



# Quarterdeck

September  
2021  
Our 90th  
year

THE PHILADELPHIA SHIP MODEL SOCIETY.

www.philadelphia-ship-model-society.com

Launched January 7, 1931

## Minutes of the Meeting

886th Meeting (Virtually) called to order by President Jim Wheeler at approximately 7:05 pm - opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

♥ **Sick Call:** Jean Spicer covering, doing well.

**Visitors:** Ron Neilson

**Minutes and Newsletter** accepted from the July meeting.

**Members Present:**

Steve Bulova, Jim Wheeler, Mike Weaver, Joe Jordan, Spence Delin, Joshua Fichmann, Mike Zimmerman, Ron Nielson.

**Presentation;** No presentation

**Treasurer's Report:** Accepted as read.

## Old Business

**Northeast Conference 2021 update:** PSMS judge for the Jim Roberts award will be Mike Zimmerman. Fred Signor is a maybe. Joshua Fichmann has donated two ship models for the luncheon prize drawing. Table top demonstrators are Todd Wardwell (yes) and Mike Weaver (maybe).

Previously, the Society gift of a model for the raffle had been donated by Mike Weaver.

**2020 ModelCon recap:** Overall, it was a success but there was discussion about how to improve next years ModelCon.

Discussion points were:

- 1) The loading of models aboard ship
- 2) Traffic at the pier.
- 3) More carts for model transport.
- 4) Signs for directions to the ward room, the fantail and cafeteria. Possibly maps.
- 5) Information packets for participants.
- 6) More food and handlers.
- 7) Mats to reduce vibration of carts driving over the dimpled ramp.
- 8) Food vouchers in the packet.

**Volunteers needed for the 2022 Northeast Conference committee.**

It is the year that PSMS will be the host club. Contact Mike Weaver or Steve Bulova.

### The Shack

The move of the Shack to the front of the museum is now projected to be late December or early January.

**The Leafs** are well is the word from Mike Zimmerman.

## New Business

**ModelCon 2022:** The first Saturday in August, 2022. Vote taken and passed. Joshua Fichmann will head the PSMS ModelCon committee. Volunteers are: Mike Weaver, Joe Jordan, Ron Neilson and Jim Wheeler.

**Money for parking when in-person meetings resume.**

Joe Jordan reports that the Hilton Hotel, and the flat parking lot are privately owned. They are not interested in supporting PSMS with discounts and the Seaport Museum cannot afford it. Our Treasury amount is about \$12,000.

Subsidizing each parking stub with a \$10 bill, such as was done years ago was suggested.

It was proposed that Jim Wheeler talk to Battleship New Jersey leadership about holding meetings aboard ship. Concern about security in Camden was discussed. It is tabled for the present time.

Parking expenses solved??

Dr. Mike Zimmerman will donate the funds from the sale of the model kits *Vasa* and *Flying Cloud* for club parking expenses. In the past, Dr Zimmerman has raised almost \$13,000 for our treasury.

### Holiday Brunch

Treasurer Steve Bulova stated that the Holiday luncheon at the Corinthian Yacht Club will cost more this year. It looks like it will be approximately \$40.00. We have reserved the 12th of December.

### Show and Tell

Mike Zimmermann: LST Aircraft Carrier  
Meeting adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

V.P. Mike Weaver for Secretary Joshua Fichmann

## OCTOBER MEETING

**The next PSMS meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 7th at 7:00 PM At the Independence Seaport Museum**

### BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY:

The battleship is open for tours every day from 11 am to 3pm. Add a free guided tour of turret II or an engine room tour on weekends

### INDEPENDENCE SEAPORT MUSEUM

#### Hours of operation

Open full time: 10AM to 5PM seven days a week.

### PSMS Name Tags;

Contact Spence Delin [sdelin@verizon.net](mailto:sdelin@verizon.net)

# THE SHIP SHACK

Photo Ron Spicer



The Museum is relocating it to the old book shop space ( up front adjacent to the entrance). The Museum will give us two weeks notice to empty the shack of personal items in order to lighten the load of moving. When the shack is moved, we will have six windows in the front of the building next to the main entrance. These windows will give public exposure to our craft. The Museum will place signage to draw visitors to the Boat Shop.

