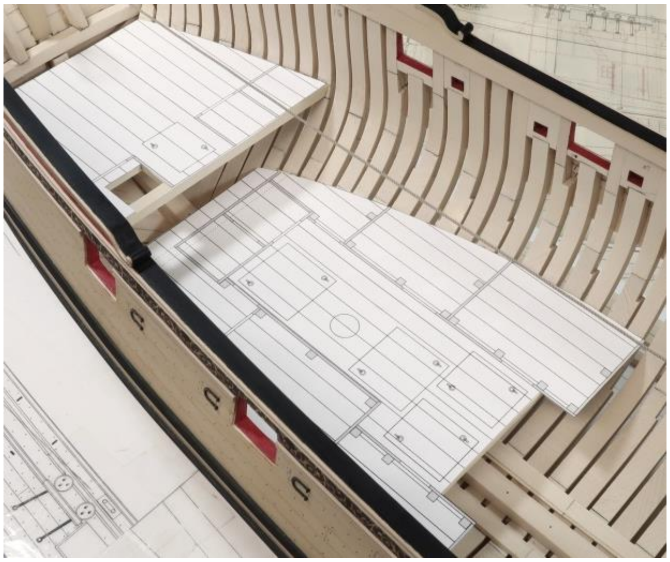
Chapter FIve – Starting to work on aft platforms …

Continuing with the lower platforms…there are two aft platforms. They are framed exactly like the two forward ones. Mark out the heights for the frames etc. I wont go through the step by step and instead just mention the a couple of noteworthy things.

There is another jig that helps with finding the height and position of the first beam on the upper platform. Dont throw it away after using it. It will come in handy later. **Note** that the mizzen mast partner is laser cut for you. Its a little longer on the forward and aft sides so you can adjust its position over the mast step to match the plans.

Just as with the forward platforms…use the plans as templates to help find the proper positions of those ledges for the scuttle openings as well. Using them as templates helps so much, and really helps you see the final product.

Now that the framing is done, the next stage is to plank the lowest platform. Once again the templates and plans for these really help. Everything is laid out on them. Note how the deck planking hangs over the forward beam. The planks also run over the aft beam as well. Use the string to keep everything lined up down the center.



It was hard to keep everything focused in this last picture below because the camera wanted to only focus on the string....but here I have attempted to show the templates positioned down the center line. They fit perfectly.

You should keep these templates because it will make life very easy when it comes to laying out all those cabins later in the project.

I am just doing the busy work...planking those aft platforms like we did for the others. But I thought this small detail was worth mentioning. Maybe some of you will think this is a good tip to use on any model.

The lower aft platform is planked first following the plans and templates provided. But as seen on many ship models there are scuttles which have rings for handles. Similarly you can see these type of rings used for the gun tackles on deck etc. Most folks will make a split ring and then insert this into the eye of an eyebolt. You have seen this a million times.

The photo below shows just that. Look at the bottom row. On the left is what you typically see. The split ring on an eyebolt. Nothing wrong with this as everyone does it this way. But even when the eyebolts have smaller eyes you will end up with so many unsightly rings on deck or on your scuttle lids that look out of scale and sticking up. Yes, you are supposed to sink the eyes part-way into the deck which is a real pain. But even then, it looks very odd to me now after examining so many contemporary models.

So to the right is a solution for this which I keep meaning to write about... but always forget to.

The split rings in this case are made from 24 gauge black wire. They are made as

usual...wrapping many times around a #47 drill bit and sawed off to produce a 15 or 20 rings.

Rather than make and use tiny eyebolts I just take a small length of thinner 28 gauge black wire and make a small bent "V".   This makes it easy to handle and slip the split ring onto.   Then I crimp the 28 gauge wire tight around the split ring with small pliers. Its very simple indeed.   Squeeze the two ends together and snip off the bottom on an angle so you have a point.   It looks almost like a cotter pin of sorts.   This is slipped into a hole drilled on deck or in this case the scuttle lids.

I saw this done in my favorite book,   "Legacy of a Ship Model" by Rob Napier.   During his restoration of the Princess Royal model he took the model apart...I mean all of it.   In the book there are so many photos of these items which show the way the contemporary model builders made their parts.   This is how the contemporary builder made these on that model (250 years ago) and after carefully examining so many other contemporary models I believe most of them were made just like this.   There is an excellent photo of the contemporary version of one of these in that book....along with countless other gems showing how those guys did stuff back then. Rob had to make more of these for his restoration and used the exact same method of course.

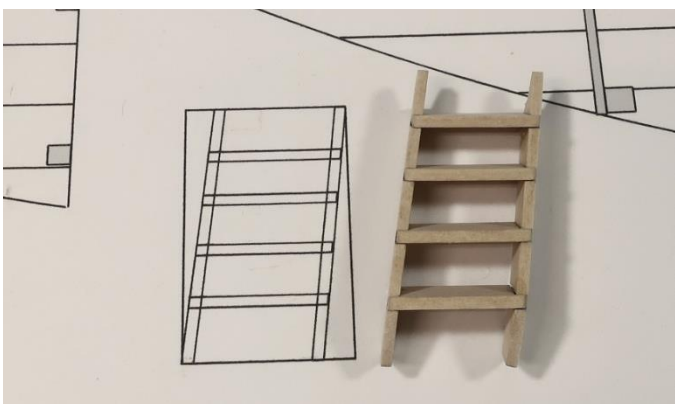
This makes the handles and rings look so much more to scale. No more pesky eyes sticking up that are too large all over the deck for the crew to trip over.   Its a small detail but I thought worth mentioning now that I remembered to do so.   At least I hope you think so.   Its the small details that make a difference when you add them all up...

