

Shetland Library

Colouring suggestions for the 'Build Your Own Galley Kit'

Before you start, it is worthwhile making sure that you have gathered together the things you'll need for colouring and constructing your galley. These are; a glue stick, a pair of good scissors and some colouring pens or pencils. You will need to locate a mast (a short piece of wood), which is not included in the pack.

Before constructing your galley, it will be much easier to colour in the various parts before they are cut out and stuck together. It is worth taking the time to do this, as a carefully coloured galley will undoubtedly look much smarter than a hastily completed effort.

There are certain parts of the real galley, which remain similar from year to year, while other parts vary significantly. In recent years, the sides of the galley have been various combinations of white and coloured stripes. These have included blue, red and white. Sometimes of course the galley is just plain white. In 2006 the galley was a nice natural brown varnish colour. There have also been a couple of years when the lower strakes (boards) of the galley were a deep blue or red and became progressively lighter shades of the same colour until the strakes below the gunwales were almost white. It is however, entirely up to yourself which colours you use on this part of the vessel.

The interior of the galley is usually painted a creamy colour or is left a natural varnished woody colour. This applies both to the insides, mid-taft and the fore and afterdecks.



The hand is always painted red.

The sail is generally bold stripes of red and white, although the 2006 galley had a black and white sail and in 1992 it had a green and white sail.

As opposed to the Raven Banner that flies above the Town Hall on Up-Helly-Aa day, which depicts a black raven on a red background, the Raven Banner on the Galley is usually a black raven on a white field.

In 2006 the crow's nest was a natural brown colour. Although in Jarl Matheson's year there was very much a red and white colour scheme. This meant that the crow's nest had red and white stripes running vertically all around it. In 1992 it was green and white stripes matching the green and white sail of that year.

The head and the tail on the 2006 galley was a sort of silvery colour, which is perhaps not that easy to recreate using felt tips or colouring pencils. However don't worry as dark greens and blues usually work quite well. Don't forget to use a nice bold red colour for the galley's 'gums', which draws attention to its sharp teeth and makes it look more fearsome.

The eyes are usually yellow with black pupils and the spikes can be yellow with red tips or the same colour as the head and tail to about halfway up each one, then tipped with a flash of blood red.



Metallic blue galley head from the late 1980s

The shield designs and colours vary significantly from year to year with the 2006 shields being painted in monochrome. Let your imagination go on these, bearing in mind that designs, which work particularly well, are both Norman or Celtic crosses and so forth.

Instructions for the construction of the 'Build Your Own Galley Kit'

- **Step 1 Preparation**

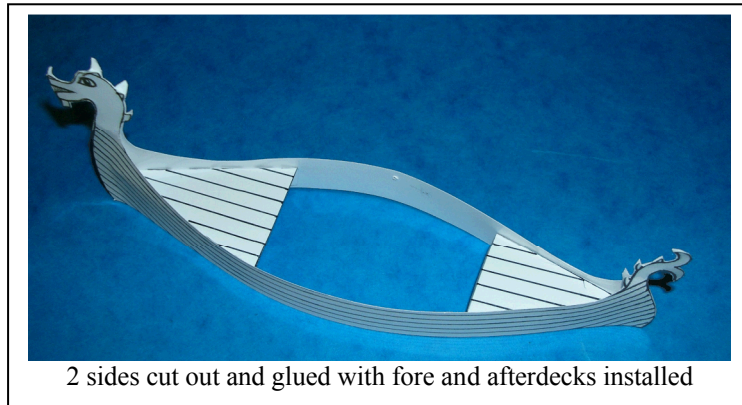
Using a sharp pair of scissors carefully cut along the dotted lines to produce rectangles (or squares) with each of the parts and its description clearly visible. Have the mast handy at this stage because you will need it for **Step 8**.

- **Step 2 Cutting out the galley**

After step 1 you should be left with little but the 'mirrored' galley shape. Cutting this out will be tricky because of the spikes, beard and tail, but take your time and trim off excess card every so often, particularly if it is getting in the way. Don't attempt to cut in around the teeth as this will be much too fiddly and could cause irreversible damage to the head. In order to save time and for a neat job the 'mirrored' galley image can be folded in half. Be sure to fold right at the line running between the two galley halves otherwise the model may not match on both sides.

