

THE SHIP MODEL SOCIETY
OF NEW JERSEY
Founded 1981

Volume 37, Number 4

Newsletter of the Ship Model Society of New Jersey

April 2019

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Our next club meeting is
April 23rd at 6:45PM

ROSELAND PUBLIC
LIBRARY



MARCH NOTES...

Meeting. The March meeting was opened at 1845 by President Chuck. In attendance were 19 members and 2 guests, Carmine Bianco and Don Kieffer, both of whom were attending their second meeting. Next meeting they'll be eligible for membership! Welcome back Carmine and Don. The meeting was adjourned at 2025 whereupon several members went to Thatcher McGhee's Irish Pub and Eatery. [Meeting photos](#).

Treasurer's Report. Tom Ruggiero presented the report. We have a good balance in the Club account. Tom passed out checks to members who had sold items at the auction and collected money from members who owed. Everyone has now paid. Steve Fletcher donated his proceeds to the club. Thank you, Dr. Steve!

Next Month's Meeting. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 23rd.

Saturday Workshop. The next workshop will be at 10:00 on Saturday, April 20th, at Chuck's place. Please let him know if you will be attending.

Upcoming Tech Sessions. The April Tech Session will be "Adhesives and Glues" presented by the membership. Larry has requested that members bring in a favorite glue and/or joining or clamping device. He asked that the member describe why he likes the adhesive or device and how he uses it. This will be a group discussion rather than a session delivered by a single member.

The Tech Session for May will be rope making presented by Chuck; the June Tech Session will focus on scrapers for fabricating moldings. We are looking for a volunteer to do the June presentation.

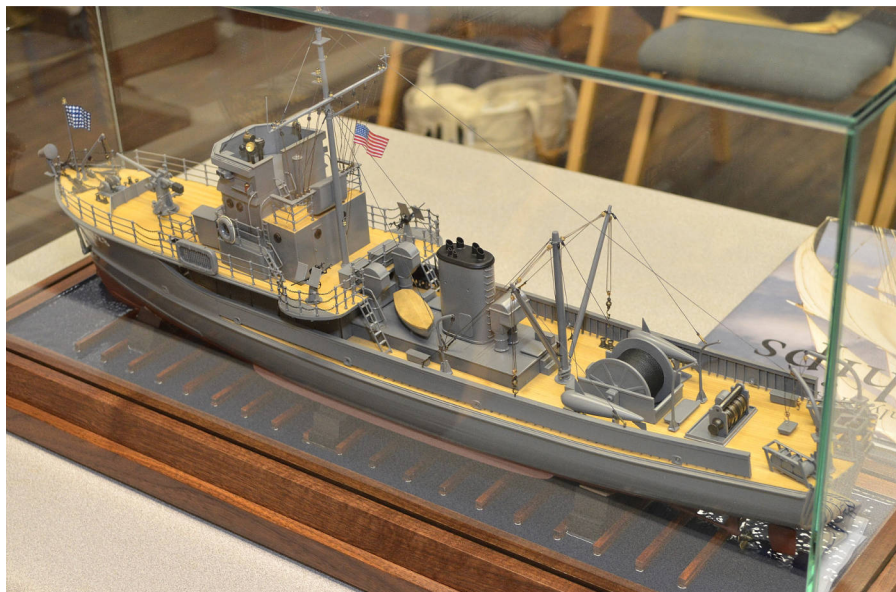
Saw Blades. Chuck announced that, regrettably, Thurston Saw Blades is out of business. They will surely be missed as their service was impeccable and their prices very reasonable. The good news is there is a quality alternative, a company called Malco located in Rhode Island. Their blades are excellent, though slightly more expensive. Their website is www.malcosaw.com.

Roseland Library Show and Exhibit. This event, held on Saturday, April 13th, was both a fun day and resounding success. See the article below for more details. [Show and exhibit photos](#).

—March Notes continued on next page

Minesweeper YMS-328. Last year, our member and friend Jeff Fuglestad scratch built a 1/8" scale model of Minesweeper YMS-328. Following service in WWII, the ship was stricken from the Naval Vessel Register and converted into a private yacht. In 1962, she was purchased by John Wayne, who did extensive renovations and renamed her *Wild Goose*. The vessel is still in operation as a dinner cruiser in Newport Beach, CA.

