

Detailing 'Amazon' Class frigates

Modifications to the Airfix kit described and drawn by **Paul E. Beaver**

THE TYPE 21 General Purpose Frigate, perhaps better known as the 'Amazon' Class, was envisaged in 1967 when a joint tender was submitted to the Ministry of Defence by Vosper Thornycroft and Yarrow. The idea was to produce a frigate to be powered by gas turbine engines (COGOG) to supersede, and to replace, the Types 41 and 61 frigates in RN service. HMS *Amazon* was commissioned in May 1975 by HRH the Princess Anne, and is the lead ship of a class of eight which have been ordered by the Royal Navy. There are also potential sales to Denmark and Greece. Recent reports suggest that this class compares very favourably with foreign frigates of a similar tonnage, for example the USN's USS *Knox*.

Airfix have produced a 1:600 scale kit of HMS *Amazon* (F169) and, since it seems to have been modelled on the early artist's impression, not unnaturally there are several inaccuracies. However, these are easily corrected as the general shape and appearance is good.

Selected corrections

It is obviously not possible to record every change or correction in a new class of warship, but the following can be assumed to

be accurate for a model of HMS *Amazon* or HMS *Antelope* in 1975.

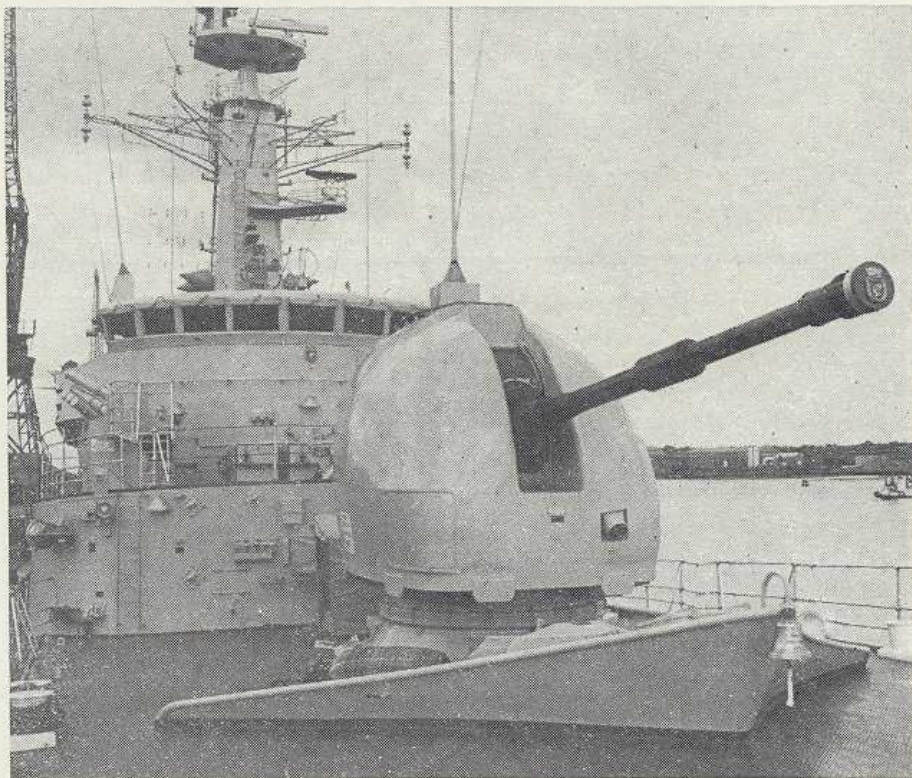
1. Remove the hull side aft of the hangar deck the length of part 3 as shown.

