



Volume 38, Number 2

Newsletter of the Ship Model Society of New Jersey

February 2020

In This Issue

[Old Business](#)
[New Business](#)
[Auction 2020](#)
[Isoroku Yamamoto](#)
[The Pinnacle Virginia](#)
[Tips, Tools and Techniques](#)
[Club Information](#)

Our next club meeting is
February 25th at 6:45PM

ROSELAND PUBLIC
LIBRARY

JANUARY NOTES...

The January meeting was opened at 1845 by President Bill Brown. There were 19 members in attendance and five guests:

- Eric Marshall – attending his third meeting.
- Joshua Fichman – a member of the Philadelphia Club. Joshua has been to several of our meetings.
- Todd Wardwell – another member of the Philadelphia Club. Todd was the keynote speaker at a Joint Clubs meeting where he described how he makes acrylic cases for models.
- Alexander Stec – a model builder who had been inactive for some time but has decided to get back into the hobby. He is looking for advice and we assured him that he had come to the right place.
- Kris Scornavacca. When Kris was at the USS Constitution Museum in Boston, he saw their model shop and picked up a flyer for the USS Constitution Shipcraft Guild. He found SMSNJ's website and decided to check us out. He has built several models such as *Constellation*, *Constitution*, and the *San Felipe*.

Welcome to all our guests. As this was Eric's third meeting, he was nominated for membership, and voted into SMSNJ. Welcome aboard, Eric!

The Tech Session at the January meeting was replaced by our annual White Whale Auction. On hand was a large selection of kits, tools, plans, materials, and other items. See photos below. Doctor Steve donated clamps and needle holders as he does every year. Dan Pariser donated plans. All of the proceeds from these donations go to SMSNJ and we thank our donors.

The auction went very well and most of the items sold at very good prices to their new owners. Tom will have checks for those who are owed. Those who owe the club are asked to bring a check payable to the Ship Model Society of New Jersey to the February meeting. If you do not plan to come to the February meeting, please send a check payable to the Ship Model Society of New Jersey to Tom Ruggiero by the next meeting. Tom's address is at the end of *The Broadaxe*.

The meeting was adjourned at 2030 whereupon several members went to the Caldwell Diner. [Meeting photos](#).

Treasurer's Report. Tom Ruggiero presented the report. We have a good balance in our account and expect to add to it with the proceeds from the auction.



Next Month's Meeting. The next regular meeting will be on Tuesday, February 25, 2020, 1845, at Roseland Free Public Library.

Tech Session for Next Meeting. Next month's presentation is "Sharpening Chisels" presented by our newest member, Eric Marshall.

The Broadaxe. The newsletter for SMSNJ is published once a month. While Tom Ruggiero writes up the meeting minutes and report, *The Broadaxe* is compiled by our editor, Steve Maggipinto. Steve does quite a bit of additional research, adds other very interesting articles and features, as well as doing pieces on our members such as for Ossie Thalmann, and this past issue, Ken Schuetz. He has done this great service for SMSNJ for many years. Tom wants to personally thank Steve for his hard work and dedication! It means quite a bit to our club.

OLD BUSINESS



Speedwell Exhibit. We have been contacted by Historic Speedwell in Morristown. It is confirmed that we will be doing an Exhibition and Workshop Demonstration for two days on Saturday and Sunday, April 18 and 19, 2020. This is a chance for members to display finished models as well as work on current projects. We would appreciate having at least five members there each day. Note that you don't need to do both days, but feel free to come the whole weekend if you prefer. Please let us know if you plan to participate.

Northeast Joint Clubs Conference. The next Northeast Joint Clubs meeting will be Saturday, April 25, 2020 at the Port n' Starboard Convention Center in New London, Connecticut. This year the event will be hosted by the USS Constitution Shipcraft Guild. Registration information was sent to members via a separate email. Those who have been there know what a great time this is. Those who haven't been to one need to get to this. There are vendors, round tables, lunch, and an afternoon speaker. There are usually 100 models on display. SMSNJ also hosts the Jim Roberts Competition. This will be our 11th competition, and several SMSNJ members have received this winner take all award.