- **Step 3 Gluing the two ends together**

Carefully cut along the fold to separate the two sides of your galley. Using a glue stick, fix the heads and tails together. Remember however that the middle must open out so try not to let the glue extend much more than about 1cm from the stem at either end.



- **Step 4 Foredeck**

Cut out around the outline of the foredeck and fold down the flaps along the dotted lines. Spread some glue onto the outer sides of the flaps and insert the now triangular part into the inside of the galley bow. It can be sloping slightly toward the middle of the vessel and the top

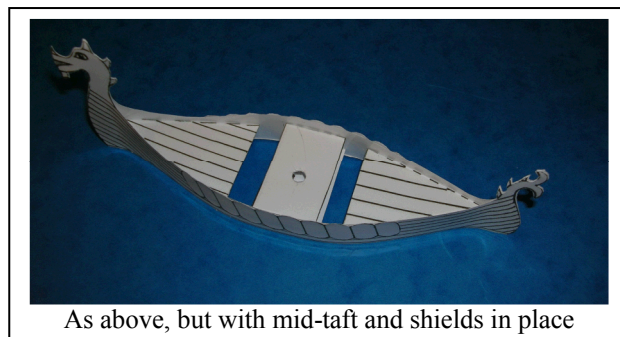
of the foredeck should be slightly lower than the gunwales i.e. 3 or more mm at the nearest point.

- **Step 5 Afterdeck**

The same instructions for step 4 can be applied for the afterdeck. Once this part is similarly dealt with, your galley should have assumed its proper shape.

- **Step 6 Mid-taft**

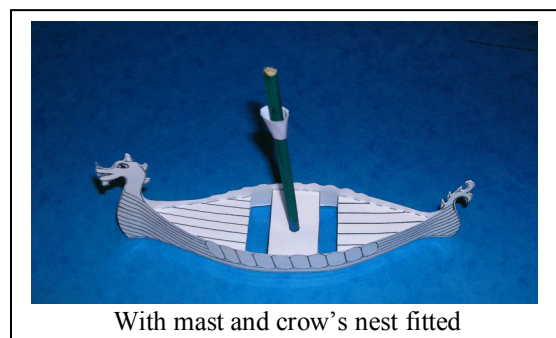
It is now time to construct the mid-taft. Cut around the outline of this shape and fold it along the dotted lines to produce a rectangular shaped 'box'. Using a sharp pencil or compass pierce two holes where the black dots are. These will be for supporting the mast, so need to be big enough to insert the mast but not too big as a snug fit is desirable in order that the mast is not wobbly. Glue the flaps of the box together before applying more glue to the ends of the mid-taft and sticking it into the centre of your galley, which should now be rather more rigid. It is now ready for the shields.



Glue the flaps of the box together before applying more glue to the ends of the mid-taft and sticking it into the centre of your galley, which should now be rather more rigid. It is now ready for the shields.

- **Step 7 Shields**

The two rows of shields should now be cut out and glued to the sides of the galley ensuring that the tops of the shields lean slightly towards the head on both sides. It is up to the individual how much the tops of the shields should stick up above the gunwale but 2 – 3 mm is recommended.

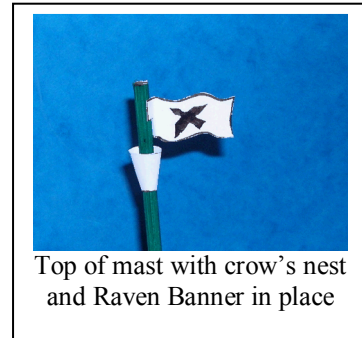


- **Step 8 Crow's nest**

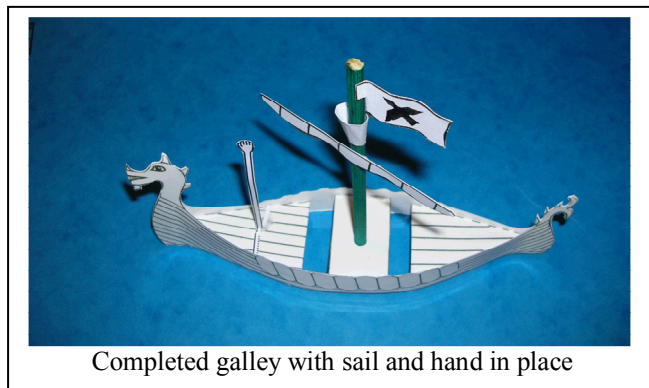
The crow's nest should now be constructed by folding the cut out into a cone shape with the hole at the bottom of the cone just big enough for the mast to pass through. It is better to attach the crow's nest to the mast **before** attaching the mast to the galley as the bottom of the mast will push down through the crow's nest much more easily than the top of the mast passing up through the nest.

