



# The Broadaxe



Founded 1981

Volume 36, Number 12

Newsletter of the Ship Model Society of New Jersey

December 2018

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Our next club meeting is  
**January 5th at 10:00AM**

**TOM RUGGIERO'S  
HOUSE**

# Happy Holidays!



## NOVEMBER NOTES...

**Meeting.** The November meeting was opened at 1835 by President Chuck. Chuck welcomed 19 members and 3 guests. This was the third meeting for Tom Griffiths, and he was unanimously voted into the SMSNJ. Welcome Tom! Carmine Bianco, who hails from Staten Island, was attending his first meeting. Carmine first became aware of SMSNJ at a National Lighthouse Museum event. He considers himself a neophyte although he has built a model of *America* from a kit. Our third guest was Don Kieffer. Don got into modeling as a youngster (haven't we all?). He wanted to return to the hobby and found us on the SMSNJ website. He enjoys the America's Cup competition and is currently building the yacht *America*. His plan is to make a model of every cup winner, of which there are thirty-five. His goal is to build one a year. At his current age of 53 this will be quite an undertaking! Welcome all our first-time guests. The meeting was adjourned at 2022 whereupon several members retired to the newly reopened Caldwell Diner. [Meeting photos.](#)

**Treasurer's Report.** Tom Ruggiero presented the report. We have a good balance in the Club account.

**Next Meeting.** Our next meeting is Saturday, January 5th, 2019 at Tom Ruggiero's house. This is replacing our normal December meeting at the Library. The next meeting after the 5th will be Tuesday, January 22nd (our annual auction).

**Saturday Workshop.** Due to a busy month with Thanksgiving and the Lighthouse Museum Exhibit, there was no Saturday Workshop in November. Instead, there were various group build sessions that were arranged separately.

**Tech Session.** Next month's Tech Session will be "Making Hances and Volutes with Sculpy" presented by Bill Brown.

## OLD BUSINESS



**Group Build.** At the November meeting there were five Medway Longboats in various stages of completion shown by Bill Houston, Tom R., Larry F., Doug McKenzie, and Chuck. Tom noted that everything fits well.

*Continued on next page*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### JANUARY

- 5 - **Holiday Meeting** – Tom Ruggiero's house  
TBD - **Group Build**  
22 - **Monthly Meeting: Annual Auction**, 6:45PM, Roseland Public Library, 1st Floor

### FEBRUARY

- TBD - **Group Build**  
26 - **Monthly Meeting**, 6:45PM, Roseland Public Library, 1st Floor

### MARCH

- TBD - **Group Build**  
26 - **Monthly Meeting**, 6:45PM, Roseland Public Library, 1st Floor

(good idea). Chuck encouraged group build members to give him their cell phone numbers so that they can join in on group chats.

**Show and Exhibit at the National Lighthouse Museum.** The exhibit and demonstration at the National Lighthouse Museum in Staten Island went off very well. Tom, Ken Whitehead, Jeff Fuglestad, Bill Brown, Ken Pomplun, and Mason Logie were there. The museum staff was very appreciative, especially with the way the SMSNJ members interacted with museum visitors. See photos on [Dropbox](#) and the next page.

## NEW BUSINESS



**Annual Auction.** The annual auction is scheduled for our January 22nd meeting. We request that you provide a form for each item that you intend to auction off. To assist in this, Chuck has placed an electronic form on the home page of the SMSNJ website. No searching needed. Simply provide the information and press submit for each item you are selling. Please help us help you!

**Northeast Joint Clubs Conference.** The next joint clubs meeting will be hosted by the Connecticut Club. They will have flyers out early January. We will need to have someone from SMSNJ do a round table presentation. Please, step up and volunteer.

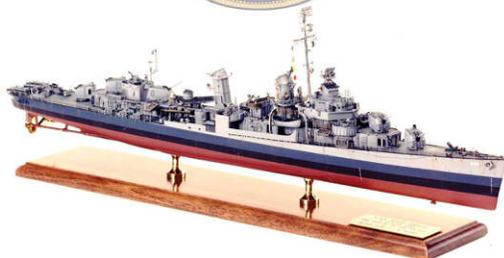
He emphasized that you need to be very precise in getting the transom perpendicular to the keel using the blocks on the stern of the assembly jig. He also mentioned that the wood being used, Alaskan Yellow Cedar, readily splits along the grain. So when removing laser char you need to be extremely careful. Chuck showed the stand that he is planning for the model. He is using cradles rather than simple pedestals to avoid keel breakage. Larry protected the keel of his model with tape

