

Philadelphia Ship Model Society

Launched January 7, 1931



Algerian Xebec
Scratch built by
by Ed Leaf

90th ANNIVERSARY
COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE



SHIP MODELING IN PHILADELPHIA

A Brief History of The Philadelphia Ship Model Society
1931 -2002 by Bill Corothers

The Beginning

On January 7th, 1931, seven men and one women met at the home of Gordon Meader to discuss the creation of a Philadelphia Chapter of the ship Model Makers' Club, a national group founded 3 years earlier by Captain Armitage McCann. Even at the first meeting, the heritage of the club was being developed since the only business was a proposed exhibit at the Art Alliance*. The group's full attention then turned to Mr Meaders 74 gun ship of the line, and Mrs. McBrides unfinished clipper ship model. As is still our way, "no adverse comment was made on her work, even by Mr. Ross, an ex-sailor".

Home Ports

The seas sailed by the Society have not always been smooth. Just as any long-lived ship has experienced, the Society has known a number of home ports. After two meetings at members' homes, the club found a berth at the Penn Athletic Club in March 1931. This was our home port until 1936 when the club moved to the Franklin Institute.**This move was apparently not without problems, since the minutes of the meeting tell us that attendance was down considerably because a number of the members had navigational problems and couldn't find the proper entrance to the building. However, once that had been worked out, we met at the institute until September 1949 when economics forced a relocation. (Things had gotten a little tight during world War II, when the membership dropped as low as six members.)

At that point, the society entered into an arrangement whereby it met in a member's apartment which was above his photographic studio. That was home until November 1956 when disaster struck. It seems that during a police raid, some X-rated photography was found in the studio below during one of the meetings, and the widespread publicity spread to the good name of the Philadelphia Ship Model Society. (Remember that this was the 50's and much more innocent times.). Back to the members' homes. Then in 1961, meetings began to be held at the Engineers' Club.*** Then in January of 1982, the club moved to the Philadelphia Maritime Museum.

Even at the Museum, meetings were not without excitement. One September, when the members showed up for the first meeting after summer break, it seems that someone forgot to arrange for the building to be open, and we were locked out. While a couple of enterprising members fanned out to find another suitable temporary meeting place, we began our meeting in the park across the street. If you can visualize some 30 members sitting along a low brick wall while the president addressed them from the stairway of the restored building on the other side of the walk. This lasted about as long as the business portion of the meeting, when one of our scouts came back and told us that he had found a place. So we adjourned to the second floor of the Middle East Restaurant for the balance of the meeting. This turned out to be an interesting, if not distracting, location for a meeting, because every ten minutes or so, we were treated to seeing the belly dancer, who had just finished her number, returning to her rest spot in the corner of the second floor. The progress of the rest of the evening's activities were disjointed to say the least.

When the Museum moved to the Philadelphia waterfront and became the Independence Seaport Museum, the society went with them and stayed until the year 2002. At that time a number of factors lead us to seek a new home, and we moved to the Philadelphia Yatch Club, which has proved to be a most hospitable environment, and includes excellent views of the waterfront establishments such as Dave and Busters, and Hooters.

Recently we had an invitation to hold our meetings on the battleship New Jersey, BB62. We had an experimental meeting there. Nevertheless, we maintain a close relationship with the ship, and may in the future, hold one meeting a year there.

Our Meetings

PSMS meets ten times a year - no meetings in July or August due to the unfortunate tendency of the members to be absent on vacations. Each month, the program chairman has the responsibility to schedule a speaker for the meeting. The talk may have to do with a variety of things, such as building techniques, materials, tool handling, plans, maritime artifacts - anything that may contribute to the members' ability to build faithful models. Over the years there has been a wide variety of speakers of a consistently high caliber. There have been evenings when the president has had to call a forceful halt to the discussions generated by the presentation in order to let people go home at a reasonable hour.

Each meeting includes a "Presentation and Discussion" segment. (That's "Show and Tell" to the uninitiated.) The members are encouraged to bring in any work in progress, new books, materials, tools, maritime artifacts, or anything else that might broaden the members' knowledge or that just might be fun.

Often these sessions trigger the same kind of animated discussions as the speakers. Sometimes it seems that there are as many ways of doing a particular piece of work as there are modelers. The really important aspect of these discussions is that no one's work or presentation is ever in any way denigrated. The lowest amateur's work is treated with the same respect as the professional's, and if the professional is the one asking the question, he will just as willingly accept novice's information if it answers the question. That is not to say that needles don't fly. One evening when Merve Willis brought in his model of the *Oliver Cromwell* and announced that after 47 years of work it was finally completed, a voice from the back of the room suggested that perhaps it should be inspected for dry rot. Or there was the time Ed leaf brought in his model of an early 20th century tramp steamer and showed how it had been weathered. One voice suggested that perhaps it should be turned over to Bill Wester for restoration. Another suggested that the model was missing Humphrey Bogart on the bridge. (Movie African Queen, 1951)

Exhibitions

Public exhibition of models have been a long PSMS tradition. In 1931, just months after our founding, a week long show was mounted at the Art Alliance, followed by others in 1933 and in 1936. In 1939 a show at the Atwater Kent Museum prompted some unusual notes in the secretary's minutes. It seems that "the secretary of the society" was trailed all through the proceedings by a refined gentleman in formal attire whose formula was to present a laden tray containing various heady smelling liquids and then state the various contents. In self-defense a glass of good old tomato juice was taken and from then on, the glass was carried as a badge that I had been initiated.