We're asking for a volunteer to do a "round table" presentation of a modeling technique at the conference. The presentation should be about twenty minutes long and will be repeated twice. Please volunteer and advise Bill Brown, Larry Friedlander, or Tom Ruggiero about your topic.

NEW BUSINESS



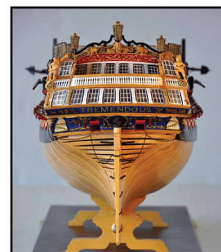
Tech Sessions. Vice President Larry is again asking for volunteers to do a Technical Session at our regular meetings. New member Eric Marshall has stepped up to do a Technical Session on *Sharpening Chisels* at our next meeting. Please help us by identifying something that you want to learn, and/or present. We will help you out with the presentation if you'd like.

THE NAUTICAL RESEARCH GUILD

"ADVANCING SHIP MODELING THROUGH RESEARCH"

Annual membership includes our world-renowned quarterly 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



Isoroku Yamamoto

Isoroku Yamamoto was a Japanese Marshal Admiral of the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) and the commander-in-chief of the Combined Fleet during World War II until his death.

Yamamoto held several important posts in the IJN, and undertook many of its changes and reorganizations, especially its development of naval aviation. He was the commander-in-chief during the early years of the Pacific War and oversaw major engagements including the attack on Pearl Harbor and the Battle of Midway. He was killed when American code breakers identified his flight plans, enabling the United States Army Air Forces to shoot down his plane. His death was a major blow to Japanese military morale during World War II.

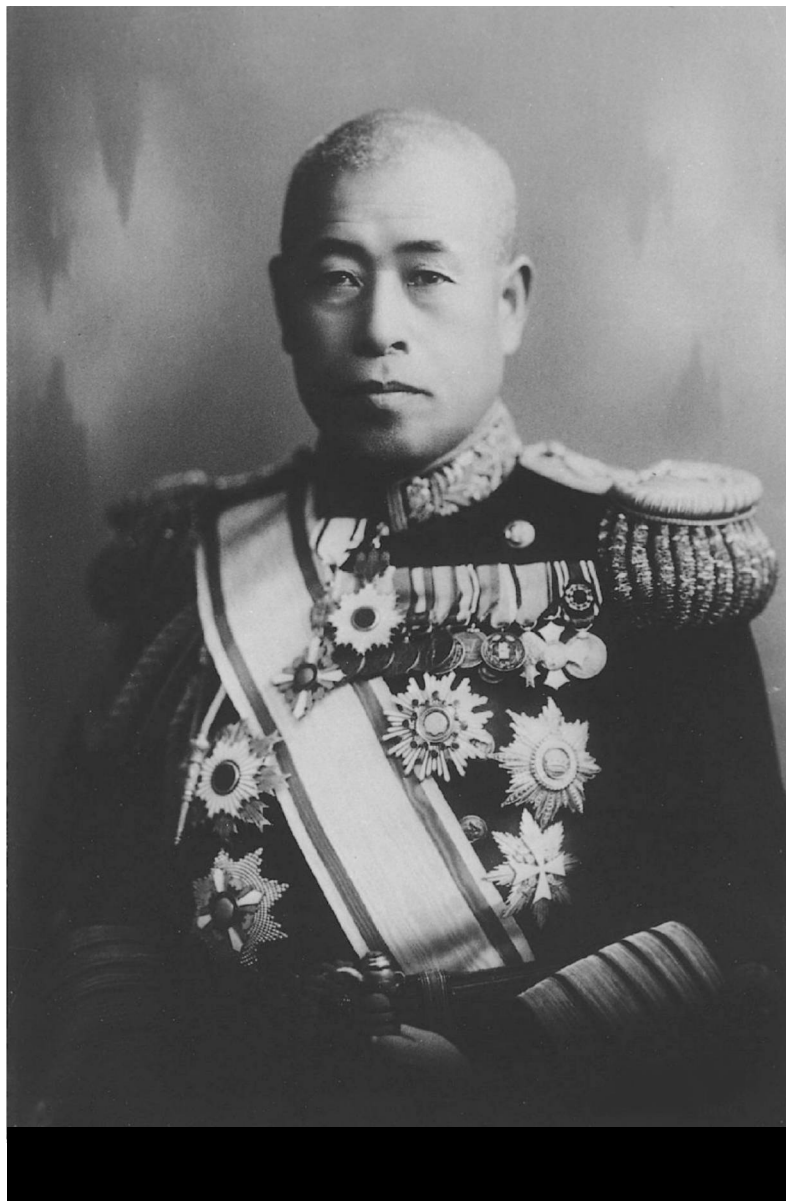
Yamamoto was born Isoroku Takano in Nagaoka, Niigata. His father was an intermediate-rank samurai. "Isoroku" is an old Japanese term meaning "56"; the name referred to his father's age at Isoroku's birth.