## THE NAUTICAL RESEARCH GUILD

### "ADVANCING SHIP MODELING THROUGH RESEARCH"

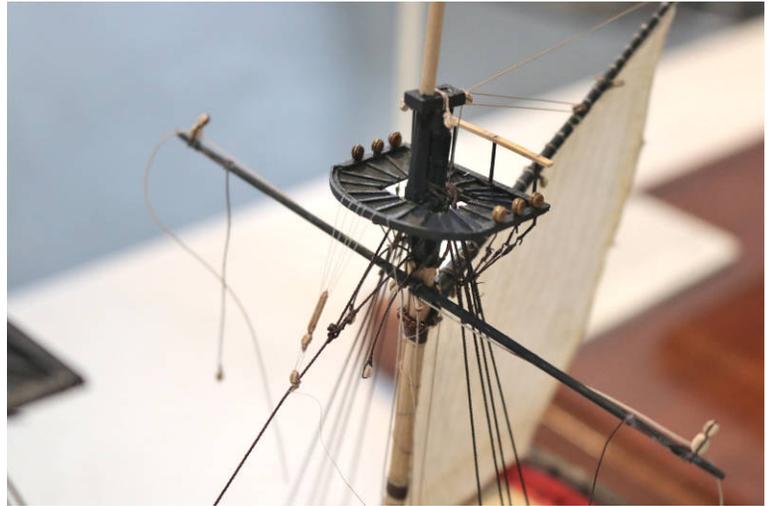
Annual membership includes our world-renowned quarterly magazine, Nautical Research Journal, which features photographs and articles on ship model building, naval architecture, merchant and naval ship construction, maritime trade, nautical and maritime history, nautical archaeology and maritime art.

Other benefits include discounts on annual conferences, ship modeling seminars, NRG products and juried model competitions which are offered exclusively to Guild members. We hope you will consider joining our ongoing celebration of model ships and maritime history.



For more information contact us at: [www.thenrg.org](http://www.thenrg.org) or call 585 968 8111

## National Lighthouse Museum Show and Exhibit November 17, 2018



## TECH SESSION

# Table Saw Tips

by Tom Ruggiero and  
Larry Friedlander

The Nautical Research Guild held their annual conference in October (see article below). One of the topics presented was "Safety Tips for Table Saws", by Kurt Van Dahm, one of the NRG Directors. Larry read the conference review on *Model Ship World* and then called Tom. Together they decided this would be an excellent topic for a Tech Session for the Club. So, thanks to Kurt, Tom and Larry demonstrated a few of the techniques shown in Kurt's excellent presentation.

Both Tom and Larry brought in their Byrnes Model Machines table saws. Although their presentation used (in Tom's opinion) the best in class saw, the techniques and suggestions shown can be used with any table saw, as well as with many power tools. Larry quipped that he shouldn't be the one talking about this having recently cut his finger! All the more reason...

The Byrnes saw is a serious machine. It has plenty of power and is especially aggressive with a carbide tipped blade. You can cut yourself very badly if you use unsafe practices. In fact, a carbide tipped blade can easily sever a finger.

The most important rule to remember is to keep all body parts away from the blade and use safety glasses at all times. A quick word about gloves: Larry uses gloves because

he says that he can feel the blade if he gets too close. Tom, however, believes that even though he uses gloves for most operations with tools, wearing gloves when using rotating equipment is problematic. He knows of an instance where a saw blade actually caught a loose glove and pulled the user's fingers into its teeth. Another thing to keep in mind is to never force stock into the

blade. Forcing anything or using dull cutting tools is an easy way to slip and cut yourself.

To protect your fingers, especially when cutting narrow stock, a push stick is very important. There are commercially available push sticks, or you can simply make your own. The best sticks push the stock into the blade while holding it down on the table.

The next important tip is to keep the blade high enough above the cutting surface so that the blade teeth are contacting the top of the stock. In other words, the teeth are hitting the stock in a downward motion; this assists in forcing it down on the table. The space between blade teeth is called a gullet. Gullets are designed to remove sawdust. So, gullets need to be above the wood so that sawdust can be cleared. If the blade is too low, the teeth hit the front of the piece. This tends to cause the piece to ride up the blade. Obviously, this only applies to cutting pieces rather than cutting slots.