We have seen the model at our meetings. So, what's new? Jeff's article "Modeling YMS-328" was published in *Nautical Research Journal* Volume 64, Number 1, Spring 2019. The article discusses a short history of the many minesweepers constructed for the US Navy in World War II, the major differences among them, why Jeff chose to build this particular sweeper, and a description of how the model was researched and built. Great job Jeff! Also, in the same edition, Kurt Van Dahm provides the plans for the travel stop that Tom demonstrated when we did the Tech Session about table saws.



If you are not already a member of the Nautical Research Guild, this is one of the reasons to [join](#). If you wish to write an article or shop note for the NRGJ, contact the Editor, Paul E. Foutenoy, 505-588-2549, nrjeditor@gmail.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

20 - Workshop

23 - Monthly Meeting

6:45PM, Roseland Public Library

27 - Northeast Joint Clubs Conference

New London, CT

MAY

TBD - Workshop

28 - Monthly Meeting

6:45PM, Roseland Public Library

JUNE

1 - Pennsville Farm Show

TBD - Workshop

25 - Monthly Meeting

6:45PM, Roseland Public Library

OLD BUSINESS



Northeast Joint Clubs Conference. The Joint Clubs meeting, hosted this year by the Connecticut Club, is just a few days away. It looks to be a good one. The Jim Roberts Judges from each club have been identified and member John Marinovich has stepped up to do a round table presentation on making small boats. So far, twelve of our members will be attending. Hope to see you all there.

Pennsville Farm Show. As we have done for several years, SMSNJ will be exhibiting at the Pennsville Farm Show along with the Philadelphia Club on Saturday, June 1st. When contacted by the show organizers, Tom Ruggiero again agreed to participate and Bill Brown has said that he will be there as well. This is a fun day. The weather is usually great and the event takes place right next to the Delaware River. We encourage others to attend.

NEW BUSINESS



Al Geigel's Library. Our good friend and SMSNJ Plank Owner passed away one year ago this past December. Grace, Al's wife and an Honorary Member of the club, and Al's family have donated his entire Nautical Library to the SMSNJ. Included are complete sets of *Seaways' Ships in Scale*, *Model Ship Builder*, and an extensive collection of *Model Shipwright* and *Nautical Research Journal* publications. Additionally, there are over sixty other books and pubs. Tom will send a list of what's available to SMSNJ members so they can identify what publications they are interested in.

TECH SESSION

Fabricating Masts From Square Stock

by Chuck Passaro



Most model kits offer birch or walnut dowels for masts and spars. These dowels are typically sanded to a taper. Some kit instructions actually have you squaring off the dowel, tapering it, and then sanding it round! At the March meeting Chuck demonstrated a better and more accurate way to make a mast, starting with square stock. This allows you to use different types of wood that are not available as dowels, such as boxwood.

The first task is to select a square length of wood having a dimension at least the major diameter of the finished mast. For example, if the mast is to be $\frac{1}{4}$ " in diameter, you need to start with a piece that measures at least 0.25" by 0.25". When choosing, also select a piece that is somewhat longer than your finished mast. This extra length allows you to insert the piece into a drill chuck if you choose to turn it in a drill to sand it round.

Next, you need to reshape this square stock into an octagon by shaving off the corners. Chuck's method is to mark each face of the square to a ratio, from left to right, of 7:10:7. Where does this ratio come from? Well, to make a square into an octagon, you are taking off the corners with each leg being the same. So, you are removing a 45 degree Right Triangle. The sine of an angle is the opposite side divided by the hypotenuse of the triangle. Since this is a 45 degree angle, the sine is 0.707. The opposite side from the angle is 0.7, and the hypotenuse is 1.0. So, multiplying both by 10 for convenience gives you the ratio of 7:10:7.

Chuck demonstrated how he shaves each corner with a sharp number 11 blade getting close to, but not over the marked line. Using this method, the mast can be spun in a drill and sanded round. You can do your tapering while turning. That's all there is to it. In the case of a yard, with

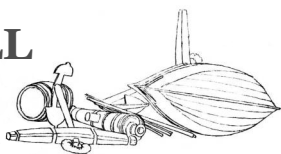
an octagonal center section you simply taper from both ends.

Tom Ruggiero explained that he does his tapering before he rounds off the stock. The way he does this is that he marks each quarter of the length of the spar and marks the diameter at that point. Then, using a blade as though it were a spoke shave, he takes an equal number of strokes on each face. Once the square stock is tapered, he similarly shaves each corner of the square so that all the faces are the same width. In this way, you automatically get the correct ratio without trying to mark it on the very small spars that he works with. After that, he sands, by hand, the octagonal stick round by using various grits of sandpaper. Tom finds that this gives him more control of the tapering and allows him to make spars that have differing tapers top to bottom (for example, a typical bowsprit is flat on its top surface so that it can be walked upon).