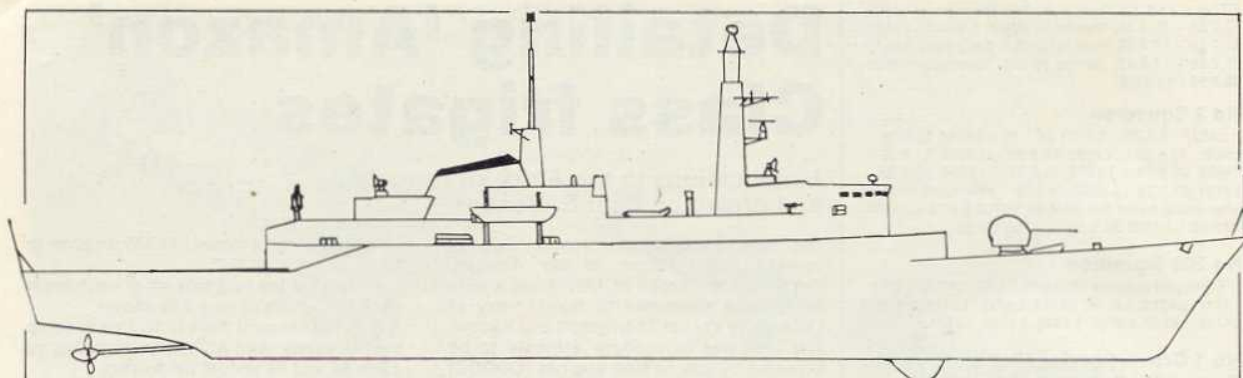
2. At the moment there is no plan to equip the 'Amazons' with ASW torpedo tubes, so parts 54 and 55 should be deleted.

3. The life rafts need to be repositioned as follows: port side — aft of the Oerlikon and directly beneath the ship's launch in a single stowage and double banked beneath the after missile radar position and also forward of the superstructure on the boat deck; starboard side — again a single mounting aft of the Oerlikon, forward of the superstructure, and double mountings again below the radar position. The double mountings are vertical not horizontal as in the kit.

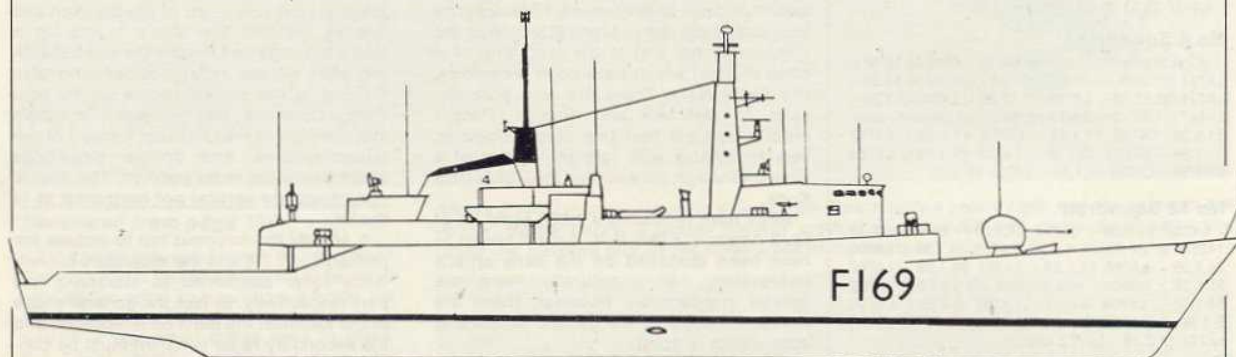
4. Modify the foremast top to include the primary (part 29) and the secondary surveillance radar positioned to starboard and port respectively. In fact the general shape of the foremast top must be remodelled and the secondary radar (smaller) must be constructed.

The Vickers Mk 8 4.5-inch GP gun on HMS Amazon. Note also foremast, bridge, ship's bell, ship's crest, and the aerial positions (Vosper Thornycroft).

