(Hobby supplier)

Microscale Industries, Inc.  
P. O. Box 11950  
Costa Mesa, CA 92627  
(Decal-setting solution)

Model Expo, Inc.  
Box 1000 Mt. Pocono Industrial Park  
Tobyhanna, PA 18466  
(Ship models and fittings, wood display bases, and brass pedestals)

The Naval Base  
P. O. Box 207  
Cedarhurst, NY 11516  
(Ship models, supplies, and reference material)

Northwest Short Line  
Box 423  
Seattle, WA 98111  
(Chopper and true sander)

Pacer Technology  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730  
(Super glue accelerator)

Pacific Front Hobbies  
14320 124th Avenue N.E.  
Kirkland, WA 98034  
(Ship models, supplies, and reference material)

Plastruct  
1020 South Wallace Place  
City of Industry, CA 91748  
(Plastic shapes and rod)

Rocky Mountain Shipyard  
590 Ronlin St.  
Grand Junction, CO 81504  
(Ship plans, drawings, models, photos, and ship fittings)

Scotch 3M Painters Masking Tape  
Box 33053  
St. Paul, MN 55133  
(Masking tape)

Squadron Shop  
1115 Crowley Drive  
Carrollton, TX 75011  
(Putty)

Super Scale International, Inc.  
Carson City, NV  
(Decal-setting solutions and white glue)

Testor Corporation  
Rockford, IL 61108  
(Paints, paintbrushes, putty, sandpaper, glue and glue applicators, sprue cutters, and airbrush equipment)

Tom's Model Works  
1050 Cranberry Drive  
Cupertino, CA 95014  
(Resin models and photoetch sets)

Waldron Model Products  
P. O. Box 431  
Merlin, OR 97526  
(Waldron punch set)

X-Acto  
P. O. Box 5830  
Statesville, NC 28677  
(Blades and cutting tools)

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