Joe Jordan enlightened them as to how much of a gem the actual building of wooden boats is to visitors. It is deeply appreciated by the public. The submarine pool will be placed behind the Diligence and in front of the Indianapolis model. The Shack, in its new location, will draw visitors down the hallway we use to get to the elevator to the 2nd floor.

NOTICE: The relocation will not occur until late December or early January.

## **Give a day to the ISM Shack experience.**

Sat. 10 AM to 5 PM. Sunday 12 noon to 4 PM

Contact: Joe Jordan [jjvtown@aol.com](mailto:jjvtown@aol.com) 609 518-9672

**NOTICE : At the present time, Shack sitters will have to pay to park. Parking costs will be reimbursed thru the Treasurer Steve Bulova. Call 215-747-7441 or email [bulovasteval@msn.com](mailto:bulovasteval@msn.com)**

## MIKE ZIMMERMAN

Last month Mike showed his model of an LST aircraft carrier circa 1943 with an unusual structure added to the sides of the hull which he identified as pontoons used for landing trucks and tanks. For his model, Mike used an old Lindberg plastic kit, scale 1/235.

This was the result of a trip to the Lockhaven, Pa., home of the Piper Cub aircraft factory that produced the aircraft used for scouting, artillery spotting, casualty rescue, resupply and any other tasks that fit a small plane. One of the best known light aircraft of all time with low speed handling properties and short field performance. In their museum was a model of an LST, at right.

Coincidentally, the following article ran in the August 2021 issue of Naval History Magazine.



Photo: MIKE ZIMMERMAN

## BRIDGING THE GAP FROM SHIP TO SHORE

Excerpts from an article by By Frank A. Blazich Jr.

In the morning hours of July 10h 1943, Luftwaffe pilots likely paused in disbelief as they flew over the southern beaches of Sicily. More than a hundred yards from the shoreline, endless streams of tanks and vehicles could be seen exiting Allied vessels and driving ashore atop causeways assembled from thousands of U.S. Navy landing pontoons. The sloping shores of Sicily, bane of amphibious landings since the days of Thucydides, had been overcome by roadways of deceptively simple steel boxes. When British General Bernard Montgomery stepped from his landing craft on to one of the causeways, Royal Navy Vice Admiral Louis Mountbatten remarked: "The general is not setting foot on Sicily. He is setting foot on one of these miraculous American Pontoons.

Following the successful Allied landings in North Africa (Operation Torch) in November 1942, the allies learned during the planning of the next operation—the invasion of Sicily, the sounding charts of the island revealed gently sloping sea floors for all planned invasion beaches. These gentle slopes would cause landing ships, tank (LSTs) to ground up to several hundred feet from shore in six-foot-deep water. Waterproofed vehicles could safely wade ashore from no farther than 300 feet out from the beach.

Following discussions in mid-December, the only known option involved the use of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers tread way bridges, employed in North Africa landings. The structures used steel beam treadways placed overtop collapsible pneumatic floats to function as either floating or fixed bridges. These structures had proven unstable for moving tanks from ship to shore and required more than an hour to assemble in calm seas. Furthermore, the components had to be stowed on the tank decks of LSTs, using valuable space on even more valuable ships.

In the summer of 1939, Commander John N. Laycock accepted an offer from Rear Admiral Ben Moreell, chief of staff of the Bureau of Yards and Docks (BuDocks) to transfer to Washington D.C., and serve as a war plans officer. A 1914 graduate of the U.S. naval Academy and a Civil Engineer Corps officer with a reputation as a problem solver, Laycock reviewed and revised plans for any future Pacific conflict. He scrutinized the Navy's requirement for portable or mobile base equipment of universal utility. While determining what essential items of equipment did not then commercially exist, he focused his attention on specialized air-filled buoyant pontoon gear to transport or lighter supplies from ships to undeveloped shores.