The kerf of the blade is the width at its widest part. This



determines how much wood gets turned to sawdust. Carbide tipped blades have a much wider kerf than slotting or slitting blades. They are intended to rapidly and efficiently cut through thick stock. However, using this type of blade, a good amount of wood becomes dust. Slotting and slitting blades have a very narrow kerf and create a much finer finish. The downside of this type is

*Continued on next page*

that thickness of stock is somewhat limited. These blades also do not clear sawdust as efficiently. Overworking a slotting or slitting blade will cause it to bind because sawdust isn't being cleared. This is what creates burning. If you are getting burning, either the blade is dull or you are forcing it.

All saws need to accommodate blades of different thicknesses. It is important that there not be space between the part and the blade so that the part doesn't drop through the table. To avoid this, a "zero clearance" insert is required. You make this by lowering the blade all the way below the table, removing the insert and installing a blank. Once this is done, you can turn on the saw and slowly raise the blade. Simple as that.

A rip cut is one where you are cutting in the direction of the wood grain. A fence is used as the guide for these cuts. Most users cut strips between the blade and the fence. This is not a good practice as it tends to put a side load on the blade that causes the cut to burn and the strip to launch back at you. The reason is that the fence is not perfectly parallel to the blade. Note that you should always tighten the near side of the fence first, then the far side. The slight divergence from parallel is purposely done so that sawdust is cleared, especially with slotting blades that are not hollow ground. So, always have the piece that is to be cut off to the left side of the blade. Tom showed how the cut opens up a bit as the strip is cut off. To make accurate repeat cuts, Tom demonstrated a stop that is clamped to the saw table as an index. Larry demonstrated an indexing stop that he attached to a slide. You set the stop to the left side of the blade, place your stock against the index and move the fence over to contact the right side of the stock. Now you're ready to make your cut. For the next cut, all you need to do is move the stock over to the stop. Slide over your fence and continue to cut.

A cross cut is one where you cut the wood across the grain. This is usually done when you are cutting something to length. In this operation, you use a fixture that slides in the groove of the saw's table. You can even make very accurate angle cuts. When cross cutting, the temptation is to slide the wood up to the fence and then push it into the blade. As discussed previously, this creates the tendency to side load and possible jam the blade. If your push stick comes off the piece or your hands slip, they head for the blade. Not good! Tom demonstrated that if you do this, the cutoff piece tends to torque clockwise. This would at best launch the piece, and at worst jam the saw. To avoid this and still be able to make accurate, and if necessary repetitive cuts, you need to have something that allows the piece to be out of contact with the fence before the cut starts. If the fence is tall, you can simply clamp a small scrap piece to it. If your fence is short, there are pre-drilled holes that allow you to mount a piece of scrap. Or, as Tom demonstrated, you can make a small channel that fits tightly over the fence. You keep the standoff at the near side of the fence, butt your stock up

against it, and then slide the miter to the blade. Tom showed multiple cut off pieces that are exactly the same length. As a side note, if you have a Preac saw, the standoff is already mounted to the fence. You simply remove the fence, reverse it and reinstall it. This was good thinking by Preac inventor, the late Charlie Files.

Larry demonstrated a slide table that he fabricated that allows you to crosscut pieces quickly and efficiently. It also keeps your hands a good distance away from the blade. If you are making repetitive mitered cuts, the table is a good fixture to have. Model Machines currently makes one out of aluminum. As with all Jim Byrnes products, it is well thought out and perfectly fabricated. Larry also demonstrated a miter that is used for tapering. Also sold by Model Machines, this is another excellent product. As with the rip cut discussions above, the cutoff piece needs to be on the left side of the blade.

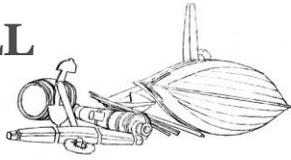
Finally, Larry demonstrated a tilting table to make bevels. This is required on the Byrnes saw as the arbor does not tilt, a feature that contributes to the exacting precision of the Byrnes saw. The tilt table is a good idea, but it does load the side of the blade. Tom suspects that this would be a problem with very narrow slotting or slitting blades as they will tend to deflect. As an aside, the higher end scroll saws use a tilting head rather than a tilting table. This is so that the part you are cutting stays flat. While not a problem with a table saw, side loading a scroll saw blade will surely break the blade!

Both Tom and Larry purchase blades from [Thurston](#) in Rhode Island. Their prices are very reasonable and their service is first rate. Tom noted that he received an order from them within a week.

