The Broadaxe

THE SHIP MODEL SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY

Founded 1981

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Newsletter of the Ship Model Society of New Jersey

March 2017

In This Issue

Our next club meeting is
March 28 at **6:45PM**

ROSELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

MARCH NOTES...

The February meeting was opened at 1848 by our President, Jim Lavelle. We welcomed past President and Honorary Member Bob Fivehouse, visiting from Colorado, and returning member Richard Lane. There were 20 members present for this session and 1 guest, Sally Alworth. You will remember that our monthly Saturday workshops were held at Tony and Sally's store, the Aardvark Quilt Shoppe on Speedwell Avenue in Morris Plains. The meeting adjourned at 2050; click here for photos.

It is important to note that the April meeting has been shifted to Monday due to scheduling issues and overbooking. If you know someone who doesn't read *The Broadaxe* or refuses to use e-mail, please let him know. The schedule of meetings for the next couple of months is:

- Tuesday, March 28
- *Monday, April 24*

After that, we will be back to the fourth Tuesday of the month.

At the February session, President Jim announced what amounts to a significant meeting reformat. We all come to enjoy the Tech Sessions, see the models and publications, and socialize during the break. We don't enjoy the business end so much. To that end, for the first time we reordered the agenda, doing the Tech Session and Show and Tell first, followed by the business items. Toward the latter part of the meeting, when it came time to present Old Business, Secretary Tom Ruggiero noted that the new format appears to have worked well, in that we had good discussions and presentations of what we are all here for. That said, there are business issues that must be transacted. To the extent possible, Tom will be sending out announcements and other Business by email, asking for responses. This is more work for the Officers, but if it makes our meetings more enjoyable and useful, we are more than willing to do it. We ask the members to respond when they get these emails.

The treasury is healthy. During the business portion of the February meeting, Al Geigel thanked Jim Lavelle for doing the accounting for the Auction. He had checks for all who were owed, and collected from almost everyone who owed. If you have still not paid for your purchases, please do so promptly.

Mason Logie is planning two possible dinner cruises. He will work out dates. Emails about this will be forthcoming.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

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

APRIL

TBD - Group Working Session
24 - Monthly Meeting - 6:45PM,
Roseland Public Library, 1st Floor
29 - Joint Clubs Conference, New London, CT

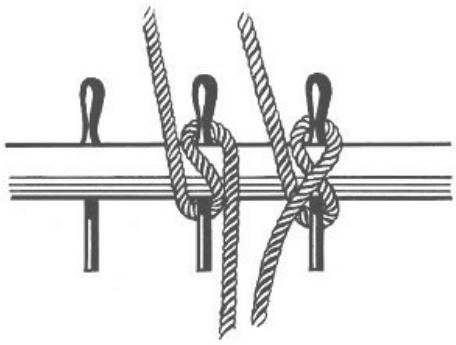
MAY

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

On the Horizon

Joint Clubs Meeting at Annapolis

March 28 - Weathering Techniques.
April 24 - Making Belaying Pins.



OLD BUSINESS

Northeast Joint Clubs Meeting in April — New York Shipcraft Guild has already sent out the registration information for the Joint Clubs Meeting in April. An email forwarding that information was sent by Tom. If you are planning on going and haven't submitted your registration yet, please do so.

Not so early anymore, we need to set up a committee for this year's Northeast Joint Clubs meeting in April. We will need to liaise with Dan Pariser and the New York Club to make certain that we have a round table speaker and that all details for the Jim Roberts award are arranged quickly and efficiently. Also, SMSNJ will be hosting the meeting in 2018 and we need to take on that responsibility in 2 months. Chuck Passaro and Tom Ruggiero will be on the committee, but at least one more member is requested.

Staten Island Drydock Tour — On Saturday, February 25, several of us went on a tour of the Caddell Drydock conducted by Steve Kallil, the Company President. The day included a tour of the facility, how the floating dry docks function, and how tug boats currently maneuver barges. We had a chance to go aboard *Peking* for an examination of the work being done to prepare her for her trip back to Hamburg, Germany. Steve gave us all a copy of a book that was written to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Drydock. Caddell has been in business since 1913.

After a great lunch at a local German Beer Pub, we went to view the exhibits at the Noble Museum at Snug Harbor. It is really a beautiful place and was very clean and professionally done. Our thanks to Mason Logie for setting this up. As a follow up, we sent a thank you to Steve and invited him to a meeting. Click here for photos of the day.

TECH SESSION

The February Tech Session was casting presented by Chuck Passaro. Chuck began by describing the casting materials that he uses. He emphasized that all of these materials have a specific shelf life and that you should only order them when you intend to use them quickly. They are unusable past their expiration date; the material will not cure and you will damage or destroy your master. Most mold material comes in two parts, in a one-to-one mix. It is best to use a measuring cup because the material is workable for as little as five minutes.

Chuck went through a demonstration on resin casting. Although it works through exothermic reaction, resin casting is still low temperature casting. If you are pouring metal, there are high temperature mold making materials. Chuck noted that he would not be pouring a mold at the meeting because it takes a long time to cure. Curing occurs when the mold is thoroughly dry and is up to its required strength and other characteristics.

