MIKE ASHEY PRODUCTIONS

PRESENTS

DETAILING SCRATCHBUILT PARTS

BY

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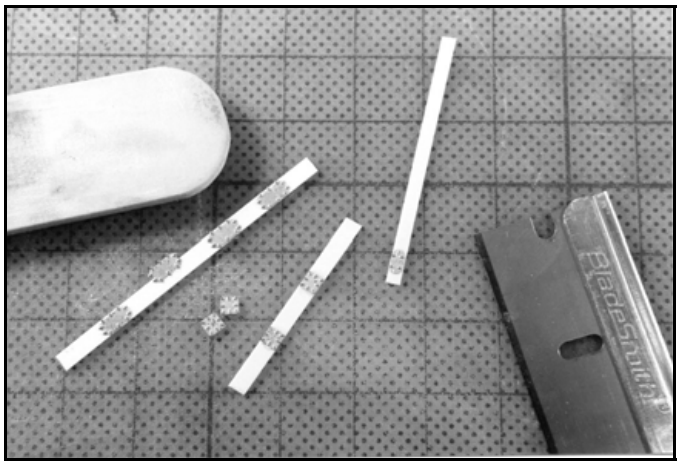
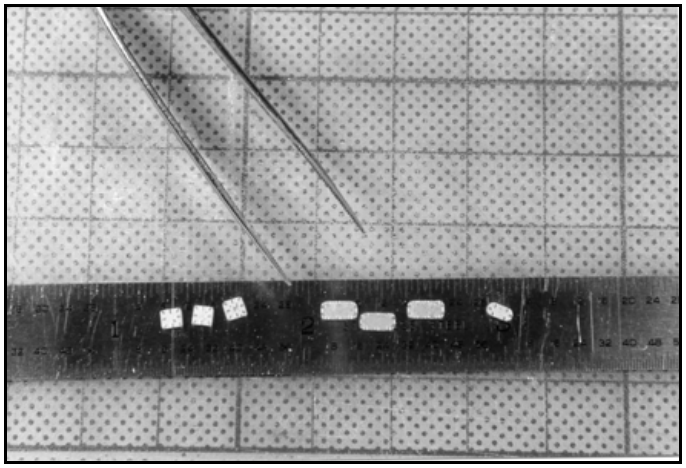
Once you have created superstructure shapes the next step is to add surface detail. Ship drawings and pictures are a great help in locating portholes, hatches, fire hoses, gun boxes and other surface protrusions.

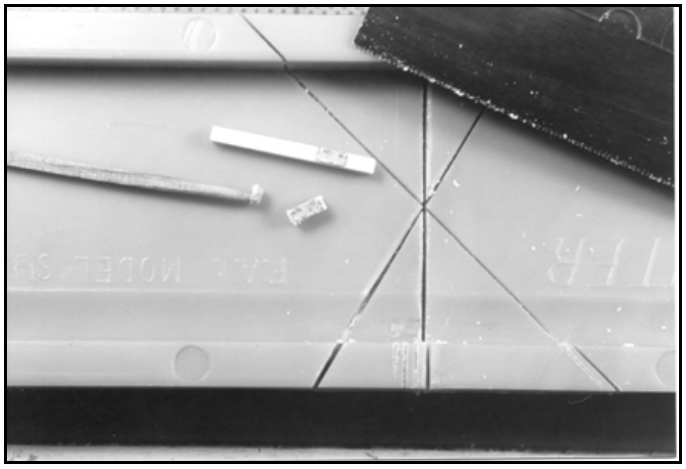
Gold Medal Models makes great photoetch hatches and fire hoses that can be used to create a variety of details. Small plastic parts can be reproduced using a model Railroader's Northwest Shortline Chopper and edges can be made straight with their True Sander. Round shapes such as deck vents can be reproduced using a hobby lathe and I strongly recommend that if you decide to purchase one get a Sherline lathe. Their lathe is easy to use and it is made of metal. As in any scratchbuilding project, patience, creativity, good tools, and various shapes and sizes of plastic sheet, strip and rod make
all the difference.