## SUMMARY

- Keep your fingers away from the blade! Two to three inches away is a good idea.
- Wear eye protection.
- Use a push stick. You can buy them or make your own.
- Avoid situations that would bind the blade.
- Use a zero-clearance plate.
- Use a piece of scrap as a backer board when you are making cross cuts.
- Whenever possible, cut off pieces should fall away from the blade. When doing rip cuts, the cutoff piece should never be between the saw blade and the fence. Doing so will allow the cutoff to fly back at you. There are a few ways to do repetitive rip cuts where the cutoff is on the left side of the blade. Basically, you are making a feather board, so to speak.
- When doing repetitive cross cuts, you should put a standoff piece against the fence. Again, that prevents binding of the blade.
- The blade should be high enough above your work so that the rotation of the blade tends to clamp the piece rather than propelling it back at you.
- A sliding table is a way to keep your hands safe. There is one available for the Byrnes saw.

## SHOW AND TELL



### Skeleton Ship's Deck, Hex Marks the Spot

— Mason Logie

This is a Lindberg plastic kit with two skeletons, a ship's wheel, cannon and a broken mast on a pitching deck. Mason is building this for a Halloween display. One skeleton will be at the helm while the second skeleton points at a treasure map with a dagger.



### Yacht America

— Guest Carmine Bianco

This model was built about 35 years ago. The top works have degraded over the years and Carmine will probably cut down the masts and repair and display the work as a hull model only.



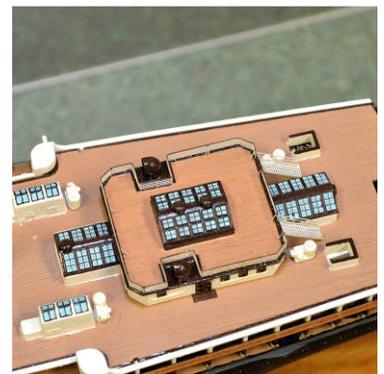
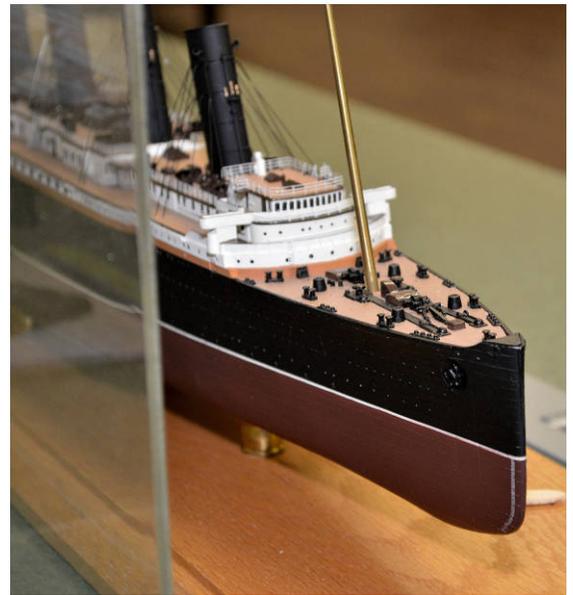
## SHOW AND TELL



### RMS *Lusitania* and SM *U-20*

— Tom Griffiths

Tom brought in his work in progress *Lusitania*, displayed with the U boat that sank her, *U-20*. The model is super-detailed with photoetch from Gold Medal Models. Both models are 1:350 scale. *Lusitania* measures 27" by 3" by 6" while *U-20* is 7" by 1/2" by 1". The RMS *Lusitania* was launched in 1906 for the Cunard Line. She was sunk off the Irish Coast on May 5, 1915 by *U-20*. The model depicts *Lusitania* as she appeared on that last voyage. Her name and port of registry were blacked out and the landmark red/orange portion of her stacks was also painted black. In addition, a tan stripe added the length of the superstructure at the promenade deck was added. Tom will also be detailing all of the life boats. Very good looking models, Tom.



