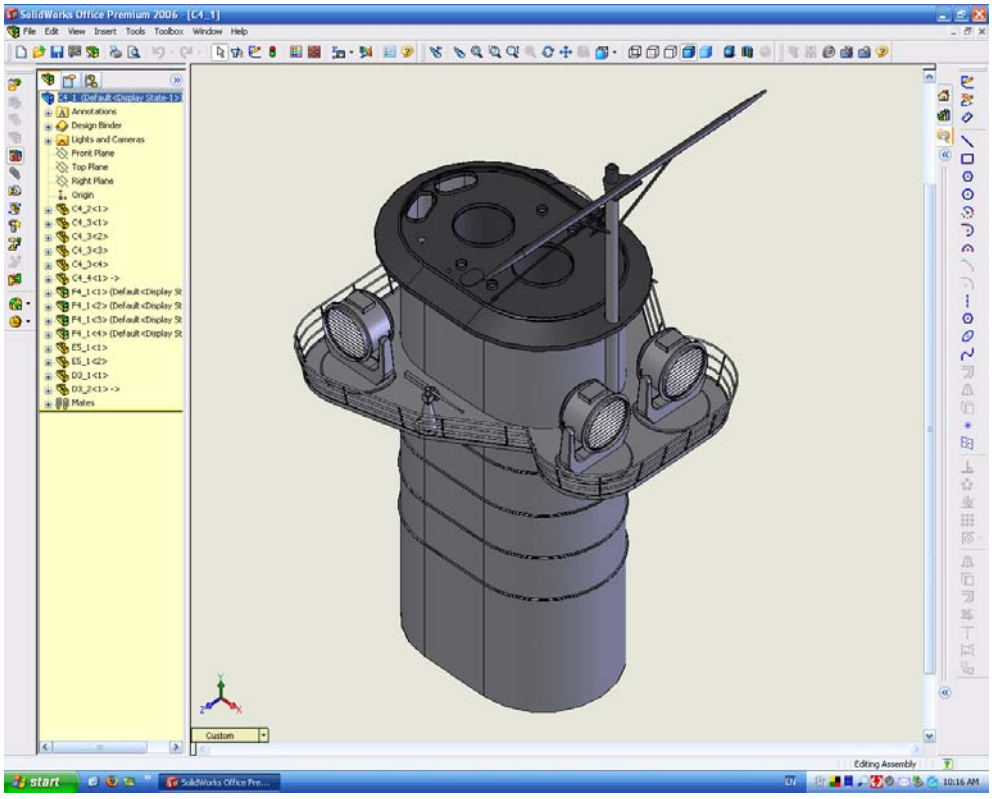
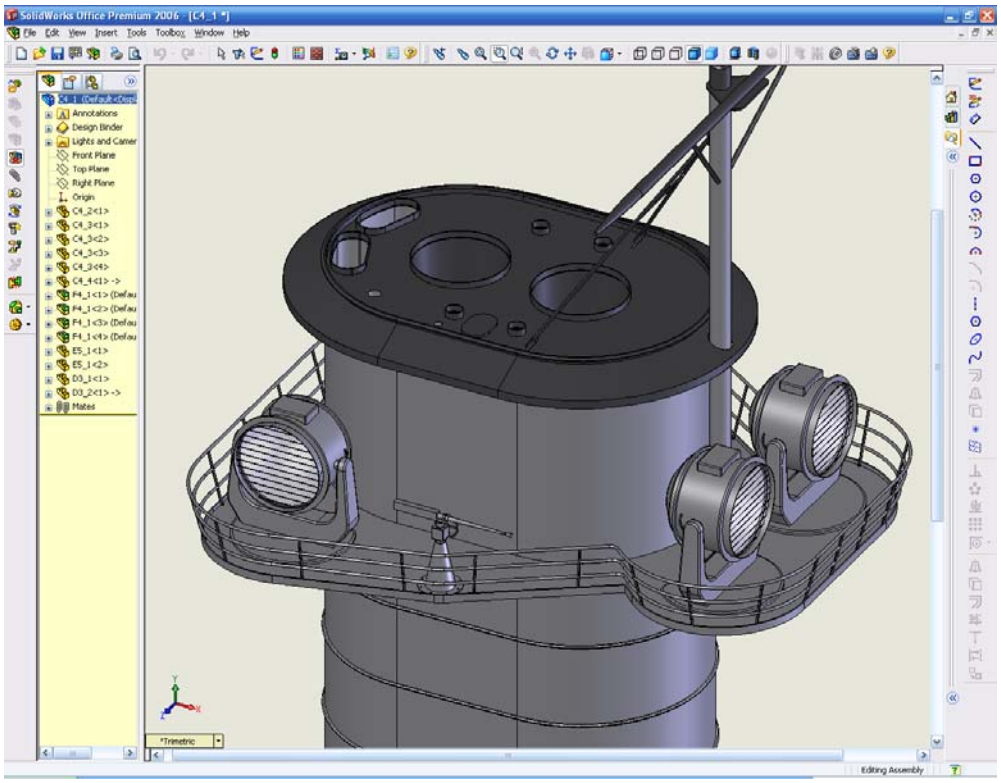
DRAWING SHIPS FROM EXISTING IMAGE FILES - MISCELLANEOUS - PART 5

