



Volume 38, Number 6

## Newsletter of the Ship Model Society of New Jersey

June 2020

### In This Issue

[Show and Tell](#)  
[Cage Masts](#)  
[Tech Session](#)  
[Club Information](#)

The June Meeting of SMSNJ will be a virtual meeting. The meeting will be June 23, 2020 at 7:00 PM (1900). A meeting invitation with instructions will be emailed to everyone.

### SATURDAY WORKSHOPS AND TECH SESSIONS

Future workshops are on hold for the next few months. Please watch your email for updates as they become available.

The Tech Session for June will be 'Weathering Techniques' by Mason Logie.

### MAY NOTES...

#### Important Announcement to the SMSNJ Membership and Family

As mentioned in the last Broadaxe, we will have virtual meetings for quite some time. Also, I will be regularly communicating with you via email. It is very important that you ensure that you are getting the emails. Depending on your email provider and your security settings some do not get emails with more than a few senders. Some email goes to spam if there is a link in the email (like an invitation to our virtual meeting). There are dozens of ways to avoid this issue that are too numerous to discuss here, however, one way may be to add me to your contacts, or as a trusted address. Please let me know if there is something that I can do on my end to help.

Tom Ruggiero

**Meeting Report.** May 26, 2020 was our second virtual meeting. The meeting was called to order at 1900 (7PM) by President Bill Brown. There were twenty-one members and three guests. As was mentioned last month, Ryland Craze, from Virginia, Barry Rudd, from Florida, and Bob Fivehouse, from Colorado were in attendance. The guests were Joshua Fichman, from Philadelphia Ship Model Society, plus Gregg Harrington, and Gene Berger, both from Hampton Roads Ship Model Society. Gene showed his photo-etched gun mounts. Welcome to you all. Eric Marshall showed a guitar that he made and still plays. Another virtual meeting benefit was that Bob Fivehouse was able to show his prize guitar. Might a virtual jam session be in the offing? The meeting adjourned at 2030. Unfortunately, no Diner or after meeting 'meeting'.

**The Broadaxe.** Another great job by Editor Steve Maggipinto. We appreciate information that our members send in to allow the publication of a quality newsletter.

**Treasurer's Report.** The Club Treasury report was given by Tom Ruggiero. **Please remember that your annual membership fee will be due by our June meeting. This year, all payments are to be by check made out to Ship Model Society of New Jersey. Please mail them to the Treasurer at the address on the last page of the newsletter.**

**Next Month's Meeting.** The June SMSNJ Meeting will be a virtual meeting held on June 23rd at 7:00 PM (1900). A meeting invitation with instructions will be emailed to everyone.

**Elections.** Elections for the positions of Vice President and Treasurer will be conducted at the June 2020 meeting. The nominees are Mason Logie for Vice President and Tom Ruggiero for Treasurer.

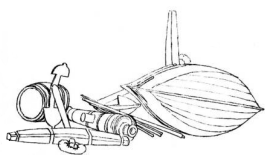
## Important Request

One of the big advantages to a virtual meeting is that you do not need to truck in your models to the library. The downside is that the views of the models need to be taken from the Zoom video. The video is great, but moving the model around distorts the image and the various lighting situations, band width etc. make pulling the images from the meeting recording very spotty. So, we ask that if you plan to do a Show and Tell, or Books and Publications, or Cool Tool, that you send the relevant information to Tom Ruggiero. There are Show and Tell forms available from the web site. Also, we ask that you take photographs of your model. During the meeting, you can bring up the photos. This ensures that the members get a good view of your model. Send two or three of those photographs to Tom Ruggiero and Steve Maggipinto for them to be put into the Broadaxe.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Tom Ruggiero

## SHOW AND TELL



### HMS *Comet*, Stern Galleries, Fire Ship, 1806, English, 1:48 Scale

— Barry Rudd

A few years ago, Barry, along with a few other SMSNJ members, attended a two-day seminar conducted by Admiralty Models' David Antscherl on how to build and finish the stern galleries and quarter galleries. The seminar started with a small kit supplied by Chuck Passaro to David's instructions. The course went into laying out and installing the stern and quarter gallery lights (windows) as well as some of the various moldings etc. It was informative and a lot of fun, but obviously two days was not enough to finish everything. Barry took his back to Florida and finished it. Good job Barry. Now you need to add the rest of the hull.





## SHOW AND TELL



### *Procida*, 1850 (approximate), Italian, 1:96 Scale

— Nick Starace

Nick presented a restoration of a model that was built by his grandfather around 1915. He recently received it from one of his many cousins. Nick's grandfather was an avid ship modeler who of course built from scratch without plans and built period sail only. He simply built them from memory of his days sailing these types of vessels. He preferred diorama settings too. EVERYTHING is hand-crafted except for the brads that hold the handrails in place, and the standing and running rigging. Nick's aunts told him that Nick used to sit next to his grandfather watching him build ship models. Nick guesses that it rubbed off. The model had no name so Nick gave it the name of the island where his grandfather was born.