Lastly I also made the mizzen mast coat as you can see. Its made in the same way as on the Winnie. In three layers. The middle layer is rounded off and the char removed. Then the top and bottom layers were added after removing the char from those. The mast coat is not glue down permanently. It is just lightly tacked with some rubber cement. You may have to move it when trying to position the mizzen mast later. So dont glue it down permanently yet. The hole on deck is slightly larger than that of the mast coat...so you can move it any way to accommodate the mast later. **NOTE: The mast coat was later changed here to be Octagonal. The lower masts are not round and I discovered this later. But I was able to replace the round mast coat with one that was octagonal later on. So my model will be accurate. Your kits have had the laser cut mast coats updated as well. The laser cut parts are now octagonal. Its an interesting detail I have not seen on a contemporary model so I want to make sure I accurately depict the same. The lower masts are octagonal from the keel up to the sheer line or caprail before turning to round in section. I have only since acquired some really fantastic photos showing this feature.**

I finished up the aft platforms...

They were both planked with the scuttle lids being finished as described earlier. But then two upright timbers were cut to length (3/16 x 3/16) and placed on both sides of the open hatchway. This gives it more support so you can Carefully cut away the beam between them. It will look like the pic (next page) when done.

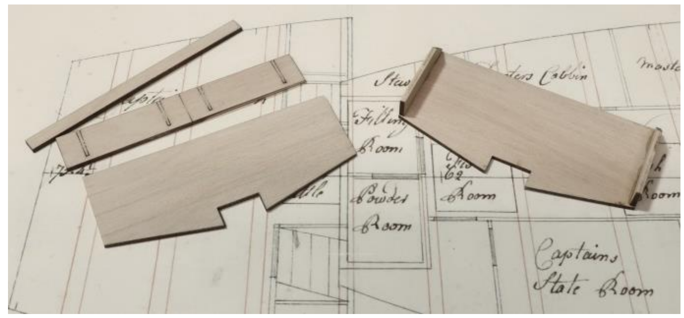
Then you can make the short ladder that goes in that opening between platforms.   This is typical and laser cut for you. The only difference is that this ladder is tilted or skewed sideways.   Its an interesting detail.   The reason for this will become clear when we start building out all of the cabins. There is a small square with the angle you will need for this ladder on the plans. See below.



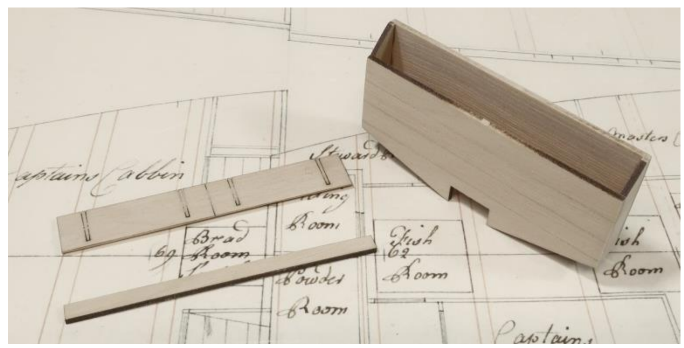
This is what it looks like in position. Brutal close-ups..

Then I figured it would be fun to build and install the shot lockers at this time.

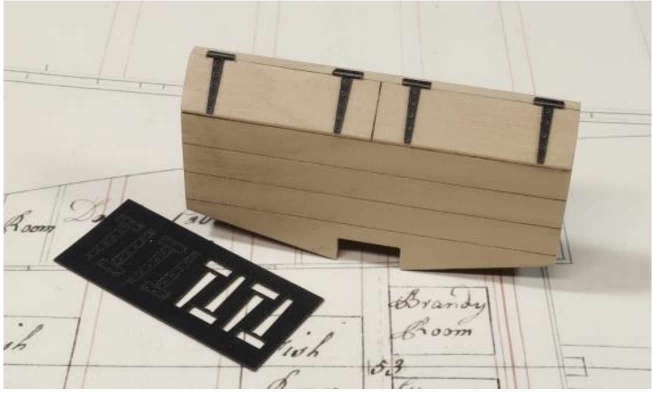
All pieces are laser cut. The sides were glued on top of the back piece first. They were placed at right angles neatly.



Then the front is added...which is shorter and has laser etched plank details.



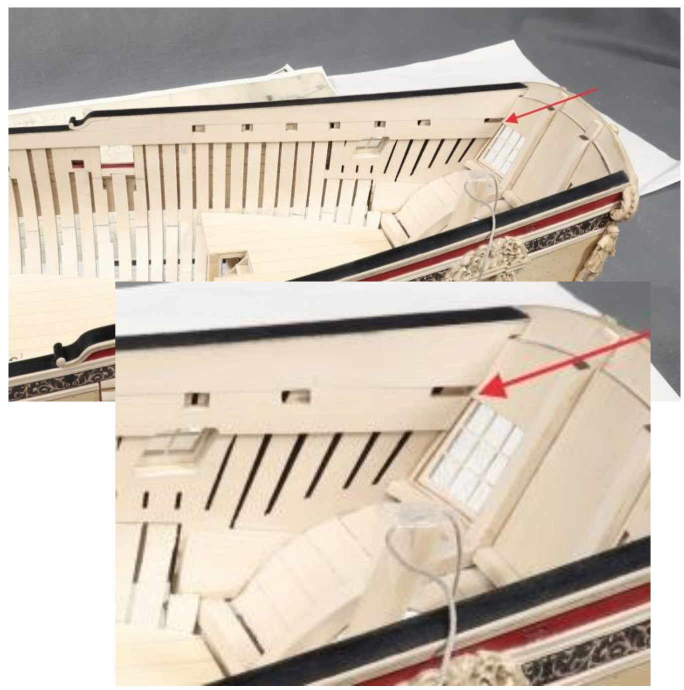
Next comes the top piece. This was laser cut a bit wider than needed for wiggle room.   It was glued on top and then the back side was sanded flush where the top hung over the edge. The lids were also prepared. It is one piece with some laser etched details. Basically you have to bevel the top and bottom edges. Quite a bit as you can see.