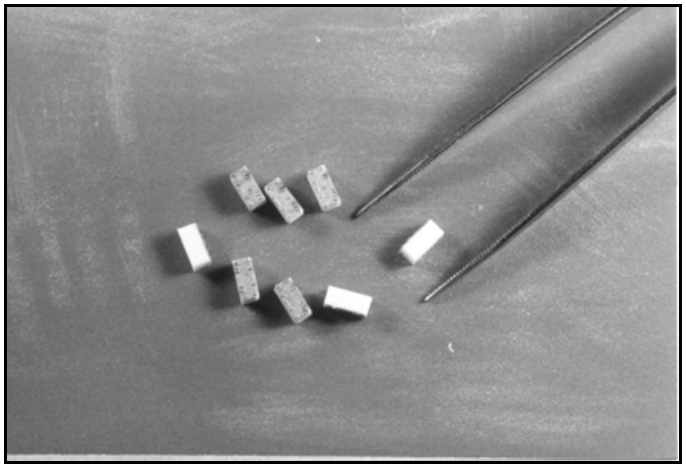
Deck hatches can be made by super gluing Gold Medal Models brass hatches to strips of plastic slightly smaller than the hatch widths. For 1/350 scale models use .020 inch thick strips.



I carefully sand the edges to remove the hinge detail which extends from the sides of the hatches.

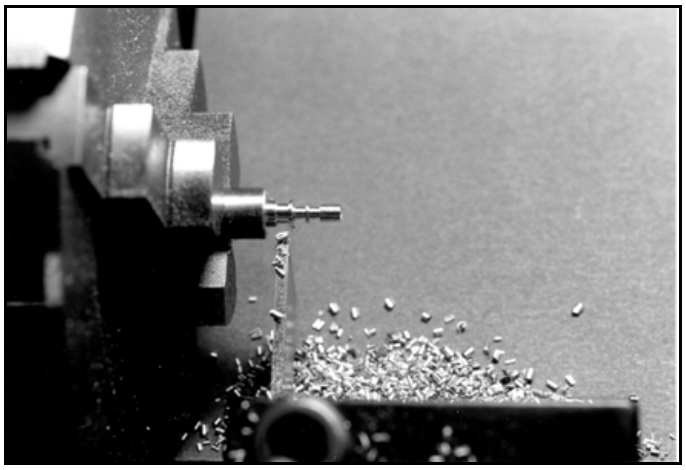


Ammo boxes can be made with Gold Medal Model hatches. To position the hatches I use a round toothpick with a flat end and a small strip of masking tape doubled onto itself so that it sticks to the toothpick end and the hatch.

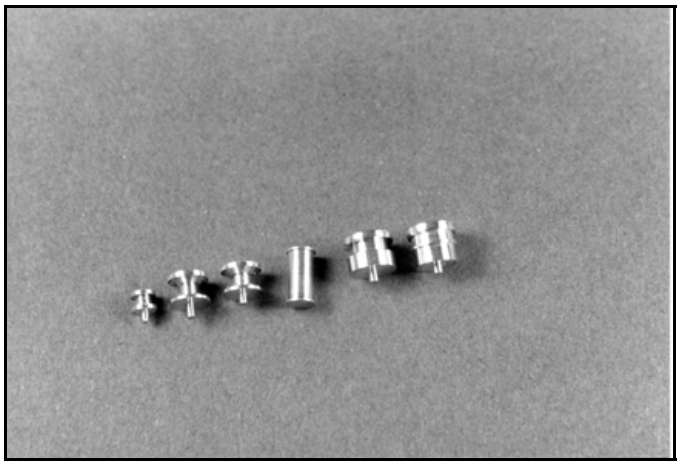


The ammo boxes had their edges smoothed out by running the sides across a stationary piece of fine grit sandpaper. For 1/350 scale models use .08 x .1 inch strips.