Jeff related that he fabricates spars by spinning the stock in a drill while passing it against an abrasive wheel.



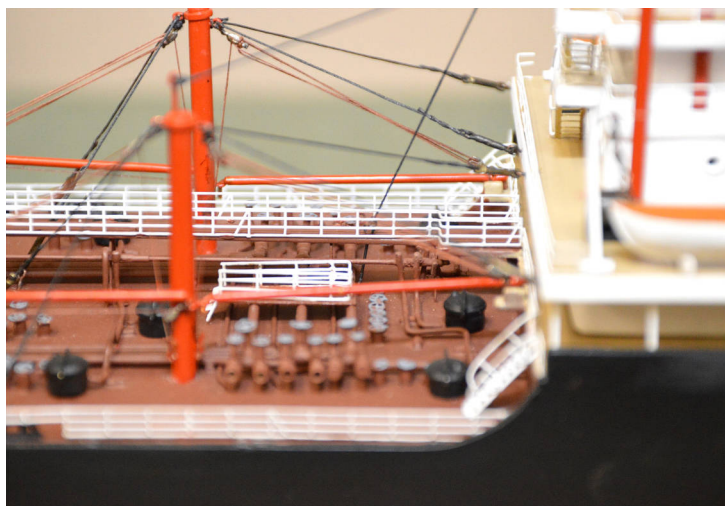
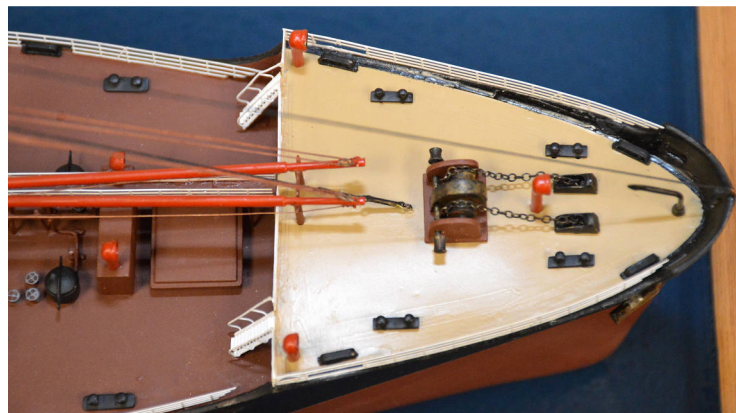
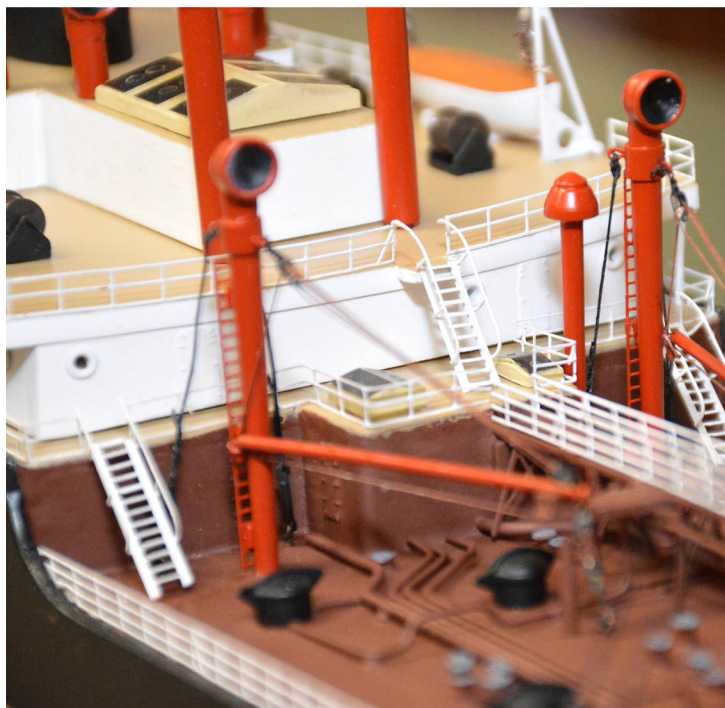
SHOW AND TELL