Here the lid piece was added. It has etched reference marks for the hinges. The hinges are laser board and added the same way we did them for the fire hearth. The top and bottom halves of the hinge are separate pieces. They are glued on first. Then to finish them up a small length of 24 gauge black wire was used to simulate the hinge pins between them.

And finally added to the model...you may have to adjust the height of the shot locker AS you are building it. It all depends on whether or not you placed the height of the aft platform differently. Maybe you placed the platform lower and thus your shot locker may have to be shorter. Measure twice and cut once sort of thing...its so important to get the platform heights correct. But if you didn't, that's OK...just do some problem solving and with some adjustments you will be just fine. I would even go as far to suggest that you test the back piece in position before you assemble the shot locker. Then you will know if it's too tall or short and you can adjust accordingly.

Now that the aft platforms are completed it made sense to plank the great cabin next. First thing to do was add the laser cut deck clamps. These have notches cut for the qdeck beams. You can see the deck clamp added below. The aft side needs to be beveled to fit flush against the transom. The forward side is left a bit long so you can trim it to fit neatly in place. That forward-most beam notch is a bit longer to give us some wiggle room later for the placement of that beam. In addition before gluing it in...You must shape where the qbadge window is. Sand the shape into the bottom edge of the deck clamp as shown. Because it could be in a slightly different position model-to-model, this detail is not laser cut into the deck clamp.



NOTE the red arrow. The bottom of the notch in the clamp should be even with the top of the window or even slightly higher. But it should not be below the top edge of the windows. If it is, you should make adjustments before gluing it onto the model. In addition, the bottom of these beam notches should NOT be altered. However, when you test fit the beams and find you need to make adjustments, you can absolutely enlarge the notches on the sides and top for a better fit. Just carefully chisel out some of the deck clamp or the planking above it to accommodate your beams.

Next we will plank the inboard side of the great cabin. I am sure most of you could do this without any issues, but to help make it easier, there is a template on the plans. See below. This should make it easier to cut each strake with the appropriate tapers. There are six strakes. I highly recommend that these planks be cut from a 3/64" sheet as they are somewhat wide at the stern. Plus they are pretty much all drawn out for you. I will also add that you may have to make small adjustments because depending on where you aft platform ended up, you may have a slightly different area of space. Adjust the template accordingly and cut your planks to fit. Again they are 3/64" thick.

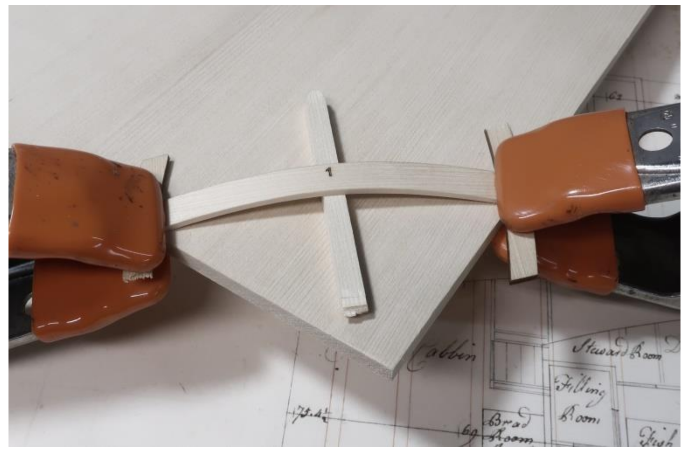
The photo below shows the cabin planked inboard. I carefully cut around that window and did simulate caulking for the plank seams. I just used full length planks rather than show any possible butt joints. They won't be seen anyway. Note the forward edge of the planking runs down the FORWARD edge of the hull frame. Keep the forward edge nice and neat right down the edge of that hull frame.

You might see some laser cut qdeck beams in that picture as well. They are just lying on the lower platform. Although we won't be adding

them just yet, it will be to our benefit to have them handy while we do the next steps of fitting out the cabin benches and rudder trunk details. The laser char was removed from the deck beams and they were cut to length. It takes some practice on the first few to get the length correct so they sit nicely in those notches. But dont throw it away if you cut it too short. Just use it for the next shorter beam and work from the forward side aft when doing this.

Test fit the qdeck beams....none are glued in as I mentioned. Note the extra space or larger notch on the forward beam on the deck clamp. This will let us move it around where needed when we start work on the bulkheads there. If any of you are having a problem slipping the beams into those notches, you could easily add another strip of say 1/8 x 1/32 cedar following the bottom of the notches and it would be fine. I did not find the need to do that however. But you might find it easier if there was a second layer that stood proud of the planking a bit to rest your beams on. Builder's choice...

I managed to get the transom beam in position. Much like the Winchelsea, it was made in layers to simplify it. These are all laser cut, but slightly longer than needed just in case. They were pre-bent in a jig set up. This is crucial. I used some scrap 3/16 x 3/16 wood under the center to bend it. I just clamped the end and then blasted it with the hair dryer on super-hot. Note the wood scraps on the ends too. This protects the ends from denting and other damage. All of the layers are done like this. Using the 3/16" x 3/16 strip makes the perfect bend we need..



Testing it in place. Layer one. Not glued in yet. but pretty tight.