- **Step 9 Flag**

The raven banner should now be prepared by making a small cut along the very short dotted line. This will enable two flaps to be made, which should be folded in opposite directions at 90 degrees to the rest of the flag. This will provide a means of gluing the raven banner to the top of the mast.



Top of mast with crow's nest and Raven Banner in place



Completed galley with sail and hand in place

- **Step 10 Sail and hand**

Almost there! Cut out the two remaining pieces, the sail and the hand. Simply put a dab of glue on the reverse of the sail and attach to the mast, just below the crow's nest. Cut along the dotted line at the bottom of the hand post. Fold the two flaps in opposite directions at 90 degrees to the post. Apply some glue to the underside of the flaps and

place the foot of the hand pole somewhere around the middle of the foredeck.

Congratulations! Your galley is now complete.

Galley part names and explanations

Mid-taft – (or bulkhead), this is where the mast is supported in the middle point of your model galley. In a real galley of course there would have been several tafts (seats) as a party of Vikings may have included between 20 and 30 men, who would have rowed the galley in the absence of favourable winds. Due to the scale of this kit, the interior of the galley has been simplified and also the oars omitted due to the fiddly nature of cutting out such small components.

Fore and afterdecks – as well as providing somewhere to stow provisions, the fore and afterdecks provide convenient vantage points for the Jarl. From the foredeck he can scan the horizon for enemy vessels, whilst standing on the afterdeck, he would have faced his hardy crew and been able to effectively harangue them into rowing faster.

Hand – the hand is a reference to a story about two Jarls racing to claim a piece of land. The custom was that whoever's hand touched the shore first would claim that island for himself. One of the Jarls was looking like he was going to win the prize, as his boat was nearer than the other's. In desperation the losing Jarl cut his own hand off and threw it ahead of the winning Jarl. In this way *his* hand was first to touch the land so giving him the right to claim it.

Raven Banner – the raven banner is a very special flag, which can only be flown on Up-Helly-Aa day. It is clearly referred to in the 'Galley Song' '*...floats the raven banner o'er us, round the dragon ship we stand...*' The three songs: The Up-Helly-Aa song, the 'Galley Song' and the 'Norseman's Home' are central to the celebrations and similarly must not be sung in public on any day other than Up-Helly-Aa.