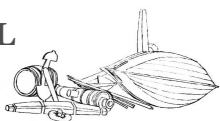
SS *Pendleton*

— Jeff Fuglestad

SS *Pendleton* is a bread and butter construction using poplar lifts. Jeff inserted a vertical piece between the lift halves that allowed him to perfectly align the bow and stern. The model is complete and is 1/16" to the foot, 32 1/2" long by 4 1/4" wide. Everything on the model is scratch built with turned brass fittings. *Pendleton* was a T2 Tanker that broke in two and sank off Chatham, Massachusetts in a 1952 storm. The event is memorialized in the 2009 book entitled *The Finest Hours*, and a 2016 Disney film with the same title. It is the true story of the most daring rescue attempted by the US Coast Guard. Jeff will be donating the model to the Chatham Historical Society in Massachusetts.



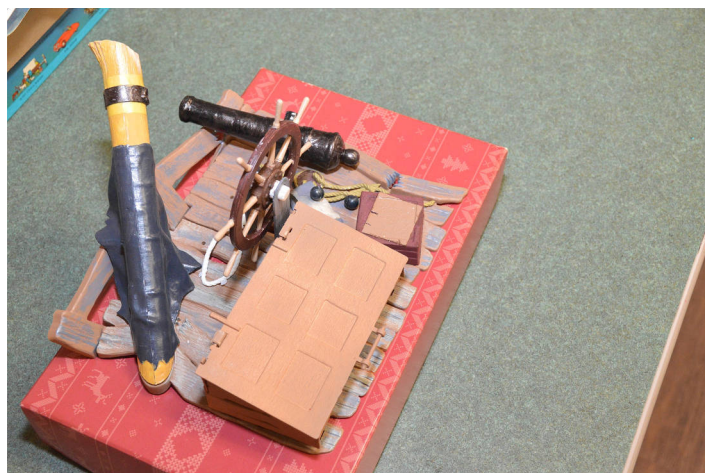
SHOW AND TELL



Hex Marks the Spot

— Mason Logie

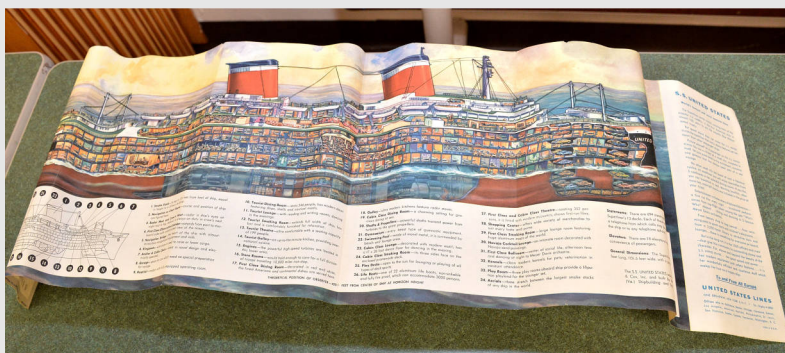
Mason continues to work on his fantasy pirate raft with ship's wheel, skeleton pirate and treasure chest. When completed it will be animated, with a skeleton popping out of a crate with dagger in hand to pinpoint the location of lost booty on a treasure map.



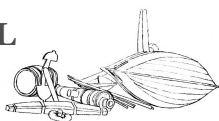
SS *United States*

— Mason Logie

Mason has come across a Revell kit of the *United States* that was stored in someone's attic. The kit is from the 1950's and the shop wants to show it for \$50.