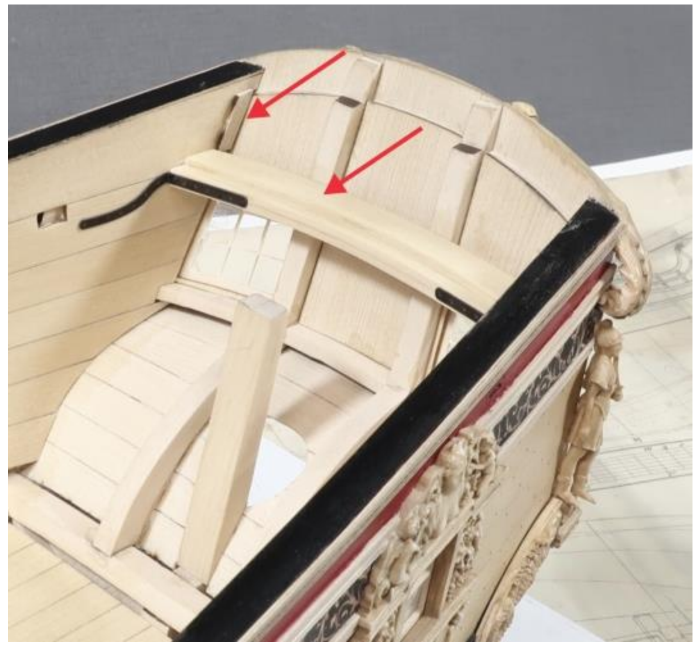
Then repeat with layer two on top. No need to bevel the back edge. Just slide it against the stern frames. Then glue the top layer onto the bottom one while on the model. I found that helpful. You will be able to remove the whole thing because the bottom layer isnt glued in. This way you can sand it a bit if needed and clean it up.

Testing the transom beam with the other six.   They should be the same height and a test with a strip of wood confirms this. The deck planking will lay nicely on top. You should absolutely do this on your model.

To finish off the transom beam, you can glue the final 3/64" thick layer on the top. This one will show so take your time cleaning it up.   The back side was beveled to sit flash against the stern frames. The same was done on each end against the bulwarks so I got a tight fit. One of the red arrows shows this top layer. Note that it is narrower and leaves a nice rabbet on the forward side to accept the qdeck planking.

The other red arrow shows a laser cut filler on the 3/64" thick. This is glued to the bulwarks and will be important in the next step.

And finally...the iron straps are added. These are laser cut on black laser board. Each iron strap is in two pieces. One on the beam and the other curved section on the deck clamp. These will hardly be seen. In fact I think they are mostly covered later...what a pity.



Next up was the planked inboard side of the transom. This is laser cut in one piece with etched lines to show the planking. Just bevel the sides for a tight fit. Also bevel the bottom edge as well. This was actually pre-bent in that same jig set up to establish the curve. It worked great.   Use the 3/16" x 3/16" strip in the center like before. Once I got a tight fit I removed it and painted it red before gluing it in permanently. This helps me keep a crisp

edge on the bottom with no sloppy paintwork. Then glue it in...

The top of this planked area was prepared next. It is laser cut in a way that the grain makes it super easy to bend. So no jigs are needed. In fact be careful as it is delicate. The top is done in two halves. I have given folks and extra set just in case. There are notches for the stern frames. They are laser cut smaller than needed so you will need to enlarge them to fit tightly around the stern frames. The back edge was also beveled so it fit nice and tight.

Then repeat with the other side. Note how the top is flush or nearly flush with the cap rail.

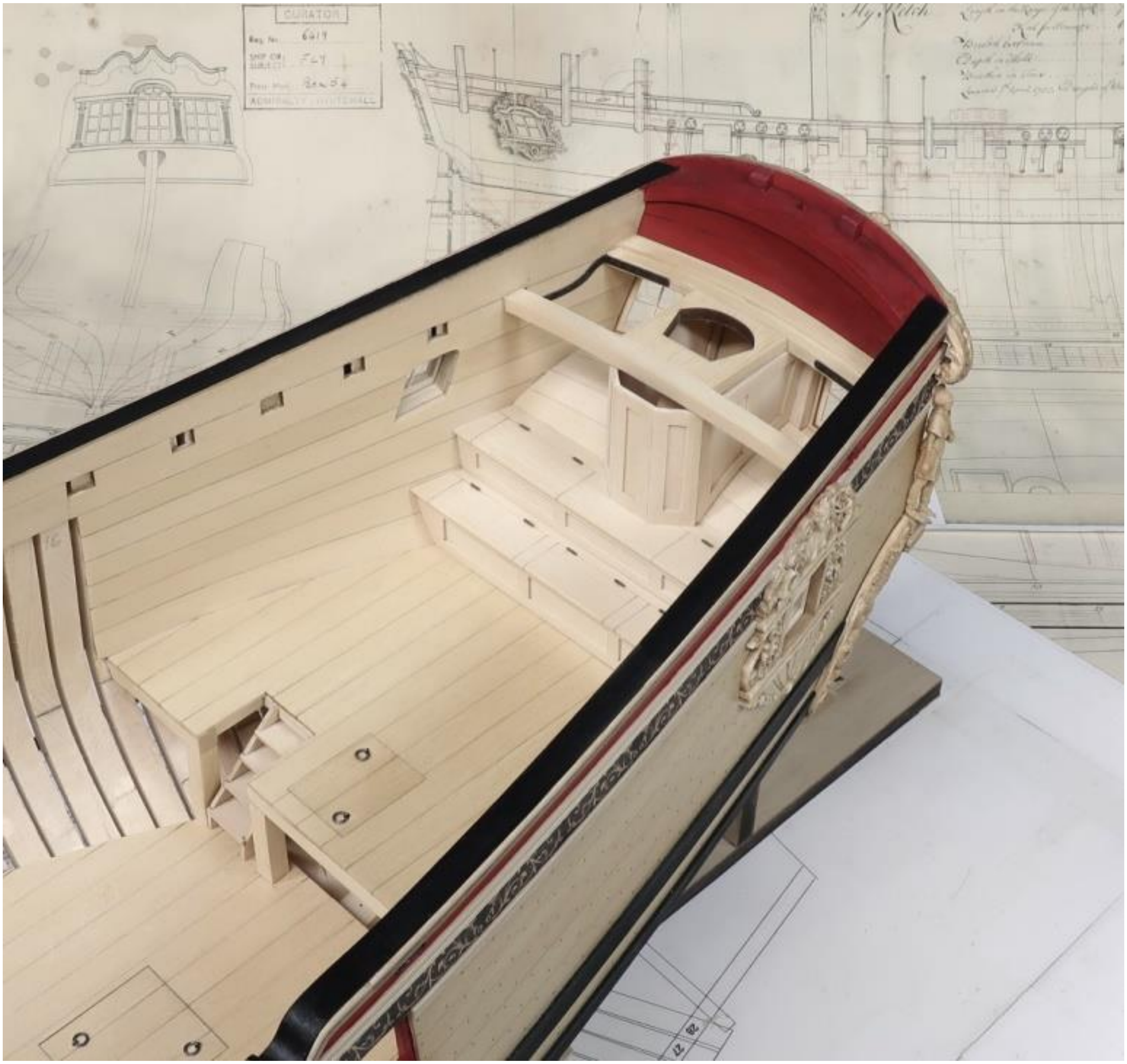
Then a front mold piece finished it all up. It is the forward face of this simulated beam for lack of a better word. It was sanded to fit tightly and all prepared for painting. It is also 3/64" thick.