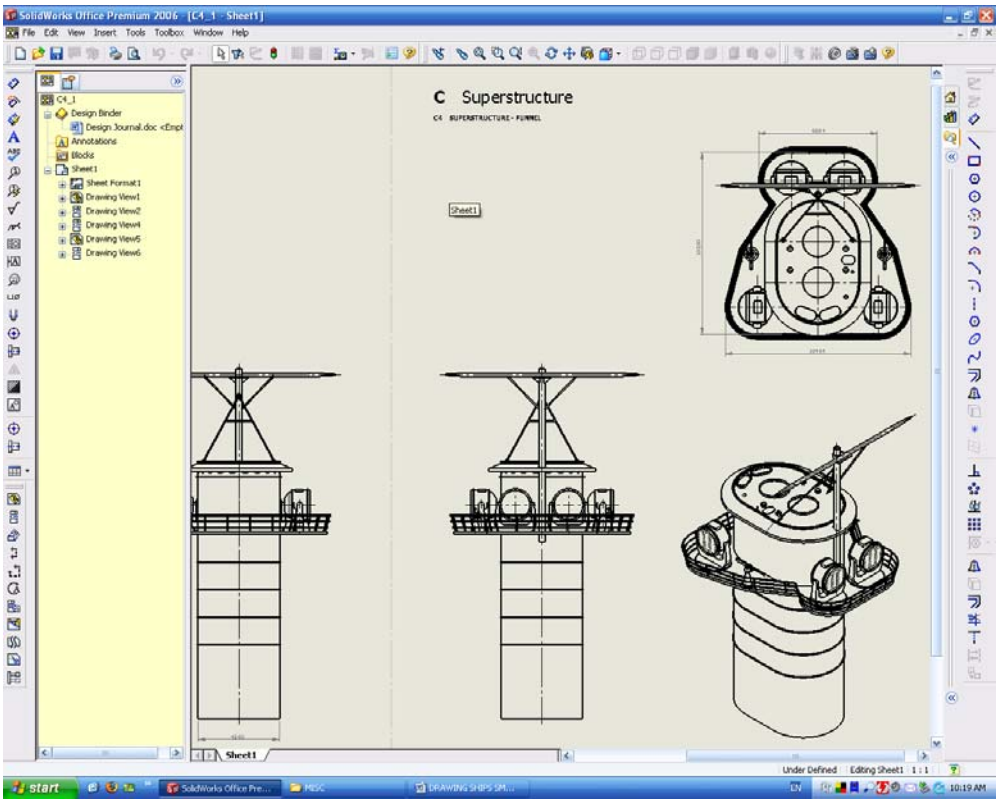
Other Programmes

I will mention here a couple of other programmes that I use on occasion to help me get a better drawing – especially useful if illustrating books. The first is the tried and tested Solidworks – we actually 3d model the parts and then can automatically generate as many views as we like, in whatever scale we want. We can then add more to the drawing as we wish. The programme generates the drawing itself, so it is considerably faster. The images below are of the Graf Spee funnel model:



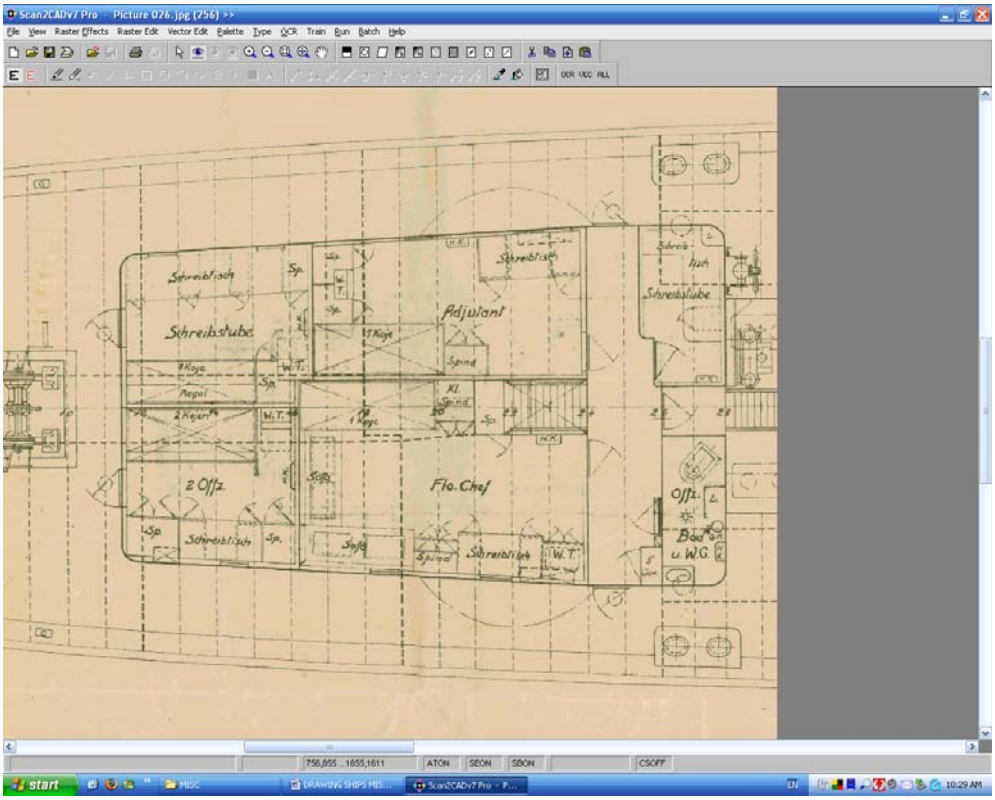


And here is the drawing after views have been inserted:

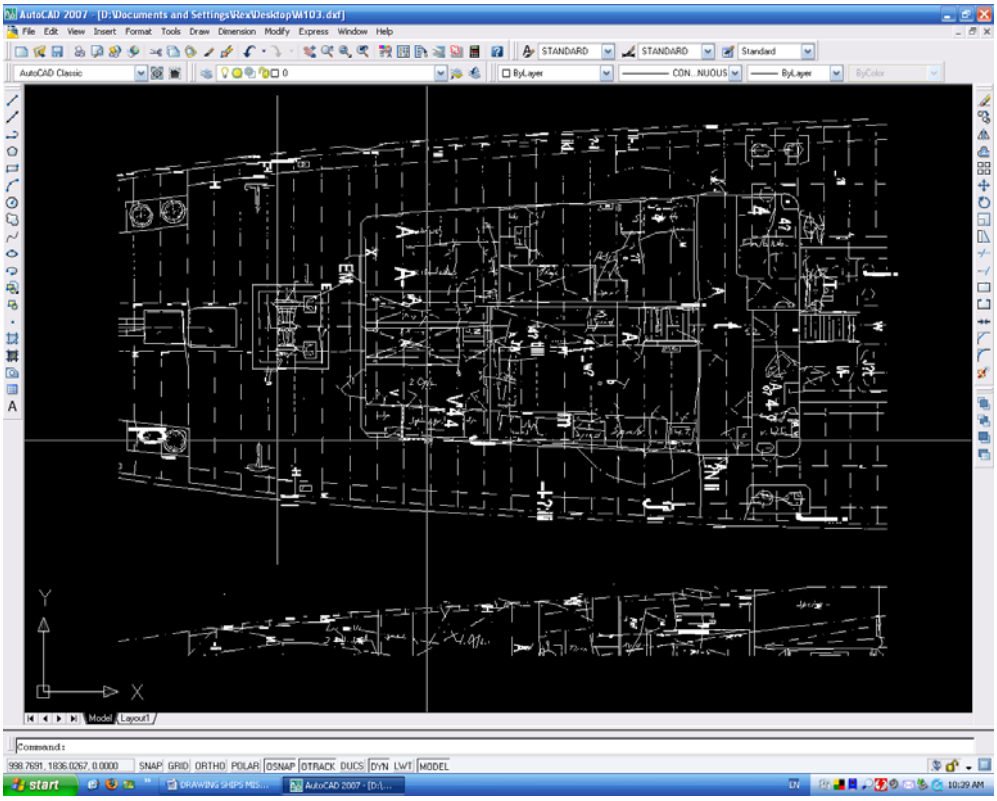


I won't go into how to "drive" Solidworks – for those that are interested there is a lot of help available in the way of tutorials and internet forums. It is not difficult to use, downside is the cost!