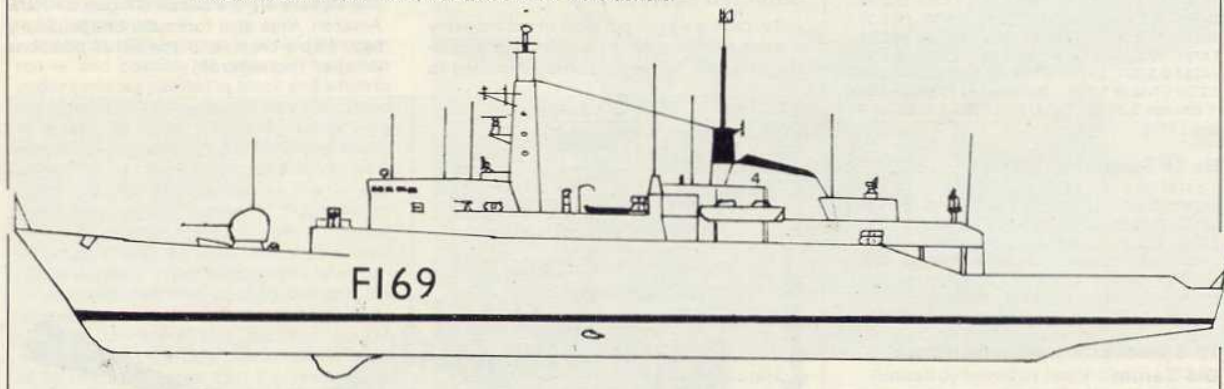




Artist's impression: Airfix kit similar.



HMS Amazon 'F169' 1975, starboard view. Note aerials.



Port view. Note life rafts, Corvus, quarter deck and stabilizers.

5. Add two 8-barrel Corvus rocket launchers forward of the bridge, plus their six lockers.

6. Add two struts to the ensign staff and to the jack staff.

7. Add two supports to each side of the hangar deck.

8. The pennant number decals should be positioned under the bridge on the hull sides and amidships on the stern.

9. At Flying Stations, the hangar door is 1/3 open and the Oerlikons point abeam.

10. The ECM aerials on both masts are not solid and must be reshaped, also various aerials and wires must be added.

11. The MF/DF aerial over the bridge (part 24) should be a ring not solid.

12. The ship's launch (part 50) should be remodelled with two cabins.

13. A fin stabilizer should be fitted to each side of the hull as shown.

Colour scheme

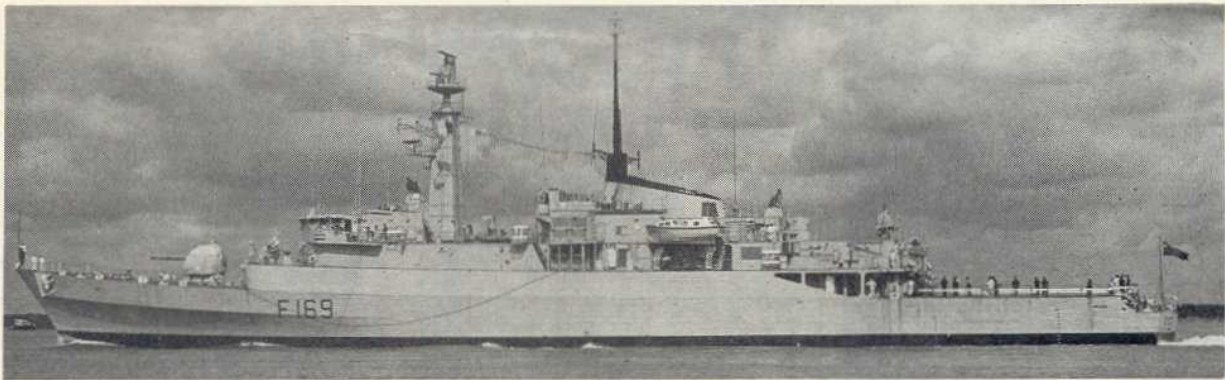
Mid-grey: Hull, superstructure, radar dishes, gun, boat covers, whaler, launch (unless otherwise painted blue or red), gun barrel end-cover, anchor, Bosun's boat (part 37), boat covers. **Dark-grey:** Flight deck (non-skid). **Dark green:** All decks except the Flight deck. **Black:** Gun barrel, funnel top, mainmast top above funnel, ECM aerials, boot topping, anchor chain, helicopter rotor blades, gemini (part 38), bridge windows. **Dark blue:** Seacat

