



Volume 44, Number 3

Newsletter of the Ship Model Society of New Jersey

April/May 2026

Meeting Report for March 28, 2026

The meeting was called to order by President Bill at 1030. There were seventeen members and two guests present. Leonard Xuereb attended his second meeting. Gene McNatt attended his third meeting. Gene's membership was proposed and seconded. The vote was unanimous. Welcome aboard Gene.

Treasurer Tom presented the Club finances. The meeting adjourned at 12:05.



Northeast Joint Clubs 2026



The conference was on Saturday, April 25, 2026. For that reason, there was no regular meeting. Twelve SMSNJ members (sorry Tim that you're not in the photo) were there. Leonard received the third place Peoples Choice award for his model of Kearsarge. Eric won the Disc Sander and there were other winners of door prizes as well. Mason did an excellent and well-attended demonstration of Decal Application. The speaker was Kroum Batchvarov who presented an excellent and entertaining presentation of recent and often misstated facts about Wasa.

June is the end of our fiscal year and when dues are payable. Please bring your payment to the May meeting or send your check, payable to SMSNJ, to Tom Ruggiero. If you joined after February 2025, your initial fee covers you until June 2027

Next Meeting and Tech Session

Next Meeting is Saturday, May 23, 2026, at Roseland Free Public Library, 20 Roseland Ave, Roseland, NJ 07068 at 10:30 am. The Tech Session will be "Making Gratings" by Kevin Kenny.

Club Hats: Bill ordered hats and we sold most of them to SMSNJ members who were there. There are a few left. Bill will have them at our next meeting in May.



Tech Sessions

Vice President Chuck passed out the following list of possible Tech Session Topics for the rest of 2026 and into 2027. He asked members to sign up for a topic that they could present. So far, five members have volunteered to do presentations. Those topics are **bold**. Let us know if you will do one of these.

Fixtures	Anchors	Building a Deck House – Scratch	Capstans and Windlasses
Cannon Rigging & Accessories	Flags – Making Chuck	Ships' Bilge Pumps	Small Boats
The Rudder	General	Adhesives	Air Brushing Mike E
Cannon Rigging	Display Case	Displaying & Mounting Ship Models	Finishing: Natural & Paint
Furniture & Fixtures	Photo Etching Brass Parts	Photographing Models	Raw Materials & Parts: Sources
Soldering	Super Detailing: Finding Materials	Wood Finishing: Round Table	Rigging
Belaying Plan	Blocks & Tackles	Mast Making Bill	Right vs Left Hand Laid Rope
Running Rigging & Belaying	Sail Making	Standing Rigging	Scale Comparison Thread to Actual Rope Lines
The Principles of Rigging	Yards & Spars	Techniques	3D Printing & CAD Software Support
Bending Wood	Building Display Cases	Card Modeling	Carving
CAD, Computer Assisted Drafting	Dioramas	Electro Plating	From CAD to Component Parts
Illuminating Models	Lofting & Reading Plans	Repairing/Restoring Ship Models	Rope Walks: Making Your Own Rope
Scratch Building Leonard	Ships in a Bottle Doc Fletcher	Soldering	Thread Railings
UV Resin Molding	Weathering: Aging Ship Models	Tools	Jigs & Fixtures - Used in Ship Modeling

The Broadaxe

John J. Harvey Cruise

John J. Harvey is a fireboat formerly of the New York City Fire Department (FDNY). She is one of the most powerful fireboats ever built, capable of pumping up to 18,000 gallons of water a minute. The boat famously returned to service following the September 11, 2001 attacks. Mason will be arranging a tour and three hour cruise for SMSNJ members and guests. He is working out details. Possible dates will be this Summer or early autumn.

Day at the Farm Exhibit

SMSNJ and the Philadelphia SMS have been invited to exhibit models at the Day at the Farm in Pennsville for many years. This year, the exhibit is Saturday, June 6, 11 to 3 (arrive at 9:30 for setup). It is a great time to exhibit your models as well as work on a current project. The show is right on the banks of the Delaware River. Vintage cars, bicycles, crafts, and a Civil War Union Band. I am planning to go. As they will provide a light lunch, we need to let them know how many will attend. Please let me know by the May meeting if you will be attending.

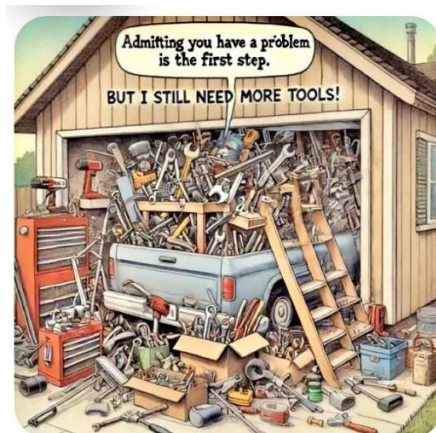
Mosquitocon 2026

The International Plastic Modelers Society (IPMS) does an annual show called Mosquitocon. The show is in Wayne New Jersey the first Saturday of April. It is quite an event with several hundred models. Armored vehicles, tanks, aircraft, figures, Gundam, and yes, a few ships. The workmanship and many of the models and dioramas is stunning. Several members and former members of SMSNJ were at the show. You may remember Ernest Connors. He is an excellent model builder. He was there as a judge and it was great to talk to reminisce about the earlier days of our club. As far as nautical models go. The best in my opinion was a scratch-built model of a German Patrol boat.