Then its all painted red and cleaned up...once the paint work is tidied up, this really finishes off the inboard side of the transom nicely. You can see the deck beams also being tested in position but not glued in permanently.

It is time to make the bench lockers and rudder trunk. This finishes up the inboard side of the transom nicely I think. I have taken many step by step photos but rather than go through the whole process here are some pictures.

Its pretty self explanatory actually.

The panels are made in two layers of .025 Yellow Cedar for the benches and rudder trunk. Then its just a matter of shaping them to fit snug and neat in position. You want a tight fit against the planked sides of the cabin.

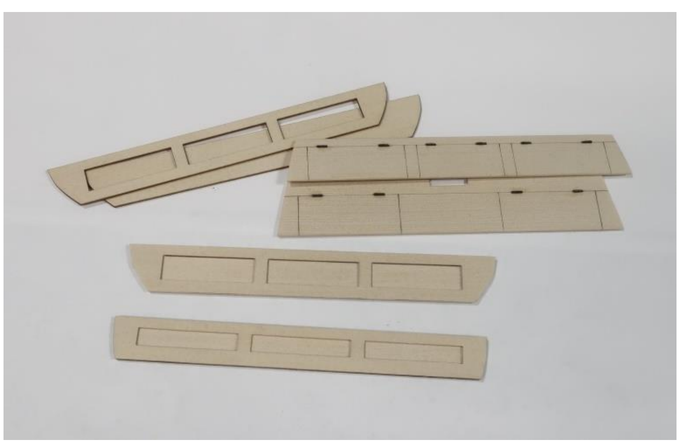


Small lengths of 24 gauge black wire was use for the benchtop lids. Some laser etching shows where they go. To finish it all up I added that aft-most beam permanently and also the framed for the rudder. Everything s laser cut for you...even the planking for the inside portion of the counter. The sides of the rudder trunk panels were beveled so they could be fit together with a tight mitered seam between them. I have not added wipe on poly yet. I want to do a bit of clean up and repainting where thing got scuffed up a bit. But I expect it will clean up OK. And I have already cleaned the inside of the windows as well. It will get harder to do that now that this detail was completed.

To begin...add the two center supports against

the stern frames as shown. Then add the two outer bench locker frames right against the counter planking as shown. These are a little beefier or deeper so you can tell which ones to use in the center and which ones to use along the sides.

Then build out the front faces of each bench. They are in two layers. Be sure to sand the laser char off and also really thin down the top layer which simulates the panels. You don't want the top layer too thick. Don't be afraid to sand them. You can also add the simulated hinges for the top of the seat lids.



Slowly shape the front faces of each bench along the sides so they fit nicely in position. Try to not get any gaps along the sides!!!

Glue the tops on next. Nice and neat!!

Now we can plank above the bench tops up to the stern window sills.

But to make this easier, you should add these along the side of the hull first so you have some surface area to sit those planks onto.

Now build out the surround for the rudder head. The side panels are built in two layers just like the benches. Sand those top layers thinner for a better more elegant look. Carefully sand the char off the edges inside the panels of that top layer if you want to. Note

the other odd looking laser cut piece that sits on top of the bench. Just in front of the rudder head. It should slide in between the two sides and make it easier to position the 3 front panels.

To finish it up add the next deck beam so you can position the partners for the rudder head.

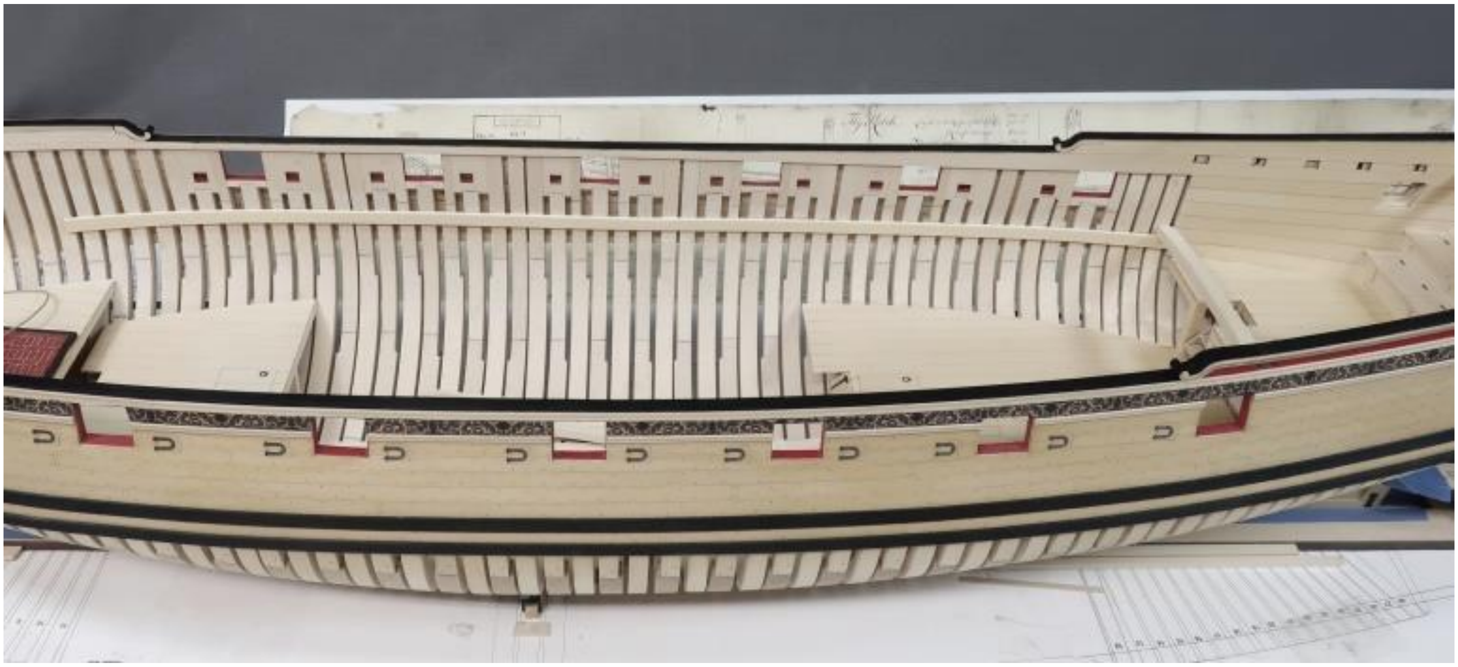
The partners for the rudder head are laser cut with an opening for the rudder head. No need to clean the char from the edges inside the opening. It will be covered up.