In 1950 an extremely successful month long show, held in the main hall of the Free Library on Logan Square, was attended by nearly 100,000 visitors. Further shows were held in 1953 at the Hill School in Pottstown and again at the Free Library in 1954 and 1977. In 1980 an exhibition was held at the Philadelphia Maritime Museum and in 1988 PSMS members built the models for the Museum's exhibit, "Boats of the Delaware Waterway". For a number of years the ISM sponsored multi-club model exhibits, in which the PSMS was a prominent exhibitor.

For some years the Society has been a participant in the annual meetings of the Northeast Regional Combined Clubs. This has helped to put us in contact with a wide range of modelers and given us valuable inputs as to the activities in which the clubs engage.

The club has engaged in an outreach program designed to interest young people in the art of ship modeling. This program included educational exhibits at the Moorestown Library and at Topsail 2000. The Moorestown exhibit was particularly satisfying. During the day, a large number of elementary school groups visited and the children were fascinated. That evening a dozen or more returned, dragging their parents. The kids just couldn't bear for the parents to miss the show.

Booths were taken at the annual Northeast Hobby show. This three day event was most satisfactory for us. The bonus was for some of the vendors, who sold more ship model kits as a result of visits to our booth.

Nautical Research Guild Conferences

The Society hosted NRG Conferences in 1976, 1987 and 1992 in center city Philadelphia. These were well received but in planning for the 2002 Conference it was quickly discovered that Philadelphia prices had risen beyond reason. We were forced to look for a location beyond the city limits and the chosen location in Bucks County proved to be very successful.

*Founded in 1915 by theatre aficionado and philanthropist Christine Wetherill Stevenson. The institution hosts art exhibits, theatre and music workshops, poetry readings, lectures, concerts and recitals. It is the oldest multi-disciplinary art center in the United States. Housed in the Wetherill mansion, designed in 1906 by Frank Miles Day, merged and was acquired by the University of the Arts in 2018. 251 S. 18th st.

** The Franklin Institute on the Parkway *** The Engineers Club was located 1327 Spruce St. between Juniper and Broad St.

HOME PORTS OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHIP MODEL SOCIETY

Penn Athletic Club
18th at Locust St.
1931- 1936



The
Franklin
Institute
1936 - 49



Spruce St and Juniper. 1961 - 81



The Art Alliance
South 18th street - 1982



Maritime Museum.
3rd and Chestnut Sts
1982 - 2000



The Philadelphia Yatch Club
303 front st. - 2000

Introduction: 2021

90 Years and Full Steam Ahead

By Joe Jordan

We've been growing...on pause...and in occasional retreat since the 2002 *Brief History of the PSMS* report.

We meet at the Independence Seaport Museum (ISM) each first Thursday, since the trial visits elsewhere- a church, an arsenal, and a sailing club. Some were hard to access, and some an acoustical challenge, but the ISM is our home port. Our membership has varied, of course, and hovers around the 30-35 mark, with attendance around 20-25 per meeting.

Our Society has, over the years, embraced new techniques, materials such as Titebond, 5 minute epoxy, polyurethane, superglue and, oh yes, Radio Control.

We've had 4 Radio Controlled Regattas since the 2002 report-with great participation using in-water floats with elaborate scenic islands created for visual appeal (and obstacles). Note to 2030 members: all events are intense and 10% do 90% of the work- same as any organization.

PSMS has had many meaningful events at high visibility locations. The Philadelphia International Airport for six months, many libraries, farm shows as well as four regattas at Roosevelt Park in South Philadelphia, Mt Laurel New Jersey and the Seaport Museum several times. Members have visited schools, senior homes and many other venues over the past years.

PSMS has hosted the NRG* in Philadelphia. Our member, Pat Leaf is the only women to have chaired this event).

In past years our Society has participated in the NE Ship Model Conference in New London Connecticut and prizes and plaques have been awarded to Spence Delin, Ed Leaf, Joe Jordan, Mike Weaver, and Mike Zimmerman, and others. The main outcome is "you don't know how well you can do until you see how well it can be done". We've all advanced our skill set because we can see how others have used research

materials and our fellow members for advice and example.... and it's fun!

We continue to enjoy the company of fellow members, the public and other clubs. Our home port, the Independence Seaport Museum has been a marvelous host over the years.

The Ship Model Shack is now in its eleventh year, where we "model make" under the eyes of the public. Our Saturday/Sunday Shack sitters enjoy visits with 20 to 60 + visitors as the weather entices the public to stroll the waterfront.

