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Newsletter of the Ship Model Society of New Jersey

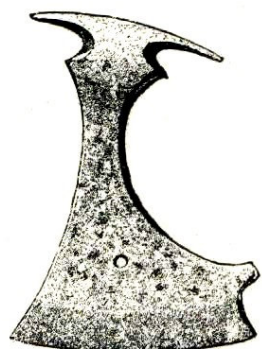
March 2016

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Our next club meeting is
April 26 at 6:45PM

**ROSELAND PUBLIC
LIBRARY**



Axe of iron from Swedish Iron Age,
found at Gotland, Sweden

MARCH NOTES...

We request that all members pick up their name tags before monthly meetings, wear them during the meetings, and return them to the name tag box before leaving. The tags will be available just inside the entrance to our meeting room at the library.

We are sad to announce that Marilyn Roberts passed away in March. Her final services were private. Her passing makes this year's Jim Roberts competition especially memorable and poignant. May Marilyn rest in peace.

Good news! Al Geigel is recovering nicely from bypass surgery. We wish Al Godspeed in his recovery.

Former member Mike Gutsick is moving south and will not be modeling anymore. He has asked the club to auction his modeling gear and supplies. See below for more details. Mike also has ship's plans he is passing on. These will be kept in the club library, available free to members for check out. The same applies to miscellaneous leftovers (mostly fittings) Mike has in his possession from the Jim Roberts collection. These will stay with the club. If you need a fitting, you're free to come and get it at no charge. Tom R. only asks that when you take something, you sign it out. Chuck Passaro has about 35 other ship's plans at his house. These need to be catalogued along with Mike's set. Once this is done, a complete list of available plans will be compiled and published in *The Broadaxe*.

While we're on the subject of "Broadaxe", ever wonder where the name came from? I always thought a broadaxe was a weapon carried by a soldier into combat. Perhaps at times, but not its primary use. [Click here](#) to shed some light on the subject and learn more about use of the broadaxe in shipbuilding.

Ken Schuetz reminds everyone that the refreshments that Dennis Powell faithfully provides for our meetings are not a club perk, and that donations to "the can" should at least cover refreshment costs. We ask a reasonable \$1 from those partaking of the goodies.

We are expecting two guests at our April meeting, Ryland Craze from the Hampton Roads Ship Model Society and his wife Pam. Ryland last joined us two years ago on his way to the Joint Clubs Conference in New London. The April meeting will be "Bring a Model Night". Jim Lavelle's tech session "Fun with Flags 2" will take place in May.

[Click here](#) for photos of our March 22 meeting (the last 6 pictures are from the April 16 group working session).

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

- 16 - Group Working Session at Chuck Passaro's house - 10AM
- 26 - Monthly Meeting - 6:45PM, Roseland Public Library, 1st Floor: *Bring a Model Night*
- 30 - Joint Clubs Conference, New London, CT - 9AM to 3PM
- 30 - [New Jersey Folk Festival](#) at Douglass College, Rutgers campus - 10AM to 6PM

MAY

- TBD - Group Working Session
- 24 - Monthly Meeting - 6:45PM, Roseland Public Library, 1st Floor: *"Fun With Flags 2" Tech Session*

JUNE

- TBD - Group Working Session
- 28 - Monthly Meeting - 6:45PM, Roseland Public Library, 1st Floor

On the Horizon

Spring Luncheon

May/June - Date TBD. At the Kenilworth Hotel, Kenilworth, NJ

Exhibit

September and October at the Morris County Library, Whippany, NJ

OLD BUSINESS



Club Luncheon. A couple of months ago, Mason Logie and Tom McGowan volunteered to find a suitable place for our traditional Spring get together. After checking several venues, they decided that The Kenilworth Hotel in Kenilworth provided the best combination of good food, central location, fine atmosphere and reasonable price. The restaurant is located just off the Garden State Parkway at Exit 138. Tom M. has been there before for a high school reunion. What the facility is offering us is a luncheon buffet for a price of \$25-\$30 per person. Menus are online at <http://www.kenilworthinn.com/>. The only catch is that we need a minimum of 30 people. We are targeting a weekend sometime in May or June. Tom R. will put together a list of potential dates.

Northeast Clubs Conference. This will take place the last Saturday in April (4/30). Barry Rudd is the chairman of the Jim Roberts Award this year. Jim Lavelle will be at the event early on Saturday to assist the host club (Philadelphia) with tagging those models whose builders want to enter them in the Jim Roberts competition.

New Jersey Folk Festival. Also on Saturday, April 30th. The event is being held on the campus of Douglass College at Rutgers in New Brunswick. Don Otis and Steve Maggipinto will be representing SMSNJ at the festival, and will have club flyers to hand out at their assigned booth. Tom R. has offered to do a show at Rutgers if the festival organizers like what they see. No pressure, Don and Steve!