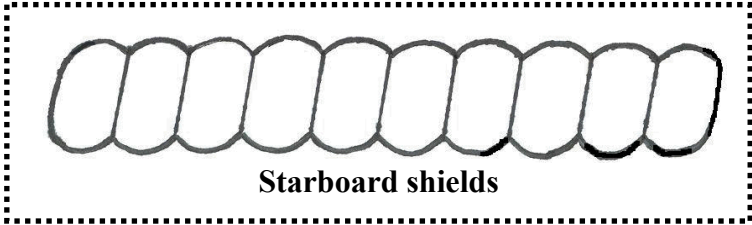
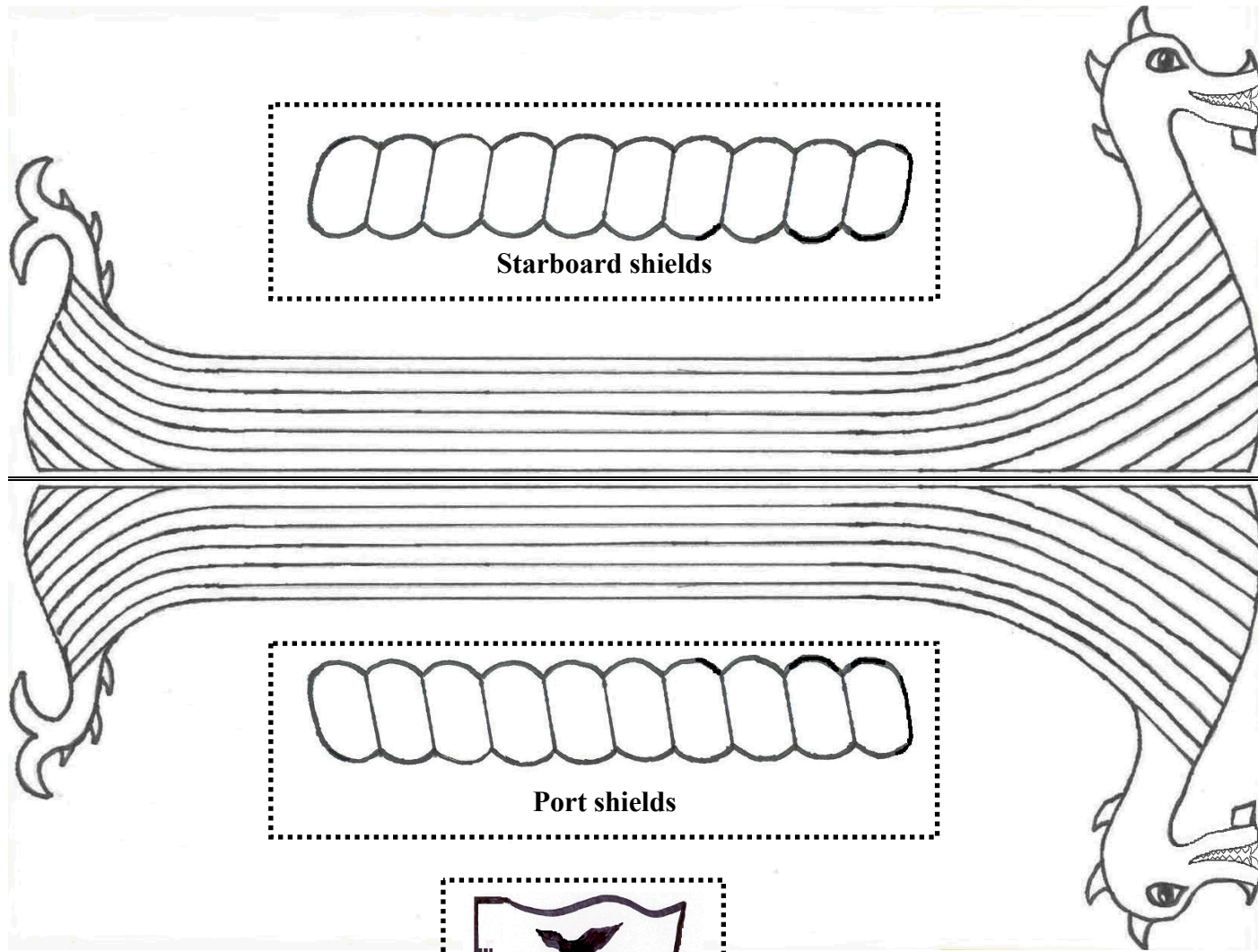
Crow's nest – perhaps only the very largest of galleys would have had an effective crow's nest, as (strictly speaking) a crow's nest should be large enough for someone on lookout to safely stand in near to top of the mast. The crow's nest in smaller form nevertheless still decoratively adorns the modern galley.

Stem – the stems are basically the pieces of timber at the two pointy ends of the galley where the boards all meet and are securely fastened. In a real galley the two stems would have been attached to the keel, which would have run along the bottom of the vessel, one end to the other. The galley used at Up-Helly-Aa however, is a 'waterline model' so parts such as the keel, which would have been underwater are omitted.

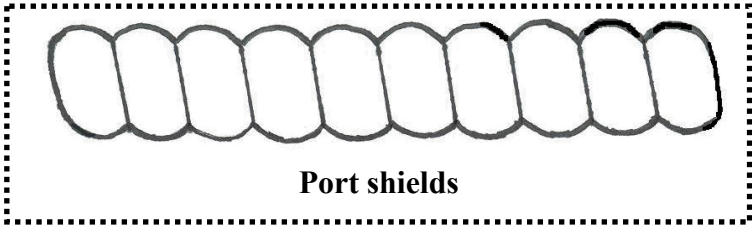
Strakes – these are the boards that make up the sides of the galley. The Norsemen were particularly skilled at assembling 'clinker built' vessels. This term means a series of strakes that overlap and are fastened to each other at the bottom edge of one to the top edge of the one below.