The Shack was designed by member John Cristinzio and built by Josef Messmer and Joe Jordan with the expert carpentry by John Oddo. It is the only interactive area in the Seaport Museum.

Our model makers have a wide range of interest; warships of wood and steel, sail or steam, mahogany runabouts and small craft, and work boats large and small.

At our meetings, the "Show and Tell" generally has 5-7 models that are narrated by the builder. Many are works in progress that tend to reappear as the build advances. One theme repeats; "good enough never is" for a faithful model. There is a video mounted outside the Shack themed "The Closer You Look, The Better It Gets". It's a Tube video and is viewed by the thousands who pass through the Seaport Museum.

The ISM has acquired a model ship, the *John S. Taylor* from 1845 and is scheduled to be re-rigged and cleaned by our members. The model is approximately 9' tall and 8' in length. A group of PSMS members will do this delicate work on a model 175 years old and still robust. This will be done under the supervision of Craig Bruns, Chief Curator at the Seaport Museum.

This photograph appeared October 10th 1938 in the Baltimore Sun



On the dock of the Choptank River Yatch Club. Choptank, MD. Front row. H. J. Millar, L. J. Terry, H. F. Fox. H. H. Harrocke, W. S. Scott, W. Corothers, L. C. Britton and C. G. Scott; (back row) : T. J. Edelan, F. D. Maisslan, W. J. Hulme, Jr. , H. C. Robinson, W. J. Hulme, Capt. G. T. Ross, R. S. Sketchley, W. R. Hunn, President; Capt. H. E. Dantzebecker, E. E. Herbest, E. A. Weiss and Capt. Phil Wright, Director. Hunn is shown with a favorite model.

*Nautical Research Guild



Extracts From the Log of **THE FIRST 500 MEETINGS**

by Bill Crothers

1st Meeting, 7 January 1931- On this date, eight persons (seven men and one woman) all interested in ship modeling, met at the home of Gordon Meader, who was the original guiding force in the formation of our Society. Their purpose is to discuss creation of a Philadelphia chapter of the Ship Model Makers Club, founded in 1928 by Captain E. Armitage McCann, in New York. This was a national Organization made up of individual chapters located in various cities throughout the United States.

2nd Meeting, 27 January 1931-At this meeting, attended by sixteen persons, it is decided that no dues will be assessed. Plans are made to hold a ship model exhibit at the Art Alliance in Philadelphia, which has agreed to house this exhibition.

3rd Meeting, 10 February 1931- This meeting is held at the Penn Athletic Club in Philadelphia which becomes the Society's first "home". It is voted that, in lieu of dues, a collection will be taken and, quoting from the minutes "All those present (14) gave very generously and the Treasurer established the purse with the sum of \$4.50 to be expended —."

20 April to 2 May 1931 - Our first Ship Model Exhibit is held at the Art Alliance. The reception on opening nights attended by Ship Model Club founder Captain E. Armitage McCann and noted artist Gordon Grant.

6th Meeting, 12 May 1931- Twenty-one members attend. The pressure of operating expenses results in a vote instituting the collection of dues at the rate of \$2.00 per year.

15th Meeting, 12 April 1932-Member Ned Brownlee recounts his recent experience of being shipwrecked while a member of the crew of the schooner Nomis.

16th Meeting, 10 May 1932- It is voted by twenty-two attending members that in the future, the Society will operate as an independent body under the name of the Philadelphia Ship Model Society. Relations with the Ship Model Makers will continue.

18th Meeting, 13 September 1932- A motion to reduce annual dues from \$2.00 to \$1.00 is enthusiastically and unanimously voted into law.
(The Great Depression is under full sail.)

20th Meeting, 9 November 1932 - Howard I. Chapelle, maritime authority, author and Naval Architect, is guest speaker at this meeting.

15 March to 3 April 1933 - The Society's second Ship Model Exhibit is held, again at the Art Alliance of Philadelphia.

27th Meeting, 10 October 1933 - the honorary office of "Master Model Maker" is established. This is to be voted on each year.

28th Meeting, 14 November 1933 - The first annual dinner meetings held at a local restaurant.

38th Meeting, 13 November 1934 - The second annual dinner meeting is held at Bookbinder's Restaurant, this being the only well known restaurant in the city which will provide us with a private room and dinner at \$1.00 per plate. Beer was provided for an additional \$.25 per head. Considerable difficulty was encountered among the members because of the cost.

43rd Meeting, 22 April 1935 - Our third Ship Model Exhibit opens at the Art Alliance in Philadelphia.

47th Meeting, 12 November 1935 - The opportunity to affiliate with the Franklin Institute presents itself.

50th Meeting, 11 February 1936 - The annual dinner meeting is again held at Bookbinder's and it is still suffering the the same plague - high cost - \$1.00 per plate plus \$.25 for beer.

51st Meeting, 10 March 1936 - We hold our first meeting in our new "home" the Franklin Institute.

62nd Meeting, 11 May 1937 - After much debate and difference of opinion it is voted to raise the dues from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per year.