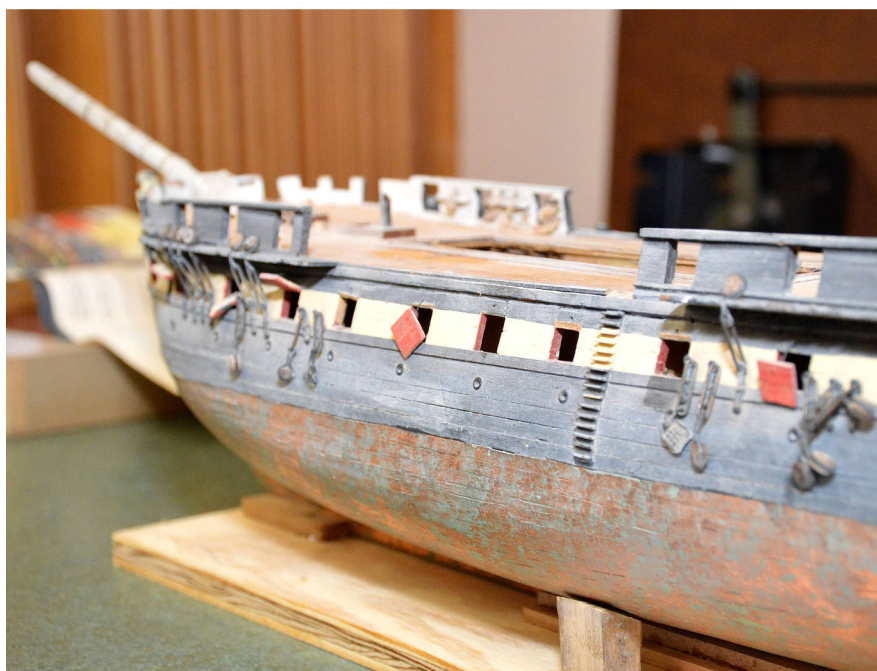
SHOW AND TELL



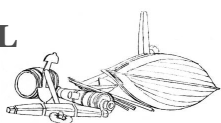
USS *Constitution*

— Richard Lane

Rich brought in the completed hull of a Mamoli kit that he started 25 years ago. Although it has seen rough handling over the years, the hull weathering and copper patina make it look more realistic. The model is in 1:93 scale (slightly larger than 1/8" to the foot). Rich plans to complete it as *Constitution* appeared in 1804 during the Barbary Wars, complete with the Hercules figurehead. He will be correcting the armament to reflect the early 19th century configuration when she did not have any carronades.



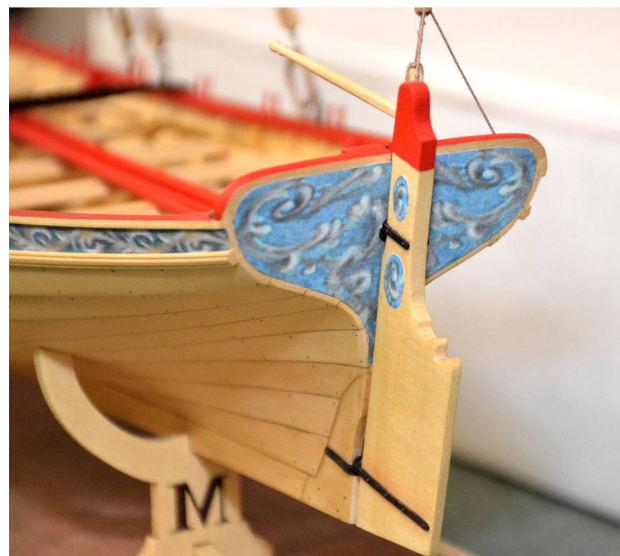
SHOW AND TELL



Medway longboat

— Chuck Passaro

Chuck's Medway longboat is just about complete. The model is 1:24 scale and measures 17" in length. It now includes the mast, bowsprit boom, rigging and the baseboard. This is the prototype of the group build project that the club is working on. The red Chuck is using is Winsor and Newton Galleria Acrylic Crimson.



Medway longboat

— Larry Friedlander

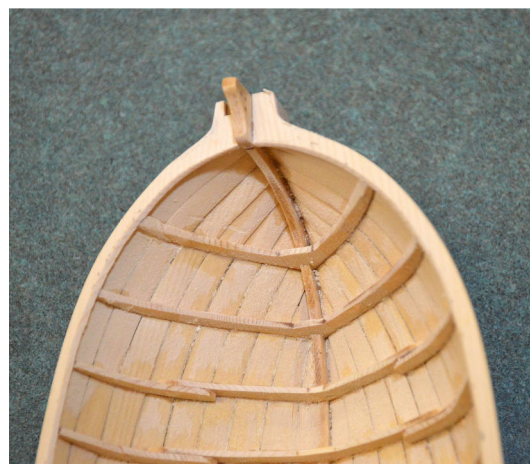
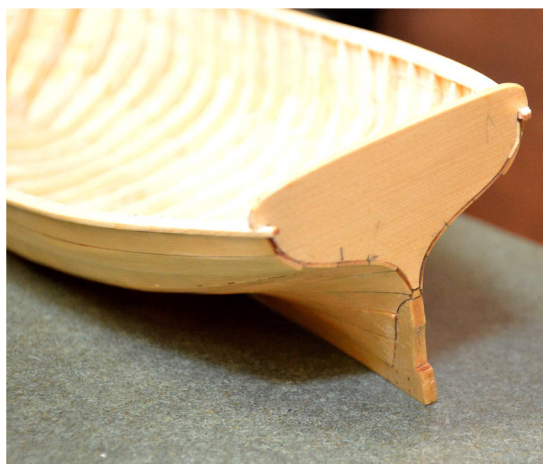
Larry has completed the planking on his longboat. He has made several spacing jigs to assist with the placement and shaping of various parts. One of these he created to accurately sand the edge of the washboard rail. Another is designed to locate the molding on the rail. Larry will be priming the rail with sanding sealer before painting. Coming along well.