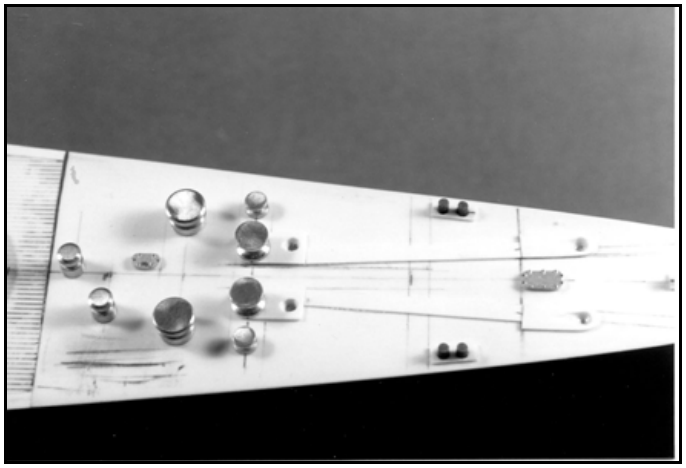
Detail parts such as deck vents are best cut from brass on a lathe. I use a Sherline lathe which is easy to use and which is specifically designed for hobby work. It is also an all metal tool.



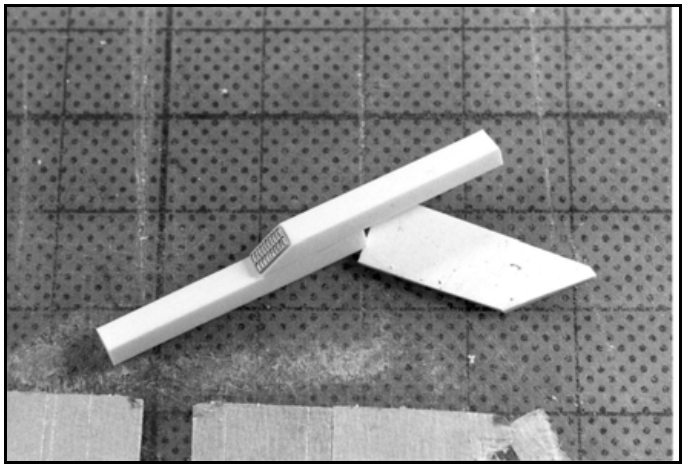
I use parting tools more than any other tool cutter on my lathe. When making parts I always draw the part and decide what diameters to cut before I begin. This makes it easy to duplicate parts.



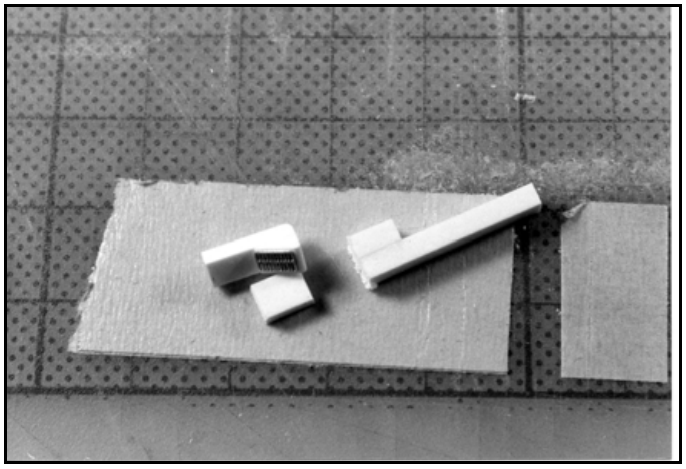
These deck vents, anchor chain capstans, and the rope reel took very little time to create on my Sherline lathe.