In 1916, Isoroku was adopted into the Yamamoto family (another family of former Nagaoka samurai) and took the Yamamoto name. It was a common practice for samurai families lacking sons to adopt suitable young men in this fashion to carry on the family name, the rank and the income that went with it. Isoroku married Reiko Mihashi in 1918; they had two sons and two daughters.

After graduating from the Imperial Japanese Naval Academy in 1904, Yamamoto served on the armored cruiser *Nisshin* during the Russo-Japanese War. He was wounded at the Battle of Tsushima, losing two fingers on his left hand, as the cruiser was hit repeatedly by the Russian battle line. He returned to the Naval Staff College in 1914, emerging as a lieutenant commander in 1916. In December of 1919, he was promoted to Commander.

Yamamoto was part of the Japanese Navy establishment, rivals of the more aggressive army faction. He promoted the policy of a strong fleet to project force through gunboat diplomacy, rather than a fleet used primarily for transport of invasion land forces as some of his political opponents in the army wanted. This stance led him to oppose the invasion of China. He also opposed war against the United States, partly because of his studies at Harvard University (1919–1921) and his two postings as a naval attaché in Washington, D.C., where he learned to speak fluent English.

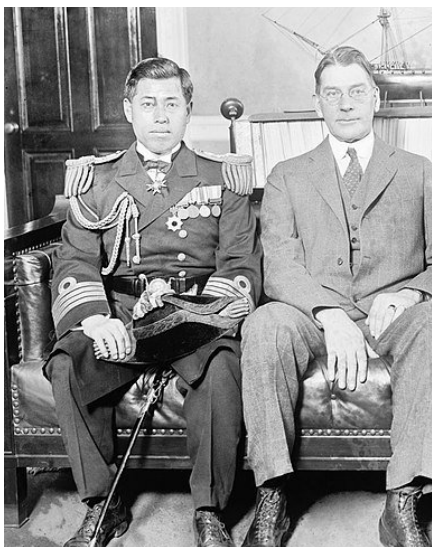
Yamamoto traveled extensively in the United States during his tour of duty there, where he studied American customs and business practices.



In 1924, with the rank of captain, he was part of the Japanese delegation that visited the U.S. Naval War College. Later that year, he changed his specialty from gunnery to naval aviation. His first command was the cruiser *Isuzu* in 1928, followed by the aircraft carrier *Akagi*.

Yamamoto participated in the London Naval Conference of 1930 as a rear admiral and the London Naval Conference 1935 as a vice admiral, as the growing military influence on the government at the time deemed that a career military specialist needed to accompany the diplomats to the arms limitations talks. Yamamoto was a strong proponent of naval aviation, and served as head of the Aeronautics Department before accepting a post as commander of the First Carrier Division. He opposed the Japanese invasion of northeast China in 1931, the subsequent full-scale land war with China in 1937, and the Tripartite Pact with Nazi Germany and fascist Italy in 1940. As Deputy Navy Minister, he apologized to United States Ambassador Joseph C. Grew for the bombing of the gunboat USS *Panay* in December 1937 (see May 2018 *Broadaxe*). These issues

initiated a steady stream of hate mail and death threats from Japanese nationalists and pro-war militarists. He was philosophical about this and wrote: "To die for Emperor and Nation is the highest hope of a military man...one man's life or death is a matter of no importance. All that matters is the Empire." To ensure Yamamoto's safety, he was later re-assigned from the naval ministry to sea as the commander-in-chief of the Combined Fleet in 1939. This was done as one of the last acts of the then-acting Navy Minister Mitsumasa Yonai.