Medway longboat

— Doc Fletcher

Steve has completed the planking on his longboat and is now preparing the surface for finishing.

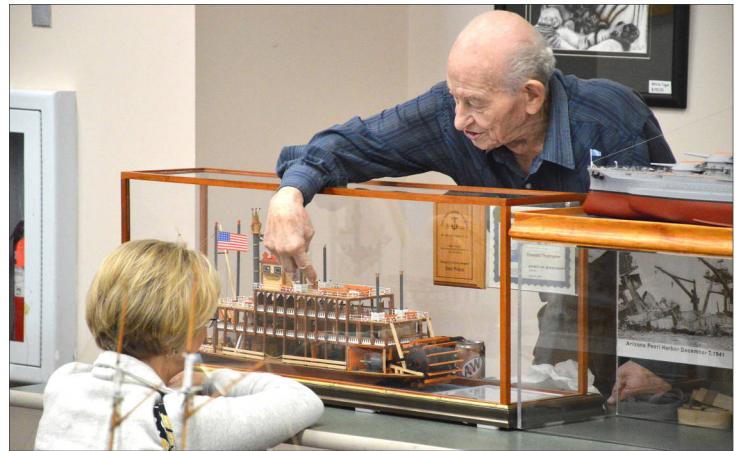
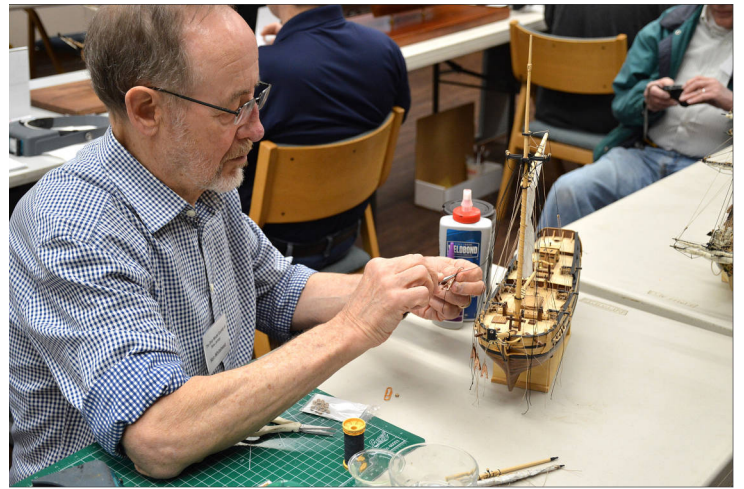


Roseland Library Show & Exhibit

The show and ship modeling demonstration at the Roseland Library took place on Saturday, April 13th. Thirteen members attended and brought with them more than twenty-five models. Many library visitors, male and female, young and old, stopped by during the day, and all the comments we received were positive. Several visitors expressed interest in joining our happy group.

We even made it to [Facebook!](#) (see the video: April 13th at 10:18am). Tom Ruggiero and Ken Schuetz thank all for their contributions in making the day a success. In addition to Tom and Ken, the following members participated: Chuck Passaro, Steve Maggipinto, Bill Brown, Roy Goroski, Nick Starace, Ken Whitehead, Jeff Fuglestad, Ossi Thalmann, Rich LaRue, Steve Fletcher, and Carmine Bianco.





Fireships



A fire ship or fireship was a ship filled with combustibles, deliberately set on fire and steered (or, when possible, allowed to drift) into an enemy fleet in order to destroy ships or to create panic and make the enemy break formation. Vessels used as fire ships were either warships whose munitions were fully spent in battle, surplus craft which were old and worn out, or purpose-built inexpensive combustible vessels rigged to be set afire, steered toward targets, and abandoned quickly by the crew. Fireships were used to great effect by the outgunned English fleet against the Spanish Armada during the Battle of Gravelines, the Dutch Raid on the Medway and by the Greeks in the Greek War of Independence.

