

## Wide Open Spaces, In a Box? The *WorkShox*

I had decided to get back into the model making hobby after many years absence, but it became quickly apparent, that after amassing some of the basic 'tools-of-the-trade', that I now faced a problem, which can be summed up in the words of Captain James T. Kirk, "Space. The final frontier"

I live in one of those houses designed on the premise that they are excellent so long as no one actually lives in one! You're familiar with the idea; bend over at the front door to do up your shoe laces and you bang your head on the back door!

I have no workshop and working off the dining room or kitchen table is not really an option, as packing and un-packing would take up most of the limited 'me' time that I have in the day.

Then I hit upon the idea of a workshop-in-a-box, I call it '**WorkShox**'. And like a full sized workshop it would have to contain everything that I could possibly need in the tools department. It would also have to contain my 'work-bench'.

The problem is that I only have 100cm by 50cm to with which to work.

To add to the challenge, I'm no carpenter and my knowledge of woodworking techniques is limited at best. If ever I was asked to build an ark because of an impending flood then the animals would be in serious trouble.

I ruled out using a cabinet maker – I had to ask – as the cost was roughly the same as the house. So it fell to my efforts to try and meet this challenge.

Interestingly, the cost of raw materials for the box and buying the tools to build it, i.e. electric drill, sander and jigsaw etc, as well as the brass fittings all came to 20% of the cost quoted by the cabinet maker, though I acknowledge that it may not look as pretty as if he had done it.

### Parameters

So starting with the basics, I had to give myself some parameters with which work:

- The size was determined for me.
- I figured that the weight must not exceed 15 kilograms.
- I calculated a budget; a scientific method was applied which involved looking at the quote from the cabinet maker, sticking my thumb in my mouth and cutting it by 70%! Well, no one said I couldn't!
- Lastly the workshox must look good, as it might have to be in plain view. Storage is an issue in this house.

These parameters were open for tweaking if necessary.

Now I looked at the contents. What would the '*WorkShox*' have to contain?

Apart from all the small items like 'G'clamps, files, saws and knives etc it would have to hold an airbrush and compressor, powered hand-drill and it's attachments, a lathe, power point and lighting, paints and associated fluids, brushes and various other gadgets. I didn't think that was asking for too much!

Out came the scales and the calculator. All told the equipment added up to a little under 14kilograms and that was with out the lathe and the compressor! This put a small spanner in the works as regards the weight requirements, but at least I now knew that amount that the box must carry. But I had to be sensible and cut out any notion of mounting a lathe or compressor inside the box. The thought of being laughed at by health and safety was just too much to bear!