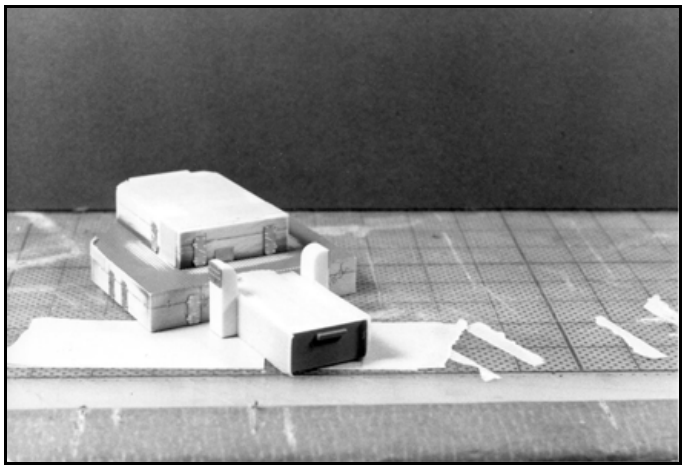
These turned brass deck details greatly enhance the appearance of this scratchbuilt cruiser.



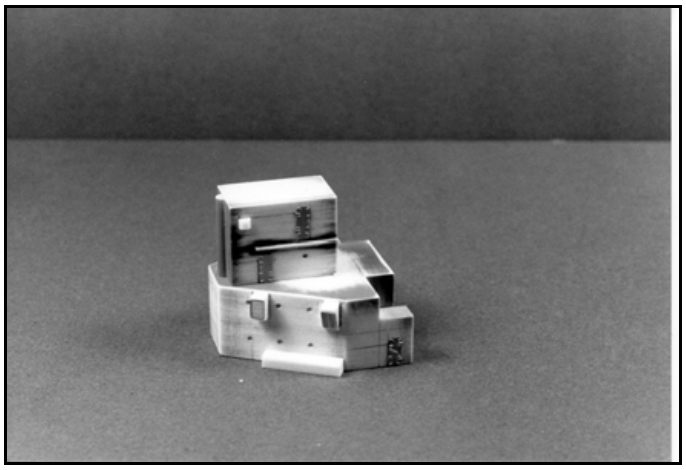
Making a multi-angled vent is easy. Pick the thicknesses you need, angle the edge, glue them together and then add a photoetch grill.



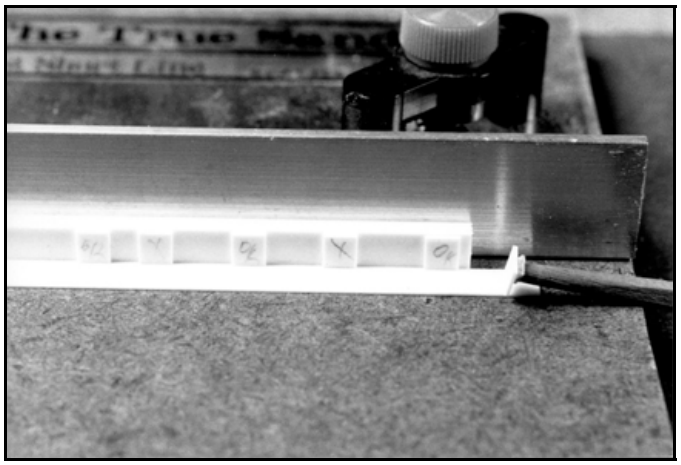
The next step is to cut the excess plastic and then sand the surfaces by running the part across a stationary piece of sandpaper. I always wet sand to achieve a very smooth surface even with 600 grit waterproof sandpaper.