To make a mold, you need to make a mold box. Many companies make a box specifically designed for mold purposes. However, Legos work just fine for low temperature rubber molds such as that which Chuck demonstrated.

Once you've sized and constructed the box, the next step is to put clay on the bottom. This is clay that does not harden. The clay should be formed under and around your master. Pushing the part into the clay is not recommended because the very light and thin master will likely be damaged by forcing it into the clay. Next, a release agent is painted onto the clay and the master. This is done so that the part readily releases from the mold. It

is very important that you slowly stir the material with a mixing stick and that you slowly pour it, letting it flow over your master. If you don't, you will entrap air bubbles. Chuck noted that the resin itself is two-part.

You need to pay attention to the open time. Once you mix the resin parts, you only have the open time to pour it. Cure time is the time that it takes to harden. Note that warmer resin will work better. The material is extremely flammable, so don't heat this over an open flame. Be aware that the mold material and resin are both expensive (in the $70 range), so it's most economical to make a bunch of castings at once. Before pouring the resin, be sure to coat the mold with a release agent. This helps in discouraging the formation of air bubbles on your finished part. Rubber molds don't last indefinitely. Although you can do up to 100 castings with one rubber mold, the mold can degrade over time. The bottom line: "Hold on to your master!" Chuck uses "Jello shot" cups for pouring the resin into the mold. For his demonstration, Chuck cast the Queen Anne ciphers that were carved at his workshop session last September. Good job, Chuck.

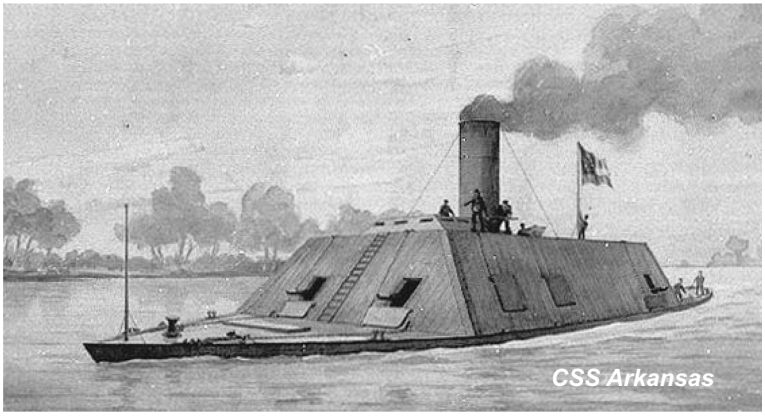
19TH CENTURY HISTORY

CSS ARKANSAS

CSS Arkansas was a Confederate ironclad which served during the Civil War. *Arkansas* ran through a U.S. Navy fleet at Vicksburg, Mississippi, on 15 July 1862, in a celebrated action in which she inflicted more damage than she received. She was later destroyed by her crew to prevent capture by Union forces.

Arkansas' keel was laid down at Memphis, Tennessee, in October,1861. In April 1862, she was removed to Greenwood, Mississippi to prevent her capture when Memphis fell to the Union Navy. Her sister ship, *CSS Tennessee*, was burned on the stocks because she was not near enough to completion to be launched.

In May, 1862, Confederate Capt. Isaac Brown received orders from the Navy Department in Richmond, Virginia, to proceed to Greenwood, and assume command of *Arkansas*. His orders were to finish and equip the vessel. When Captain Brown arrived, he found a mere hull, without armor, engines in pieces, and guns without carriages. Supplies of railroad iron, intended as armor for the ship, were lying at the bottom of the river. A recovery mission was ordered, and the armor was pulled up out of the mud. Captain Brown then had *Arkansas* towed to Yazoo City, where he pressed into service local craftsmen, and also got the assistance of 200 soldiers from the Confederate Army as construction crews. After five strenuous weeks of labor under the hot summer sun, the ship had to leave due to falling river levels. She had been fully outfitted, except for the curved armor intended to surround her stern and pilot house. Boiler plate was stuck on these areas "for appearances' sake". During this time, the Federal Navy had attacked Vicksburg with a large force made up of a squadron of ships, under Flag Officer David Farragut, that had come up from the Gulf of Mexico and a flotilla of United States Army gunboats and rams, under Flag Officer Charles H. Davis, from upriver.



CSS Arkansas

Soon thereafter, General Earl Van Dorn, commanding the Confederate Army forces at Vicksburg, and as such in control of *Arkansas*, ordered Captain Brown to bring his ship down to the city. Shortly after sunrise on 15 July 1862, three Federal vessels were sighted steaming towards *Arkansas*—the ironclad *Carondelet*, the wooden gunboat *Tyler,* and the ram *Queen of the West*. The Federal vessels turned downriver, and a running battle ensued. *Carondelet* was quickly disabled with a shot through her steering mechanism, causing her to run aground. Attention was turned to *Tyler* and the ram, which ran for their fleet with *Arkansas* pursuing. Soon the Federal fleet came into view around the river bend above Vicksburg, "a forest of masts and smokestacks." Captain Brown determined to steam as close to the enemy vessels as possible in order to prevent his vessel being rammed and to sow confusion. The Federal ships were largely immobile, as they did not have their steam up. They and *Arkansas* exchanged shots at close range, but she soon passed to safety beyond them. *Arkansas* arrived at Vicksburg to the sound of enthusiastic cheering from the citizens and within sight of the lower Federal fleet.

