



Volume 36, Number 4

Newsletter of the Ship Model Society of New Jersey

April 2018

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Our next club meeting is
April 24th at 6:45PM

ROSELAND PUBLIC
LIBRARY

APRIL NOTES...

The April meeting was opened at 1845 by President, Chuck. Chuck welcomed 19 members and two guests, David Dikun and Bill Brown. This was Dave's second meeting; he has a Model Shipways *Fair American* that he is planning to start. He had thought about building this with a solid hull, but after discussion with Chuck, he decided to go with the Model Shipways plank-on-bulkhead version. Chuck invited Dave to start his new effort at the next Saturday Workshop (Ed Note: The workshop was held on April 14th. Dave was there.) One more meeting to membership David! Our second guest was actually a returning member, Bill Brown. Bill used to come to meetings regularly, arriving at his first meeting in the company of our late friend and Plank Owner, Al Geigel. As time went by, Bill's career and a move got in the way, but now he has decided to once again join us. He has built the *Smuggler* (Your Secretary has seen this model; a masterful job). Welcome back, Bill. The meeting was adjourned at 2050 whereupon several of us proceeded to the Caldwell Diner. [Click here](#) for meeting photos.

Treasurer's report. Tom Ruggiero presented the report, noting that we are in good shape. Although there will be a temporary bump up due to receipts for the 36th Northeast Joint Clubs Conference, this will adjust in May when we pay for all the associated expenses. As reported in the last *Broadaxe*, Tom passed out checks to those who were owed for items sold at our Auction. Our friend Don Otis has returned a check of \$100 as a donation to the Club. We all thank you very much Don!

Here's an item of interest from Florida resident Barry Rudd. It seems that the 48-foot skeleton of an 18th or 19th century vessel recently washed ashore on Ponte Vedra Beach in Florida (Jacksonville area). The hulk was remarkably well preserved, and included copper sheathing and identifiable trunnels. A series of pictures was taken at the spot, photos from which scientists hope to recreate a 3-D model of what the original vessel looked like. [Click here](#) for more details and photos.

The plaque that we commissioned for our late friend and Plank Owner will be presented to his wife Gracie in May. Tom Ruggiero will be making the arrangements and will advise us of the details.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, April 24th.



UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

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

MAY

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

JUNE

- 2 - Pennsville "Day at the Farm" Event
- TBD - Group Working Session
- 26 - Monthly Meeting - 6:45PM,
Roseland Public Library, 1st Floor

On the Horizon

OLD BUSINESS

Northeast Joint Clubs. Preparation for Joint Clubs is just about complete. As of April 14th, there were over 100 registered participants and more than 55 models. We will need several volunteers to carry out our responsibilities as host club that day. The SMSNJ round table will be presented by Jeff Fuglestad; see the Tech Session below for a preview.



NEW BUSINESS



New Officers – Nominations are Open. Officer nominations are now being accepted for our annual election in June. Chuck asked for volunteers who wish to donate their time and talents. All positions except President are available.

Meeting Schedule and Club Storage. For as far back as we can remember, we have met on the fourth Tuesday of each month except December. The Roseland Library is under new management. A new rule that has been implemented is the requirement to reserve our meeting time on a monthly basis rather than scheduling several months in advance. Reservations will be made by the Vice President in concert with local Roseland area residents Jeff Fuglestad and Ken Schuetz. Additionally, we have been asked to no longer store club items at the Library. Ossi Thalmann, Jeff Fuglestad, Jim Lavelle, Chuck Passaro, and Tom Ruggiero will be providing new homes. Regarding our coffee maker: Chuck asked, once again, if anyone would be interested in setting up a coffee mess at each meeting. As there were no takers, he is planning to offer the coffee maker to another club.

Upcoming Event – Pennsville Farm Show. As he has done for the past three years, Tom R. will be attending the Pennsville Farm Show the first Saturday of June, to set up a model display and demonstration. He will be joined there by the Philadelphia Club. Ossi was with Tom last year and had a great time. Tom asks that interested members contact him if they would also like to attend this event.