While fireships were used in the Medieval period, notably during the Crusades, these were typically ships that were set up with combustibles on an ad-hoc basis. The career of the modern fireship, as a naval vessel type designed for this particular function and made a permanent addition to a fleet, roughly parallels the era of cannon-armed sailing ships, beginning with the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 and lasting until the British victory over the Turks at the Battle of Navarino in 1827.

The first modern fireships were put to use in the early 17th century Dutch and Spanish fleet actions during the Thirty Years War. Their use increased throughout that century, with purpose-built fireships a permanent part of many naval fleets, ready to be deployed whenever necessary. Initially small and often obsolete smaller warships were chosen as fireships, but by 1700 these vessels were being purpose-built with specific features for their role. Most were adaptations of the usual small warships of the day—brigs or ship-rigged sloops-of-war with between 10 and 16 guns. The practical design features of purpose-built fireships included a latticework false deck below the planks of the main deck. The planks would be removed and the combustibles and explosives stacked on the lattice, which gave good draft and ensured the fire would hold and spread. A number of square-

section chimneys would be let into the forecastle and quarterdeck to also help ensure a good draft for the fire. The gunports would be hinged at the bottom (rather than the top as on other warships) so that they would be kept open by gravity rather than ropes which would otherwise burn through. This further ensured a good air supply. The lower parts of the masts would be surrounded by cofferdams to ensure that the fire would not bring down the masts prematurely and thus deprive the fireship of motive power. Grappling hooks would be fitted to the ends of the yardarms so that the fireship would become entangled in its target's rigging. A large sally-port door was let into the rear quarter of the ship (usually the starboard side) to allow easy exit for the crew once the fire had been set and lit. There was often a chain fixed here for mooring the escape boat rather than a rope that may have been damaged by the fire. Because fireships were used relatively rarely and only in specific tactical conditions, and there was always demand for small cruisers and warships, most purpose-built 'fireships' served long careers as ordinary warships without ever being used for their actual purpose. Of the five fireships used in Holmes' Bonfire of 1666, three had been in service with the Royal Navy for over a decade before being deployed on their final mission.

While only used sparingly during the Napoleonic Wars, fireships as a distinct class were part of the British Royal Navy until 1808, at which point the use of permanently designated fireships attached to British squadrons disappeared. Fireships continued to be used, sometimes to great effect, such as by the U.S. Navy at the Battle of Tripoli Harbor in 1804 and by the British Navy's Thomas Cochrane at the Battle of the Basque Roads in 1809. However, for the most part, they were considered an obsolete weapon by the early 19th century.

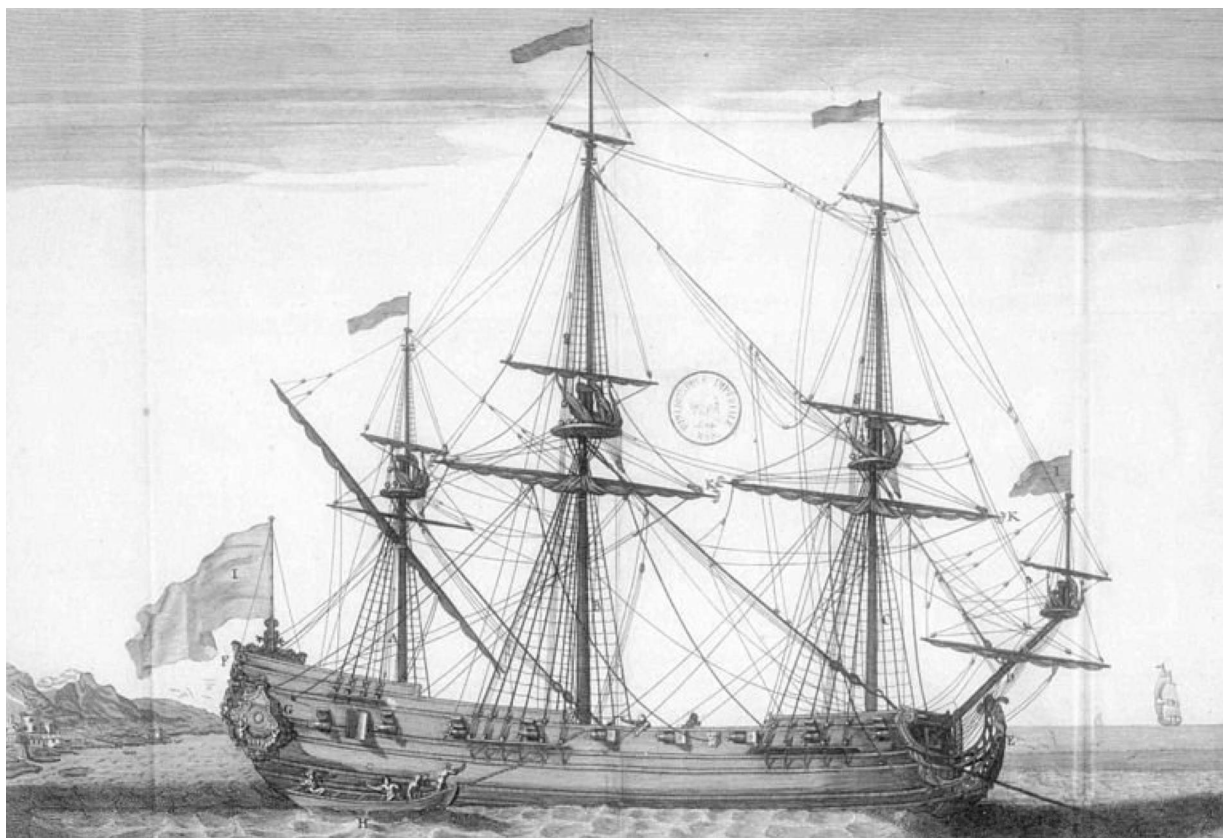
Warships of the age of sail were highly vulnerable to fire. Made of wood, with seams caulked with tar, ropes greased