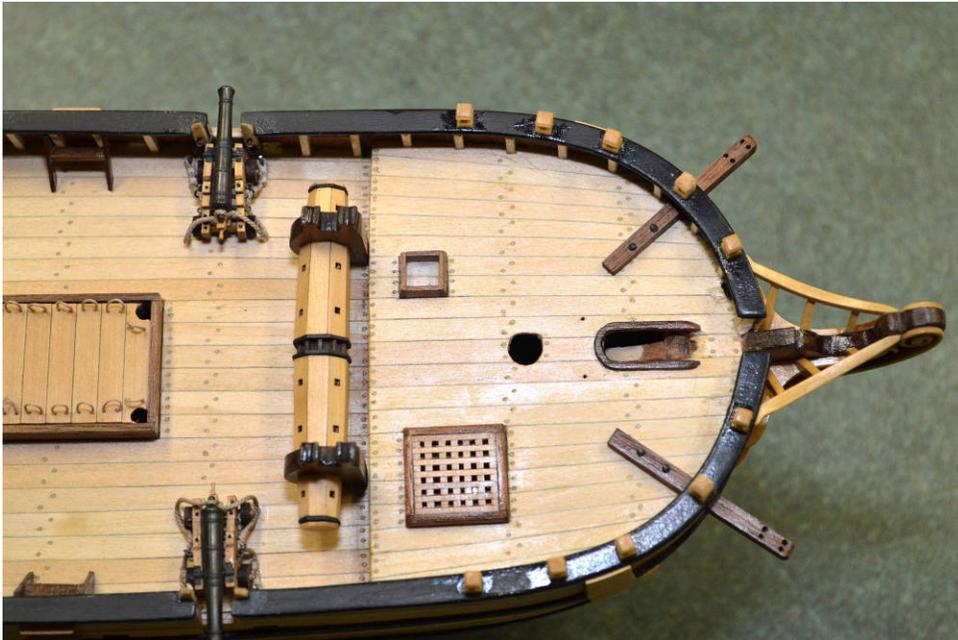
## SHOW AND TELL



### USS *Independence*

— Ken Whitehead

Ken showed his model of an Artesania Latina kit of the *Independence*, purportedly a Colonial Sloop of War circa 1775. Ken has completed carving at the bow and stern, and both quarter badges. He used the technique that Chuck had demonstrated, using a backing to hold pieces steady while working with carving tools and files. A very good job, Ken.



## SHOW AND TELL



### HMS Victory Ship's Boats

— Dan Caramagno

Dan has been building the HMS *Victory* kit by Heller. At the November meeting he brought in the ships boats for the *Victory*. Dan read *Seamanship in the Age of Sail* by John Harland, and was impressed with the way ships were kedged using their boats and the kedge anchor. So he added a windlass used for recovering the kedge anchors to one of the boats. The boats are 1:84 scale, so this work is extremely fine. Well done, Dan.



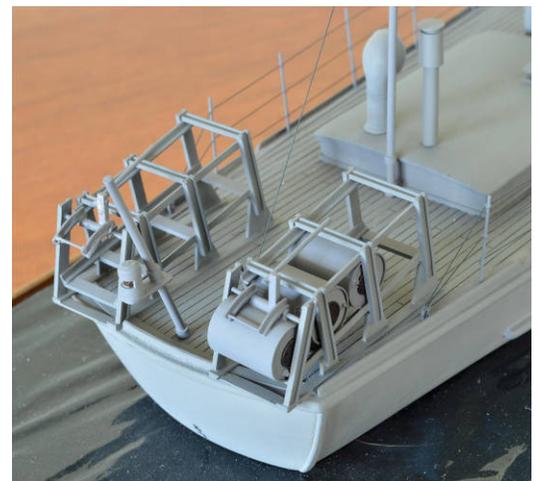
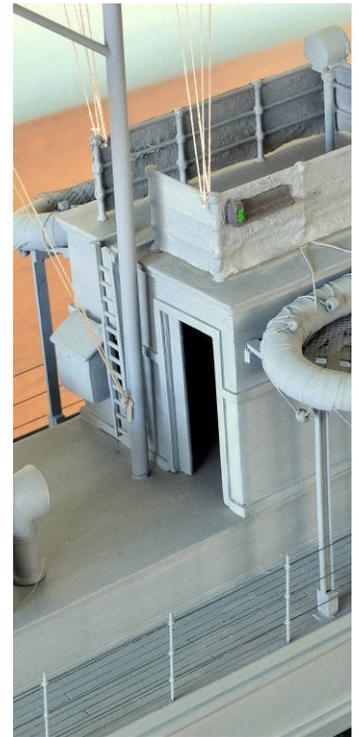
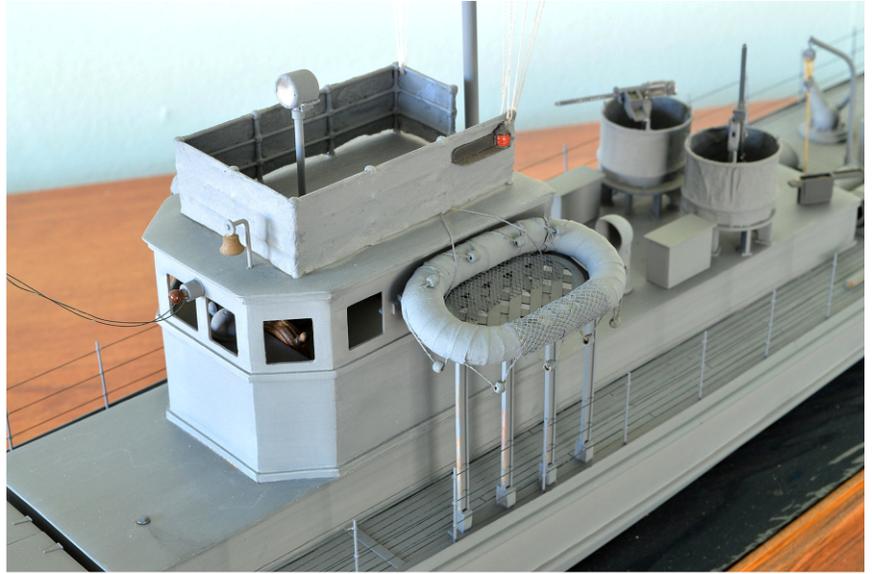
## SHOW AND TELL