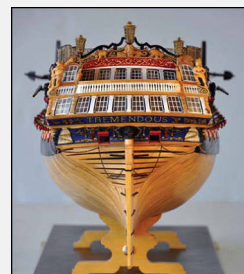
THE NAUTICAL RESEARCH GUILD

"ADVANCING SHIP MODELING THROUGH RESEARCH"

Annual membership includes our world-renowned 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 or call 585.968.8111



TECH SESSION

Various Species of Wood and Their Use in Modeling

The Tech Session at the March meeting was presented by Jeff Fuglestad.

The first sample Jeff passed around was **English Boxwood**. This wood is hard and straight grained, and it finishes and planes very well. It is great for carving.

Next was **Holly**. Holly has a white to light grey tone. Minwax driftwood stain makes it look very much like a holly stoned deck. This wood has knots that must be avoided in making strips.

Jeff showed two species of **Mahogany: Honduras and African** (Sepula). Honduras Mahogany has very little visible grain. Jeff has made masts, spars and fittings from this somewhat orange toned wood. Honduras mahogany cannot be imported. The other type, the African, is harder with a straight grain. It is a very heavy wood. Jeff uses a jointer planner to prepare the wood before final machining. Jeff has used both types for making cases; the African Mahogany has a much more pronounced grain.

Common **Fir** is okay for structure if you dry it for about three months and you are going to hide the grain. Jeff says that it is very forgiving.

One of Jeff's favorite woods is **Dogwood**. It has very tight grain and it bends readily. Dogwood is not sold commercially, but you can find it in downed trees; it can be finished to look like weathered oak. When you bend this wood, you want to bend it with, not against the grain.

Next, Jeff showed **Peroba Rosa**, a toxic wood. If you want to use various wood species to "color" your model rather than paint it, this is a good, very hard wood. It has a reddish tone and carves well.

Jeff's **Black Walnut** sample came from a tree in Virginia. Black walnut has an open grain, and is used for cases. Minwax Jacobian will make it darker. The open grain makes it typically unsuitable for smaller scales. Chuck pointed out that many commercial kit makers will supply walnut as a second planking material because of its color. However, the open grain is not particularly pleasing in models constructed with this material.



Maple is very hard and turns well. Jeff passed around a piece showing how different sides and grain take stain. It really doesn't stain well, though. Hard maple is harder than boxwood.

Ebony dust is carcinogenic. Ebony is very heavy and brittle and has been used for wales and other dark timbers on a ship. Jeff has bent it, but that is very difficult to do.

Basswood has no grain and is very soft. It is typically used for carving blanks.

Oak is not suitable for modeling due to its open grain.

Apple has a tendency to turn pink. Jeff typically paints his apple wood. Apple is known for its good turning properties, but it does have a fair amount of knots. It's yet another wood not particularly good for ship modeling.

Poplar is excellent wood if you are going to cover it. It carves well to make hull blanks and patterns and is readily available. Tom R. commented that it is used to make kitchen cabinets and you can get scrap and cut offs from cabinet makers for very little cost as they are going to be discarded anyway.

Cherry is another wood that is readily available and can be used for planking.

Chuck uses and likes **Alaskan Yellow Cedar**. It is a light and soft wood that holds a significantly hard edge. It machines and bends very well. Another advantage is that it is insect and rot resistant.

Jeff uses **Pear** for masts and spars. It is available from fallen trees although Swiss pear is very difficult to find these days.

Thank you, Jeff!

COOL TOOLS

Jeff Fuglestad brought a very small jig saw that he uses to do inside cuts in very tight spaces. Called the [MicroLux Sword Saw](#), its twin blades slide back-and-forth next to each other (teeth in opposite directions) at 100 to 2,000 strokes per minute. You hold it like a pencil and it can cut the most intricate patterns in balsa, basswood and other soft materials up to 3/8" thick as well as pine up to 3/16" thick. Given time to cut properly and not forced, it will slice through harder woods as well. The saw comes ready to go with 1 pair of replaceable blades. It requires a [#87365 Transformer](#); the tool will not operate without it. Specifications: weight, 6.4 oz.; length, 6-3/4 inches; speed 100 to 2,000 strokes/min; motor, 12VDC, 2.5 amp.



BOOKS AND PUBS



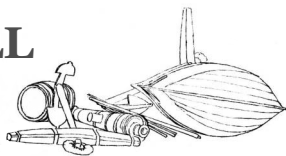
fussy the company was. Everything had to be perfect, and he was told many times to rework things until Scientific was satisfied with the final product. Ossi also made several doll house furniture pieces for Scientific (see below). He brought a 1975 catalog to the March meeting showing his work displayed on the cover. Thanks for sharing this, Ossi.