Morris County Library. We're working on a September/October date this year for a 2-month exhibit. We would like to have 35-40 models displayed. Members are asked to decide over the summer what models they would like to bring. There are 1 or 2 cases at the library for the smaller models, but if a member is bringing a larger model, Tom R. suggests it be cased. Steve Maggipinto and Jeff Fuglestad will be heading this effort and will work out the logistics with library staff.



AUCTION



An auction of various modeling-related objects, tools and kits was held at the March meeting. This was a continuation of the Brehm estate sale plus items that Mike Gutsick is selling. Included were:

- A Picket Boat model
- Emma C. Berry model
- Halifax Timber Kit & Plans
- Cordless Soldering Iron
- Photoetch Kit
- MicroLux Table Saw
- Testor Air Compressor
- Assorted chisels, carving knives, miniature planes and paints

Many of these items were never used. All were sold at great bargain prices. As is our custom, the club kept 10% of the proceeds for our treasury; 90% went to the sellers. Drama during the proceedings was provided by the always effervescent Larry Friedlander. With typical enthusiasm, auctioneer Larry brought his hand down hard on an extra sharp carving knife and ended up with a nice slice in his epidermis. Was there a doctor in the house? Of course: Dr. Steve Fletcher to the rescue! Serious question: What type of insurance does Doc take? Don't know. Hope you're covered, Larry! This is a topic for a future *Broadaxe* article. Stay tuned.



TECH SESSION

Chuck Passaro is constantly asked a lot of questions about different types of wood, what the costs are and what they look like. As everyone knows, wood for ship modeling can be very cheap or very expensive.

Chuck brought several types of wood coated with a wipe-on poly to the meeting, and asked the members to pick the ones they thought would be best for modeling based on color and texture. Following voting, Chuck presented what he calls the "Holy Grail" for ship modelers, English boxwood. He has been hoarding a stash of this for some time. This material has minimum grain, a prized quality, but it is very expensive. Boxwood comes in several varieties; some are better than others. Costello boxwood, for example, although cheaper, is not as desirable for modeling as English boxwood. In the samples of each of these varieties that Chuck brought, this was very apparent in a side-by-side comparison.

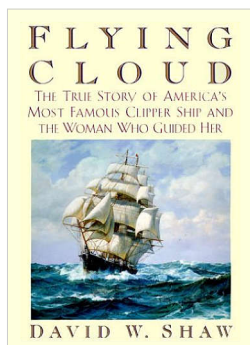
The other gold standards for modeling are Swiss pear and holly. As you might expect, they are expensive. An alternative to the high priced varieties is cherry, available at 20-25% of the cost of the others. Maple is not a good choice for modelers; it's stringy and grainy. Another poor choice is poplar, a wood that doesn't take stain well. Poplar can be used as a filler or for creating parts that are hidden from view, but it's not the best for finished surfaces. On the positive side, poplar is cheap.



Basswood works OK with a wipe on finish, but it takes a terrible stain, and it's grainy. It's a suitable substitute for holly, which is very expensive. In terms of overall value, Chuck recommends basswood and cherry for ship modeling. He also favors wipe on poly to Danish oils for finishing. Poly takes 5 minutes to dry; the oils can take days.



BOOKS AND PUBS



Some years ago I inherited an autographed book from my father-in-law. The book was a gift Jean and I had purchased for him at a lecture we attended in the local area.

[Flying Cloud](#), by David W. Shaw, is the story of the famous clipper ship's record breaking passage from New York to San Francisco during the gold rush of

the early 1850's. Back then, clippers were used as high speed transport for goods traveling from the East to a ravenous market in San Fran. Captains made or lost their reputations on the speed with which they could make the coast-to-coast passage around Cape Horn. Flying Cloud did it in 89 days, 21 hours, a record for clipper ships that was never officially broken.

The book is based on entries in Flying Cloud's well-preserved log, and is well written. It contains colorful

passages describing the captain and crew, passengers, seas and winds, storms. It relates how the captain dealt with serious damage to the mainmast early in the voyage, life-threatening weather, and sabotage of the ship's cargo. Included in the book are detailed diagrams of the ship's rigging and sail configurations, tides and currents, even the various maneuvers required to turn the ship to a new course in rough waters, a process that could take up to an hour.

The main focus of the book is on its navigator Ellen Creesy. In those days it was not unheard of for wives to accompany their ship captain husbands on voyages, but it was unheard of for a woman to navigate such an important vessel. The record breaking passage was due in large part to Ellen Creesy's skill, intelligence and guts as the ship's navigator.