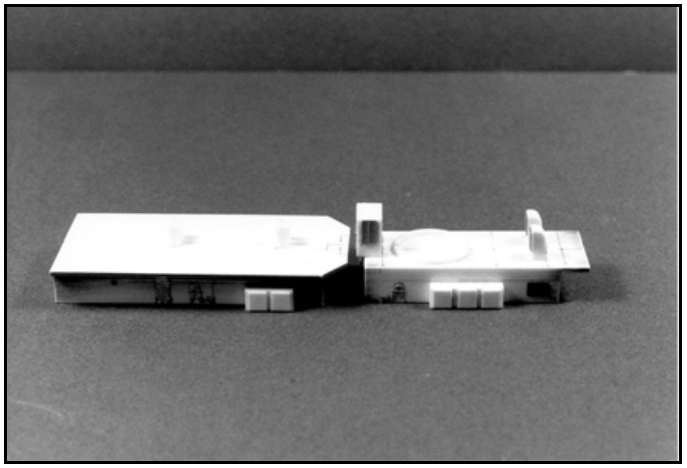
These superstructure shapes for a scratchbuilt 1/350 scale USS Brooklyn sport Gold Medal Model hatches. Note the curved shape of the vents. They were made by running the back of the parts across sandpaper while turning my wrist.



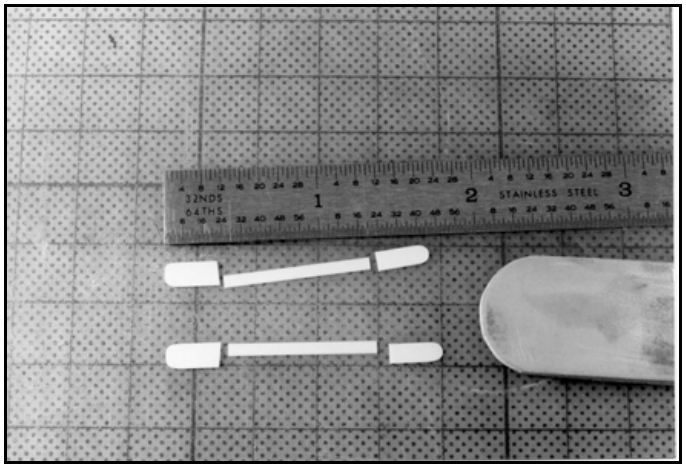
This aft superstructure part for the 1/350 scale Brooklyn has small vents, ammo lockers and a tiny strip to help locate and set the upper deck wings that will be added later.



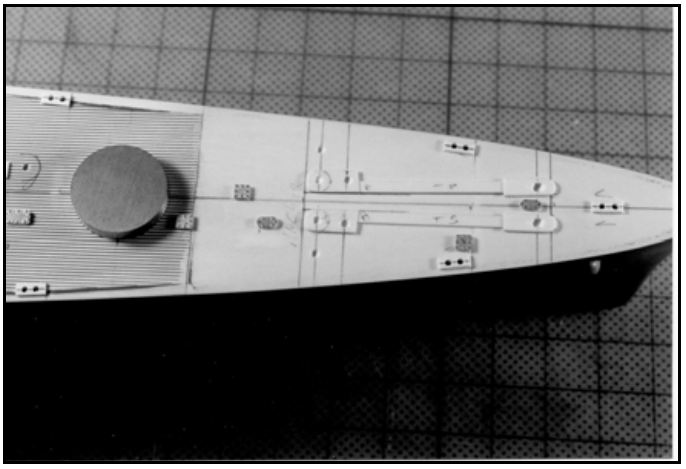
In scratchbuilding, necessity is the mother of invention. To set the doors on these deck ammo boxes I use a strip which would provide equal distance between the door lips and the faces of the boxes.



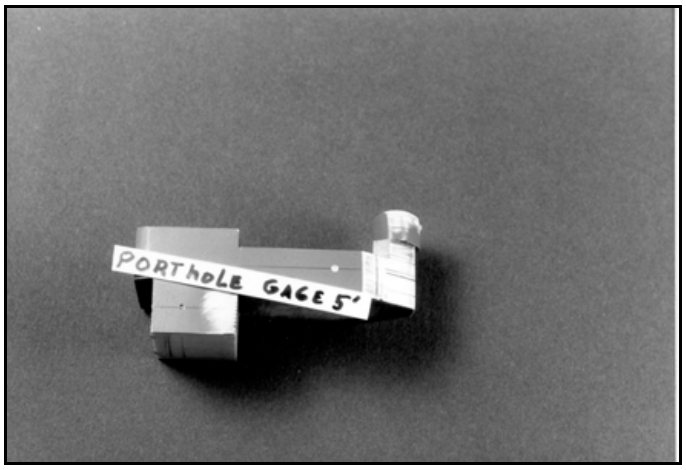
Note how straight and level all the corners and edges look. Careful cutting, sanding and shaping with the right tools is a must when scratchbuilding parts.