Nick thought there were only 2 or 3 of the grandfather's models left in the family so he was thrilled to finally get one. Not sure if its design...comes closest to a Brig, or an English Galleon. At this writing the model has been completely restored to its original condition. Hopefully it will remain in Nick's family for another 100+ years as will his grandfather's legacy.







## SHOW AND TELL



### *Sea Witch*, American Clipper Ship

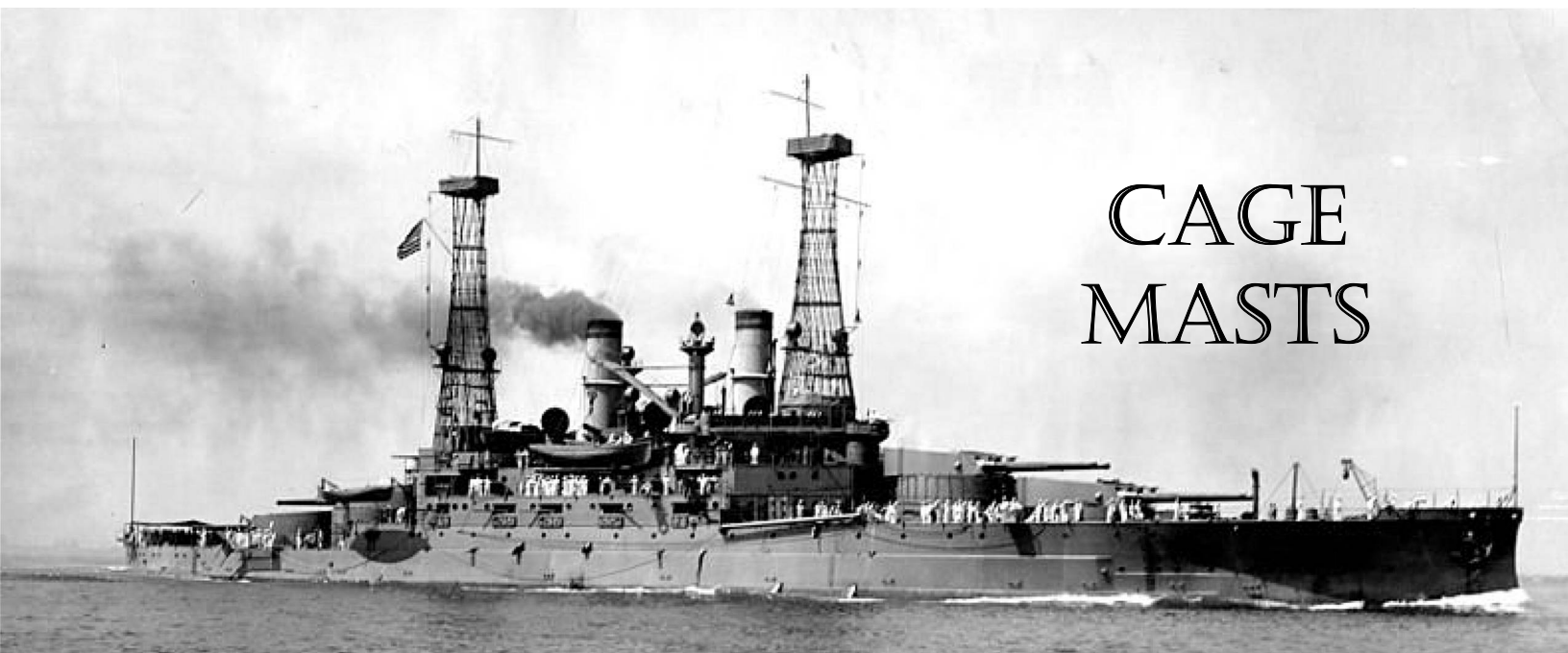
— Nick Starace III

The model *Sea Witch* was built by Nicholas Starace III, the son of Nick Starace. *Sea Witch* represents a generic clipper ship that captures typical features of those ships of the past. The model measures 21" overall. The vessel was built in 1846 in New York weighing in at 908 tons. She was wrecked off the Cuban coast in 1856. The model was built from a kit and has a solid hull.

The craftsmanship is quite remarkable when you consider Nicholas was only 15 years old when he built the model with no help from Dad. He was a gifted young man who was unfortunately taken from the Starace family at the age of 26 after a prolonged illness.