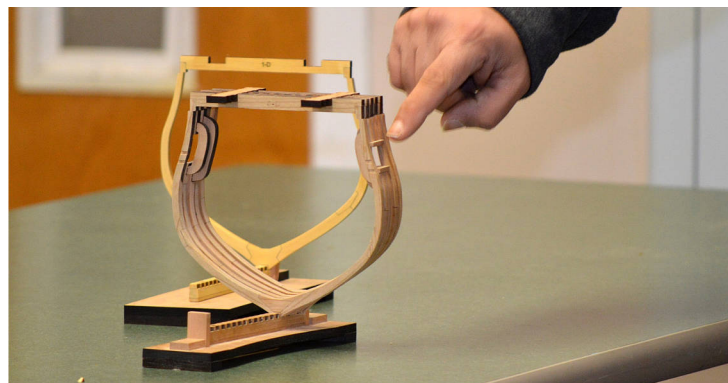
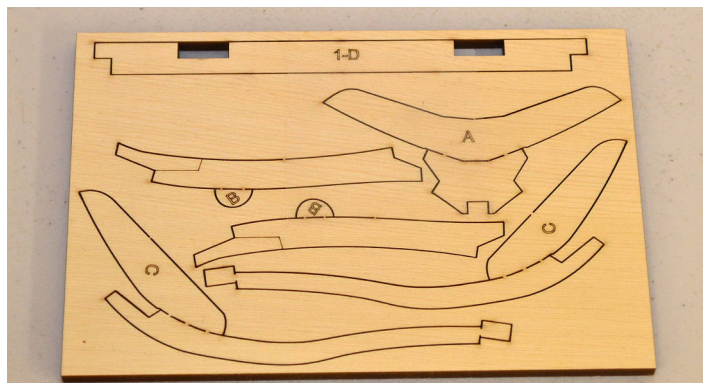
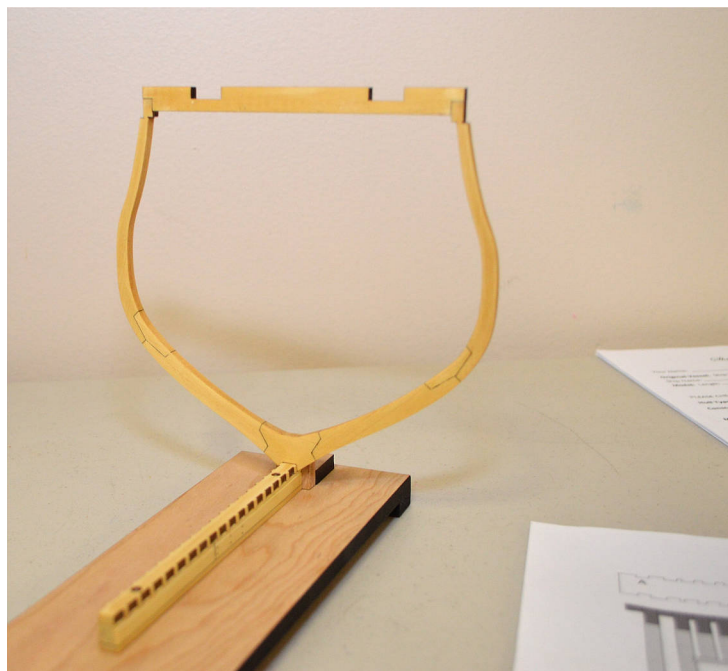
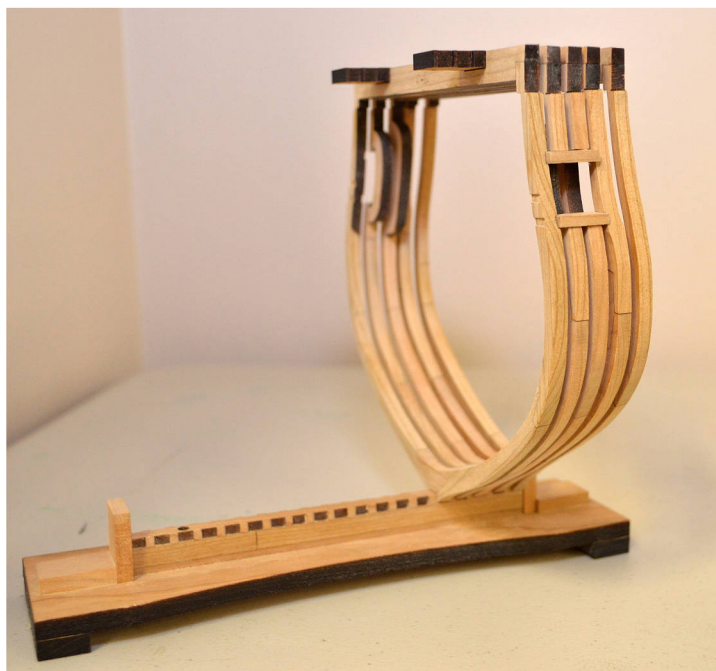
Micro-Mark began its life as Scientific Models. In 1975, the company contacted Ossi to make models to put in their catalog. From 1974 through 1980, Ossi built three model ship prototypes for Scientific: *Cutty Sark*, *Thermopylae*, and a Spanish Galleon. One of his recollections from those days was how