### USS SC431 — Steve Maggipinto

SC431 was one of a class of wooden hulled vessels originally built for World War I service. Subchasers were designed to combat German U-Boats off the shoreline of the United States. Their construction and size were conceived for mass production in as short a time as possible. After the outbreak of World War II, SC431 was updated with radar, sonar, increased armament, and alterations to the shape of the pilot house. The model depicts her appearance after these modifications. In 1943, on patrol off the coast of Virginia, SC431 detected and engaged a U-Boat. At the time she was commanded by Lt(jg) William V. Maggipinto, Steve's father.

The model was scratchbuilt in 1980-81 in 1/48 scale. The hull is constructed of laminated balsa covered with basswood. The wooden deck is planked with basswood strips. The balance of the ship's structure utilizes basswood. Some fittings were purchased, some were scratch built using strip plastic, plastic sheet, brass tubing, wire, fishing line, straight pins and Kleenex tissue. Plans for a World War I version came from [The Floating Drydock](#), and were extensively modified to reflect what the vessel looked like in 1943. When Steve was transporting his model from California to New York as a gift for his Dad, he thought for sure it would fit in the overhead compartment of the airplane. Well, it didn't. But, pre-September 11, the pilot stored the model in the cockpit for the flight. Can't happen today. The model's case is vented to prevent degradation of the various metal fittings. For more on this, see the article "Venting Display Cases" below. Well done, Steve!





## The Nautical Research Guild

### NRG 2018 Annual Conference in Las Vegas

The 2018 Conference was held on October 25-27 at the Palace Station Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. The conference included a tour of Hoover Dam on Thursday with a cruise of Lake Mead aboard a sternwheeler. Sessions were held on Friday and Saturday, and the conference concluded with a banquet on Saturday night. Here's a [link to photos](#) of the event. Try going full screen (F11 in Windows) for larger images.

#### Friday Sessions

Friday's technical sessions included presentations from:

- **Ken Foran** on Soldering Brass
- **Steve Wheeler** on Lapstrake Hull Construction
- **Kurt Van Dahm** on Table Saw Use and Safety

The afternoon featured round tables, allowing attendees to choose from a variety of different interactive discussions.

- **Ken Foran** answered questions about soldering techniques from his morning presentation. Attendees were able to watch his work up close and were provided additional tips.
- **Tony Devroude**, an expert carver, gave a preview of some of the techniques featured in his Saturday talk on carving ship decorations.
- **Kurt Van Dahm** explained jigs and safety features from his morning talk. Kurt also answered questions about table saw techniques and safety tips.
- **Pam Weiss**, an expert machinist from Sherline Products, showed Sherline equipment and answered questions about her company's offerings and machining techniques.

- **Steve Wheeler** showed his method of simulating tufted upholstery that has been featured in some of his award-winning models.
- **Nic Damuck** from BlueJacket showed how to make realistic sails using Silkspan.

The membership meeting, led by NRG Chairman Mitch Michelson, closed the day's activities.