missiles, Lynx helicopter. **Red:** Seacat noses, port navigation light, aerial bases. **White:** Fairleads, bollards, staff and jack strut, mainmast top, life rafts. **Brick red:** Anti-fouling under the waterline. **Green:** Starboard navigation light. **Brown:** The jack staff and the ensign jack are both wooden, the vents on the superstructure give the appearance of being brown. **Gold:** Cone of Seacat launcher. **Bronze:** Propellers.

Individual vessels

HMS Amazon (F169): figure '4' on the funnel in black outlined in white (this is the squadron number). Flight deck code is AZ. In service 1975.

HMS Antelope (F170): figure '7' on the



Technical data (1973)

Length overall: 117.04 m (384 feet).
 Beam: 12.72 m (41¾ feet).
 Max Draught: 4.12 m (13½ feet).
 Max Displacement: 2,500 tonnes.
 Speed: 35 knots (Max), 20 knots (Cruising).
 Complement: 192 all ranks.

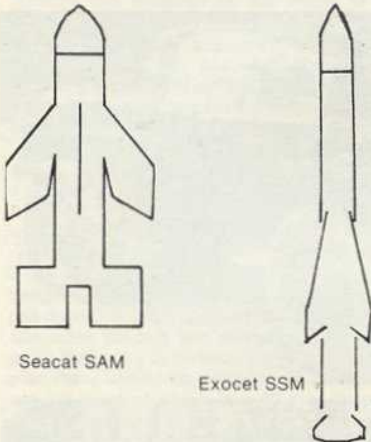
Port beam view of HMS Amazon while on builder's trials in the Solent in 1973. Note Red Ensign and the two cabins on the ship's launch (Vosper Thornycroft).

SSM (HMS Active only at present), two 20 mm Oerlikon GP hand-operated guns, two 8-barrel Corvus rocket launchers (for flares,

Armament

One Seacat SAM launcher, one Vickers Mk 8 4.5-inch GP gun, Lynx helicopter (at present substituted by a Wasp), ASW torpedo tubes (may be fitted later), Exocet

Amazon seen from above in 1973. Deck colour dark green, flight deck dark grey (flight deck markings later revised) (Vosper Thornycroft).



Seacat SAM

Exocet SSM

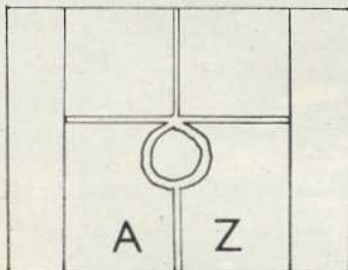
funnel again black outlined in white; the ship's launch has a white cabin and deck and is white below the waterline, the hull is red. Whaler is similar white/red/white. Coded AO on the flight deck.

HMS Active (F171): She is at present fitting out in Southampton with Exocet SSM for'ard. Handed over to the RN on June 30 1975.