Position it so it is a tight fit between the two beams. Also glue it in so it is a bit higher than the two beams so you can sand the top of the partners to match the beam round-up.

Be sure to center this as well. Also note that the partners are NOT as thick as the deck beams after you sand in the matching round-up.

The lower bulkhead against the aft platform is next. This is pretty easy and straight forward. But before we can get to work on that, we have to add the gun deck clamps for all of the deck beams. There are many ways to find the height for the deck clamp. But I chose to create another template. It's just easier for me. And I hope for you as well. Place it on the model with some tape. **The top edge of the template under that inboard shear plank.** Then trace along the bottom edge of the template to mark the **TOP** of the deck clamp. See photo below.

The actual deck clamp is made using two lengths of 1/4 x 1/16 cedar strips. Just follow the line you made. **The top of the wood strips are placed flush against, and under your reference line.** This chapter will come supplied with a few gun deck beams. You can see I cleaned the char off one in that same photo (next page). I cut it to length and test fit it in position. It should slide right up against the great cabin planking aft. Hopefully you have the height of your deck clamps equal on



both sides so you dont have a crooked and sloped deck beam...

I have that beam sitting on the side while I take the two pieces that are laser cut for the lower bulkhead. See Below. Its all etched and ready to go. You just have to clean any char and tweak its shape a bit. You want to get a pretty good tight fit against the bulwarks on each side. But remember you will have a gap where the inboard planking would have been. Thats fine. So you have some leeway here. The inboard edge of each bulkhead should be flush with the opening for the stairs. You can see this in the photo below while giving it a test fit.

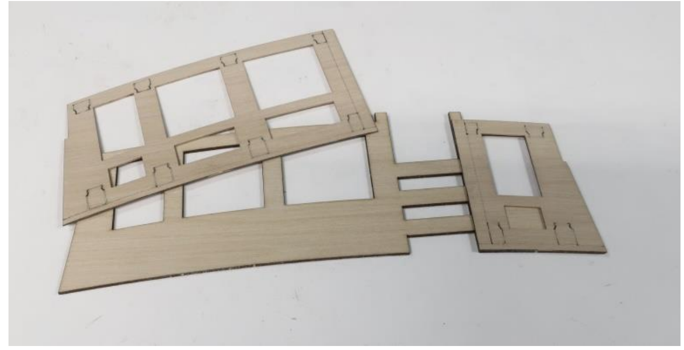
I applied some finish to each piece before gluing it in position. One note however. Continue to test fit both sides of the bulkhead....with the beam in position. You will see that after tweaking its shape that it sticks up beyond the deck beam. **That is by design...so leave that as is.** You may have to adjust as needed on your model depending on how far apart your platforms are. But this small lip will be important later when we add the next bulkheads on top of that beam.

Next up is the fancy bulkhead. This is a VERY prominent feature of our model so go slow and take your time. I have cut the plan to use as a template...

Building the Fancy Bulkhead...

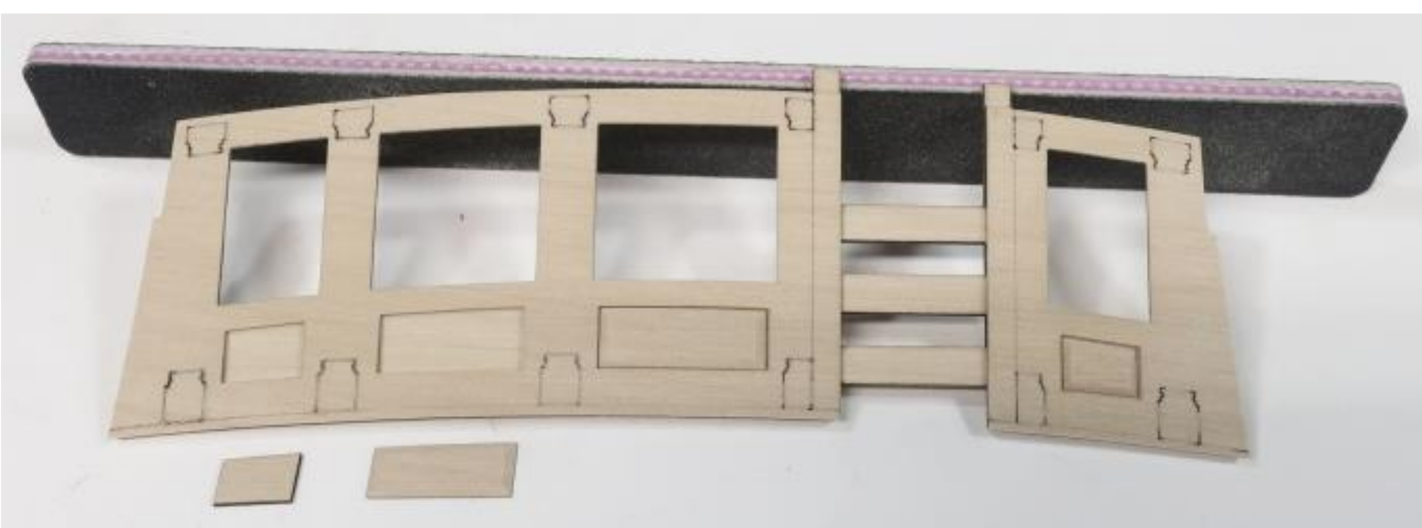
It starts as two layers like the bench lockers.   It will eventually have a third aft layer as well but we are only going to build out these first two FRONT layers and glue it on the model. Once the fancy bulkhead is in position you will add the third aft layer.