That night, Farragut's fleet ran past the batteries at Vicksburg and attempted to destroy *Arkansas* while doing so. They did not move until so late in the day, however, that they could not see their target. Only one shell hit home, killing two men and wounding three. Although *Arkansas* did not destroy any enemy vessels, she inflicted losses among the personnel of the Federal fleets. After repairs, *Arkansas* again appeared to threaten her enemies, forcing them to keep up steam 24 hours a day in the hottest part of the summer. To remove the problem, the Union fleet tried once again to destroy the ironclad at her mooring. At this time, the severely reduced crew of *Arkansas* could man only three guns, so she depended for protection on the shore batteries. On the morning of 22 July, *USS Essex*, *Queen of the West,* and *Sumter* mounted an ill-coordinated attack. First *Essex* attempted to ram, but as she approached, the *Arkansas* crew were able to spring her. As a result, *Essex* missed her target and ran aground instead, where for ten minutes she remained under fire from both *Arkansas* and the shore batteries. The armor on *Essex* protected her crew, however, so she lost only one man killed and three wounded. On the other hand,

Data for this article from Wikipedia

Continued on page 5

one of her shots penetrated the iron plating on *Arkansas*, killing six and wounding six. When *Essex* worked off the bank, she continued downstream, where she joined Farragut's squadron.

Meanwhile, *Queen of the West* was making her run. Her captain misjudged her speed, so she ran past *Arkansas* and had to come back and ram upstream. Although she struck fairly, her reduced momentum meant that the collision did little damage. She then returned to the flotilla above the city. She had been riddled by shot from the batteries, but surprisingly suffered no serious casualties.

Farragut had already been pressing the Navy Department for permission to leave Vicksburg. It was clear that he would need assistance from the Army to capture the city, assistance that was not forthcoming. Sickness among his sailors, unacclimatized to the heat of summer in Mississippi, reduced their fighting strength by as much as a third. Furthermore, the annual drop in the level of the river threatened to strand his deep-draft ships. The constant vigilance now necessitated by the presence of *Arkansas* finally tipped the balance. He got permission to return to the vicinity of New Orleans, and on 24 June his fleet left.

With the Federal fleet gone, Captain Brown requested and was granted four days of leave, which he took in Grenada, Mississippi. Before leaving, he pointed out to General Van Dorn that the engines of his ship needed repairs before she could be used. He also gave positive orders to his executive officer, Lt. Henry K. Stevens, not to move her until he returned.

Unfortunately for the ship, Van Dorn disregarded his subordinate. He ordered Lt. Stevens to take *Arkansas* down to Baton Rouge, where she would support an attack on the Union position there by a Confederate Army force led by General John C. Breckinridge. Stevens demurred, citing his orders from Brown, and referred the question to "a senior officer of the Confederate navy." The "senior officer" chose not to intervene. Stevens, now under the orders of two superior officers, had to rush the ship down the river.

Confirming Brown's fears, the engines broke down several times between Vicksburg and Baton Rouge. Each time, the engineer was able to get them running again, but it was clear that they were unreliable. Nevertheless, the ship was able to get all the way to Baton Rouge, where she prepared for battle with a small Federal flotilla that included her old opponent *USS Essex*. On the morning of 6 August, *Essex* came in sight, and *Arkansas* moved into the stream to meet her. Just at this time, crank pins on both engines failed almost simultaneously, and *Arkansas* drifted helplessly to the shore.

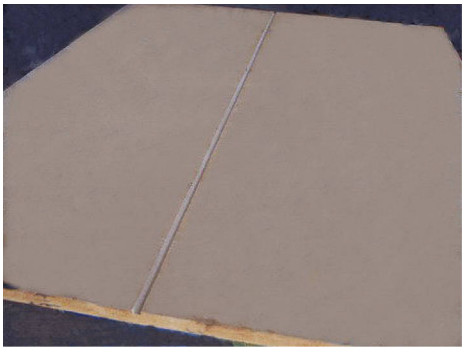
Stevens prepared to abandon ship. He ordered the engines to be broken up, the guns to be loaded and excess shells spread around, and the ship set afire. The crew then left. About this time, *Arkansas* broke free and began to drift down the river, and Stevens, the last man to leave, had to swim ashore. The burning vessel drifted into the attacking Federal fleet, which watched from a respectful distance. At about noon, the ironclad blew up.

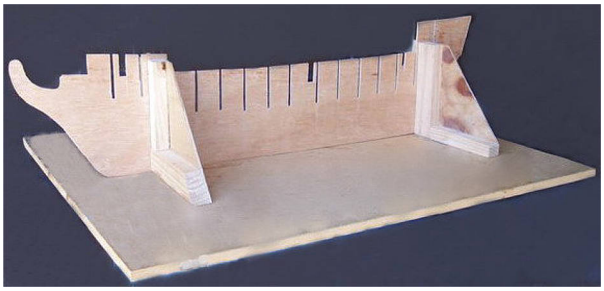
Arkansas has been memorialized in a 1/96 scale resin and metal kit from Cottage Industry Models. Click here for a build log of this kit, and more detailed information about the actual vessel.

