Chapter Six – Starting to work on the Great Cabin Details…

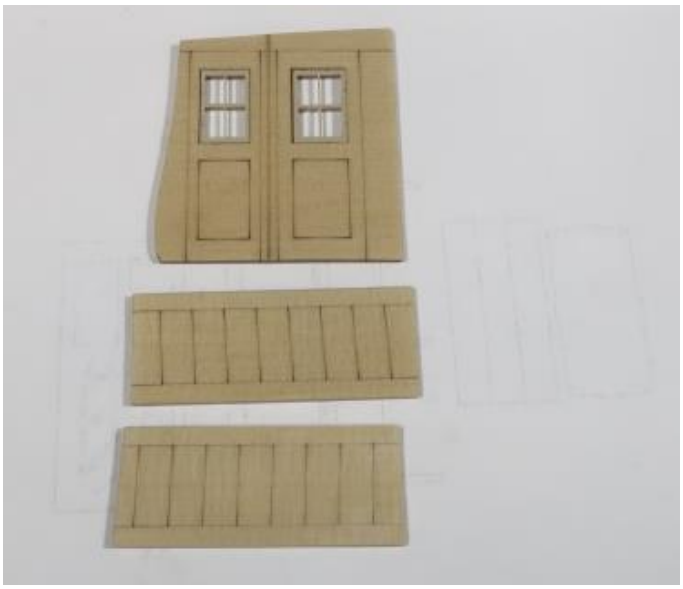
In the great cabin, there are a series of cupboards and closets along the forward bulkhead. To build these, we will be using the same build concepts already used throughout the project. The walls of these tiny cupboards will be made by building up two thin layers. You will need to temporarily position that first deck beam so you can test the fit of the cupboard bulkheads under it as you build them. These layers have been laser cut slightly wider and taller than needed. After gluing up each layer you can sand the top and bottom of each segment so it fits nicely.

Sanding the cupboard bulkheads so they fit snug and flush to your bulwarks is especially important. This will of course be slightly different for each model depending on how you faired the frames and planking on your model.

I must note that you will see many optional items I added to the great cabin like a table and chairs with some books and teacups. I also added a scale figure. Once you complete the cupboards you can also add as many of these details as you like. This is the opportunity to make your model unique and your own.

The Cupboard Walls and partitions…

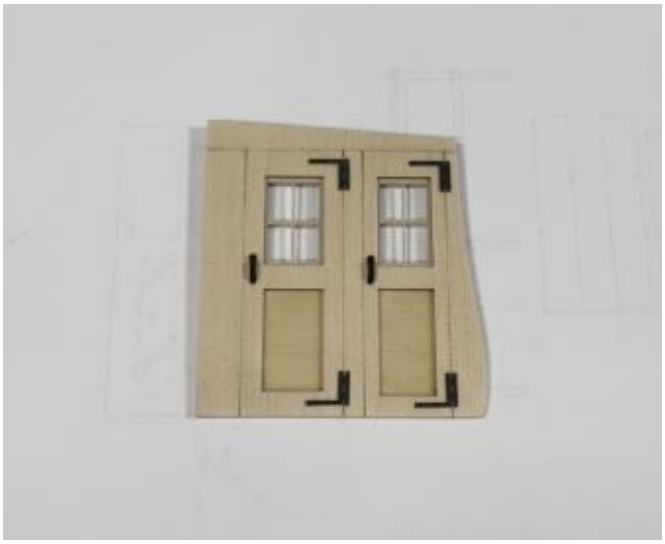
The port and starboard cupboards are basically the same although each has slightly different proportions. Below you can see the starboard side cupboard walls.



These have been built already with the two layers matched up to form each of the partitions. Not on the top of the photo how there is a laser reference between the doors where the shorter wall will be positioned.

To complete this partition with the doors, I added the laser cut windows for the doors and the acetate insert at this time. You can also add the hinges and the door handles/knobs at

this time also. It will just be easier to do that now.



Take the larger partition with the doors and shape the outboard edge to fit nicely against the bulwarks and also adjust the height to fit under the deck beam. Once you have this squared away the rest will be easy.

Just remember to only sand away a little bit at a time to avoid removing too much and making the entire partition too short. This is especially true for its width.

Now you can attach the two smaller side partitions. But I would still recommend you do a dry fit of all three partitions before you do this. Once you are satisfied then glue them up permanently.

Then simply glue this entire assembly in position on the model. Tweak as needed for the best fit. These will be only partially visible under the poop deck planking so no need to go crazy here.

The port side cupboards are assembled in the exact same way. The only thing you have to do differently this time is add the steps down from under the cupola before you glue it in position permanently. We will be building the cupola next.

The cupola…

Below you can see all of the pieces that make up the cupola or domed roof of the entrance to the great cabin.