The top thinner layer has etched reference lines to help you with other parts later. The lower layer is 3/64" thick. Dont sand anything off the thicker lower layer. There is no need to sand



the char off any edge. In fact that would be bad. But the top layer is just .025 thick. The edges inside the windows and panel openings must be filed clean of char with a light touch. I used a flat needle file and a very light touch. It will be painted but it is best cleaned up somewhat. The right side has its top layer glued in position after cleaning the char from the edges of the two openings. Dont worry about the extreme outside edges of the top layer. Dont sand that char away as you want it exactly the same size and shape as the bottom layer when you glue them together.

Once the two top layers are cleaned and glued in position, **hopefully you havent thrown away the center squares for the paneling**. These are then sanded and beveled on all four sides to make the raised center panels. A very gradual long bevel is needed to make it look good. This makes the beveled area wider. Try and keep it a consistent width all the way around. Remember this layer is just .025



thick. I used a sanding stick with 320 grit for this. Two of the panels are done in this photo and two more to go. The straps in what will become the doorway are very important in this design. This keeps both sides at the perfect distance apart. This will allow us to put the curved top pieces on later without worrying that your door opening is too wide or too narrow. If that were the case, those top pieces would never fit. We will be cutting those away later after the bulkhead is securely glued in position.

At this stage, you should take it to the model for a test fit. Depending on where your beam is in relation to the aft platform under it, everyone's model will be slightly different even with the most careful measuring throughout the project. It also depends on how much you faired the frames inboard!! So the bulkhead at this point is slightly longer and higher than you will hopefully need. So at this stage, you must slowly sand each end so it fits snug against the inboard bulwarks. Holding it at an angle so you can test fit the side against the bulwarks. Once you get a good fit on one side you can repeat this on the other side. Keep doing this until it fits snug against the top beam and against the lip on the bottom beam. Slow and steady is the name of the game here. Only sand off the slightest amount working both sides until this bulkhead fits in position. You can see how nice it fits on the starboard side below.

Then direct your attention to the top and bottom of the bulkhead. The top edge should be flush with the top of the deck beam. So

rather than just sand the top down flush...its better to take a bit from the bottom and a bit off the top. Depending on your model this might be a lot or maybe none at all. There are so many variables. But hopefully I have accounted for them all in my design. The door is also shown in this photo. It has two layers and a panel also. But we wont be adding it until much later. But you can glue the outside layer and panel in position.

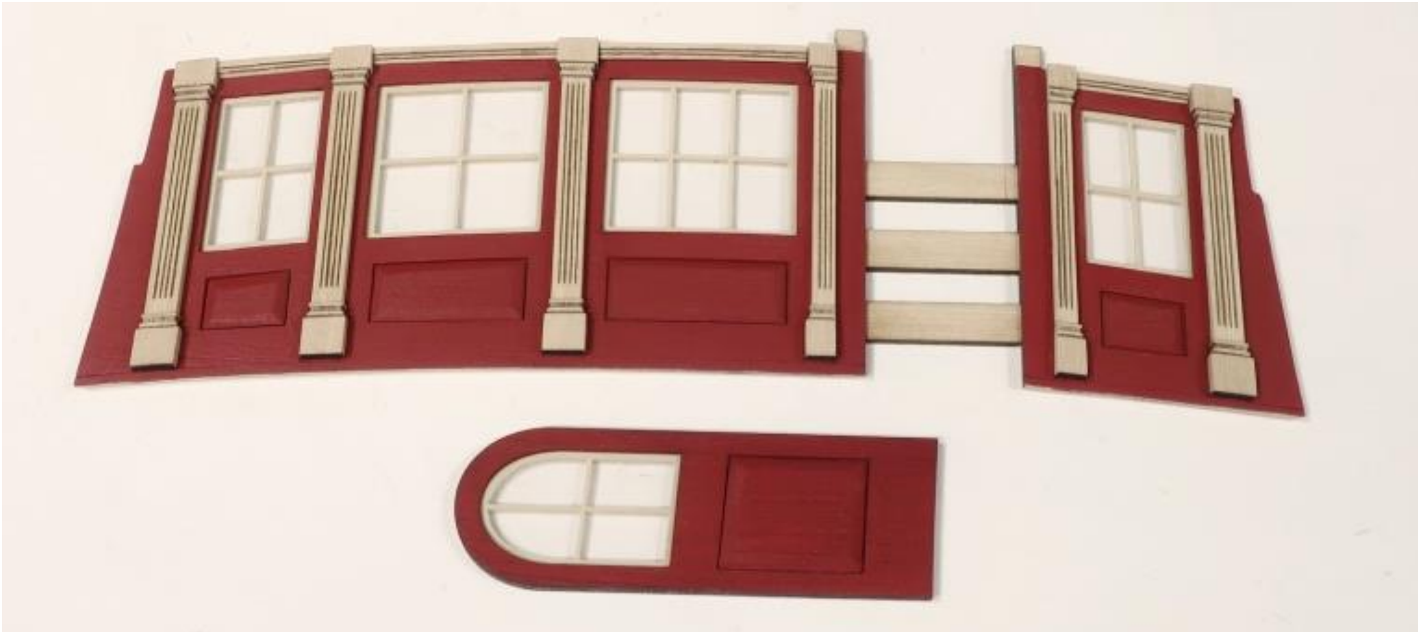
Now that you have a great fit...it's time to paint the forward side red. **Not the aft side!!**

Then we can start adding the column parts. They all need to be sanded and filed clean. Gentle here folks. Dont over sand. Use a very fine grit. A sanding stick works great here.