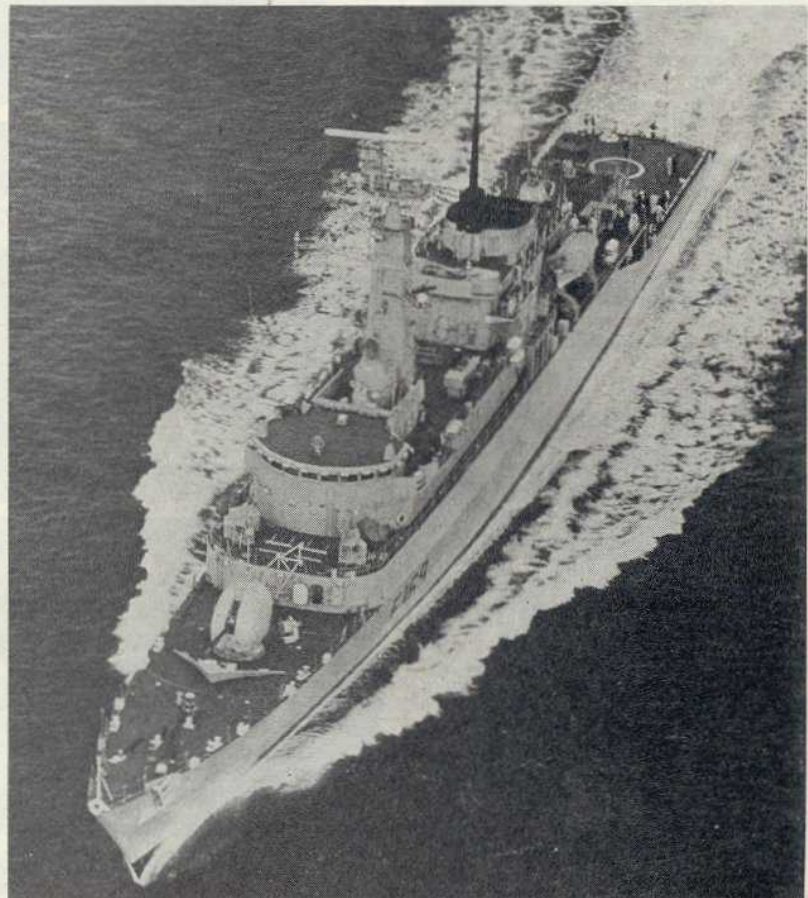
HMS Abuscade (F172): On builder's trials.
 HMS Arrow (F173) and HMS Alacrity (F174): Fitting out.

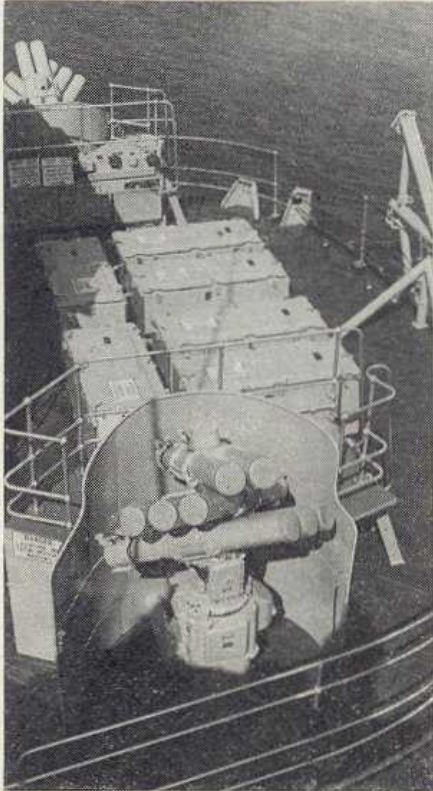
HMS Ardent (F175): Recently launched.
 HMS Avenger (F176): Building.

F169 - F171 are Vosper Thornycroft built at Woolston, Southampton. F172 - F176 are Yarrow built on the Clyde.



Flight deck markings are in white on dark grey.





Corvus rocket launcher forward of the bridge showing lockers and screen (Vosper Thornycroft).

chaff or smoke).

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to the following for providing much of the information and encouragement; MOD PRO at Portsmouth; Vosper Thornycroft; C. Dawson, Esq; Cdr W. J. Bingham, RN, CO of HMS *Amazon*; and my father, N. K. Beaver, Esq. □

*Foremast detail showing radars, ECM aeri-
als, EW domes and missile tracking radar
(Vosper Thornycroft).*