#### Saturday Sessions

- **Tony Devroude** – Carving Figureheads
- **Al Ross** – Kit Development
- **Chris Dostal** – Nautical Archaeological Excavations – 3D Imaging
- **Justin Parkoff** – Walking Beam Engines and Their Influence on the Eastern River Steamboats
- **Doug Tolbert** – Researching 74 Gun Class *Buckingham*

A banquet dinner on Saturday was the final event of the conference. The after dinner speaker was Peter Rindlisbacher, an artist, modeler and NRG member. Peter showed how he uses ship models as an aid to proper perspective in his paintings and discussed other aspects of the artist's trade.

#### Model Exhibit

The model exhibit contained nearly three dozen models from a range of periods and styles. Attendees had a chance to view both finished models and those under construction, and were provided the opportunity to discuss individual works with the modelers.



## BOOKS AND PUBS

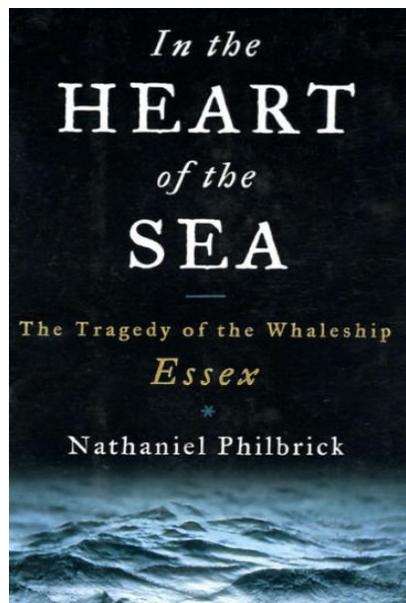


### IN THE HEART OF THE SEA

— Nathaniel Philbrick; recommended by Ken Whitehead

Ken just finished this book; he found it to be well written and very well researched. Its strength lies in the fact that, although it's history, Ken never found it boring. He attributes this to the quality of the writing.

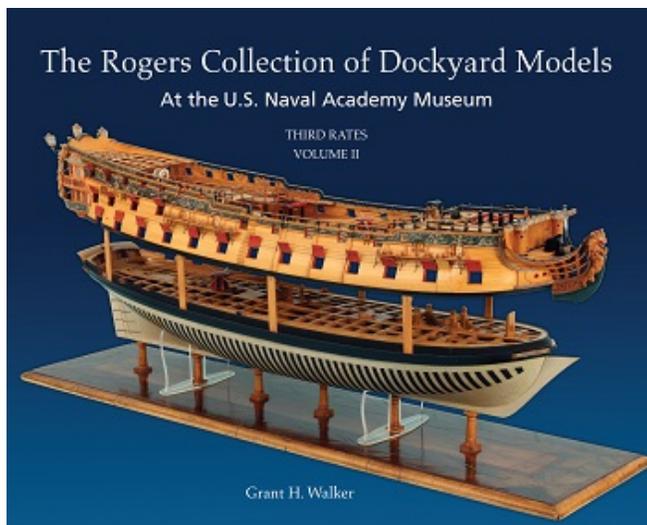
*Heart of the Sea* is the tragic story of the *Essex*. *Essex* was an American whaler from Nantucket, Massachusetts launched in 1799. In 1820, while at sea in the southern Pacific Ocean under the command of Captain George Pollard Jr., she was attacked and sunk by a sperm whale. Stranded thousands of miles from the coast of South America with little food and water, the 20-man crew was forced to make for land in the ship's surviving whaleboats. The men suffered severe dehydration, starvation, and exposure on the open ocean, and the survivors eventually resorted to eating the bodies of the crewmen who had died. When that proved insufficient, members of the crew drew lots to determine who they would sacrifice so that the others could live. A total of seven crew members were cannibalized before the last of the eight survivors were rescued, more than three months after the sinking of the *Essex*. First mate Owen Chase and cabin boy Thomas Nickerson later wrote accounts of the ordeal. The tragedy attracted international attention, and inspired Herman Melville to write his famous novel *Moby-Dick*.



### THE ROGERS COLLECTION OF DOCKYARD MODELS

#### THIRD RATES, VOLUME II

— Grant H. Walker; brought in by Chuck Passaro



Volume II features all of the Third Rates in this famous collection. A complete description and history of each model is presented by the author, Grant Walker, along with hundreds of high resolution photographs. These include rare, never-before seen inside views explored with fiber optic endoscopes, X-rays and even a CT scanner. Along with Volume I, Volume II completes all of the ships in the collection that stood in the line of battle during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Third Rates is a large format book with 299 pages, a hard cover with jacket and custom end papers. It is printed on 80lb. gloss paper.