with fat, and stores of gunpowder, there was little that would not burn. Accidental fires destroyed many ships, so fireships presented a terrifying threat. With the wind in exactly the right direction a fireship could be cast loose and allowed to drift onto its target, but in most battles fireships were equipped with skeleton crews to steer the ship to the target (the crew were expected to abandon ship at the last moment and escape in the ship's boat). Fireships were most devastating against fleets which were at anchor or otherwise restricted in movement. At sea, a well-handled ship could evade a fireship and disable it with cannon fire. Other tactics included aiming at the ship's boats and other vessels in the vicinity so that the crew could not escape and therefore might decide not to ignite the ship, or waiting until the fireship had been abandoned and then towing it aside with small maneuverable vessels such as galleys.

The role of incendiary vessels changed throughout the age of the modern fireship. The systematic use of fireships as part of naval actions peaked around the Third Anglo-Dutch War. Whereas just twenty years before a naval fleet might have six to seven fireships, by the Battle of Solebay in 1672 both the Dutch and English fleets typically employed between 20 and 30 fireships, and sometimes more. By this time, however, admirals and captains had become very experienced with the limitations of fireship attacks and had learned how to avoid them during battle. Great numbers of fireships were expended

during the Third Dutch War without destroying enemy men-of-war, and fireships had become more a way to harass and annoy the enemy rather than destroy him. The successful use of fireships at the Battles of La Hogue and Cherbourg in 1692 marked both the greatest achievement of a fireship attack since the Spanish Armada, and the last significant success for fireships. Though these vessels as a specific class sailed with the British Royal Navy for another century, they would never have a significant impact on a naval victory. Once the most feared weapons in naval arsenals, fireships declined in both importance and numbers, so that by the mid-18th century only five to six British vessels of the type would be at sea at a time. The Royal Navy attempted only four attacks using modern fireships between 1697 and 1800.

Hastily outfitted ad-hoc fireships continued to be used in naval warfare. For example, a large number of fire rafts were used in (mostly ineffective) attacks on the British fleet by American forces during the American Revolution, at Philadelphia, on the Hudson River, and elsewhere. The end of the modern fire ship came in the early 19th century when the British began to use hastily outfitted fireships at engagements such as Boulogne and Dunkirk despite the presence of purpose-built fireships in the fleet. The last modern fireship in the British Royal Navy was *Thais*. She was the only remaining fireship in the entire navy of 638 warships when she was converted to a sloop in 1808.



French fireship at anchorage. Set a higher PDF magnification and note the exit door between the two aftmost gunports, the chain securing an escape boat, an aperture below the exit door to light a fuse, and grappling hooks on the yardarms.

The Ship Model Society of New Jersey

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

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

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

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

The Broadaxe is edited by Steve Maggipinto. Your ideas and suggestions are always welcome. Please submit them to Steve Maggipinto at stevemagg@optonline.net.

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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