Gunwales – this is name for the top of each side of the galley. The shields were probably attached to this part of the galley (when the crew were aboard) and the design of the modern galley reflects this custom.

Trevor Jamieson



Starboard shields



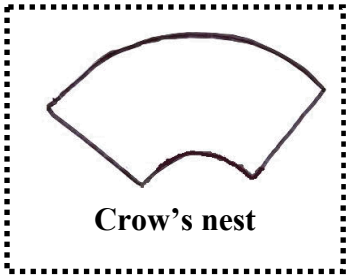
Port shields



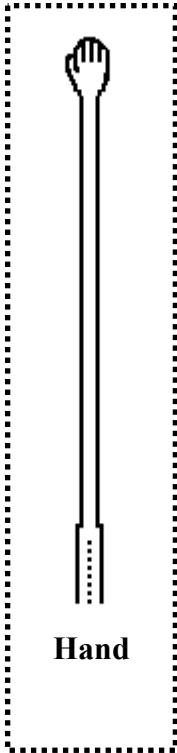
The Raven Banner



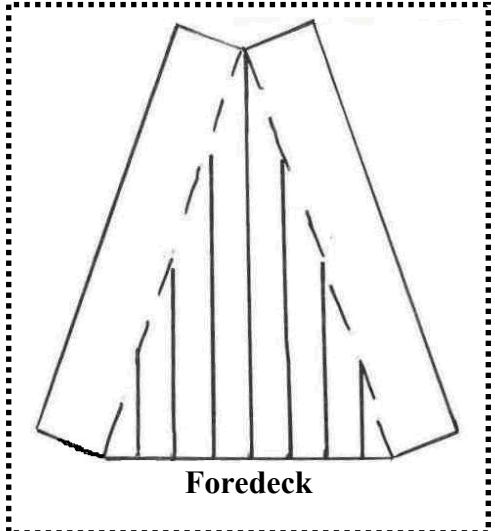
Sail



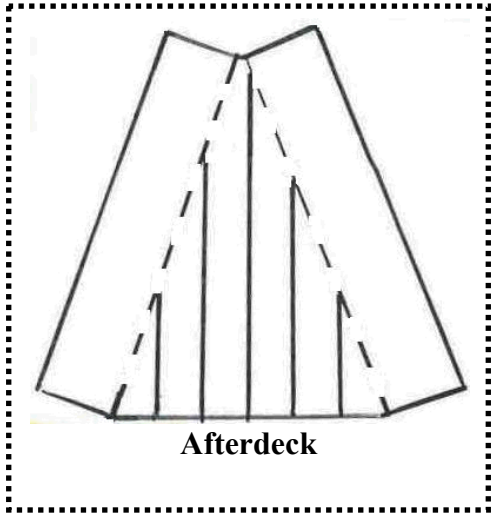
Crow's nest



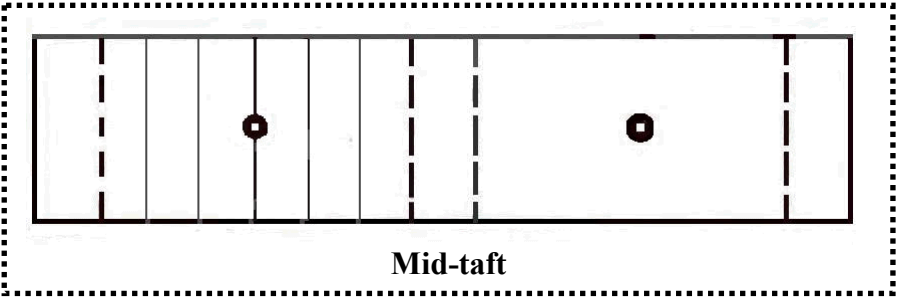
Hand



Foredeck



Afterdeck



Mid-taft