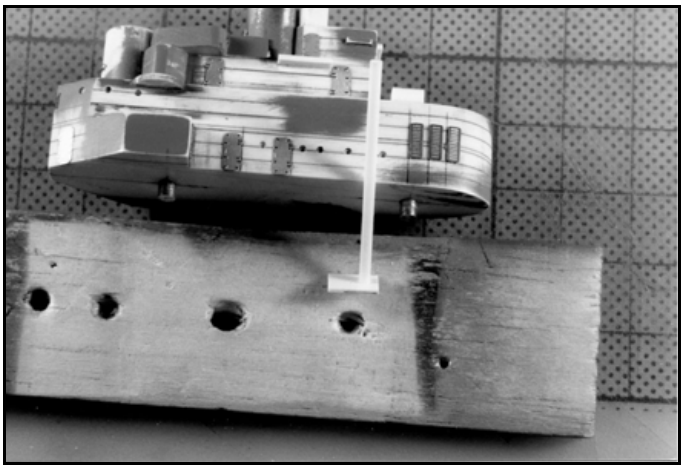
Anchor chain deck plating with multiple shapes can be easily achieved with sections of plastic strip and sheet.



Here the deck plating has been added to the bow deck area on this 1/350 scale cruiser. Note how symmetric the parts are. Duplicating parts and making them look the same is very important in scratchbuilding.

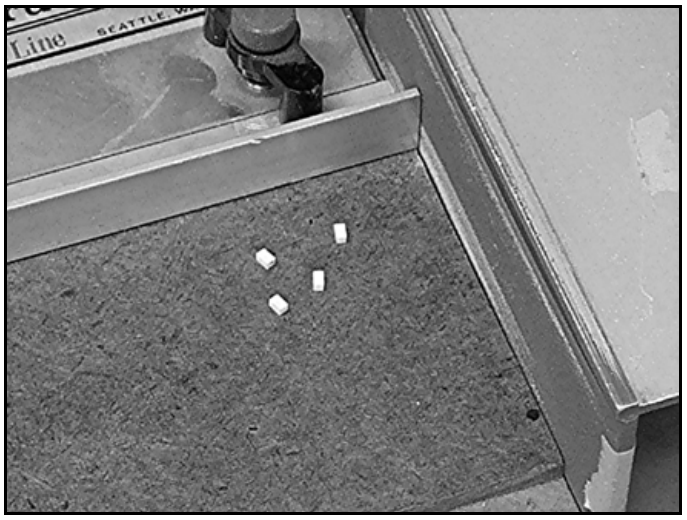


To set porthole heights I use a gage made from .030 inch thick strip and I sent the lines with a sharp soft lead drafting pencil.