64th Meeting, 12 October 1937 - The great "dues rebellion" occurs at this meeting. Since the increase to \$1.50 per year was voted in May, there has been much discontent. This has finally surfaced. As a result, the May vote is rescinded, and dues revert to \$1.00 a year.

68th Meeting, 8 February 1938 - The annual dinner meeting is held once again at Bookbinder's under the cloud of a price increase to \$1.25 per plate.

7-8 October 1938 - The Society (fourteen members) spends the weekend at the summer home of member Capt. Ross at Choptank, Maryland. The Chesapeake fare included a tub of Oyster stew, a barrel of crabs, a river of beer, and on Saturday night an old fashioned chicken dinner which the local Ladies Aid Society prepared for fifty cents a plate.

2 June 1939 - Our fourth Ship Model Exhibit opens at the new Atwater Kent Museum, formerly the home of the Franklin Institute.

27-28 April 1940 - 22 members spend the weekend on the farm of member William Hunn near Camden, Delaware.

90th Meeting, 14 May 1940 Member Marion V. Brewington, naval authority, announces that "The American Neptune" will be published as a Quarterly journal starting January 1941.

100th Meeting, 13 May - 1941 - This meeting is held in the Franklin Institute.

105th Meeting - 9 December 1941 - This meeting takes place two days after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The janitor at the Franklin Institute provides us with a flashlight in case there is a blackout during the meeting. (A sign of the sober times.)

114th Meeting, 9 November 1942 - World War II has dispersed and relocated much of our membership. Only six members are present at this meeting.

118th Meeting, 9 March 1943 - The annual dinner is held at Bookbinders at a cost of \$2.25 per plate. An infallible indication that inflation is setting in.

140th Meeting, 8 May 1945 - VE Day! By coincidence this is our dinner meeting night which is being held at the University Club. Gen. George S. Patton, Jr. is made an Honorary Lifetime Member. (See his acceptance letter of 22 July 1945)

Conti. next pg.

142nd Meeting, 11 September 1945 - This is the first meeting to be held after VJ Day. Hopefully our members will start to return.

181st Meeting, 16 September 1949 - This meeting is the last to be held in the Franklin Institute, our home since March 1936. High cost and incompatibility of schedules are to blame. For the immediate future, meetings will be held in members' homes.

183rd Meeting, 8 December 1949 - We meet for the first time at our new "home", the apartment of member Michael Denning, which is located above his Photographic Studio on Walnut Street in Philadelphia.

9 January to 10 February 1950 - We hold our fifth Ship Model Exhibit in the Front Entrance Hall of the Free Library, Phila. This is destined to be the largest and most successful exhibit in our history.

200th Meeting September 1951 - This meeting is held at Michael Denning's

27 April to 7 June 1953 - Our sixth Model Exhibit is held at the Hill School in Pottstown, Pa.

February 1954 - We hold out seventh Ship Model Exhibit once again at the Free Library, Logan Square.

252nd Meeting, 8 November 1956 - This is the last meeting we will hold at Denning's. Disaster strikes! Some X-rated photography in the studio below our meeting place receives wide publicity and besmirches the good name of the Philadelphia Ship Model Society. (These were plain and simple times). Once again we decide to meet at various homes. Call us Ishmael!

260th Meeting, 12 September 1957 - Our first meeting at our new home, the Engineers Club on Spruce street in Phila. At last our wanderings appear to be over. We have reached the promised land.

298th Meeting - 8 June 1961 - Annual dues are increased to \$3.00 with a minimum of consternation.

300th Meeting, 14 September 1961 - This meeting is held at the Engineers Club.

305th Meeting, 8 February 1962 - Due to a lack of subsistent attendance) Fewer than five members) no official meeting is called. We have never captured our pre-war enthusiasm and membership.

346th Meeting, 9 May 1968 - Membership is showing marked increase. Dues are raised to \$5.00 annually after a lively discussion.

396th Meeting, 10 May 1973 - This is the annual dinner meeting and it is our good fortune to have a noted model maker Mr. August Crabtree as our guest speaker.

14 July 1973 - The society visits the Museum of the Naval Academy as guests of Mr Robert Sumrall, Curator of the Museum and Capt. Alma G. Ellis, Director of activity.

400th, Meeting, November 1973 - This meeting is held at the Engineers Club.

24 April 1976 - The Philadelphia Ship Model Society and New York area ship model societies hold a one-day conference at Tarrytown, New York.

14 June to 7 August 1977 - Our eighth Ship Model Exhibit is held at the Philadelphia Maritime Museum.

438th Meeting, 8 September 1977 - Annual dues are raised to \$10.00 with no vibrations.

30 January to 17 March 1980 - Our ninth Ship Model Exhibit is held at the Philadelphia Maritime Museum.

1 June to 1 September 1980 - Philadelphia Ship Model Society members participate in the ship model competition at the Mariners museum, Newport News, Virginia.

