

some additional information and damage statistics to further highlight the effectiveness of the attacks. He rounds out the work with a few paragraphs on surviving airframes related to the Truk campaign.

Pre-Hailstone information on Truk from 1914 to 1939 is covered, if not repeated, in several places throughout the work. If this was reduced to just one location, it would help the work flow more smoothly and free up space within the restrictions of Osprey's format for additional information or photographs. Additionally, having a section at the end of an operation's coverage with statistical information or tables of losses would be an appreciated addition. This would allow for quick referencing of force disparity and loss illustration, further driving home the effectiveness of Allied operations and the dwindling Japanese capabilities as the campaign progressed. Finally, since the Aftermath section discusses the surviving aircraft of the engagements, it is surprising that the various sunken wrecks of Truk only warranted two sentences and no images (86). Given the ongoing efforts to locate airframes in the waters, the renown of some of the shipwrecks, and the looming threat posed by the fuel and munitions carried within, a more detailed discussion would help further illustrate the campaign's lingering presence in the modern day.

*Truk 1944-45* is a good introductory work about the various air assaults carried out by American and Commonwealth aircrews across 18 months against a beleaguered Japanese force who expected an altogether different type of enemy attack. Lardas provides solid summary information and important details regarding the involved airframes, plans, and attacks that illustrate the innovative island-hopping technique of aerial reduction that helped Truk morph from a potentially dangerous enemy base into a convenient live-fire training tool. For those interested in the air operations of the late war Pacific and the Japanese defenses of important forward naval anchorages, this text offers one a decent initial exposure to the topic.

Charles Ross Patterson II  
Yorktown, Virginia

**Robert K. Liu. *Naval Ship Models of World War II in 1/1250 and 1/1200 scale: Enhancements, Conversions & Scratch Building*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Seaforth Publishing, [www.seaforthpublishing.com](http://www.seaforthpublishing.com), 2021. 160 pp., colour illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. UK £25.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-5267-9391-1. (E-book available.)**

The making of miniature ship models is a popular hobby and pastime among a select group of enthusiasts, predominantly male, older in age, and with some means to support their interests and proclivities. Commercial companies, trade

shows, store-front and online retailers, publications, and associations cater to this community, which transcends national borders with a truly global reach, some regions better represented than others. Countries with substantial navies and the world wars in the twentieth century typically get the most attention from modelers. Having enough space to create, show, and store “collections” also remains a critical consideration, from beginners to the most skilled master builders with years of experience. Robert Liu, a retired biomedical scientist and ship model maker now in his 80s, draws on his decades of building scale warships in a variety of materials using traditional techniques, with a particular focus on those from the Second World War in the 1/1200 range. His skills as a trained jeweler and photographer add visually to the models that he has worked on and their representation in the full-colour photograph book.

The book is organized into 25 distinct chapters that first make general comments on the hobby, those who engage in it, and conventional production techniques. It then moves on to an eclectic selection of the models that Liu has built from scratch or kits, converted, and repaired, giving detailed descriptions of the process and close-up visuals with informative captions. Liu, the son of a Chinese Nationalist ambassador to fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, became interested in model warship building as a young boy, before and after his family emigrated to the United States. His brother, an engineer, was also an accomplished model maker for many years. Liu prefers to use metal and wood, as opposed to the more common styrene plastic models sold in kits by numerous manufacturers and widely available for relatively reasonable prices, although he includes newer 3D-printed models made of resin for comparative purposes to show finer detail. The chosen scales of 1/1250 and 1/1200 highlight a size small enough to facilitate larger collections of ship models, as well as presenting certain challenges and necessary skills for the intricate work in building. Such experience and skill are developed over many years and projects, to the point where a model maker becomes recognized and receives paid commissions. A single ship model may take many hours to complete, and Liu stresses the importance of documenting every stage through notes and photographs for future reference and payment invoicing. For the sake of accuracy and authenticity, he also advocates research in available books and internet sources for visual representations and data that improve the final product, which he calls a made cultural artifact of history and form of art. Some of the projects described in the book were rebuilds and conversions of earlier models, from his own collection and commissions from others, to make them more true to the original, or to correct a model as more accurate information became available. A model maker always makes judgment calls in building any warship in scale.