Captain Yamamoto and U.S Secretary of the Navy Curtis Wilbur, 1925-28

As Japan moved toward war during 1940 under the leadership of General Hidekei Tojo, Yamamoto, despite personal misgivings, accepted the reality of impending war and laid out a chart for a quick victory. His plan called for destroying the United States Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor in a preventive strike while simultaneously thrusting into the oil and rubber resource-rich areas of Southeast Asia, especially the Dutch East Indies, Borneo, and Malaya. Yamamoto recognized Japan's great need for these vital resources in order to successfully wage war in the Pacific. On the surface, the attack of December 7th, 1941 was an unqualified success for the Japanese Navy. It had, however, awakened the "sleeping giant." Having spent many years in the United States in various capacities, Yamamoto was all too aware how the industrial might and temperament of the American people would make for a long, hard fight, one he seriously doubted Japan could ultimately win. When asked by Prime Minister Fumimaro Konoe in mid-1941 about the outcome of a possible war with the U.S., Yamamoto made a well-known and prophetic statement: "If ordered to fight," he said, "I shall run wild considerably for the first six months or a year, but I have utterly no confidence for the second and third years." His prediction would be vindicated, as Japan easily conquered territories and islands in Asia and the Pacific for the first six months of the war before suffering a major defeat at the Battle of Midway in June 1942, an engagement that ultimately tilted the balance of power in the Pacific towards the U.S.

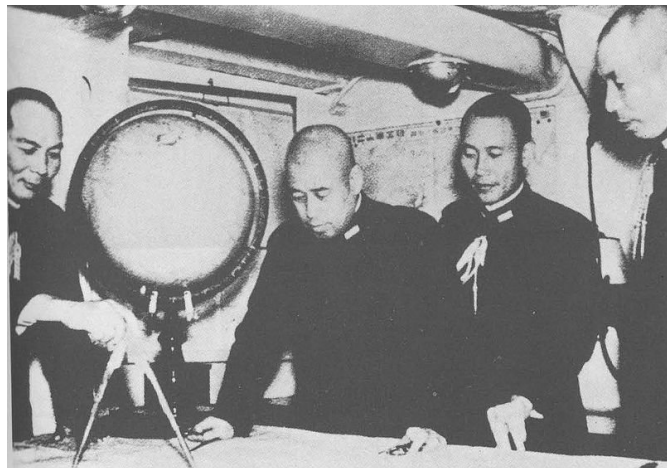
With the US fleet largely neutralized at Pearl Harbor, Yamamoto's Combined Fleet turned to the task of executing the larger Japanese war plan devised by the Imperial Japanese Army and Navy General Staff. The First Air Fleet made a circuit of the Pacific, striking American,

Australian, Dutch and British installations from Wake Island to Australia to Ceylon in the Indian Ocean. The 11th Air Fleet caught the US 5th Air Force on the ground in the Philippines hours after Pearl Harbor, and then sank the British Force Z battleship HMS *Prince of Wales* and battlecruiser HMS *Repulse* underway at sea.

From there, the Japanese swept the inadequate remaining American, British, Dutch and Australian naval assets from the Dutch East Indies in a series of amphibious landings and surface naval battles. Along with the occupation of the Dutch East Indies came the fall of Singapore in February 1942, and the eventual reduction of the remaining American-Filipino defensive positions in the Philippines on the Bataan peninsula and Corregidor Island. The Japanese had secured their oil- and rubber-rich "southern resources area."