481st Meeting, 3 December 1981 - This meeting is held at the home of member Charles Lakites in North Wales, Pa. Our affiliation with the Engineers Club is terminated after twenty-four years (since 12 Sept. 1957). Deteriorating conditions at the meeting place culminate in complete dissatisfaction among our members.

482nd Meeting, 7 January 1982 - The first meeting is held in our latest new "home" the Philadelphia Maritime Museum on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia.

1 October to 3 October 1982 - The Philadelphia Ship model Society hosts the Ninth Annual Conference of the Nautical Research Guild.

500th Meeting, 3 November 1983 - Here we are! Our 50th meeting being celebrated at our annual dinner meeting at the Philadelphia Maritime Museum.

THAT IS ALL.
CARRY ON!

A photo from the 1982 July/August Model Ship Builder Magazine.



PICTURED ON THE STEPS OF THEIR NEW HOME of the Philadelphia Maritime Museum are some of the members of the Philadelphia Ship Model Society. Left to right (Front Row): Rick Menapace, President; Cdr. Carl Morse, USN, Vice president; (2nd Row); Bill Crothers Secretary William Wester, Chuck LeKites; (3rd Row); Frank Lazet, Treasurer; (4th Row); Carlos Rodriguez, Thomas Todd, Al Seebode; (5th Row); Paul Schopp, Dick Schmid, George Dukes, Paul Geib, Jim Riley, Dick Austin and Sam Morse.

Fulfilling Our Commitment to the Seaport Museum

In support of the Seaport Museum, our society has created exhibits, supported ISM outdoor events, participated in commemorative events, created a Video display, built the shack and volunteered at special events.

PATRIOTS AND PIRATES EXHIBIT

Shown at top right is one of two models contributed by Ed Leaf to this exhibit. First, the 1837 ship of the line *USS Pennsylvania* and the second model is the one pictured on the cover of this issue, the *Algerian Xebec*.

SAIL, STEAM AND STEALTH

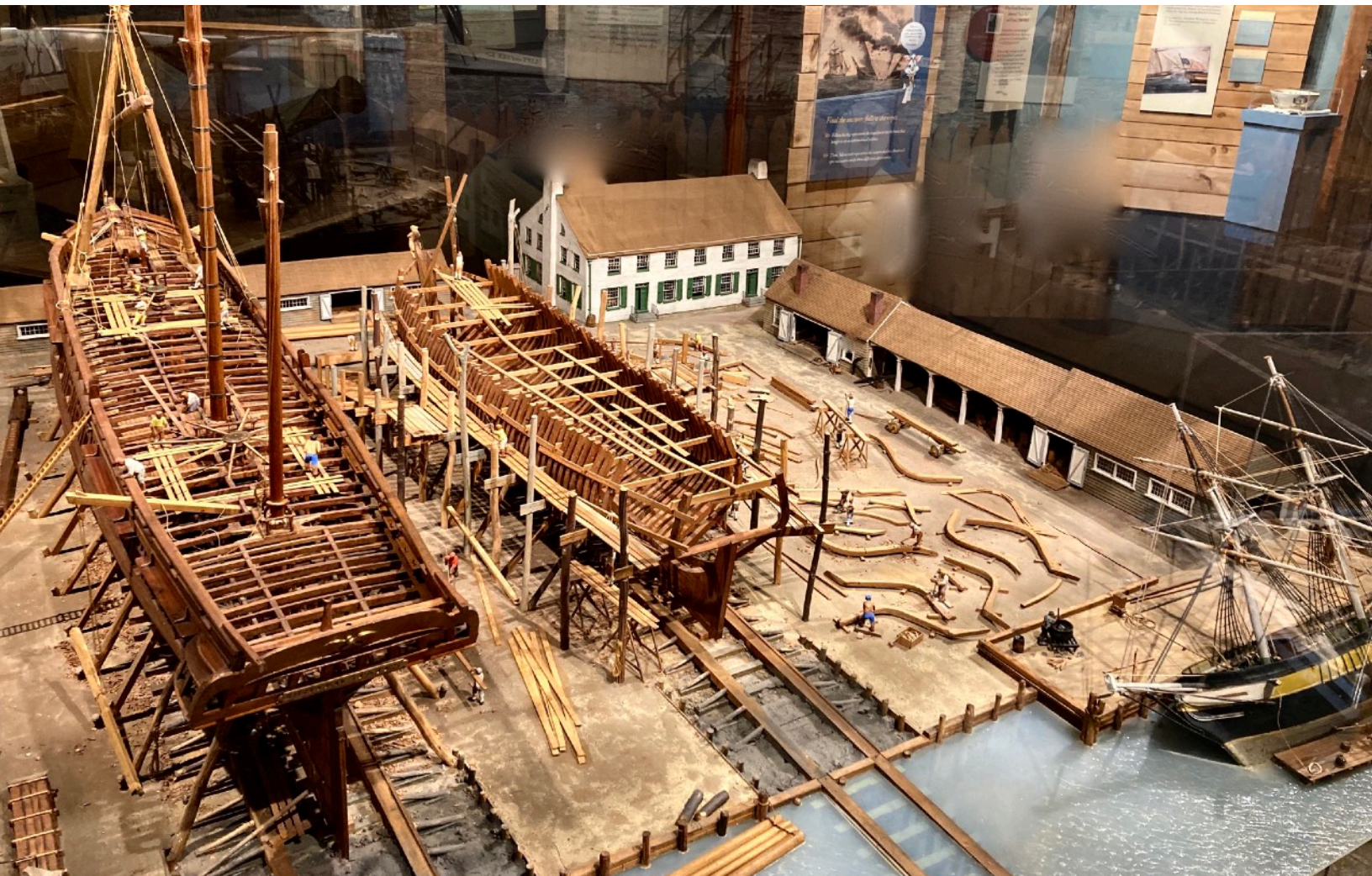
PSMS contributed two models to complete this exhibit at the request of the Seaport Museum. The 1790 model of the *Diligence* and the post WWII submarine *Becuna* to accompany an existing model of the *USS Olympia*, all in 1/96 scale.