In that same photo above you can also see a finished cupola painted brown.

To begin… Glue the three thick pieces of the cupola together that give you the beginnings of the overall shape.

Then glue the thin bottom piece into position will give you a guide to creating the final profile shape when viewed from the top. See photo above right.

Sand the cupola to match the rounded shape of the bottom piece you just added. Don't over sand this. Keep the shape of the bottom piece only until the laser char is removed from the bottom piece. See below.

Now comes the fun part. Use your artistic eye to sand the top of the dome to shape. I rounded off the top aft portion first.

Then I sanded the sides until I was satisfied with the domed shape. See above.

Ok…one last piece for the domed cupola. The last horse shoe shaped piece is glued to the bottom. This piece is larger than the cupola which will sit on top of it. The purpose is to create the base molding all around the base of the cupola without having to bend a strip in such a drastic bend. It also sets the finished height of the cupola although you may still have to tweak that later. Try and get this piece so the overhang is consistent all the way around the cupola except for the front edge. That is flush as it will sit against the arched doorway.

Sand everything with a very fine sandpaper and fill any dents etc. I sealed this with some wipe on ply also to prepare it for painting. You want a nice smooth surface.

Next up let us prepare the framed partner that the cupola will sit on top of. That is the last piece that was shown in those photos. This piece fits between the two beams as shown below.

Test the cupola on top of this. The arched top of the doorway should be larger than the finished domed shape of the cupola. This simulates a molded detail after painting it. So try and teak the shape of the cupola against the arched doorway so the thicker molding of the arch is even all around.

Now you can paint this cupola any way you want to. You can do a simple brown like shown above or you can paint it a copper color. I opted for a coppered look. I also painted the arched top of the cupola and just left the really

thin molding on the forward side natural. Once this is completed you can actually add the remaining poop deck beams. But I didn't glue them in there permanently just in case I dropped stuff down there and needed to have access to the great cabin for any reason.

Time to frame the forecastle…

Let us turn our attention to the forecastle deck framing. The very first thing we are going to do is establish the height for the deck clamp. There are many ways to do this and you can take measurements from the plans any way you like. But as a good start there are templates just like before.

Tape the templates to the frames as shown in the photo. Add the port and starboard templates. Then do some measurement taking!! Make sure the port and starboard sides are at the same height any way you can.

Draw a reference line along the bottom of the template on the hull frames. Take some measurements from the caprail on both sides to check that they are similar. You can also take a laser cut deck beam and temporarily position it with the bottom of the beam sitting on the reference line. Look to see that it isn't crooked or sloping from port to starboard. These are the two larger beams on sheet "H".

One deck beam is wider or taller than the other. The taller beam is positioned as the lower one and actually sits on the gun deck clamp. The narrower beam will sit on the f'castle deck clamp above it. Both of these initial deck beams will sit flat against the forward side of the riding bitts. See below.

This establishes their location being flush against the riding bitts. Make sure the riding bitts are not tilted forward or aft when establishing the position of these two deck beams.

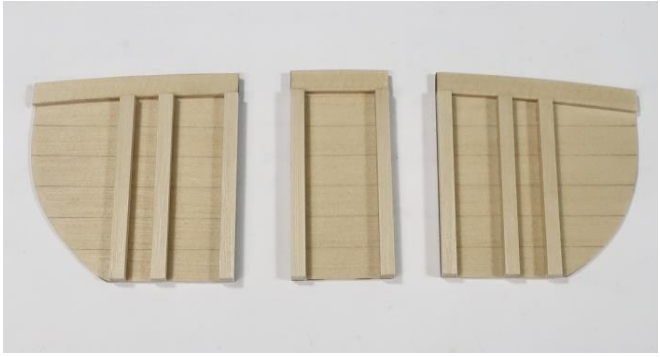
The fire hearth will sit against the forward side of these two beams.

The deck clamp itself is made using a strip of cedar that is ¼ x 1/16". Just cut it to length and use the plans to establish its position. It wont extend to the stem as you can see in the photos.

When you are satisfied with the position of the beams on top of the deck clamps you can glue them in position permanently. But still refrain from gluing the riding bits in position yet.

Forward fcastle bulkhead…

The fcastle bulkhead is laser cut for you like so many others. There are three sections as shown in the photo.



There is a lot going on in the photo above to prepare this fcastle bulkhead before you can glue it in position. To begin, place it against the fastle beams to test the fit of the three sections. You are mainly testing the height first. It should sit flush with the top of the lower fcastle deck beam. At the same time it should sit nicely on the deck below without any gaps etc. Along the bulwarks the two outer sections should fit reasonable well but not directly touching the hull framing. Since there is no inboard planking you should establish a shape for these sections that leaves a nice consistent gap between the hull frames and the edge of the bulkhead. Leave a little space where the inboard hull planking would have been.

