

# THE BROADAXE

NEWSLETTER  
of  
THE SHIP MODEL SOCIETY OF NORTHERN NEW JERSEY  
*Founded in 1981*



Volume 22, Number 1

January, 2004

## Archie Griffith

Our good friend and fellow ship modeler, **Archie Griffith**, passed away on Sunday, January 3. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, **Barbara**.

**Archie** spent most of his working life at sea, most recently as the chief engineer of an Exxon tanker. In addition to being an accomplished ship modeler, he was a fine artist and a great storyteller. Although a bit reserved, he had a warm smile and a great sense of humor.

**Archie** was an active participant in SMSNNJ affairs, and a frequent contributor at club exhibitions. Perhaps his best remembered model is that of his electrically powered working model of a side-wheeler steam engine. He never tired of demonstrating it to children who were unfailingly fascinated by the model and Archie's explanations of its working.

He will be missed by all of us at the club. We wish him a fair wind and calm seas.



**Archie at the South Street Seaport  
August 2001**

The following tributes from **Steve Fletcher** and **Tom Ruggiero** express the feelings of many of us.

"**Arch** was a kind man who was a true asset to our little group. His modeling skills were exceptional. Who will ever forget his working factories? He was an avid user of the surgical tools that I brought to the auction especially for his ships in a bottle. My favorite **Arch Griffith** model was the ship in a bottle with a whale ship being attacked by a sea serpent. We will all miss his ever present smile and his friendship."

---Steve Fletcher

"I am very saddened by the passing of **Archie**. He was a long time member of SMSNNJ as well as one of the "after meeting Diner Crew". He was an incredible model builder but more so, he was an incredibly kind, generous and talented individual.

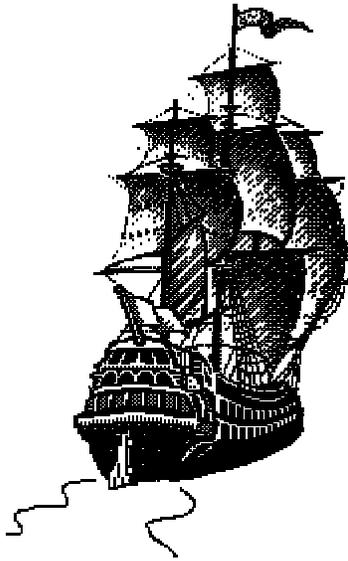
"I attended his wake last Friday. At the viewing were many friends and coworkers from **Archie's** sailing days with Esso and then Exxon. Also, there was a display of a number of his artistic projects including models, sketches, shadow boxes and watercolors. He was incredibly talented but also very humble, as many there never realized what he produced. I spoke with his wife Barbara, whom I met at the NRG Conference that we hosted in the 90s. She was very friendly and cordial and made me feel welcome. I can see how much she loved and respected **Archie**. For sure he was mourned, but the wake celebrated his life.

"**Archie** was always there to help the club and me personally. Whenever we had a club function he was there to help with models like his incredible functioning engine rooms and also to demonstrate his talent. He was frequently at South Street and he exhibited with us at East Jersey Old Town and NRG in Morristown.

"It is interesting how fate works. In November at the club meeting in Berkeley Heights, he asked me if I could help research a Swedish Yacht that he had built. I got some information from the Seaways list several weeks later and I relayed it to him by phone. He sounded as friendly, grateful and lively as ever. It was not long after that that he had his stroke. It was the last time I spoke with my friend and I'll always remember that call.

"Farewell my friend. I miss you but we will meet again."

--Tom Ruggiero



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## MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING December 16, 2003

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 by **V.P. Barry Rudd** with 25 members in attendance. This meeting is the annual White Whale Sale where one members discards become - for a price - another's treasures.

There was a brief business meeting prior to the sale.

**Mike Gutsick**, attending his third meeting, was heartily elected to membership. Visitor **Dimitry Afonin** was attending his second meeting.