VETERANS DAY ON THE OLYMPIA

We are ready to contribute our models to any events held on the *USS Olympia* or to other Museum events. Shown is the PSMS display of models in the ward room at a Veteran's day display on the *USS Olympia*.

REPRODUCTION OF AN 18th CENTURY AMERICAN SHIPYARD TO SCALE

Built by Dr Charles M. Gay, member of PSMS and originally displayed in the Franklin Institute, presently displayed on the main floor of the Seaport Museum in the Patriots and Pirates exhibit. It depicts two frigates being built on the ways with figures busily working. Every line of rigging is correctly run and every carpenter's bench and implement is historically correct. Buildings housing the shipwright and ship smith shops and sail lofts are included. Beside the dock (to the right) lies a brig, keeled to allow workmen to repair its hull.



Events That Promote Our Hobby

Northeast convention , regattas, ModelCon, library shows, school presentations, NRG conventions. Each year there are events to which the members look forward. These include The Northeast Conference, the oldest of the events in which we participate every year.

Northeast Convention

An annual gathering of five northeastern Clubs that meets every year in New London Connecticut. This convention has had as many as 100 models displayed and awards the Jim Roberts and Peoples Choice trophies and include a speaker and a luncheon. This year was the 38th annual convention.

Coast Day at ISM

PSMS participates in this Summer event with tents and outdoor table displays of ship models. The crowds are large with families and the displays are popular with the children as well as adults.

Parade of lights at ISM

Starts the holiday season in December and features a parade of lighted boats along the river. PSMS participates in this all day event by creating a display of lighted models at the Shack.

Regatta IV

The course was laid out in the Delaware River basin behind the Seaport Museum. There was a large participation by the radio controlled community. The photo below shows one of the elaborate floats being positioned.

Pennsville New Jersey Farm Show

PSMS has participated in this outdoor show for five years and it has proved to be a great outing for the membership. Small town atmosphere with bands, farm animals and local history displays.

Philadelphia International Airport Show

This show was arranged by member John Christenzio. The PSMS exhibit was displayed in the main terminal and was viewed by thousands of international travelers for 6 months.

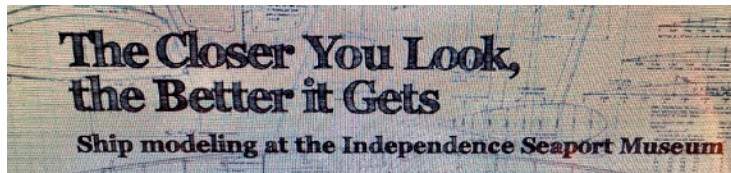


Photo: Seaport Museum



Photo: Carol Jordan

THE SHACK



A video presentation at the Shack showing four PSMS members discussing ship model making. They are Joe Jordan, Edwin Leaf, Spence Delin and John Christinzio.

Since 2010, PSMS volunteers have been meeting and greeting visitors to the Seaport Museum, promoting ship modeling to visitors to the Seaport for over 10 years. Designed by PSMS member John Christinzio and built by PSMS members Josef Messmer, Joe Jordan and John Oddo. One of two exhibits, the other being the Boat Shop, that can respond to visitors.



MODELCON

ModelCon is three years old. Starting out in the Seaport Museum, it has blossomed into an annual event. Created by Joshua Fichmann, and supported by the Philadelphia Ship Model Society, participation has been growing. In 2021, participants from five Atlantic Seaboard clubs showed over 100 models on the battleship New Jersey.



1983

The 1983 history of the Society noted members that had achieved distinction:

Among the best known members the Philadelphia Ship Model Society are professional Model builders **George Dukes** (noted for his fine models and restorations, including models in the Naval Academy collection) and **Al Seebode**, a preeminent builder of test tank models. **Frank Lazet** and **Paul Gieb** became widely known for their Ships-in-a-bottle. Nautical antique expert **Chuck LaKites**, an accomplished diver who dove on many of the wrecks off the New Jersey Coast; **Howard Taylor**, Curator of the Philadelphia Maritime Museum; Thomas Todd, the architect responsible for the critically acclaimed Baltimore Inner Harbor restoration; **Bill Crothers** took third place in the modified Scratch-Built category in the International model competition at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News for his U.S.S. Germantown, a sloop of war of 1842, and along with **Tom Hornsby**, both marine architects, turned out the remarkable series of *Seagull Plans* as well as building jewel like models. Crothers also wrote *The American Built Clipper Ship*, the definitive work on the subject.