Thanks to Ken Whitehead for providing information for this article.

TIPS, TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

The following article is from Model Ship World. Click here for other articles in this series.





BUILDING BOARDS AND KEEL CLAMPS

If you're building a plank-on-bulkhead model, you are going to need some sort of building board or keel clamp to hold the keel assembly while the bulkheads are glued in place.

A building board can be a home made thing and a basic building board is adequate. The ones pictured opposite consist of an accurately cut groove of some 4 to 5mm deep where the ply keel is held firmly in the slot. This type needs to maintain a firm fit to prevent undue movement of the keel itself and to prevent warping as bulkheads are glued into place. The groove board design is only suitable for deep keels. Check to see if there is adequate clearance between the board and the bottom of the bulkheads. If the bulkheads

Continued on page 6

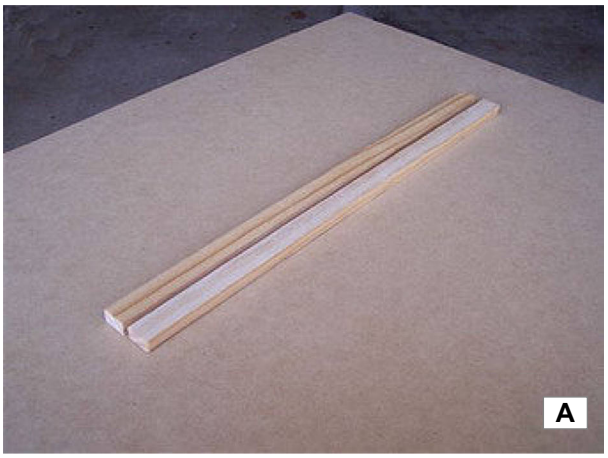
foul the board then you will have problems with keel and bulkhead alignment. It may be possible to shim the keel to overcome this problem; just ensure there is sufficient grip of the keel to prevent the model falling over. To build this board you need a saw bench or a hand held electric saw and some method to guide the saw to keep the slot perfectly straight. You also need to check for twist and/or warp to ensure the board is dead flat before you start building. When the glue has dried on the keel assembly, this board can be retained as a protective cover for the building bench. The slot is handy to hold the hull in an upright position during all phases of the building operation including rigging.

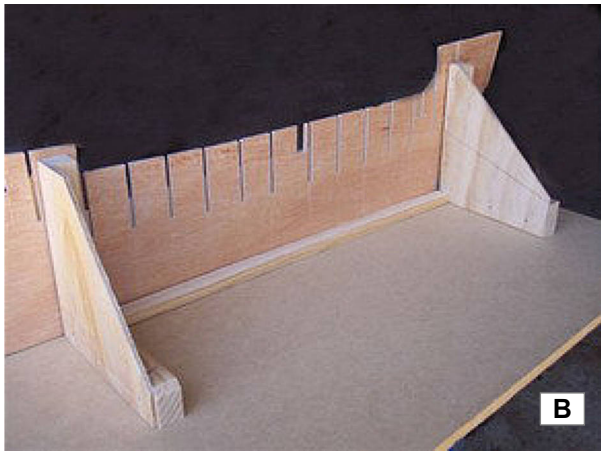
Another building board is basically the same but with two thin strips of wood screwed along either side the keel to securely hold it in place (A & B). These strips need to be reasonably thin so as not to foul the bulkheads when they are glued into position. Spacer blocks can be used to raise the keel somewhat to eliminate this problem. To build this board all you need is two strips of thin wood for the keel clamps, the board itself and a few wood screws. Again the board must be flat and free of warp or twisting. The strips of wood are screwed to the board in a temporary fashion — don't glue them down. When one is screwed down, place the keel against the strip of wood. The other strip is then held/pushed firmly against the keel and then screwed down to securely hold the keel in place. As in the above paragraph, after the keel/bulkhead assembly operation has been carried out and the glue has fully dried, the board can be retained as a protective cover for your workbench and to hold the hull upright during most building phases.

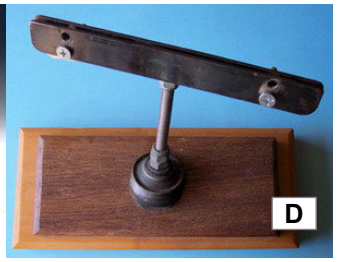
Various keel clamps are available on the market and they vary somewhat in price as well as quality. Home made clamps can be built for a fraction of the cost of purchased clamps. Anything with a swivel base is an enormous help whether it be a commercial clamp or a home made version. All the pictured clamps are handy and carry out the required function. Examples of keel clamps: expensive (C), cheap (F), home made (D), home made using a modified swivel vise and extended soft jaws (E).