The second programme I use, though not often, is Scan2Cad – this programme converts a raster image to a vector one, I can then open it up in AutoCAD, clean out the unwanted "garbage" then import it into Solidworks. Scan2Cad is available free on a 7 day trial period. It has some nice tools, but takes a while to get used to. Here is an image in Scan2cad prior to vectorisation:

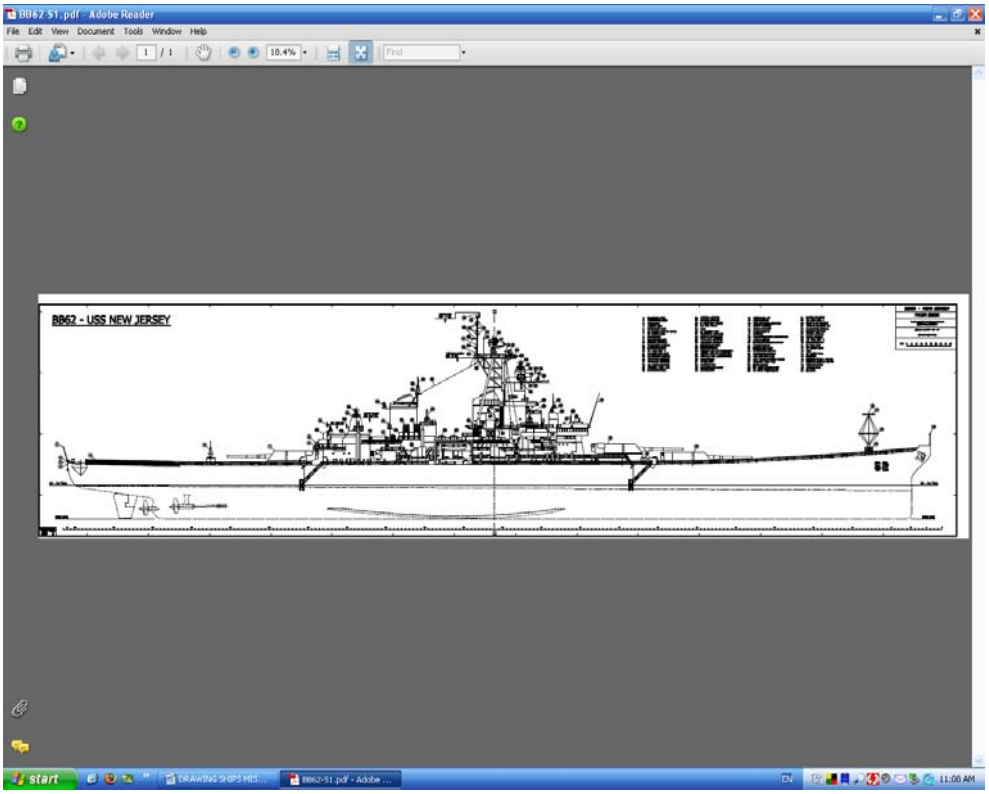


And the same image in AutoCAD:



I will mention here that these programmes are “draughting” programmes – not “image” ones. There is some beautiful work done on programmes like 3DSMax, StudioMax etc. I don’t know much about these, but once again there is a lot of help available on the internet.

On another note, if you are to send images to others over the internet, I suggest you do it in .pdf format. Both AutoCAD and Solidworks let you do this. I drew a set of drawings for the USS New Jersey, the drawings were 1520mm x 420mm each (very large) and to give you an idea of size here it is below:



Drawing ships is a lot of fun, information is readily available and there are excellent sources of information. There are many sets of archives around the world that hold vast amounts of original drawings. Some can be fairly expensive, but with careful planning we can now generate drawing sets for modellers and historians considerably easier than we could a few years ago.

This 5 Part Tutorial Set has given a small insight into what can be done with modern CAD tools – the rest is playing around and practice – it doesn't take long to become proficient enough to draw all the parts you need for a good model.

These tutorials are updated copies of handouts given to some professional modellers working on 1:10 scale training aid models for the Royal Australian Navy's Anzac Class frigates some years ago. They were given out while actually sitting in front of a computer with the programmes running, so I apologize for the shortness and incompleteness of them.

However, should you have any queries please contact me via MSW.