New Brownlee, also a marine Architect, sailed in three masted schooners in his youth and was a member of the first year of the PSMS. He was widely known for his exhausted research into vessels constructed in the Delaware Bay area and for his fine drawings made as a result of that research. We are fortunate to have **Ed Leaf**, author of his widely praised *Ship Modeling from scratch*.

2021

Some of the best known within the present day Philadelphia Ship Model Society are: **Ed Leaf**, a published author *Ship Modeling From Scratch*, has several models in the Seaport Museum as part of their Patriots and Pirates exhibit including the three decked 1837 *USS Pennsylvania*, as well as the frontispiece model, the Algerian Xebec, depicted on the cover of this edition, and the *SS Normandie* displayed at the Shack. He has done numerous commissions for Seaport Gallery clients. Ed's models on the *Battleship New Jersey* (which he saw in action in Vietnam) are: *USS Kearsarge*, *HMS Dreadnaught*, *USS New Jersey BB16*, Italian battleships *Jean Bart* and *Anti Alighieri* and the *USS Montana* in the Admiral's quarters and a historic Norwegian Liberty ship in Haer Museet, the War Museum in Oslo Norway. **Joe Jordan** is known for his excellent models including prize winners at the Northeast Conference, *Typhoon* and *Pipe's Dream*, both RC. models that won first and second place at the NE Convention. He was also instrumental in building the Ship Shack. Joe started and laid the ground work for the museum model of *Diligence* in the Sail, Steam,

Stealth exhibit, worked on the restoration of various boats in the ISM Boat Shop on the Water and participated in building the re-creation of the full size "*Diligence*" on display at the Independence Seaport. He has been the Society representative to ISM for ten years. **Joe Gudonis** Published author of articles in national magazines. *Six Bitters Versus Rum Runners*- 1988 Model Ship Builder, *Gazeta Philadelphia*, Ships in Scale, Vol.8 Number 5, *From Snapshots to an R/C Tug Model*, 'Model Ship Builder,#80. **Ron Spicer** has aboard the Olympia Cruiser, 5 Olympia models in the various periods of its service life. Ron was asked to make a model of Olympia dressed as she was while bringing home the "Unknown Soldier" from France in 1921. It will be on permanent public display in the museum above the tomb Guard Quarters of The Unknown Soldier. He has also scratch built the USS Becuna submarine for the Sail, Steam and Stealth exhibit in the Independence Seaport Museum. **Spence Delin** Has worked on ship models most of his life completing 19. At the Mariners Museum, Newport News, Va. in 1995 he won the silver medal for the merchant ship *London* and in 2000 he won the gold metal for English Brig *Pantaloon*. At the Northeast Conference, New London CT in 2011 he won 1st place for Peoples Choice for the *Charles W. Morgan*. In 2012 -2nd place Peoples Choice, *Helen B. Thomas*. In 2013, first place Jim Roberts Award and second place for Peoples choice for the Friendship Sloop *Pemaquid*. In 2015, 1st place Jim Roberts Award, 1st place Peoples Choice for *Officer's 30' Barge*. 2017, 1st place Jim Roberts award, first place Peoples Choice for *Boxer*. 2018, 2nd place, Peoples Choice for Nobleman's 42' yacht. **Pat Leaf** joined PSMS in 1987. For years, the only female member and found she was readily accepted. Always active, she has been president of PSMS twice. Pat has been PSMS representative to the NE Conference and chaired the event for the Society more than once. She also chaired the Nautical Research Guild Conference in 2002, the only women to do so. Add to this the fact that she provided the refreshments at the meetings for over 20 years.

Joshua Fichmann has been the moving force behind ModelCon. He has done the legwork and organization that has so far produced 3 ModelCons. The first, in 2019 was held at the Seaport Museum. The 2020 and 2021 were held on the battleship *New Jersey* and displayed more than 100 models with the participation of 5 eastern seaboard model clubs. **Dr. Micheal Zimmerman** facilitated the dispersal of approximately 30 models by listing and selling them on ebay internationally, there-by selling them all over the world and enlarging our treasury.