By late-March, having achieved their initial aims with surprising speed and little loss, albeit against enemies ill-prepared to resist them, the Japanese paused to consider their next moves. Yamamoto and a few Japanese military leaders and officials waited, hoping that the United States or Great Britain would negotiate an armistice or a peace treaty to end the war. But when the British, as well as the Americans, expressed no interest in negotiating a ceasefire with Japan, Japanese thoughts turned to securing their newly seized territory and acquiring more with an eye to forcing one or more of their enemies out of the war.

On April 18, 1942, in the midst of these debates, the Doolittle Raid struck Tokyo and surrounding areas, demonstrating the threat posed by US aircraft carriers, and giving Yamamoto an event he could exploit to get his way as further debate over military strategy came to a quick end. The Naval General Staff agreed to Yamamoto's Midway Island (MI) Operation, subsequent to the first phase of the operations against Australia's link with America, and concurrent with its plan to seize positions in Alaska's Aleutian Islands. The Midway operation was a planned invasion of Midway Island just 1,000 miles west of Hawaii. Its purpose was to draw the remaining US fleet into an ambush and a crushing, decisive victory by a superior Japanese force.



The Battle of Midway turned out to be a disaster for the Japanese. Four of their large carriers were lost in the engagement along with a great number of vital aircraft and experienced pilots. Although he remained in charge as commander-in-chief, retained at least partly to avoid diminishing the morale of the Combined Fleet, Yamamoto had lost face as a result of the Midway defeat and the Naval General Staff were disinclined to indulge in further gambles. This reduced Yamamoto to pursuing the classic defensive "decisive battle strategy" he had previously attempted to overturn.

Yamamoto committed Combined Fleet units to a series of small attrition actions across the south and central Pacific that stung the Americans, but suffered losses he could ill afford in return. Three major efforts to beat the Americans moving on the island of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands precipitated a pair of carrier battles that Yamamoto commanded personally in September and October 1942, and a wild pair of surface engagements in November, all timed to coincide with Japanese Army pushes. The effort was wasted when the army could not hold up its end of the operation. Yamamoto's naval forces won a few victories and inflicted considerable losses and damage to the US fleet in several naval battles around Guadalcanal, but he could never draw the U.S. into a decisive fleet action. As a result, Japanese naval strength was reduced.

To boost morale following the defeat at Guadalcanal, Yamamoto decided to make an inspection tour throughout the South Pacific. On April 14, 1943, the US naval intelligence effort, code-named "Magic," intercepted and decrypted a message containing specifics of Yamamoto's tour, including arrival and departure times and locations, as well as the number and types of aircraft that would transport and accompany him on the journey. Yamamoto, the itinerary revealed, would be flying from Rabaul, New Britain, to an island near Bougainville in the Solomon

Islands, on the morning of April 18, 1943. U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander-in Chief Chester Nimitz first consulted Admiral William Halsey, Jr., Commander, South Pacific, and then authorized a mission on April 17 to intercept Yamamoto's flight enroute and shoot it down. A squadron of Lockheed P-38 Lightning aircraft were assigned the task, as only they possessed sufficient range to intercept and engage. Select pilots from three units were informed that they were intercepting an "important high officer" with no specific name given.

On the morning of April 18, despite urging by local commanders to cancel the trip for fear of ambush, Yamamoto's two Mitsubishi G4M bombers, used as fast transport aircraft without bombs, left Rabaul as scheduled for the 315 mile trip. Sixteen P-38s intercepted the flight over Bougainville and a dogfight ensued between them and the six escorting Mitsubishi A6M Zeroes. First Lieutenant Rex Barber engaged the first of the two Japanese transports, which turned out to be Yamamoto's aircraft. He fired on the aircraft until it began to spew smoke from its left engine. Barber turned away to attack the other transport as Yamamoto's plane crashed into the jungle.

