

GRAmodels Clyde Puffer 1:150

This is a resin kit consisting of the hull, cabin, funnel, mast & boom etc and even a figure to drive the boat. The basic construction is very simple, stick together and paint!



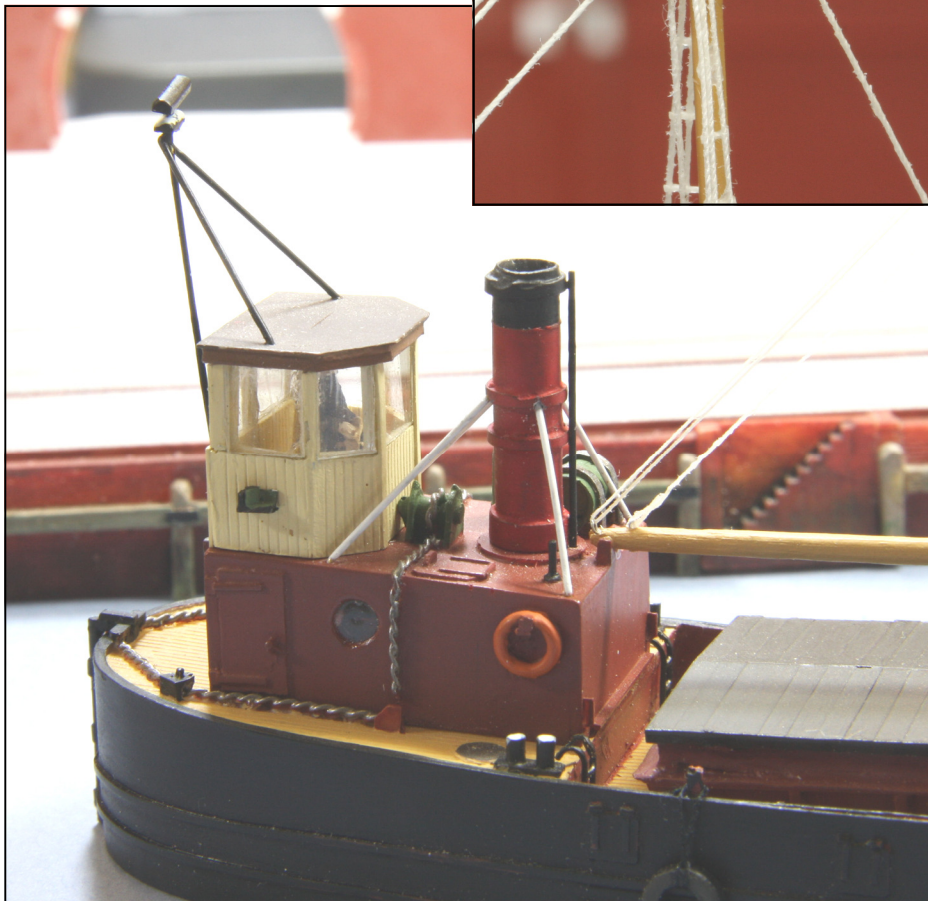
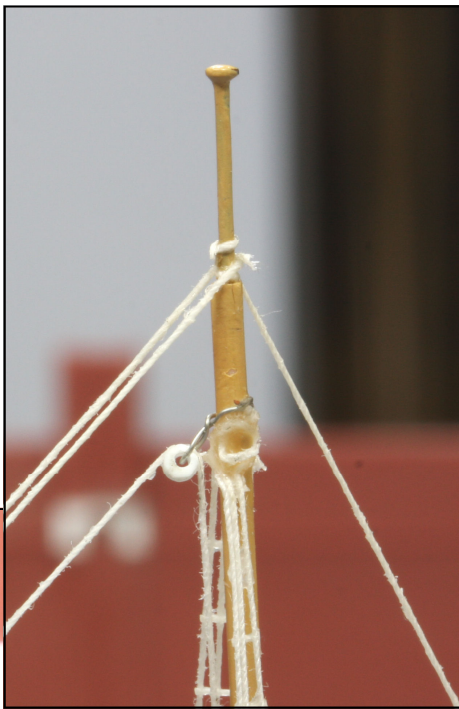
However, as with any kit of this type, it is a little more complex than that as there are many small details to be added and/or painted. In order to get a realistically finished model I searched the Internet for photos and articles on the prototype. It seems that Clyde Puffers were built over a long period and had a wide variation in design. The GraModels kit is probably what we would think of as the classic puffer similar to the preserved VIC32 or the Vital Spark.

As with most of my models, I wanted to make some changes. This is not because there are faults with the kit, but simply I like modelling, so the kit is just a starting point. The first change was to remove the hold cover, which had been moulded with a tarpaulin effect, with a file and replace it with wooden planks. These were simply strips of Evergreen styrene stuck side by side.

The boom supplied was too long so a new boom was made from a cocktail stick, which is just the right size and has a good tapered shape. Having done this, the mast is then too short. A new one was made from plastic tube and rod with a turned Peco track pin to finish the top. This gives the correct stepped appearance to the mast. Rigging was a new skill for me to learn so I did some searching on model boat building sites and found a useful jig to make the rigging. This uses brass pegs in a frame to get the spacing right for the shrouds (these hold up the mast) and then the ratlines (cross ropes) are glued in place. I did try knotting but the knots are too big. There are also lines that

convert the boom into a derrick and a very small pulley wheel that had to be made. Cleats etc are filed from track pins.

A surprising amount of brass wire has been used to add details such as the funnel stays and whistle, radar support etc. The forward deck area has had quite a few changes as if all the supplied parts are used it becomes very crowded. This was solved by making a flush deck hatch and reducing one of the access tower things in size. The winch is the item that needed the most work. I felt it was a bit big and also very basic in its detail so set about modifying it. The side plates were carefully reduced in size and the main gear wheel had teeth cut



with a sharp knife. The cable drum was wound with cotton thread. Steam pipes, piston rods and control levers were added from brass rod. The white pipe feeds steam to the winch and the black pipe is the exhaust, see below.



The anchor is made from plastic strip with a blackened 40 link per inch chain disappearing into a piece of bent brass tube through the deck to the chain locker below. The tyres used as fenders, I cast from polyurethane resin from a mould I already had. The master was a tyre from a Wiking model lorry. The hoist on the front is made from a bent piece of styrene rod with two slices of the rod to form the pulleys. A couple of pieces of etched brass signal ladder have also been used to give access between the two deck levels.

All the painting is with acrylics, either Games Workshop or Coat d'Arms. Every time I look at photos, I can see more details that could be added, I just have to find a way to make them.

Comparing this kit to those of Artitec which I am more used to, it is a little more basic. Artitec supply etched metal details but you also need to consider that the Artitec boats are twice the price. The detail in the moulding is just as good and the resin used possibly a little softer. So, in conclusion, the Clyde Puffer is a basic but good value kit that can be detailed to produce a very pleasing final model. A lot of fun to make and I am pleased with the final result. On the right is the real preserved VIC 32.



Paul