This is an interesting read. It captures well what it was like to travel by sea in the mid-19th century.

COOL TOOLS



"As seen on TV", Tom McGowan brought a liquid plastic welding tool by [Bondic](#).

The tool consist of 2 elements: a tube of liquid plastic, with applicator, and an LED UV light. In combination, the 2 provide a permanent bond in just 4 seconds.

This is a great tool but it does have a significant limitation. It will only work if the light can be shone on the entire surface coated with the liquid plastic. In other words, if you have an opaque material, the bond will only be made where the light can be seen by the liquid. The light will penetrate clear glass, but not a solid material such as wood, plastic or metal.

Larry Friedlander has worked with Bondic. He has found that it's not terribly strong, but it's probably good for small fittings. Cost is \$19.99 at [amazon.com](#).

BONDIC™
Bond, Build, Fix and Fill Virtually Anything in Seconds!





SS UNITED STATES CONSERVANCY

SAVING AMERICA'S FLAGSHIP

— By Nick Starace

As a former crew member of the *SS United States* and member of the SS United States Conservancy since its inception, I was privileged to accept an invitation to attend the announcement ceremony that took place February 4th at Pier 88 in NYC. Walking down that pier was a trip down memory lane that has been in the waiting for 59 years! Purpose of the ceremony was to announce plans to restore the *SS United States*. The event had widespread media coverage and was followed by a luncheon celebration.

The function was presided over by Susan L. Gibbs, executive director of the Conservancy and Edie Rodriguez, President and CEO of Crystal Cruises. Susan is the granddaughter of the ship's designer William Francis Gibbs, and for many years has been the main driving force in preserving her grandfather's legacy. Crystal Cruises, a luxury cruise company, has signed a purchase option for the ship.

The ladies outlined the lofty goal of getting the Big "U" back into what will hopefully be a triumphant return to cruise service. For those of us who hadn't read the *NY Times* that morning it came as a surprise. They may have expected to hear of a plan aimed at stationary service. Over the years several revival plans have been made to bring her back to some form of service. Some people close to the vessel thought reactivation to cruise service unlikely because it is not economically viable compared to building a new vessel.

The key issue will of course be the results of a feasibility study to be carried out over the next 9 months. Preliminary renovation estimates put the cost at from \$700 to \$800 million. The challenge will be

how to transform the iconic ship from the technological marvel of her day, to a modern 800-passenger luxury liner while preserving the historical legacy and "look" of America's Flagship. It is almost a foregone conclusion she will have to be repowered to replace the geared steam turbines. When I sailed in her we steamed at 31-33 knots. During sea trials she is reported to have hit a speed of 43 knots. Except for the military, those days are probably gone forever. She will more likely be redesigned in the 20-25 knot range to make her operationally competitive.

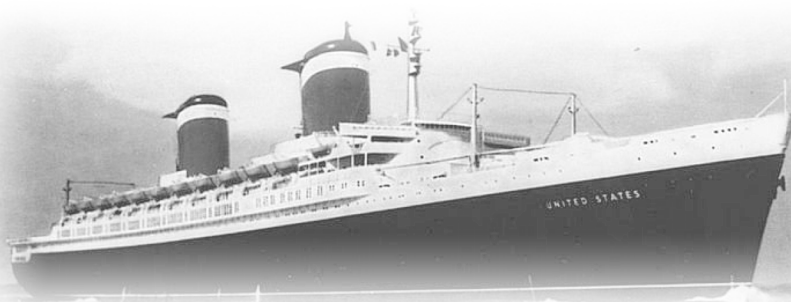
Another critical issue that could cut Crystal's lifeline has to do with environmental concerns. Whereas the asbestos was stripped out of her by a previous owner, the ship does still contain some polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), fire-resistant chemicals widely used in the 1950s and 1960s that are now strictly regulated. Crystal and the Conservancy will be working with the EPA to develop a remediation plan and address any environmental risks.

The plan is for the vessel to travel worldwide and perhaps resume occasional service between NY and Europe, the classic route it served in its Trans-Atlantic heyday. Having captured the transatlantic speed record on her maiden voyage, perhaps, in that tradition, we can look forward to her becoming the fastest cruise vessel in the world. The hope is for her to be home-ported in N.Y. Flag???

Any of you interested in learning more of her glory years can purchase a one-hour documentary DVD, *SS United States: Lady in Waiting*, on the Conservancy web site, www.ssusc.org.

To quote from my book, *White Sails Became Me*, "To this day she is a lady in waiting, an endangered species with time and tide eating away at her innards at a pier in Philadelphia." Hopefully, however, the project will be successful thereby easing the pain of seeing her look more like a bedraggled tramp steamer than the crown jewel of the U.S. Merchant Marine that she once was—and may become again!