BuDocks established a War Plans Section in the early 1930s and assembled files on prospective advanced base equipment. Studying these files Laycock read through notes and suggestions for constructing sectional steel box pontoons. In July 1940 he built an experimental model out of evenly spaced, empty cigar boxes fastened to each other at the corners with wooden kite sticks. This simple model demonstrated the feasibility of connecting individual pontoons to create a multi diaphragm sectional box girder.

By October 1940, Laycock determined the ideal Pontoon dimensions: Five feet wide by seven feet long by five feet high. He incorporated fittings for the pontoons to be flooded and drained as circumstances



T6 pontoon used in pairs T7 variant had a curved end to serve as a pontoon barge prow



Crossing the Mediterranean to Sicily's Gulf of Gela, ten LSTs carried pontoon causeway sections slung on their sides.

After Britain's retreat from Western Europe in June 1940, they set up what became known as Combined Operation Headquarters. Within it was a development center tasked with examining and experimenting with craft and equipment for joint operations under the command of Royal Navy Captain Thomas A. Hussey. In Nov-Dec. 1941, Hussey led an Admiralty delegation to Washington D.C. during a free week prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hussey went to Narragansett Bay Rhode Island where he first learned of BuDocks' new pontoons. The British saw the utility of the pontoons.



First used during the Sicily invasion, trucks loaded with supplies drive from LST-336. Pontoon causeways were used widely in the Atlantic and Pacific theaters.

## BRIDGING THE GAP (continued)



NAVAL U.S. INSTITUTE PHOTO

The pontoons arrived in North Africa together with two specialized Seebee units, the 1005th and 1006th Construction Battalion Detachments. They worked 24 hours a day in three shifts assembling pontoons and causeways. They engaged in training and experimenting with the causeways to perfect launching and beaching procedures. Observing the training, Rear Admiral Richard L. Connolly, commander, Landing Craft and Bases Northwest African Waters, suggested carrying the causeways on the sides of the LSTs rather than towing them. Navy engineers subsequently worked out a means to side-carry and launch the causeways prior to landing, eliminating 1.5 knots in speed lost to towing and saving considerable time landing invasion forces.

The success of the causeways in the Sicilian invasion ensured the use of the pontoon technology in almost every successive amphibious operation in the European and Pacific theaters.



## *Fishing Boat*

The fishermen in Phu Yen catch fish every morning. Catching fish is not only a livelihood, but also a way of life.

Smithonian Magazine photo contest

## CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER TODD WARDWELL RETIRES AFTER TWENTY YEARS



PSMS member Chief Petty Officer Todd Wardwell has retired after 20 years of outstanding service. His retirement ceremony was held at 10 A.M. on board the battleship USS New Jersey on September 24th.

As a member of the Philadelphia Ship Model Society, Todd has served as President of the Society, speaker and participated in many of its activities. Todd's list of Coast Guard accomplishments is long and impressive. We congratulate him on his retirement and look forward to his continued success in a life that is full of amazing accomplishments.

PSMS attendees: Bobbie and Mike Zimmerman, Steve Bulova, Jim Wheeler, Joe Jordan, Fred Signor, Joshua Fichmann.

Photos: Joshua Fichmann

## INSTALLATION OF OLYMPIA GANGWAY BOARD AT TOMB GUARD QUARTERS BY ISM

At 11.00 am Monday September 27th, 2021, Chief Curator of the Independence Seaport museum Craig Bruns assisted by Pat Weeks arrived at the site of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Tomb Guard Quarters. Their purpose was to install the Gangway Board from the *USS Olympia* in the Tomb Guard Quarters.



Photos: Ron Spicer

What is a Gangway Board?

They are used in a U.S. Navy tradition to adorn the entrance of a ship as part of ceremonial honors receiving Navy Commanders, elected officials, and dignitaries.

Though the Unknown Soldier wasn't given this honor, this gangway-board today is a physical manifestation of the honors given him as he boarded and disembarked *Olympia*.

Traditionally these boards are made of thick planks of polished exotic wood, deeply carved with patriotic symbols. They were only brought out on special occasions to flank either side of the passageway, cut through a ship's bulwarks, one on the starboard and one on the port side of the vessel.