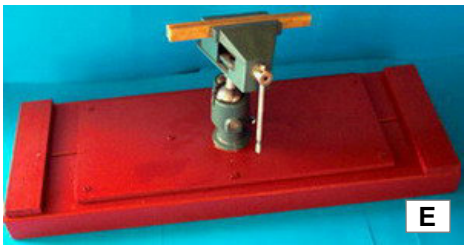
A distinct advantage of having a movable building board or keel clamp rather than using the bench top is the ability to safely store your ship out of harms way. Keeping ships out of the way of little hands and animals is a very big advantage. It causes a lot less drama in the household.

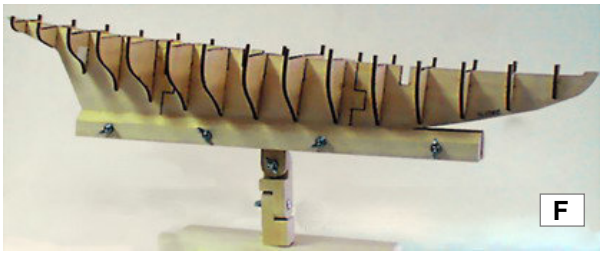
Any of the two boards (or variations thereof) mentioned above or the keel clamps can be used; it's a personal choice. There are quite a few other building boards and platforms out there for specialized building methods. Some of them are great and others not so great. These different designs can be seen on the various web sites dealing with the construction of a particular ship. It's your decision — but you will need something to build your ship on.



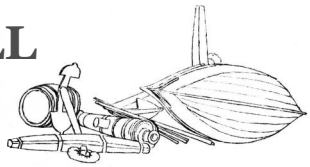






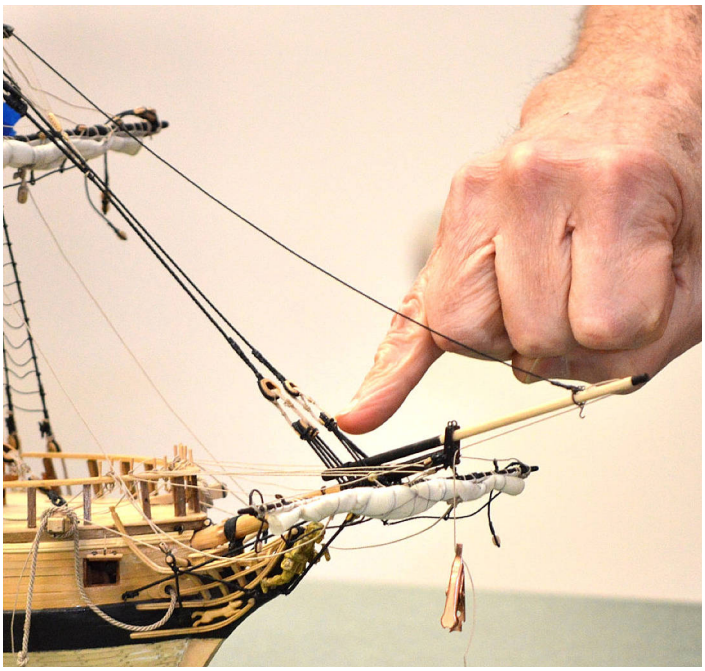


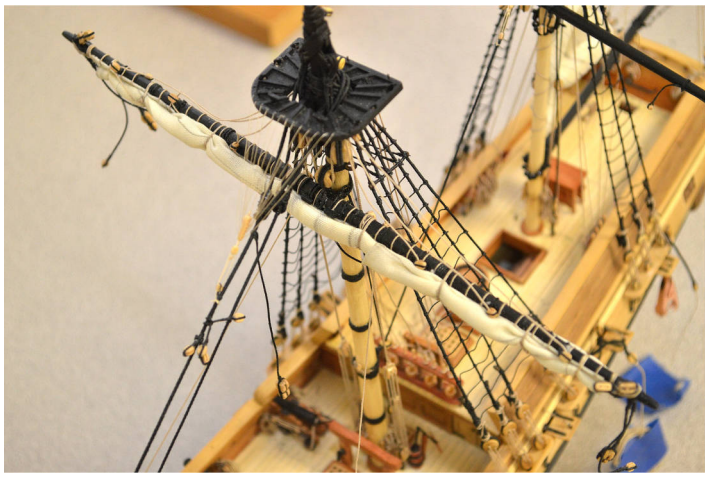
SHOW AND TELL

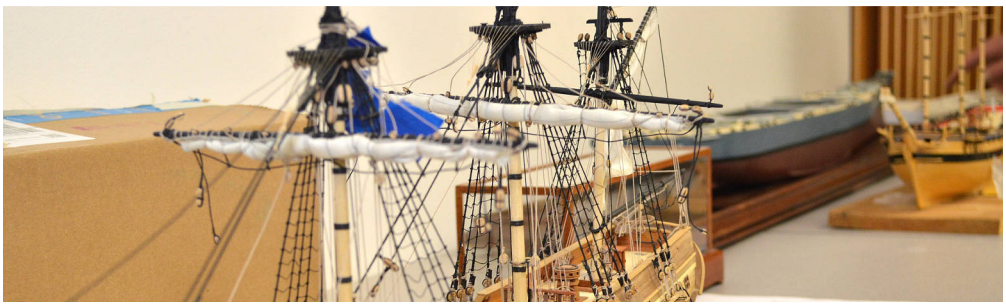


Ken Whitehead brought back his in-progress kit bash of *Rattlesnake*. The model is 1:64 scale. *Rattlesnake* was a 20-gun sloop of war which was designed by John Peck of Boston and built at Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1780. She was commissioned in June, 1781. On her first cruise she had barely been at sea when she met the British ship *Assurance* of 44 guns. The British captured her and sent her to New York. On July 28, 1781 she was purchased into British service as the sloop *HMS Cormorant*. In British service she was armed with 18 guns, had a crew of 120 men and sailed the North Sea.