A Common Problem

Our member in the Sunshine State, Barry Rudd sent along a reminder of a situation that many of us have had. Thanks Barry, I can relate!

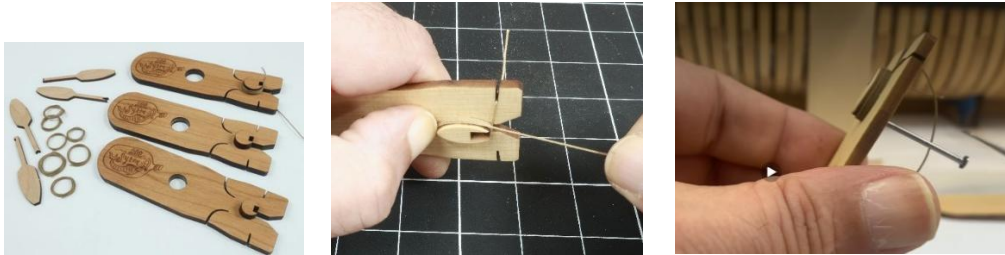


Tech Session

“A method for Making Rope Coils” demonstrated by Chuck Passaro

If you build sailing ships, there is rigging. The running rigging needs to be belayed to a cleat, timber head, or belaying pin. As these are lines that lift or lower either a sail or a yard there will be remaining line that needs to be coiled and hung out of the way. Two meetings back, we had two videos demonstrating how line is belayed and then the remaining line coiled and hung by the pin (See the January 2026 Broadaxe). Note that the coil is not draped on the pin or cleat. Further, the amount of line in the coil/hank depends on function of the line. For example, if the line is for the sheet of a sail the coil will be larger (have more excess line) if the sail is set. Conversely, if the sail is furled the coil will be smaller because the line will run up to the yard with the sail. For scale ships, you would limit how much extra line to avoid a bulky look. However, for a more accurate display, think about varying the size of the coils.

Chuck mentioned that there are several ways to coil a rope for scale models. With those methods, there is a tendency to twist the rope while you are coiling it (think of coiling a garden hose). With this twisting, the coil tends to unravel. In his research, Chuck saw a jig that the restorer of the rigging on models in the Rogers collection used. He made a few modifications and he presents an alternative way using a jig that he fabricated. With the tool, you are rotating the jig rather than twisting the rope.



Put the end of the rope in the notch on the right side of the jig. Then, the scale rope is wrapped around the plug by rotating the tool. Chuck secures the loop with a tiny bit of CA (do not glue the coil to the jig).

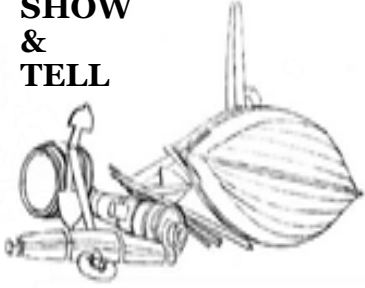
Put the provided nail into the hole on the back of the jig, pass the line through the notch and loop the rope counterclockwise around the nail and then brought back to the front of the jig.



Make a loop around the nail once or twice to make the loop to hang the hank on the belaying pin. Chuck has these jigs available on the Syren site or, you can make your own.

The Broadaxe

SHOW & TELL



Speedwell, England

1757, Ketch Rigged Sloop

Scale 1:32, Scratch Build

Chuck Passaro

Chuck has finished Speedwell! As he mentioned at the last meeting, the model is displayed with launching flags.



His son Sam will be getting this model. The figures should look familiar. They were generated by AI from photographs of Chuck and his son Sam. They were then 3D printed and painted by Chuck. The flags were generated by AI to have a slight rippling and be aged somewhat. Due to the very large scale, and the ripple effects, he printed these of 20 weight bond paper rather than the tissue that he uses for the smaller scales. A beautiful model for certain.

Phantom, New York Pilot Boat, Schooner

1868, Scale 1:96

Model Shipways Kit

Gene McNatt

This Pilot Schooner was designed by Dennison J. Lawlor. The Phantom was built in East Boston in 1868 for the Port of New York. Gene is using the practicum written by Chuck Passaro. He has the hull completed and the masts are ready to install. As suggested in Chuck's practicum, Gene lowered the deck inside the cockpit rather than leaving it flush with the main deck. He scratch built the deck house but decided that it was too large. He made a more to scale version and finished the window details with black pin strip. Chuck noted that it is not an easy model and Gene is bringing it off nicely.