The bases for the columns are all added first. NOTE: These are glued on with 3/64" of space below them. That is for the gun deck planking much later on. Dont place these against the bottom edge of the patform. There is a laser etched line for reference so you dont forget. That is followed by the column itself after removing the char from the sides. The top of the column goes in next. Below you can see each column at a various stage. The base and tops are also filed to clean up the laser cut grooves a bit. Especially the sides of these pieces. Its exactly like we did for the transom columns. Once all the columns are done, there is a laser cut molding on the top of the bulkhead between the columns. Each length needs to be rounded off on top and bottom. Just on the forward side. Then if you want to, you can bevel the entire length of each molding so the bottom comes almost to a point. Do this on the back side. Making it a pie shape in profile... It will look nicer and add dimension. But this is optional because its a pain in the A..

Any bit of the columns that stick up along the top can be sanded flush with the top of the bulkhead. I made the column tops extra long just in case. Use the laser reference lines for placement as a guide only. Yours maybe different depending on how tall your bulkhead actually is. But it should be pretty close.

Then lastly...laser cut window frames are inserted into the reverse side. You will see a nice lip formed by the two layers and these will fit really nice inside each opening. That is followed up with a laser cut sheet of acetate for the window glass. See the photo on the next page.



This is a main focal point of the model so take your time and be as neat as possible. We will glue it into position now...the beam is glued in first and then the bulkhead. Nice and secure on the top and the bottom. You can see where we will cut away the deck beam in the doorway as well as the strips that kept the bulkhead properly distanced for the door opening. But we have a couple more things to do on the aft side of this bulkhead before we can cut away those pieces.

Once the bulkhead is glued into position we need to add another third layer on the aft side. This will make the aft side nice and smooth and even and neaten it all up. I am referring to the two strakes below the windows and the uprights between the windows. All are laser cut. Add the bottom stretch of planks first followed by the column covers. You will probably have to shape the sides to fit snug against your bulwark planking.

Now we can finally cut away the beam within the doorway opening and the other straps as well. Do this carefully with a fine toothed saw. I use a fine toothed scroll saw blade in an Xacto blade handle. The bulkhead layers make it all sturdy but you still need a light touch. No hurry with this.

Below you can see the open space for the doorway after I cut them away and then sanded the sides of the opening flush with a sanding stick. You can also see the door laying there. I finished the other side of the door which gets another layer of .025 cedar with another panel...unpainted. This is made exactly like all the other panels. The small strip you see in front of the door in that photo will become the saddle in the doorway that the door will rest on top of. It is a 5/32" x 3/64" strip. It is the same thickness as the planking we will use on the gun deck.

Below I am testing the door in position...which is wider than you will need. Sand it to fit the opening...and tweak the opening as well if you need to. A little sanding with a sanding stick on both will insure a nice fit. Note how the door is sitting on top of that saddle strip. The door is not glued in position yet. It is just a test for the next step...the rounded top frame. The first .025 layer can be seen in the same photo ready to go. Do you see it laying on the deck?

The arch doorway top....This first layer (of four) is .025 thick. It is a little taller than you will need. So while the door is resting in the opening, set it in position. You will see a gap along the top of the door. Sand the bottom of this arch a little at a time until that gap closes up. Then glue it to the front side of the two tabs sticking up. Sand the seams flat and paint the front face red. Then one by one, there are three more layers of this arch. Next the 3/64" thick piece. Then another .025 and lastly another 3/64" thick arch layer. I know...it’s a lot and why these thicknesses? It just seemed to work out that way honestly. This will make the top arch above the door nice and sturdy. Now you are ready to finish it up...

Note...dont bother cleaning the char from the edges of these pieces. You will distort the curves and it wont match the top of the door. This will not be seen at all. You can lightly sand the top of the arch once all the layers are glued in position. But just a little. That will be covered up also.

You can now place the margin plank along the front of the whole bulkhead. It will hang over the front slightly. It will also leave a nice rabbet on the aft side for the qdeck planking. It is a 1/4" x 3/64 strip. Just round off the forward edge and cut it to length on both sides of the arched door frame.

The last piece will now cover up all those layers of the arched top. It is laser cut for you. There is a handle on the part so you can sand the char from the outside of this piece without breaking it. It is a bit fragile (I will provide a few extra). Once the char is removed then cut it free from the handle. Dont bother sanding the underside of this piece. Once again it wont be seen. The forward edge is rounded off. The aft side remains flat. You can see it glued on top of the arch in the photo below. It is 7/32" wide and all the pieces are flush on the aft side of the platform. It is basically an extension of the margin plank around the top of the arch to clean it all up.



We havent glued the door in yet so we can remove it and add the laser cut black hinges. You can also add the door knobs on both sides. That is your choice...a simple knob or maybe a pull handle.   I prefer bending some brass strip and making a pull handle.   Then you can glue the door in position and the bulkhead is complete. Syren does sell door handles so you might want to pick up a package of medium handles and use them for all the doors later on. There will be so many doors and door handles with all of the cabins we will build soon enough.

Add the surround molding along the inside of the door frame. It is laser cut plastic like the window inserts.

You can see a spare sitting in the hull below. You can see how fragile it looks. It is a beaded molding trim that goes all around the inside of the doorway. I have now added this last piece and that completes chapter 5.