Ken discussed the sequencing of rigging so that it would not interfere with further work. He is using David Antscherl's Swan Class Volume IV for doing the open hearts for the stays. Basically, Ken is attaching as much as he can to the mast and yards before he belays them. He is also holding off attaching deck furniture to avoid later interference. He uses Stitch Witchery to attach rope to the sails. Also of note is that Ken trashed all of the die-cast kit supplied parts and scratch built replacements. Great job, Ken.

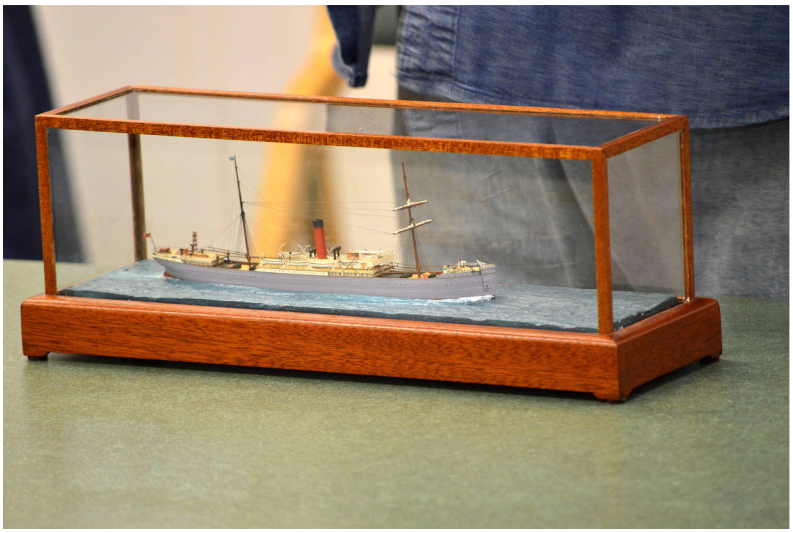


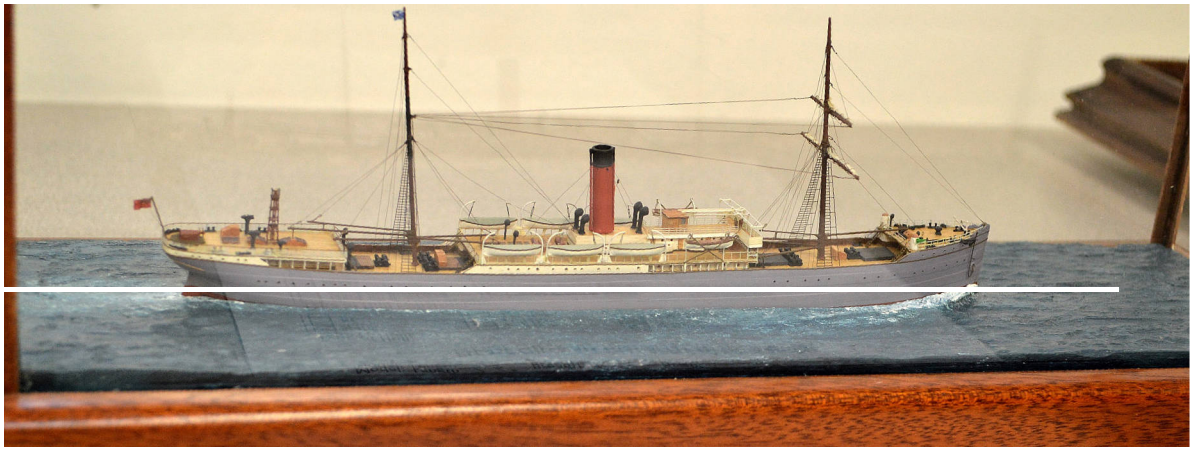




SHOW AND TELL

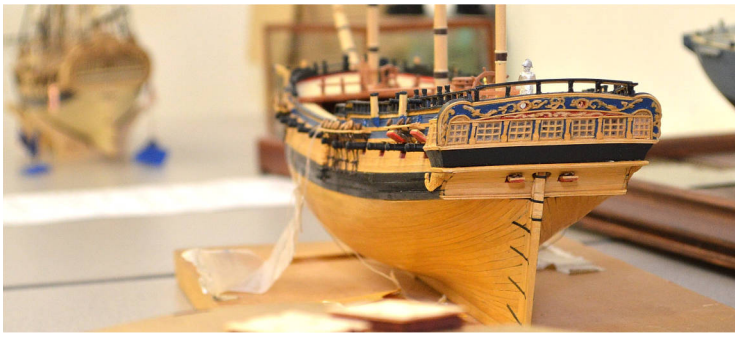
Past President **Bob Fivehouse** returned with his now-completed *Lismore Castle*. *Lismore Castle* was built in 1891 by Barclay, Curle and Co. at Glasgow Scotland. She was 4046 gross tons, 380 feet long, with a beam of 48 feet 2 inches and a service speed of 12 knots. In the late 19th Century, two companies, Castle and Union, carried mail for South Africa. They were competing against each other but South Africa said that they could not merge. The South African government decided that only one of the two could carry the mail. Neither company bid. So, Union and Castle Lines merged. Sister of the *Doune Castle*, *Lismore Castle* was delivered in January 1891 for the same service. On the 20th of October, 1899, she sailed from Southampton bound for Cape Town carrying troops to the Boer War. After the merger in 1900, she continued to be used as a troopship with troops in third class whilst being deployed in intermediate service. In 1904, she was returned to Barclay, Curle and Co. as part of payment for new buildings, and renamed *Westmount*. In the following year, she was sold to Compañía Transatlántica Española of Barcelona and renamed *C. Lopez Y Lopez*, after one of the founders, for deployment on their Central American service to Mexico. When wartime passenger traffic increased in 1916, she was placed on the Barcelona – Malaga – Cadiz – New York service until the United States joined the Allies in 1917, at which time she reverted to Mexican service. She was finally broken up in Italy in 1933. Bob's model is 1:600 scale (50 feet to the inch), 7.6 inches long, .96 inches wide and 4 inches high. This is typical of Bob's models. The model is cased, water line, fully carved with most of the vessel scratch built, but with some photoetch from Gold Medal Models. Good job as usual, Bob.