SHOW AND TELL



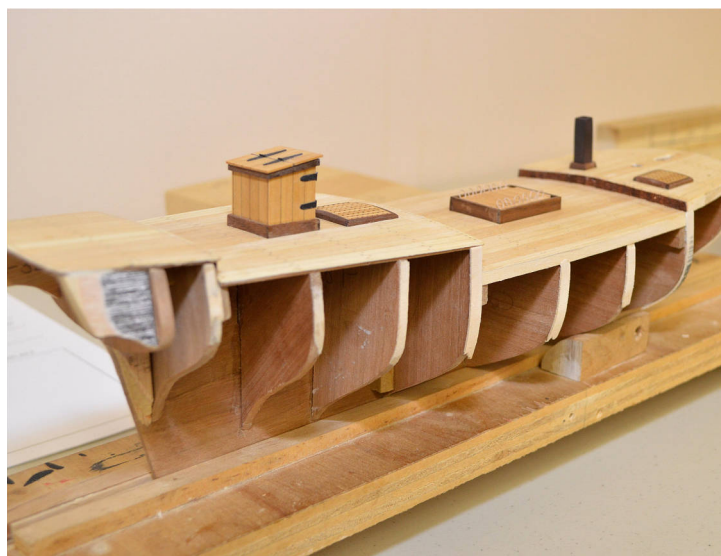
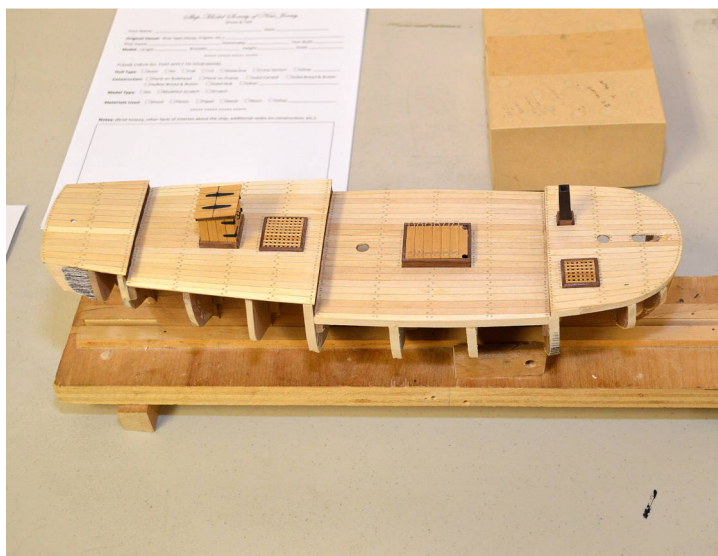
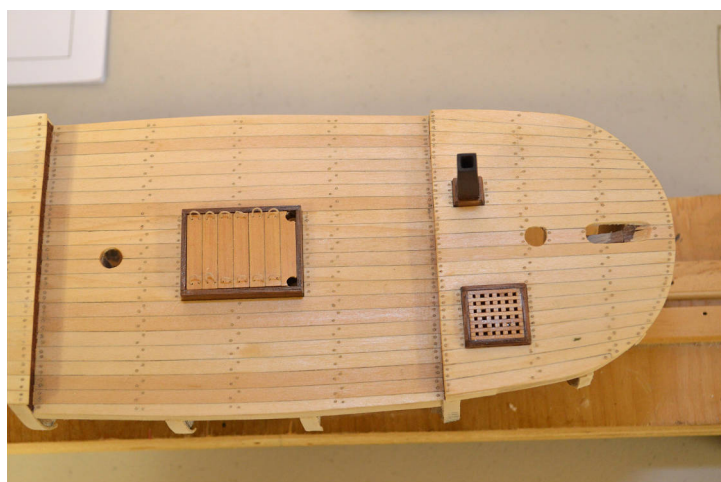
Chuck Passaro showed his newest prototype kit of the *HMS Pegasus* cross section. *Pegasus* was a Swan Class 6th rate English Sloop circa 1776. The cross section is 1:48 scale. Chuck brought two versions; one in cherry and one in Alaskan Yellow Cedar. The design of this kit is exceptional; it will represent the midship section of the vessel. Chuck has invented a method to index the floors and futtocks of the frames so that they register perfectly. He also has come up with a method for squaring the frames and holding them in correct orientation in all three directions. The kit will have three types of frames; straight frame, shifted frame to form the side of the gun ports, and a frame that is interrupted for the gun ports. Larry Friedlander will be doing the test build with Chuck.