Continued on page 7





In writing this piece I was reminded of an amusing anecdote from my book that I would like to share. It has nothing to do with the foregoing:

"In addition to Bob Hope, another frequent passenger was the beautiful Rita Hayworth, known to film-goers as "The Love Goddess." The sight of her sunbathing on the aft deck was enough to convince us of her legendary beauty. Whenever former crew members and aficionados of the great ship get together, they tell sea stories. A favorite is the one about the toilet seat in Ms. Hayworth's cabin. During one of her trips, the chief engineer was so bewitched by her beauty that he wanted to have something to remember her by. As chief engineer, he had a master key to all the cabins. He entered her room while she was out and removed the toilet seat—a mystery that went unresolved until 1990 at a reunion of SS *United States* crew members held at Kings Point, when the old devil admitted to the larceny at age eighty-eight. He also admitted to having key rings made from it, and passing them out to the crew so they could all have something that, as the chief put it, "touched Rita Hayworth's a__." And while I was fortunate enough to meet Mr. Hope during one of the cruises, I missed out on meeting

her, *and* I did not get one of those lousy key rings! Therefore, in frustration, I cannot end this silly story by saying I once touched something that once touched Rita Hayworth's you know what!!

Nicholas F. Starace II
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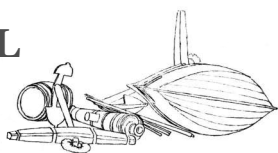


ON THE ROAD

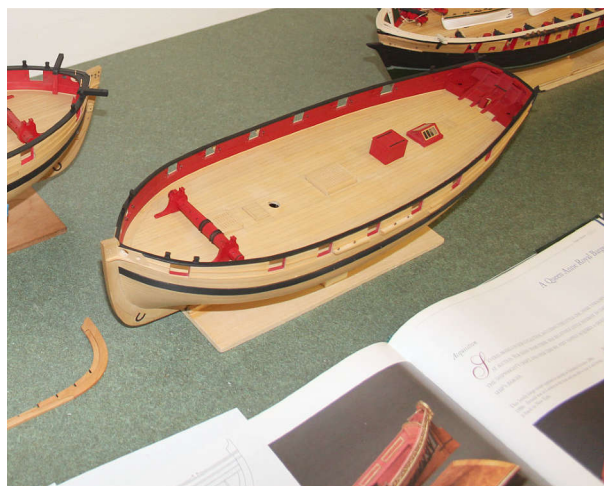
Jean and I recently took a trip to see our son in Seattle. On the way back, I came across an exhibit at the Seattle airport that caught my attention. It was a collection of ships-in-a-bottle crafted by Jeff Simmons, a local resident who has been making them for more than 40 years. All are beautifully done. Note especially the unusual containers he uses to house the miniatures and the tools of his trade displayed in the case. [Click here](#) for more photos.



SHOW AND TELL



Mike Rogers reviewed progress he has made on his cutter *Cheerful*. He has completed the deck planking, finished off some of the bulwark detail, attached some cleats and has placed eye bolts for the guns. Mike had initially epoxied the eye bolts in and later found he had to remove them to more easily add detail (breech lines). He was able to do this by using a technique from his old aircraft modeling days: heating the eyebolts to a point where they easily slid out. Mike also added the windlass, false sternpost, some outer hull detail and boom clutches. It took him a whole day to make 2 boom clutches, one of the most difficult tasks in building the model. The clutches have 4 angles and it's hard to get them placed correctly.



Ray Vernon brought a model of *Niagara*, a build he's been working on for over a year. When asked what paints he was using, he replied that these came from [Winsor & Newton](#), a British company that deals primarily in artist's supplies. Ray is using W&N acrylics. He tried several shades of green before settling on the hue he finally chose. Ray does not thin his paints; since they have a good native consistency, he's able to apply them smoothly right out of the tube. He does wet his brush before painting, however. Chuck P. has used Winsor & Newton paints in the past. He has found that their quality has degraded over the years as production moved from Britain to China. As an alternative, Chuck recommends [Grumbacher](#) acrylics.



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 by both US mail and 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 written and edited by Steve Maggipinto.

Your ideas and suggestions are always welcome. Please submit them to Steve Maggipinto.

If any member would like an email copy of the roster, please drop a note to Steve Maggipinto at the email address listed below. If there is an error in the roster let Steve know and the roster will be amended. Please make sure that your spam filter is not blocking emails from Steve because if it is, you won't get *The Broadaxe* and member bulletins. You can eliminate the filtering by adding Steve's email addresses 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 Steve Maggipinto 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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