There was some general discussion about **Jeff Fuglestad's** idea about holding an informal competition where members build anything using hulls and material from the **Jim Roberts** cache. There are no rules and the event will be scheduled for 12-18 months from now. Prizes are available,

including a kit of the **San Felipe** (donated by **Jeff Herne**) and a \$100 gift certificate at Micro Mark (donated by **Tom Piccurillo** of Micro Mark).

**Jeff Fuglestad** has built a glass case to be given to **Marilyn Roberts** to hold **Jim's** well known whaleboat model. The case will contain an engraved plate stating that the case was presented by the club.

No show and tell was scheduled but **Mike Gutsick** did show a model (the name of which your secretary failed to note-sorry **Mike**).

Business being concluded, **Bob Fivehouse**, auctioneer extraordinaire, took over for the rest of the meeting.

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## JIM ROBERTS' MODELING SUPPLIES

The late **Jim Roberts** left behind a large amount modeling materials that his wife, Marilyn, generously had donated to the SMSNNJ. Although much of the material has been taken by club members, a fair amount remains. **Gary Kingzett** has taken responsibility for disposing of the remaining material and has asked that the following announcement be placed in the **BROADAXE**.

"**Jim** had an amazing supply of materials. I would hate for it not to be utilized by the people in the hobby he so clearly loved. And **Marilyn's** generosity deserves a commensurate response by us.

"I have the storage space set up for **Jim's** parts and materials, and will be picking them up from the Aviation Museum next week. The materials will be available to SMSNNJ members (and friends and associated clubs, I guess) at my offices. I won't have the stuff catalogued or sorted, but it will all be available, with a decent sized table and chairs so anyone who wants to go through the materials can do so at their leisure. I will also have a couple of parts catalogs available, so people will be able to identify the parts. The office is not open to the public, and we are a small company, so I will have to have some prior notice to make sure that there is someone there to let individuals in.

Contact me at: Design Engineers  
85 Newman St.  
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[gkingzett@aol.com](mailto:gkingzett@aol.com)



### FROM THE EDITOR

As mentioned in the November meeting minutes, I will be giving up the job as **BROADAXE** editor after the next few issues. I will be leaving New Jersey to live closer to my children and grandchildren. The Executive Committee is looking for a new editor. I hope that my replacement can be found soon in order to have time to transfer the files and knowledge in an orderly fashion. I urge anyone with the time for the job to give serious consideration to volunteering for it. It is a great way to make a contribution to the SMSNNJ. It has been very gratifying for me to receive the (mostly) positive feedback from our members. I will do all that I can to help the new editor to pick up the job.

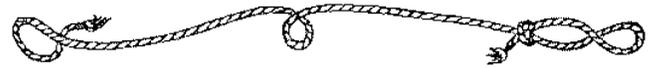
I have also been serving as webmaster for our Internet Web site, and a replacement will be needed for that job also.

If you would consider doing either or both of the jobs, contact our president **Ed Hegstetter**. If you have any questions about the jobs, I will be happy to talk to you about them.

As noted in the box below, several conferences have been scheduled for the new year. The closet meeting will be the annual Northeast Regional Conference in New London, CT. The Philadelphia Ship Model Society is hosting the conference this year.

Speaking of the Philadelphia club, they held their 700<sup>th</sup> meeting on December 4, 2003. By my reckoning that is equivalent to nearly 60 years of meetings. Congratulations to the Philadelphians for their longevity!

It was my sad duty to report in this issue the passing of **Archie Griffith**. I had a long talk with **Archie** at the last meeting that he attended in November. He told me a lot about his adventures at sea, including a narrow escape or two. He combined the virtues of sailor, engineer, artist and modeler. He was truly one of the "good guys" that I have been fortunate enough to know.



