

Radio control model ship project of the Battleship USS Oregon BB3

Many modelers around the world know the artistic and inventive satisfaction of a good, accurate working radio control model.

I have enjoyed building models since boyhood. I have built plastic, balsa, gas, control line, car, and gas Cox .049 boat models, (we didn't have R/C in those days, just set the rudder for a circle and let her go.) Through the years I also dabbled in R/C aircraft, but the time to repair and the skill to be any good was not to be for me.

As a boy, my oldest son became interested in the WW II story of John F. Kennedy and PT-109. We saw all the films, read books on the fast torpedo boats and decided to put together a [Dumas kit](#) 109. 33" long, nicely detailed, simple and not too expensive. It runs a 7.5V motor, electronic speed control and the cheap 2 ch radio from Futaba. Being a family on the go it took about two years to complete, but it finally launched, and many summer days and evenings have been spent as father-son time sailing the 109.

When the PT109 boat was finished, I realized that R/C model shipbuilding is the perfect hobby. It is an art form and can be as complicated and or expensive as you want it to be. The builder plays the role of an artist, a historian, and an inventor. For the kids, It teaches about patience, planning, proper order, (of assembly), problem solving, were to find information, history, skills with glues, resins, electricity, radio, engineering and painting to name a few. The people who build model ships are just a great bunch, happy to share ideas and talk of ship history. Each modeler expresses the art form in their own building style. People love model ships, when we sail, a crowd gathers. There is most likely a dad with a ten year old in the gathered, asking, "how to get started"? I just had to build another ship.

I decided to scratch build the USS Oregon BB3. The great ship was berthed in Portland Oregon, (our home), for years, making information from local sources easy to find. With in a short time, I found plans from <http://www.marylandsilver.com/> and on Ebay, and friends and family had offered, ideas, photos, a small cast metal 1:1250 scale the of Oregon, and a small gavel, (made of teak from the salvaged deck materials of the real Oregon). Mr. Art Greisser donated a photo of Oregon taken from the then unfinished Broadway Bridge here in Portland. That photo, (shown on the opening page/"photos of the real ship"), is one of the best I have, I refer to it constantly. It is highly detailed, (probably taken with a plate camera) and at a down angle! Most all, old ship photos are taken from a boat or dock, at water line, so you don't get topside detail.

Rich information, original drawings, notes and many great photos are available from the Oregon Historical Society. The Society also has her brass, "Oregon" hull letters, Silver punch bowl set, models and a life ring. Her two stacks are now in storage.

Portland's, "Water Front Park", displays her main mast, now over 100 years old. Also on display are some questionable items, which we don't believe are from USS Oregon, chain and anchor, a bow plate and an anchor chain bollard.