**Focus meeting July 24, 2021 at William Kay’s house**

Gentlemen,

After the Focus Meeting, I put together the words below as something that might go into The Lynx, or wherever else appropriate.  Not sure whom I should be working with on this, but if someone can get back to me with guiding instructions on what else you need, I'd be pleased to work with you on it.

And let me know what photos you see appropriate ... I have some to offer up.

Bill

"There are three types of folks who engage in creating miniatures of boats", and that is how Bill Kay started off the Focus Meeting in his basement workshop.  He went on to explain, "The vast majority of modelers work on just one model, be it from a kit or scratch-built, and they make it to either to keep or to pass on to someone else.  The level of detail involved in their boat model can range from very simple to amazingly complex.  The second type of model boat builder is, however, in it for the money.  That builder typically has to give up intricate details in favor of mass-producing a final product that can be sold at a profit-making price.  And then there is a third type of craftsman that is the rarest of all,  for he is involved in producing near-exact miniatures, of a specific boat, for someone directly-related to that boat and I am of that type.  I am not a "boat model" builder, in the public's understanding of that, as I do not do this for the money nor for anyone I wasn't personally close to.  This "Portrait" concept is something that others might pick up on in their community, as it something that is truly meaningful and rewarding in a way more important than mere money."

Bill had the group over to his workshop for the July 24 Focus Meeting.  He explained how he became involved in what he calls his "Portrait" models.  He has made over forty "Portraits" of a dozen different vessels that represent, to surviving family members, the captains, mates and boatwrights of vessels that he knew as a teenager in the small seaport town of Swansboro, NC.  He feels that this different approach to models might spark an interest in others who might find similar "Portrait" opportunities in their boating communities.   When scratch-building a "real" boat, he finds that to be more satisfying than when he'd done a kit that had no such personal connections.

In gathering information, producing construction drawings, and in the building of over forty "Portraits".   he has come up with a number of "Axioms" for those interested in pursuing this aspect of our hobby:

Axiom #1 says that it is absolutely essential that the builder know the shape and graphics of the transom for that, to Bill, is like the person's face on a portrait painting;

Axiom #2 conveys that a key element in creating the "Portrait" is to learn from the requestor what specific things they remember of the vessel.  This Axiom cautions the builder to beware that the requestor's memory of things, from many years ago, may not be "perfect" and to use discretion in handling something you might know to be "different" than the requestor's memory;

 #3 cautions that the requestor may know of another vessel, or even a model, "That is just like the [subject vessel]".  Bill is convinced that, in the era of these wooden vessels, no two were exactly alike and one must be aware of putting something on the "Portrait" model that didn't really exist ... that will jump out immediately when the requestor sees it and could ruin the whole image;

 #4 says that these "Portraits" will become extremely detailed, consume vast amounts of your time,  you will get very "attached" to them, and sad is the day that you have to let one go.  Axiom #4 is to make one for yourself, and you'll appreciate that in days to come;

 #5 conveys that there can arise a situation where you, yourself, will have a connection to the "Portrait" boat.  And it alerts you to the possibility that you could want MORE than the one for yourself, in order to share that with others.  Such has happened in three of the "Portraits" done to date;

#6 cautions the builder to be alert to the actual colors of the hull and topside elements as those could change over the life of the vessel, and even be different on the same vessel if more than one "Portrait" individual is involved.  Bill described one situation where three different parties wanted "Portraits" of the same vessel and the differing timeframes those also had three different color schemes;

#7 recognizes that you must determine, at the onset, how many models you will be building.  Sometimes you may have reasons to add one or more to cover some unknown, and those can often be very surprising outcomes.

These "Axioms" reflect a lot of common-sense and, in his experiences, Bill also found a lot of humor, strange happenings,  pleasant surprises, and impressive rewards in creating his fleet of "Portraits".

He never made less than two of these very-detailed "Portraits" and most were 4, 5 or 6 identical reproductions.  This gave Bill a broad perspective on how to "mass-produce" components, which could be useful knowledge to the in-it-for-profit model boat builder.

He also noted that his models were entered into "Ships-In-Scale" contests of 2008, 2010,  2017, and each took a first-place.  Those recognitions were wonderful feedbacks on his long hours building the models.  Even that series of honors was eclipsed for Bill when the North Carolina Maritime Museum purchased TWO of the same "Portrait",  those being models in which the cabin tops were removable to expose the fully-detailed interiors of that vessel.

At the Focus Meeting Bill also talked about a number of very practical tools and methods that he uses which are not usually found in the typical model boat builder workshop.