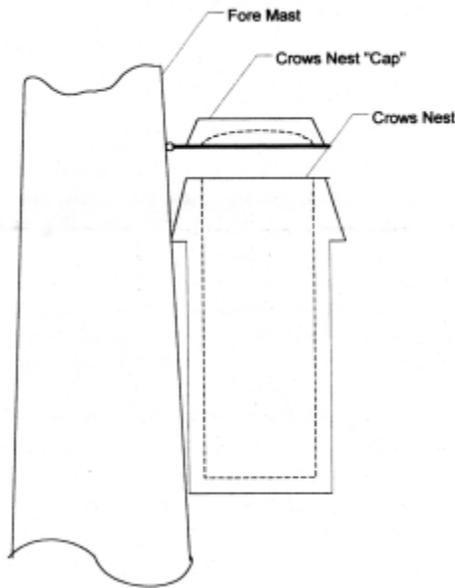
The following is an interesting note taken from the December 2003 issue of the Washington Ship Model Society newsletter, ***The Lynx***.

#### Using Aluminum in Soldering *By Vince McCullough*

Ship modeling often involves the use of metal parts. While often these parts come as cast or turned brass, cast white metal or photo etched brass or steel, it is often necessary for modelers to fabricate their own parts. Aluminum, while easier to work, is seldom used for this purpose for a very simple reason – it is virtually impossible to solder two aluminum parts together. Aluminum rapidly oxidizes, wrapping itself in a layer of aluminum oxide a few molecules thick that most common solders will not adhere to. As a result, most of us use brass or cast pewter in fabricating components.

However, the aluminum *does* have place on the modeler's bench. The very property that makes us shun it in fabricating parts can make it useful in fabricating jigs – solder won't stick to it. This means that two parts can be clamped to a rigid aluminum jig, soldered, and removed without fear of the soldered parts adhering to the jig.

Aluminum can also be a useful "separator" for keeping two components separated by small, but fixed, gap into which you do not want solder to flow. For example, consider the crow's nest on the USS *Atlanta* that I have been working on. The crow's nest is illustrated in the figure below.



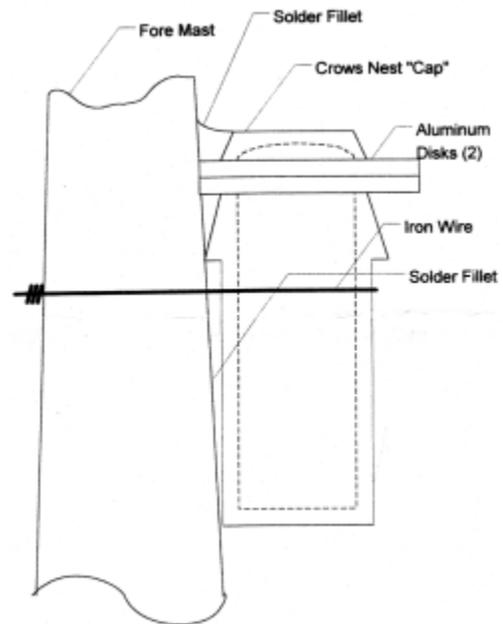
The crow's nest on these vessels had a cap that folded up to allow access by the lookout, and then folded back down to provide some protection from weather (still not a job that I would have enjoyed!). Adding this cap in 1:350 scale is a challenge, however. The top of crow's nest is only 0.1 inches in diameter, as is the cap. So the problem was, how could I fabricate the mast, crow's nest and cap, and then attach the crow's nest and cap to the mast.

I fabricated the component pieces from brass, turning each piece on my lathe. Then it came time to attach the pieces together. Attaching the crow's nest itself was no problem. Simply apply rosin to the crow's nest and mast, wire the crow's nest to the mast with iron wire (solder will not adhere to iron), and solder in place with a torch.

The cap was another matter. There was no way to wire the cap directly to the mast. Worse yet, the gap between the cap and the crow's nest itself is only a few thousandths wide. Even if I could figure out a way to hold the cap to the mast, soldering the cap in place would rapidly fill the gap between the crow's nest and the cap. What I needed was a spacer that solder would not adhere to.