SHOW AND TELL



Ken Whitehead brought a model of an [Artesania Latina kit](#) of *USS Independence*, purportedly a colonial Sloop of War circa 1775. The listed scale is 1:35, but Ken felt that the model looked out-of-scale, on the large side, so he decided to reduce the plans to make it smaller. He took the kit plans and reduced them so that the identified 4-pounder cannon scaled out properly at 1:48. This turned out to be an 80% reduction. He recut each bulkhead and the keel former, and made the new bulkheads and keel from cherry. He also resized and scratch built all of the deck furniture. The decks are planked with basswood and the hull and deck furniture received a coat of polyurethane. Good job, Ken.



ERNEST SHACKLETON: EXPLORER...SAVIOR... LEGEND

Viewing the latest episode of AMC's series *The Terror*, I was reminded of a book I had read many years ago. The book, *Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage*, detailed a 1914 attempt to cross Antarctica from coast to coast – an adventure that would become legend.

Ernest Shackleton was an Anglo-Irish explorer who participated in 3 expeditions to Antarctica in the early 20th century. His first experience of the polar regions was as third officer on Captain Robert Scott's Discovery Expedition from 1901 to 1904. During the second expedition 1907–1909, he and three companions established a new record, traveling to within 97 geographical miles of the South Pole. At that time, it was the largest advance to the pole in exploration history. Members of his team also climbed Mount Erebus, the most active Antarctic volcano. For these achievements, Shackleton was knighted by King Edward VII on his return home.

After the race to the South Pole ended in 1911, with Norwegian Roald Amundsen's conquest, Shackleton turned his attention to the crossing of Antarctica from sea to sea via the pole. To this end he made preparations for what became the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition, 1914–17. His plan was to employ 2 ships: *Endurance*, carrying the expedition crew at one end of the continent, with the vessel *Aurora* at the other end. *Aurora's* crew were charged with laying provisions in advance along Shackleton's 1800-mile route from coast to coast.

Disaster struck the expedition when *Endurance* became trapped in pack ice and was slowly crushed before the shore parties could be landed. The crew escaped by camping on the sea ice until the ship disintegrated, then by launching the lifeboats to reach uninhabited Elephant Island and ultimately the inhabited island of South Georgia. This last was a stormy ocean voyage of 720 nautical miles and Shackleton's most famous exploit.

After *Endurance* sank, Shackleton and his party camped on a large, flat floe for almost two months, hoping that it would drift towards Paulet Island (approximately 250 miles away) where it was known that stores were cached. After failed attempts to march across the ice to this island, Shackleton decided to set up another more permanent camp (Patience Camp) on another floe, and trust to the drift of the ice to take them towards a safe landing. By 17 March, their ice camp was within 60 miles of Paulet Island but, separated by impassable ice, they were unable to reach it. On 9 April, their ice floe broke into two, and Shackleton ordered the crew into the lifeboats, to head for the nearest land.