## CAGE MASTS

Lattice masts, or cage masts, are a type of observation mast common on US Navy major warships in the early 20th century. They are a type of hyperboloid structure, whose weight-saving design was invented by the Russian engineer Vladimir Shukhov. They were used most prominently on American dreadnought battleships and armored cruisers of the World War I era.

In the age of sail, masts were required to support the sails, and lookouts were posted on them; with the advent of engine-powered warships, masts were retained and used for observation and to spot fall of shot. The purpose of the lattice structure was to make the posts less vulnerable to shells from enemy ships, and to better absorb the shock caused by firing heavy guns, isolating the delicate fire control equipment (rangefinders, etc.) mounted on the mast tops. However, the masts were found to be easily damaged by the inclement weather experienced at sea by naval ships during typhoons and hurricanes: USS *Michigan*'s mast was bent right down to the deck by such a storm in 1918. As the caliber and range of ships' guns increased, heavier rangefinders were required, and the powerful guns and engines created shock and vibrations; lattice masts were eventually phased out in favor of the more rigid tripod masts favored by the Royal Navy.

The *South Carolina*-class battleships were the first class of American battleships to feature lattice masts, which were to become a standard fixture on all American battleships, and many cruiser classes. Older vessels, including the first modern American battleship, *Indiana*, were modernized with lattice masts during the period. In January 1918, the lattice mast of the battleship USS *Michigan* collapsed in a severe storm; the heavy seas put excessive stress on the mast and the weight of the fire control equipment caused the mast to fail at the narrowest point. The incident spurred an investigation by

the Bureau of Construction and Repair, which found that the collapse was in part due to the fact that the mast had been lengthened, with a new section spliced in where the mast broke. In addition, fragments from a recent explosion in one of the ship's 12-inch guns had damaged the mast, and the damage had not been adequately repaired. Nevertheless, the investigation also found that the mast aboard the battleship *Connecticut* also showed signs of buckling. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the Navy repeatedly found evidence of structural problems in the



masts, in large part due to the corrosive effects of funnel gases.

At the same time as the *Michigan* incident, US Navy officers were also gaining experience with British tripod masts for the first time while serving with the Grand Fleet during World War I. Unlike lattice masts, the heavier tripods did not suffer from vibration when steaming at high

speed, and they were not as susceptible to shock from gunfire, which caused the lattice masts to whip from the concussion.

All American battleships up to the *Colorado*-class battleships were equipped with lattice masts, although in the 1920s to 1930s, the older battleships had their lattice masts replaced with more modern tripod masts, concomitant with the addition of larger, much heavier fire-control director tops. The newer *Tennessee* and *Colorado* classes retained their original lattice masts, of heavier construction than those on earlier ships, at the start of World War II.

### Use in other navies

Only four battleships were completed with lattice masts for other navies. The two *Andrei Pervozvanny*-class battleships of the Imperial Russian Navy had lattice masts until they were replaced with conventional masts in the beginning of the First World War. The two

United States-built *Rivadavia*-class battleships of the Argentine Navy, *Rivadavia* and *Moreno*, had lattice masts. They were the only dreadnought-type battleships built for export by the US. Two other battleships, the US pre-dreadnoughts *Mississippi* and *Idaho* were sold to Greece in 1914; they retained their lattice masts until their sinking by the Germans in 1941.

Some navies considered lattice masts for their ships. Following their experience with the *Andrei Pervozvannys*, the Russians initially designed the four *Gangut*-class battleships with lattice masts, but constructed with pole ones. The German Imperial Navy designed its first battlecruiser, SMS *Von der Tann*, with lattice masts, but she was instead completed with pole masts.

### Use in fortifications

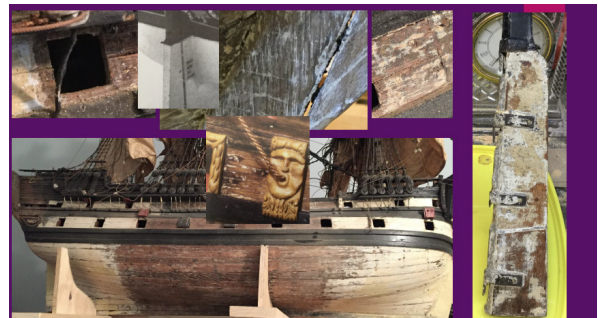
A lattice fire-control mast was installed on Fort Drum, a fort built by the US to guard the entrance of Manila Bay. The mast directed the fire of the fort's 14-inch main batteries.

## TECH SESSION

## Restoration of a Dutch East Indiaman

The May Tech Session was a presentation by Dan Caramagno of his restoration of a Dutch East Indiaman. Dan is doing a very thorough job researching the model, verifying its identity, and doing the actual restoration work.

[Click here](#) for Dan's presentation. Great job, Dan.



# 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](mailto: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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