

Construction of a 4' long model of the ocean salvage tug *Cintra*

In December 2009, I came across retired seaman Colin Burrows, a builder of custom models of trawlers, tug boats, and supply vessels. Soon after, I commissioned him to build a 4' long model of *Cintra*, the salvage tug on which my late father served as an officer. A few months later, I drove to Hull, England to pick up an absolutely gorgeous little *Cintra*! During the construction of the model, Colin sent me pictures of her so that I could accompany his progress. The presentation that follows is based on these pictures.

A bit more on the real *Cintra*: she had an overall length of 164.3', a beam of 34.6', and a gross tonnage of 716 tons. Down below, she had a steam reciprocating engine with 1800 gross HP / 1620 brake HP. She was built in 1944 for the UK Admiralty as part of the war effort (one of the 6 *Envoy*-class tugs) and was originally named *Enchanter*. She was sold to United Towing of Hull, England, in 1947 and renamed *Englishman*. Finally, in 1962 she was sold to Sociedade Geral de Comércio, Indústria e Transporte, Lda (Sociedade Geral) of Lisbon, Portugal, and renamed *Cintra*.



Cintra was registered in Panama under ownership of Suprema Compañia Naviera, SA, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sociedade Geral. To my knowledge, she was the only ship of Sociedade Geral to receive a flag of convenience (and as such, the only ship of Sociedade Geral to have the initials S.N. on her smoke stack, rather than the usual S.G.) According to Rui Amaro, an expert on all that pertains to ships and shipping companies (<http://naviosavista.blogspot.com/2010/04/salvadego-cintra-ex-englishman-ex-hmt.html>) this was due to legislation current at the time in Portugal that did not permit national registry of vessels more than 10 years old.

My father served on *Cintra* (as chief mate and then captain) from Sociedade Geral's acquisition until he left the sea life and moved to Mozambique in 1966. On her, and as captain, he made a salvage of a mixed ship (cargo and passengers) near the Ouessant Islands off Brittany (the Southern end to the Western entrance to the English Channel.)

Now you understand why all my sailboats have been named *Cintra*. ... Yes, with a C!





Cintra entering Leixões for refueling



From l to r, my sister Rita, my brother Luis, and me at
the now vanished beach of Titan, near Leixões, with
Cintra as background

















Thank you, Colin! Fantastic job.

(One last comment on the modeler: Colin lost 4 fingers on his left hand in an accident at sea when he was 17 years old. It just goes to show that, for some people, where there is a will there is a way!)

I would also like to thank Rui Amaro and Pedro Macieira. Some of the information in these pages came from their blogs, respectively Navios á Vista (<http://naviosavista.blogspot.com>) and Rio das Maças (<http://riodasmacas.blogspot.com>)

Last but not least, a special thank you to Pedro Macieira: it was a posting on his Rio das Maças blog that eventually would lead me to Colin!

Photo credits

slide 3: unknown (family photo); slide 4: Capt. Luis Santos Serpa;
slides 5 to 10: Colin Burrows; slides 11 and 12: me.