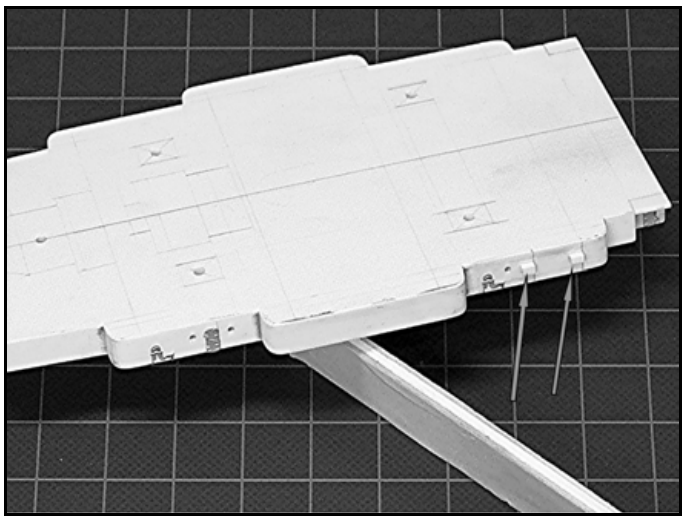


To help position Gold Medal Model hatches straight I use a small positioning gage to draw vertical lines at the hatch locations.

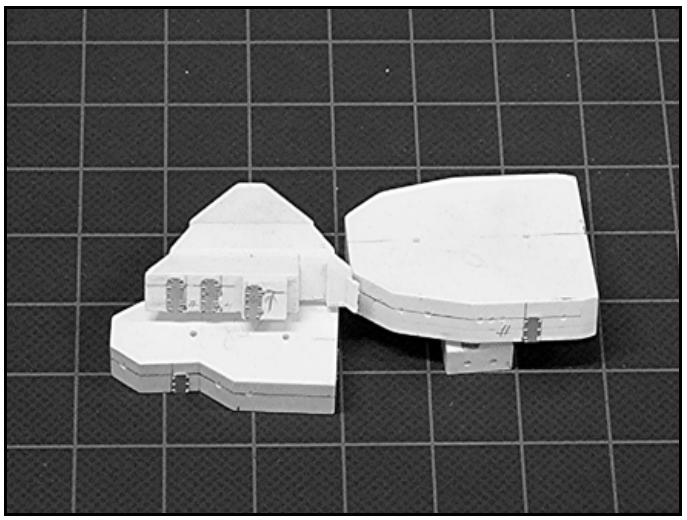
To duplicate parts I use a Northwest Shortline chopper which is used by model railroaders. It is inexpensive and it works great!



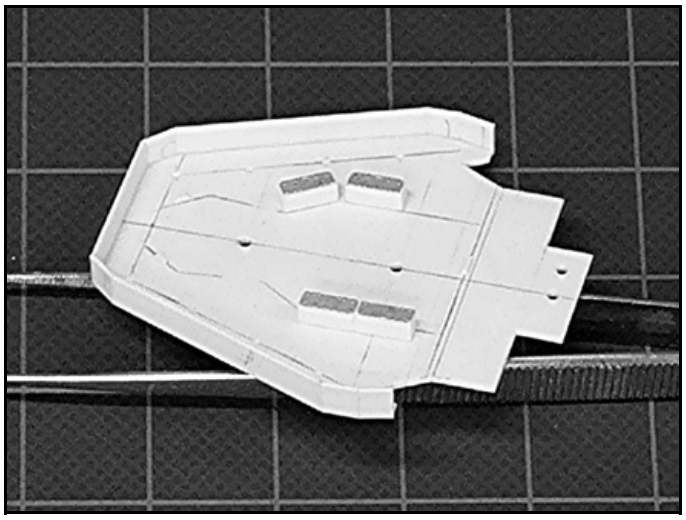
To get the edges and faces of parts square I use a Northwest Shortline true sander, another inexpensive scratchbuilding model railroad tool.



The small box shaped parts made with my trusty chopper and true sander were added to the vertical sides of the 01 superstructure level. Each part was carefully positioned with a tiny drop of Testors glue so I had some working time.



Here are some examples of detail work on the vertical faces of scratchbuilt superstructure parts. Note how straight the hatches are.



This deck part has 20 mm gun boxes which also serve to help locate and hold in place the superstructure part. Note how clean the splinter shields are.

The scratchbuilt parts on this page were made for a 1/350 scale 1944 USS Pennsylvania which was modified from a Trumpeter 1/350 scale USS Arizona. Pictures of the finished model of the USS Pennsylvania can be viewed on the ship gallery web page.