Yamamoto's staff recovered and cremated his remains, and his ashes were returned to Tokyo aboard the battleship *Musashi*, Yamamoto's last flagship. Yamamoto was given a full state funeral on June 5, 1943, where he received, posthumously, the title of Marshal Admiral and was awarded the Order of the Chrysanthemum 1st Class. He was also awarded Nazi Germany's Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords. Some of his ashes were buried in the public Tama Cemetery, Tokyo, and the remainder at his ancestral burial grounds at the temple of Chuko-ji in Nagaoka City. He was succeeded as commander-in-chief of the Combined Fleet by Admiral Mineichi Koga.



Yamamoto's state funeral, June 5, 1943

THE PINNACE VIRGINIA

Virginia or *Virginia of Sagadahoc* was a pinnace built in 1607–08 by colonists at the Popham Colony. The ship was a project of the Plymouth Company, a branch of the proprietary Virginia Company, on land that England claimed belonged to the Virginia Colony. She was the first English-built ship in what is now Maine, and possibly in all of the English-colonized areas of North America, and a demonstration of the new colony's ability to build ships. The second and third "local" pinnaces (*Deliverance* and *Patience*) were built soon afterwards in Bermuda.

Virginia was constructed at the mouth of the Kennebec River in what is now Phippsburg, Maine. Little is known about the details of her architecture, but written accounts of the colony and historical records of similar ships suggest that *Virginia* was a pinnace of about 30 tons.

The Popham Colony, also known as the Sagadahoc Colony, was established in 1607 by the Plymouth Company. The expedition's mission was to find gold, the Northwest Passage and a river passage to China, to fish and hunt beaver for fur and to sell and prove that New World forests could build English ships.

During the 12 months the colony existed, the residents completed one major project: the construction of a 30-ton ship, a pinnace they called *Virginia*. It was the first known ship to be built in what would later become the United States, and the first ship of noteworthy size for which solid evidence exists that she was constructed locally. It was also meant to show that the colony could be used for shipbuilding. The choice to build a 'small' pinnace for the Popham Colony was a good one. Able to support at least three different rigs, the 'small' pinnace was very versatile and could be assigned to offshore fishing, the North Atlantic fishing grounds, or readied for a trans-Atlantic journey to England with equal ease.

At this time the term "pinnace" could mean either a larger full rigged pinnace, or a smaller ship that could be stowed (or towed) and used as a ship's tender. *Virginia* was a pinnace of the smaller type, perhaps similar to a shallop. Shallops are mentioned as often as pinnaces in earliest records of water craft in the North American European colonies, but rarely described as a 'ship.' The largest shallops might



approach the smallest 'small' pinnaces in size, but average size was much smaller and this places the shallop within the 'boat' category.

Virginia would have been about 56 feet long with a beam of 15 feet 5 inches, a flush main deck and a freeboard of less than 2 feet. Sketches of the replica's hull design and framing are online at the [Maine First Ship website](#). Plans for *Virginia* that include a plausible rigging are available from the [Maine Maritime Museum](#). For coastal work, *Virginia* would have used a fore-and-aft rig with a sprit mainsail and one headsail. How the coastal rigging would have been changed for a cross-Atlantic voyage is not yet fully understood. In John Walker's drawing of *Virginia* when rigged for a trans Atlantic voyage, an aft-rigged mizzen mast carries a sail that resembles a lateen sail more closely than a spanker. This variety of rig equipped the 'small' pinnaces of this era for several different assignments. The vessels could be used for fishing, storage at anchor, or as a tender to large ships or supply ships.

There is a very small 17th-century sketch of a pinnace on J. Hunt's October 8, 1607, map of Fort St. George at the Popham Colony in southern Maine. This boat is thought to be the 30-ton pinnace *Virginia*.

The ship's first major role came on October 17, 1608, when the Popham Colony was abandoned by Captain James Davis and 45 colonists who packed into *Virginia* for a return to England. Structurally sound after her first ocean crossing, *Virginia* had more work to do. On May 23, 1609, a new Charter of the Virginia Company, drafted by Francis Bacon, was signed by King James I of England. This Charter granted a vast extension of territory and expanded powers to the Company, spurring a renewed effort to save the colony at Jamestown.