The mostly metal model warships showcased in Liu’s book have come a

long way from the cruder models made for practical application in support of naval warfare. Warship models of this scale were used extensively in recognition and identification training, naval wargaming, and testing of camouflage patterns. Some museums and private collections still have samples of these ship models, often kept in easy-to-carry and store wooden boxes. Ship models presented by shipyards upon completion or found in shore establishments and on board individual warships were generally more detailed and came in larger 1/700, 1/350, and even 1/72 scales. From the start, the 1/1200 scale was utilitarian and economical in space, not expected to be too refined. Warship modelers like Liu, however, have added considerable detail and refinements to final products through their own techniques and innovations. Individual chapters cover the making of anti-aircraft ships, landing craft, destroyers and cruisers, and Japanese battleships. The French cruiser submarine *Surcouf* and French battleship *Jean Bart* receive special attention, owing to Liu's late friend and fellow-collector Alex White's interest in the *Marine nationale*. White's extensive collection of warship models was broken up and sold off after his death, though a few items found their way into Lui's possession, while he retained photographs of others. Some warships, such as the armed auxiliary cruiser *Jervis Bay* and the action between two Japanese auxiliary cruisers and the Royal Indian Navy minesweeper *Bengal* and tanker *Ondina*, get chapters due to their interesting stories and modifications in modelling. Aircraft, tiny at the 1/1200 scale, are added to ship models and covered in a dedicated chapter. Several lesser known conversions on the Allied and Axis sides to anti-aircraft auxiliaries, mine clearance vessels (*Sperrbrecher*), and convoy rescue ships are shown through various stages of building. A chapter is devoted to the HMCS *Prince Rupert* configured as a late-war anti-aircraft ship, that compares an Optatus kit to a scratch-build by Lui. The last two chapters showing an Italian armed schooner and Japanese guard picket boats take the small scale to a new level and amply demonstrate the ship modeler's skill and mastery of the medium. The book ends with a very useful glossary, comments on further resources, and an index.

Lui's book is aimed at serious, small warship modelers who aspire to gaining a certain modicum of higher skill in older techniques and mediums. Those are increasingly fading away as software-assisted line drawings and three dimensional computer modelling of warships gain in popularity. The same research and attention to accuracy and detail are needed for individual projects, and the level of granularity is far more refined than working in traditional materials at a small scale, even with the advent of photo-etched parts for static hand models. Toxic exposure to fine dust, paints, glues, and lead is almost completely eliminated. Lui's references to lead disease (corrosion) describes the interaction between wood and the commonly used metal that

can damage or destroy ship models over time, though the adverse effect on human health with prolonged proximity has been equally demonstrated. Lui is very much old school in a craft that struggles to attract new followers who might prefer just to buy finished models or incline instead toward newer forms without the downside. Computer modelled ships can be made to move, without a push by the hand, and may even be projected in three dimensions.

Chris Madsen  
Toronto, Ontario

**R. Bruce Macdonald.** *Never Say P\*g. The Book of Sailors' Superstitions.* Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, [www.harbourpublishing.com](http://www.harbourpublishing.com), 2022. vi+163 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography. CDN \$22.95, hardback; ISBN 978-1-55017-979-8. (E-book available.)

At its core, *Never Say P\*g* is a collection of maritime superstitions, beliefs, and values of sailors from around the world and through the ages. Macdonald relies on his personal experience, notes, and interactions to build up an alphabetized list of sailors' superstitions. While the concept is simple and straightforward, the final result covers international boundaries, long-held beliefs, and modern creations. It touches on cultural norms, industry standards, and the methods through which identity is formed by sailors.

The book is highly personal in its writing style and authorship. Macdonald claims his initial interest in maritime superstitions came after being told not to stir his tea with a knife, as "stir with a knife and stir up strife" (136). He continues to draw on his own experience to show how it allowed him to collect anecdotes and listen to other maritime folk tell their stories or warn others away from bringing on bad luck. Relying on private experience, especially in a work of maritime history, can seem counterintuitive in a field where personal recollections rarely carry the same weight as historical documents, reports, or diaries. On the other hand, one might be hard pressed to find academically accurate recollections of folk beliefs and superstitions. When this knowledge is handed-down from individual memory, however, it can be a reliable historical and anthropological approach for creating a database of people's beliefs – or at least a good place to start. It should be noted that, where possible, Macdonald also provides more academic sources for his findings.

A list does not necessarily lend itself to grand historical, or cultural, conclusions. Nevertheless, certain themes do come forward as the reader proceeds down the alphabet of sailor's truths. Superstitions help a community form an identity and create a specific way of doing things. Traditions exist for a reason. While seemingly based in occupational mythology, they can carry a