With that taken care of, you can add the details to the aft side of the bulkhead sections. I added what will be a simulated deck beam along the top edge. This is laser cut for you on sheet "M". There are plenty of laser etched reference lines for these details on the aft side of each section. Then cut some 1/8" x 1/8" cedar strips to length and add them where the etched reference lines are shown. The completed bulkheads are shown above.

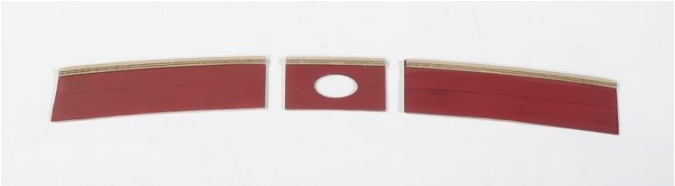
Now test them on the model again with the riding bitts in position.

See the photo below.

Upper f'castle bulkhead…

The upper fcastle bulkhead sits on top of the one we just installed. See the photo posted above. Just like the previous bulkhead this one is also laser cut in three sections to fit around the riding bitts.

They were tested in position first to make sure they sit nicely on top of the lower bulkhead and also are flush to the top of the upper deck beam. Then they were painted red.



The laser cut fancy molding was added along the top edge of each section as well. The only thing we have to do now is test them in position and tweak the widths to fit where they will be positioned. Test them with the riding bitts in position.

With the riding bitts still temporarily in position we can now add the margin plank along the upper deck beam. This will hang over the edge a little bit and be rounded off on the aft edge.

Use a ¼" x 3/64" strip to make the margin plank along the upper deck beam. Remember to create that overhang on the aft side.

The photo shows the margin plank along the edge of the deck beam. Note that you will have to notch it to accept the riding bitts.

You can see the three remaining deck beams have been cut to length and test fit along the deck clamps as well. Use the plans for their placement. There is a detailed plan showing the placement of the deck beams and ledges along with a few hanging and lodging knees. I have added the knees here because you will see just a little bit of them after the facstle deck is planked unlike the other decks.

The knees are all labelled and laser cut for you but will require some sanding and shaping before they are glued into position. Remove all the laser char and bevel the sides of the hanging kneed. The hanging knees need to be beveled to sit flush against the deck clamps etc.

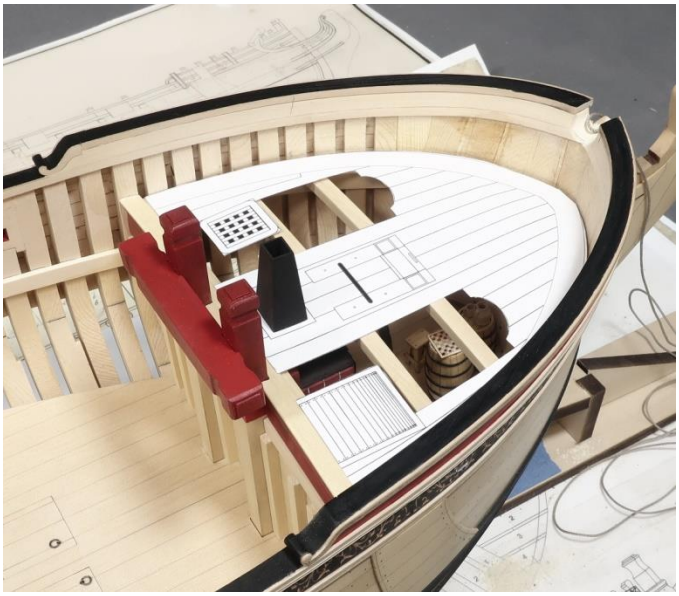
Along the bow there are two curved laser cut pieces which are need so you have a place to sit your deck planking on top of. The carlings and ledges are 1/8" x 1/8" strips. These are made just like the others you added elsewhere. The coamings for the companionway and vent scuttle will sit on these. Again use the plans to make sure they are positioned correctly. You can even cut the plan and use it as a template to find their locations. This includes all the deck beams.

I have added many details below before I glued the beams and carlings and knees to the model. The fire heart was finally glued into position and so was the riding bitts. I added a few barrels and some mugs even a few stools. You might want to add some of those details

also. Its always a treat to catch a glimpse of a ships cat below deck.

There is also a ladder that will lead below which you can make at this time. Its just easier to have it place now. You should be an expert at building these laser cut ladders by now and all of the pieces are provided for you.

This completes chapter six but I thought I would show a few photos of the model with some templates in position.



I used these templates to help me find the locations for the carlings and ledges and also just see how it will all look after the deck planking is added.

It shows the traditional and classic cut-aways in the deck similar to all those wonderful contemporary models we have seen and admired.

You can see the template for the poop deck as well. You can see the glimpse below deck you will get when the deck planking is added later.