The Rogers Collection includes 108 ship and boat models of the sailing ship era dating from 1650 to 1850. It contains scale models built for the British Admiralty and original display cabinets from the 17th century. The collection, bequeathed to the Naval Academy in 1935 by Colonel Henry Huddleston Rogers, is one of the most valuable of its type in the world.

## Venting Display Cases

Venting the display case of your model can be a major factor in preserving its quality. Ventilation is a step often overlooked.

Logic would dictate that a sealed case is preferable to one that provides air circulation. A sealed case certainly keeps out dust and shields its contents from such things as aerosol sprays and smoke from a fireplace or cooking. But it also seals the atmosphere within the case and that's a potential problem. Gases from parts, paints and adhesives used in construction can be harmful to a model if allowed to accumulate in a sealed environment.

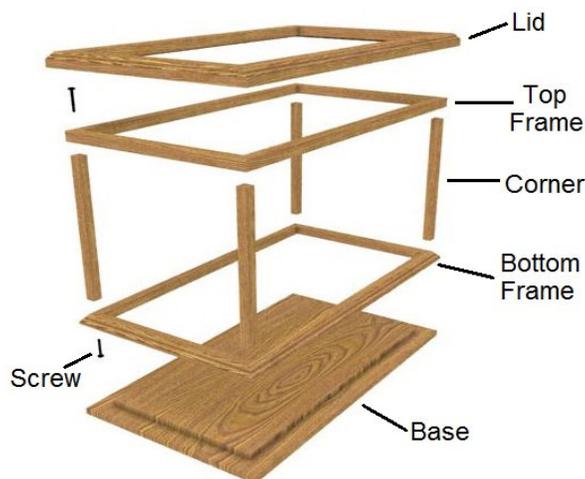
I'm sure many of us have seen a pile of dust (particularly on older models in sealed cases) where a fitting once stood. Another danger is condensation. The [Museum of London](#) found that sealed cases placed in the winter against cold outside walls developed internal condensation under even relatively low humidity conditions.

Current thinking in case construction favors ventilation to equalize temperature, air pressure and humidity levels inside and outside the case. Below are two methods for ventilating cases. Both provide a high level of protection from dust and particle intrusion.

- 1** Below left is the top view of a glass/wood frame display case with slots cut in its base to allow air circulation. The photos to the right show: a) The rubber foot under each of the four corners that raises the case to permit the air exchange; b) Steve M's model of USS SC431 (see **Show and Tell**) in its case.



- 2** Here's another method. This is a kit from the case manufacturer [Houston Display Furniture](#) of Houston, TX, telephone number 832-640-0334. Separators are used between components to provide narrow channels for air flow. [More details.](#) [Ordering information.](#)



# The Ship Model Society of New Jersey

*The Broadaxe* is published monthly by The Ship Model Society of New Jersey (SMSNJ), a nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching and promoting ship modeling and maritime history. Membership dues are \$25.00 for the first year and \$20.00 per year thereafter.

Visit our Web Site at: <http://www.shipmodelsocietyofnewjersey.org> where a web version of *The Broadaxe* can be found. *The Broadaxe* is distributed each month by email in PDF format.

Regular meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 6:45 PM, at the Roseland Free Public Library, 20 Roseland Avenue, Roseland, New Jersey. Guests are always welcome.

Contributions to *The Broadaxe* are always welcome, and SMSNJ members are encouraged to participate. Articles, shop hints and news items may be submitted directly to the Editor as typed manuscript or electronic files, either on discs or by email. Handwritten notes or other materials will be considered depending on the amount of editing and preparation involved.

*The Broadaxe* is edited by Steve Maggipinto. Your ideas and suggestions are always welcome. Please submit them to Steve Maggipinto at [stevemagg@optonline.net](mailto:stevemagg@optonline.net).

If any member would like an email copy of the roster, please drop a note to Tom Ruggiero at the email address listed below. If there is an error in the roster let Tom know and the roster will be amended. Please make sure that your spam filter is not blocking emails from Tom because if it is, you won't get member bulletins. You can eliminate the filtering by adding Tom's email address to your contact list. Please keep the secretary informed of any changes so that the roster can be kept current. If you would like a printed copy of the roster, please send a SASE to Tom Ruggiero at the address below and one will be mailed to you. Rosters are also available at the monthly meetings.

Please keep your contact information up to date. Your email address is particularly important because that is the main avenue of communication for club announcements. In case of emergencies such as last-minute cancellations due to weather, emails will be sent to the members.

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