MAS15, Torpedo Boat, Italian

1916, Scale 1:48

Scratch Built

Leonard Xuereb

MAS were classes of Italian torpedo boats used in both World War I and World War II. MAS 15 was successful in sinking the Austro-Hungarian Coastal defense ship SMS Wein and the dreadnought battleship SMS Szent. In researching this boat, Leonard was contacted by the granddaughter of the commander of MAS 15, Luigi Rizzo. The model took four months to build using a plan in a magazine. Very well done.



The Broadaxe

USS Argus, Brig
1794, Scale 1:96

Scratch Build

Tom Ruggiero

Tom has mounted the figure head, a bust of Argus that was 3 D printed. He used fine beading copper that is twisted together to make scroll work on the trail boards and fashion pieces. Tom has seen several models of US ships of the period with green rather than red bulwarks. He notes that a docent on Constitution told him about fifty years ago that they were green because that was Issac Hulls favorite color. I don't think so. So, after doing his own research he asked Microsoft Copilot (AI). That came back with two sheets of background and references for not only the green, but the shade of green. So, the next will be painting the inside bulwarks green prior to opening the gunports. The plan is to finish as much of the outside hull while it still can be held in a vise. Part of that will be to carve the quarter badges that measure roughly 1/2" square.



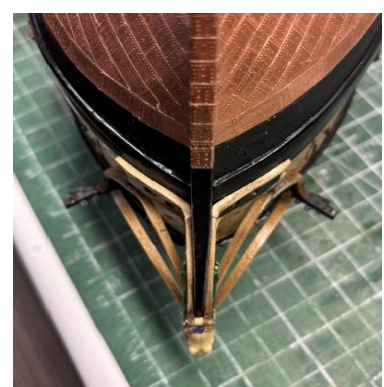
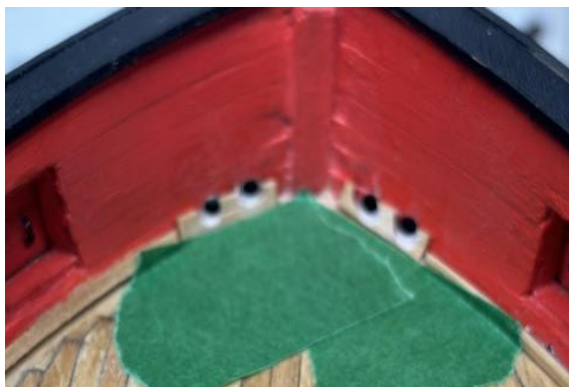
Syren, US

1803, Brig

Scale 1:64, Model Shipways Kit

Paddy O'Hare

Paddy is making great progress. He has cut the hawse holes, catheads, and trail boards and installed the figure head. The next challenge is to complete the head rails.



Capstan Project

He library is closed on weekends July and August. As mentioned in prior issues of Broadaxe, we will be having a group build project on the Capstan that Chuck has produced. We will be working out the logistics at the May meeting.

Ships In Scale

Mike Ellison reports that the next edition is available. He was a vendor at the Northeast Joint Clubs. The magazine is very well done.

Model Ship World

Model Ship World (MSW) was hacked along with several other corporate websites. The attackers not only deleted the files from our primary disc, housing MSW, but also deleted the three backups we had on a secondary, separate drive. Model Ship World doesn't exist in any form. All files, photos, structure, posts, and data have gone. This was out of our control, and there will be many sites around the world, including corporate/business sites, which will also be destroyed.

Due to the excellent work of Jim Hatch, Kurt Van Dahm, Chuck and many others, MSW is back. The site is being rebuilt so if you posted a forum topic and still have a copy you can reload it.

The site is back with a more secure platform. While you will still be able to use your old screen name, **you must re-register an account.** This will require that you use your email address and password. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE NRG OFFICE.**



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 Saturday of every month September through June except December at 10:30 AM, 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 Tom Ruggiero. Your ideas and suggestions are always welcome. Please submit them to Tom Ruggiero at trugs@comcast.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. 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. Direct All Correspondence to Tom Ruggiero.

Club Officers

PRESIDENT:
Bill Brown
28 Betsy Ross Drive
Allentown, NJ 08501
E-mail: wldjbrown@gmail.com

SECRETARY/TREASURER:
Tom Ruggiero
54 Peach Orchard Dr
East Brunswick, NJ 08816
Email: trugs@comcast.net

VICE PRESIDENT:
Chuck Passaro
20 Sylva Lane
Hamberg, NJ
E-mail: cpassaro123@gmail.com

WEBSITE CONTACT:
Chuck Passaro
E-mail: cpassaro123@gmail.com