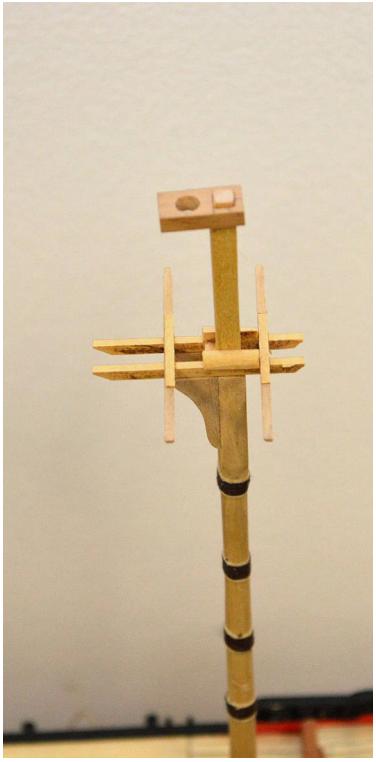




SHOW AND TELL

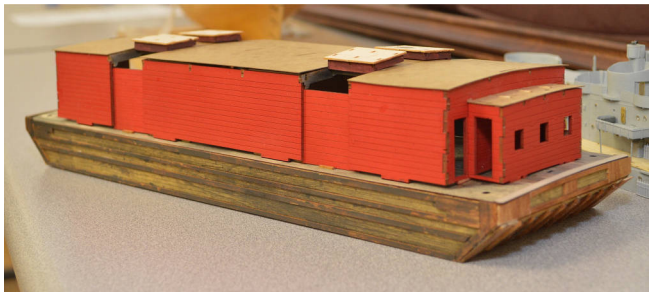
Tom Ruggiero brought in his decade long project, *HMS Liverpool*. Since he is finally retired, progress is being made. Liverpool is in 1:96 scale. The model is being fitted out as she appeared when on American station from 1775 to 1778, when she sank in Jamaica Bay. The build is a bit of a challenge because the ship had two major repair/rebuilds after she was launched in 1757. Tom admonishes, once again, to avoid scaling plans and to use available dimensional data, such as Lee's or Steel, to verify that the sizes and proportions are correct for the period. Tom has completed the lower masts and bowsprit. He has also completed the lower trestletrees and crosstrees. These support the tops for each of the lower masts. Tom notes that even though he has fabricated these of boxwood, they are very fragile. He spoke about the sequence of rigging and advised that this is the phase where you need to be well aware of all of the attachment points to the masts and spars, because once you start mounting things there are attachment points that will be very difficult, if not impossible, to access. He will be putting on attachment points for the stays and then will rough out the topmasts to make certain that everything fits correctly and is aligned before permanently mounting anything.





SHOW AND TELL

Mason Logie showed an underway model of a railroad barge. The prototype of this bump end barge was built in 1940. It was known as a “floating boxcar” and was used by several railroad lines around New York Harbor. Mason’s model is HO scale, 1:87, slightly larger than 1/8 inch scale. The model is planked over bulkhead formers and is well weathered using a technique that Mason will be demonstrating at the March Tech Session. Materials are wood and resin. Good progress, Mason.



Don Otis works in wood nearly all the time, but not with this one. He is building a 1/200 Trumpeter kit of *USS Missouri*, a gift. This is the second *Missouri* that Don has started. He is planning to keep the World War II color scheme. Don’s maternal grandfather worked in the Brooklyn Navy Yard from 1942 to 1944 and helped build *Missouri.* Given Don’s modeling efficiency, we expect that his latest creation will be completed in a few months.