After five their harrowing days at sea, the exhausted men landed their three lifeboats at Elephant Island, 346 miles from where *Endurance* sank. It was the first time they had stood on solid ground for 497 days.



—*Endurance finally sinking*

Elephant Island was an inhospitable place, far from any shipping routes; rescue upon chance discovery was very unlikely. Consequently, Shackleton decided to risk an open-boat journey to the 720-nautical-mile-distant South Georgia whaling stations, where he knew help was available. The strongest of the tiny 20-foot lifeboats, christened *James Caird* after the expedition's chief sponsor, was chosen for the trip. The ship's carpenter made various improvements, including raising the sides, strengthening the keel, building a makeshift deck of wood and canvas, and

—*Continued on next page*

sealing the work with oil paint and seal blood. Shackleton chose five companions for the journey. Shackleton refused to pack supplies for more than four weeks, knowing that if they did not reach South Georgia within that time, the boat and its crew would be lost.

The *James Caird* was launched on 24 April 1916; during the next fifteen days, it sailed through the waters of the southern ocean, at the mercy of the stormy seas and in constant peril of capsizing. On 8 May, thanks to the excellent skills of *Endurance's* navigator, the cliffs of South Georgia came into sight. But hurricane-force winds prevented the possibility of landing. The party was forced to ride out the storm offshore, in ever-present danger of being dashed against the rocks. They later learned that the same hurricane had sunk a 500-ton steamer bound for

blocked the approaches to the island. He appealed to the Chilean government, which offered the use of *Yelcho*, a small seagoing tug from its navy. *Yelcho* and the British whaler *SS Southern Sky* reached Elephant Island on 30 August 1916, at which point the men had been isolated there for four and a half months. Shackleton quickly evacuated all 22 men. There remained the men of the *Aurora*, who were stranded at Cape Evans in McMurdo Sound after *Aurora* had been blown from its anchorage and driven out to sea, unable to return. The ship, after a drift of many months, had returned to New Zealand. Shackleton traveled there to join *Aurora*, and sailed with her to the rescue of the stranded crew. This group, despite many hardships, had fully carried out its depot-laying mission, but three lives had been lost, including that of its commander.

Recounting the entire experience, the adventure almost defies belief. These were the days before GPS, Gore-Tex and freeze dried rations. To Shackleton's credit, not a single *Endurance* crew member was lost, although several suffered injuries and frostbite. This was due primarily to Shackleton's courage, endurance, leadership and faith in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles. He had an extraordinary sense of responsibility and care for those he led. His concern for his men was such that at one point he

gave his mittens to photographer Frank Hurley, who had lost his during the boat journey. Shackleton suffered frostbitten fingers as a result.

Following this adventure, Shackleton went on the lecture circuit and published his own account of the *Endurance* expedition, *South*, in December, 1919. In 1920, tired of the lecture circuit, he began to consider the possibility of a last expedition, once again to Antarctica. Although some of his former crew members had not received all their pay from the *Endurance* expedition, many of them signed on with their former "Boss". When the party arrived in Rio de Janeiro, Shackleton suffered a suspected heart attack. He refused a proper medical examination, so the expedition continued south, and on 4 January 1922, arrived at South Georgia. At 2:50 a.m. the next morning, Shackleton, at the age of 47, suffered a fatal heart attack. At the request of his wife, he was buried in South Georgia.



Launching of the James Caird

South Georgia from Buenos Aires. On the following day, they were finally able to land on the unoccupied southern shore. After a period of rest and recuperation, rather than risk putting to sea again to reach the whaling stations on the northern coast, Shackleton decided to attempt a land crossing of the island. Although it is likely that Norwegian whalers had previously crossed at other points on skis, no one had attempted this particular route before. For their journey, the survivors were only equipped with boots they had pushed screws into to act as climbing boots, a carpenter's adze, and 50 feet of rope. Leaving half the crew at the landing point on South Georgia, Shackleton traveled 32 miles with the other 2 crewmen over extremely dangerous mountainous terrain. Their trek took 36 hours; they reached the whaling station at Stromness on 20 May.

Shackleton immediately sent a boat to pick up the three men from the other side of South Georgia while he set to work to organize the rescue of the Elephant Island men. His first three attempts were foiled by sea ice, which

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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