Virginia was one of two pinnaces and seven larger ships in the fleet known as the Third Supply. With 500-600 people, the supply mission left Falmouth, Cornwall, England on June 8, 1609, directly for the colony in Virginia by way of the Azores and Bermuda. *Virginia* and one other pinnace were towed by the 300 ton purpose-built flagship, *Sea Venture*, which was the first single-timbered merchantman built in England and also the first dedicated emigration ship. Along the way, the fleet encountered a powerful three-day hurricane near Bermuda resulting in the loss

of two ships, *Catch* and *Sea Venture*. Davis guided *Virginia* safely to Jamestown, arriving on October 3, 1609. This arrival was six weeks later than the other ships that had not been wrecked by the storm. The long travel time suggests that *Virginia* may once again have been in tow behind a larger ship, or significantly blown off course, or damaged.

John Smith's refusal to resign his governorship had promoted political divisiveness, and the arrival of the battered fleet's limited supplies and extra mouths was not greeted with enthusiasm. Nonetheless, Davis became the Commander of Fort Algernon at Point Comfort. *Virginia* became a safe refuge when Indian hostilities erupted. She was also used on a trip inland to relieve Fort Algernon and attempt trade with the Powhatan confederacy. During the trip, Davis decapitated two Indians and left their mutilated bodies near the fort. On yet another inland foray, he destroyed a Powhatan village, burned the villager's corn and killed all its men, women and children. Afterward, *Virginia* and Davis returned safely to England.

The last known details of *Virginia* occurred in 1610 when she once again delivered settlers and supplies to the Jamestown Colony under the command of Thomas West. After the return to Jamestown in mid-June, Captain

Robert Tyndall was directed to take *Virginia* to catch fish in the Chesapeake Bay between Cape Henry and Cape Charles. There is no mention of *Virginia* afterward in known historical records.

Replica

A four-year project to build a replica of *Virginia* began in July, 2011, with two shipwrights, a teacher, a media specialist, fourteen high school students and many adult volunteers. *Virginia*'s keel was laid on July 3, 2011. A non-profit organization, Maine's First Ship – Reconstruct Virginia has been formed to oversee the build on the grounds of the Bath Freight Shed in Bath, Maine. The organization educates people about Maine's role in early American and European history, the 400-year tradition of shipbuilding, and archeology. Because plans of early 17th century British or American sailing vessels have not yet been found, reconstructing *Virginia of Sagadahoc* was a challenge. Nonetheless, there is historical information about the 'small' pinnacle design that can be utilized, and from which a reasonable plan has been put together.

Our thanks to Barry Rudd for making us aware of the *Virginia* and for providing [this link](#) to a short video of her reconstruction.

Tips, Tools and Techniques

One of the items brought—and sold—at the January auction was the [Dremel Moto-Saw Kit Model # MS20-01](#). This handy tool is a multi-functional scroll saw and coping saw in one. It provides a compact solution for making detailed cuts in a variety of materials, including wood, plastic, laminates and metal. The portable saw is easy to store, set-up and operate, and features a tool-free mechanism for quick blade changes. An auto-tensioning feature keeps the blade taut and ready to cut so you don't have to make blade adjustments. Its slim handle with a comfortable grip provides control in any cutting position. The Moto-Saw works well as a stationary scroll saw, yet it can be removed from its base to become a portable electric coping saw. Features include:

- A detachable coping function for handheld use to take the tool to the work piece
- An auto tensioning quick change mechanism for easy accessory change and optimal blade tensioning
- Variable speed control for optimal cutting in a variety of materials
- A fast clamp base that attaches to various tables, benches and surfaces
- A two year warranty

Note that the blue edge guide locking levers illustrated are not included in the kit and do not affect performance of the tool. [Owner's manual](#).

Available at a variety of stores, including Amazon, Walmart, Home Depot and [Saleoff.store](#) from \$71.70.



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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