SHOW AND TELL

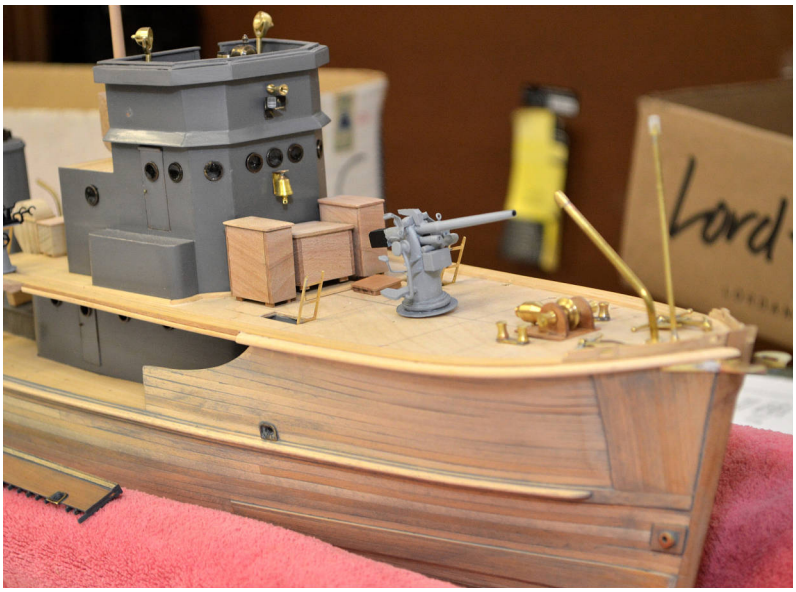
Tony Alworth arrived at the meeting with a model of *Emma C. Berry*, a well smack (fishing boat). Its scale is 3/8 inch to the foot. The model is being built from a kit that was started by Jim Roberts, with the framework already completed when it came into Tony's possession. Tony's goal is to maintain Jim's high standards. He's done a great job. The kit is somewhat upgraded in this model.

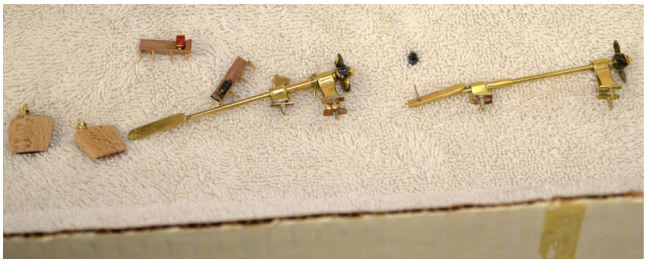
Nick Starace showed a model of *King's Point*, a 1982 Chris Craft that Nick completed years ago. The prototype was 63 feet long. The luxury yacht miniature measures 5/8 inches to the foot and is 24 inches long, with an 8 inch beam. It's 13 inches high. The model is suitable for RC, but Nick's version is static. Construction is basswood sheet over bulkheads.

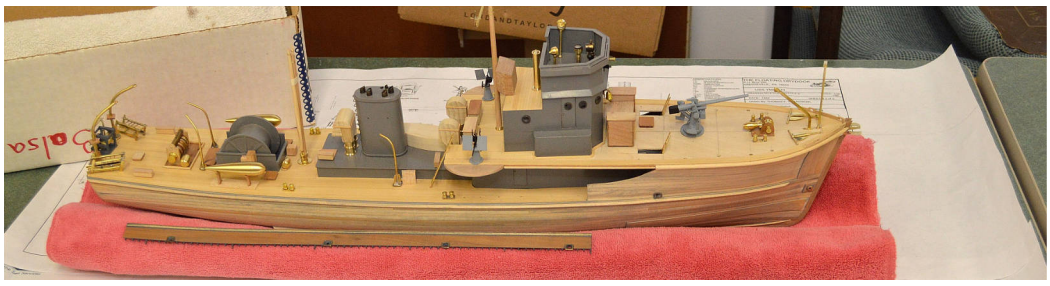
SHOW AND TELL

Returning member **Richard Lane** is an accomplished artist. He brought in a beautiful painting that he has done of *USS Constitution* at the Battle of Tripoli in 1804. The painting is done in acrylic. Richard is a little obsessed with the *Constitution* at that time because she was quite a bit more ornate that she was in the War of 1812. Her figurehead at the time was Hercules. This painting is very well done. Thanks, Richard and we hope to see you at more meetings.

Jeff Fuglestad brought in his continuing construction of minesweeper *YMS-455*. This particular craft was 136 feet long; in 1:64 scale this translates to a hull 25½ inches long with a 4½ inch beam. Jeff constructed the hull using the lift, or "bread and butter" method, and then he planked it. World War II era minesweepers were of wooden construction. This particular minesweeper subsequently became a private yacht. The model, as all of Jeff's models, looks excellent. Jeff has done extensive research to verify that this particular minesweeper is correctly depicted. Coming along very nicely, Jeff.







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