That's when it occurred to me to use aluminum. I considered aluminum foil from the kitchen, but it is too thin and flexible. My wife supplied the answer – aluminum pie pans. The aluminum used by grocers to contain pies, pie shells, pot-pies and the like is easily cut, and much thicker and more rigid than aluminum foil. Taking a pan that had previously

contained an apple pie, I cut a square out of the smooth bottom of the pan. Next, I used a Waldron punch set to punch out a couple of aluminum disks. I made the disks larger than the diameter of the cap to allow them to be extracted easily once I was finished soldering the cap in place.



Two disks stacked one on top of another suited my purpose. I applied rosin to the top and bottom of each aluminum disk, and sandwiched them together. Next, I placed the two disks on top of the crow's nest, and then placed the cap on top of the disks, as shown in the figure. The rosin on the spacer served as a temporary adhesive to hold the disks to the crow's nest, and the cap to the disks. The disks themselves served as spacers, and prevented solder from invading the space between the cap and the crow's nest itself. Placing a small speck of solder in the gap between the cap and the mast, and another between the crow's nest and the mast, I could solder both components to the mast using a small hand torch. Once done, I removed the disks and filed away any excess solder from the fillet between the cap and the mast and extracted the aluminum disks with a pair of tweezers. Simple!

I can think of many applications where aluminum braces or spacers could be useful as spacers or clamping surfaces for hard to hold brass fittings. Aluminum has definitely become a standard part of my model-building inventory.

## Mark Your Calendar

**Greater Chicago Area Model Ship and Boat Show**  
**March 20<sup>th</sup> 2004**

**Northeast Regional Conference**  
**Port and Starboard Conference Center**  
**New London, CT. April 24, 2004**

**Western Ship Model Conference**  
**Long Beach, CA. April 29 – May 2, 2004**

**Nautical Research Guild Conference**  
**Portland, ME. September 12 –19, 2004**

The '**BROADAXE**' is published monthly by The Ship Model Society of Northern New Jersey, a nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching and promoting ship modeling and maritime history. Membership dues are \$20.00 for the first year and \$15.00 per year thereafter.

Visit our Web Site at:

<http://www.njshipmodelsociety.org>

where a Web version of the **BROADAXE** can be found. The **BROADAXE** is distributed by both US mail and e-mail in PDF format.

Regular meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:30 P.M., at the Millburn Free

Public Library, 200 Glen Avenue, Millburn, New Jersey.

Guests are always welcome.

Contributions to the **BROADAXE** are always welcome, and SMSNNJ 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 e-mail. Handwritten notes or other materials will be considered depending on the amount of editing and preparation involved.

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of

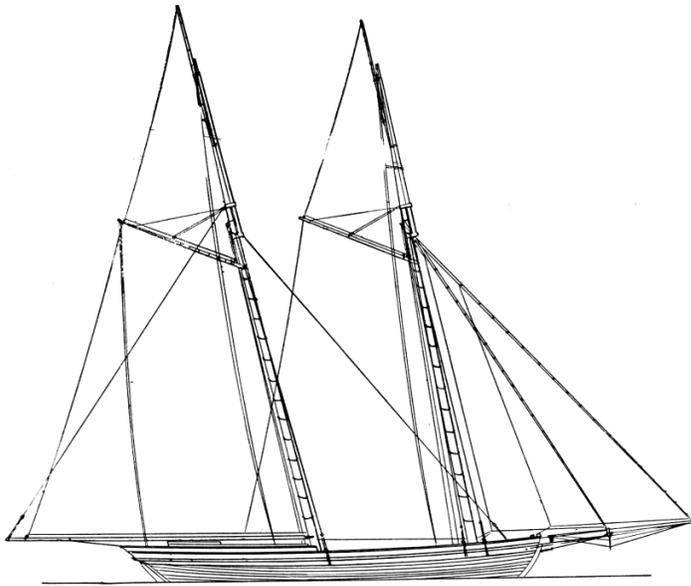
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**Newsletter Editor:**  
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BALTIMORE CLIPPER SCHOONER OF 1820  
From Marestier's "Mémoire sur les Bateaux à Vapeur"

**NEXT MEETING:**

**January 27, 2004**

**7:30 PM**

MILLBURN  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY

Tech Session  
To Be  
Announced