This is one of four *Olympia* gangway boards that survive and is on loan from Independence Seaport Museum in Philadelphia, the steward of the historical ship

Ron Spicer presented the model of the *USS Olympia* to the 3rd Infantry Regt. (Old Guard). The model was built at the request of the Independence Seaport Museum. Ron used a Revell kit and plans, drawings and archival photos to replicate her appearance at Le Havre, France in October 1921 to transport the body of the Unknown Soldier to Washington D. C. This included the depiction of the casket, flowers and flags and radio shack on the stern and the open gun platforms and towering caged masts with three antennas stretch between them and all flags at half mast.

Displayed now in the Tomb Guard Quarters, its permanent home will be the Tomb museum.



Model shown outside the case



# MODEL BOAT SHOW & FALL FESTIVAL



**Saturday, November 13, 10am to 4pm  
FREE indoor/outdoor event**

**Regional Model Boat Builders Exhibit & Sales  
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Fun for the Whole Family!**



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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](http://www.thenrg.org) or call 585 968 8111



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## PSMS OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD

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## QUARTERDECK SUBMISSIONS

Take pictures with your camera or cell phone of a current or past project that you would like to show (maybe you already have). Include a description. Be sure to include the name of your (project, ship), scale, scratch or kit (manufacturer), era (year) and country, and anything you would want to say about your project. Just as you would when you fill out the presentation sheet at the meeting or stand up and talk.

A word about pictures. Make sure they are well lighted, (possibly take them outside) and in focus and no more than 2 or 3. Put them against plain backgrounds if possible - not on your oriental rug. **But workbench shots are welcome.** Send them to the editor:

[rspicer33@aol.com](mailto:rspicer33@aol.com)



Short Sleeved Polo

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LONG SLEEVED POLO SHIRTS NAVY BLUE

**Men's sizes** small thru 4 XL.

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**\$35.00**

**Women's sizes** thru 2X.

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**\$14.50**

**FOR ORDERS:**

Contact Pat Leaf at [pjlebl@comcast.net](mailto:pjlebl@comcast.net)

**Please be sure of your size**



**THE PHILADELPHIA SHIP MODEL SOCIETY**

*Launched January 7, 1931*

The Philadelphia Ship Model Society (PSMS) meets on the first Thursday of each month at the

Independence Seaport Museum (ISM) at 1900 hours.

ISM is located at Penns Landing,

211 South Columbus Boulevard,

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106.

**GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME**

PSMS annual dues are \$35.00 for an **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP**

\$40.00 for a **FAMILY MEMBERSHIP**: Includes **MEMBER** as well as family with children **FREE**

**FORTHCOMINGEVENTS**

October 2nd

**NE conference , New London, CT**

November 13th

Oxford Md, Boat Show

December

ISM Parade of Lights. Date to be announced

December

**Holiday Brunch** Date to be announced



**THE SSMA JOURNAL**

Become a member of SSMA

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All membership applications and renewals

should be sent to:

**Heinz Ricken**

**514 Cranford Avenue**



Delaware Valley Chapter meetings are held at The Independence Seaport Museum at Penn's landing on the Delaware River. Membership is \$15 for one year. Contact Steve Lovless at [slldvesshsa@gmail.com](mailto:slldvesshsa@gmail.com) or 215-495-8889 for more details or if you are interested in joining



# FOR SALE

**10% OF THE SALE PRICE WILL BE DONATED TO  
THE PHILADELPHIA SHIP MODEL SOCIETY**

PRICES ARE NEGOTIABLE



I have a large scale small freighter that I am selling for Tom Smith (twin brother of deceased Dennis). Length: 36". Beam: 8.5". Has speed control, s futaba servos, futaba receiver, motor and looks ready to go (with a little repair work). Asking price \$175, but can be negotiable.



Also, a large scale tug for sale for \$125. It has 1 servo and a Dumas Pitman motor. Length: 24" Beam: 7.5 inches. It was running at one time.



**CONTACT FRANCINE SERRATORE:  
[fserratore@verizon.net](mailto:fserratore@verizon.net) or Phone 267-529-9321**