Marion V. Brewington Founding member of the Philadelphia Ship Model Society

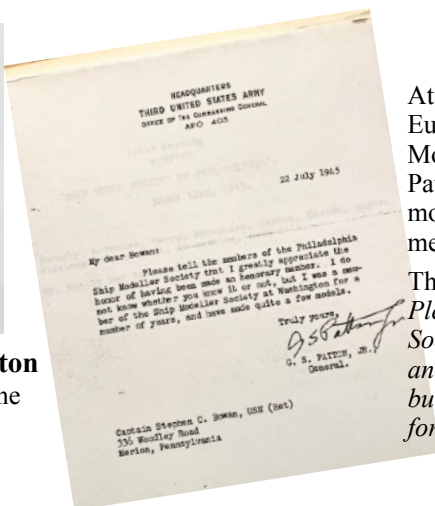
Marion V. Brewington, Jr., maritime historian. One must read Marion Jr.'s obituary to fully grasp the depth and size of his accomplishments, Guggenheim Fellow, head of the Naval Historical Foundation, Curator of the Peabody Museum, elected to the Massachusetts Historical Society, and American Antiquarian Society. The Marion Brewington Book Price is awarded annually by the Maryland Historical Society. Author of *Ship Carvers of North America* and *The Peabody Museum Collections of Navigating Instruments with notes on Their Makers*. In 1963, John B Heffernan of the Naval Historical Foundation wrote:

"The late Commodore Dudley Knox, U.S.N., considered Brewington to be the best informed man in the United States on the history of sailing vessels built and operated in this country. Knox recruited him for the office of Naval History of the Navy Department, and he is still a commander in the United States Naval Reserve. The Navy Department desired to retain him as Curator for the Navy, but circumstances prevented this arrangement at the end of World War II. He is now assistant director of the Peabody Museum of Salem, Massachusetts.

Honorary Memberships



General George Patton
WWII Commander of the
3rd Army in Europe.



At the meeting of May 8, 1945, V.E. day (Victory in Europe), Captain Rowan, President of the Philadelphia Ship Model Society, was pleased to say that General George S. Patton Jr. Commander of the 3rd Army, was an old time model maker and made a motion to list him as an Honorary member in our Society. Motion passed.

The letter of acceptance from General reads:
Please tell the members of the Philadelphia Ship Modeller Society that I greatly appreciate the honor of having been made an honorary member. I do not know whether you know it or not but I was a member of the Ship Modeller Society at Washington for a number of years and have made quite a few models.

Captain Peter Hill Orvis

During his career, Peter Orvis was Commodore of Landing Squadron Three in 1966 and 1967 as the fourteen ships of the squadron were engaged in direct combat support in the Republic of Vietnam. The unit was recognized with commendations.



Photo Joe Gudonis

Antonio Da Silva

Superb model maker and Captain
of the Tall Ship Gazela

HONORARY MEMBER AND BENEFACTOR



William Charles White

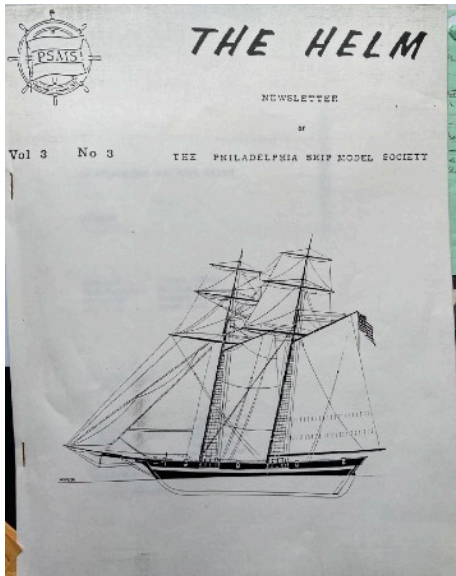
Boy Telegraphist, Age 18. *HMS St. Vincent* 1939

About 20 years ago, we had a model ship show at our Tredyffrin Library, attended by Bill White. A few days later, I received a phone call from him. He told me he had accumulated some kits of large sailing ship models and didn't think he would ever build them, as he was 80 years old. I said we would come over and take a look. He replied "You better bring a truck!" he had about 30 large kits all in boxes and in fine condition. Bill served in WWII and I have just acquired a kit of his ship *HMS Glasgow*.

A widower, he was about to remarry and his new wife Annette told him he was welcome to her house but not all the ships! With the help of some of our members we brought the kits to my house.

I advertised them on eBay. We sold all but one, a 1/96 Flying Cloud that awaits my retirement. One buyer was in Scotland and we were able to sell the model because we had a cousin living there in Aberdeen as intermediary. The result is that we have a well funded treasury. Bill sadly passed away in 2005. Annette asked me to arrange for new homes for Bill's tools, paints etc. so the club members were able to take these things to their workshops. Bill did build *HMS Victory* and I arranged for it to be donated to the British Embassy in Washington, D.C. where it now resides.

Mike Zimmerman



This copy of the "Helm" is an ancestor of the present day Quarterdeck and dated 1983. Apparently it died when the editor died. Nobody else took over.

From the collection of Joe Gudonis.



THE WHITE WHALE SALE & AUCTION

Has been held for so long that no one can remember when there wasn't a White Whale Sale.



A seafarer's life is filled with excitement of world travel, but it also has times of loneliness and need of reaffirmation of caring. The seaman's Church Institute provides Christmas Ditty Bags to the crews of ships who cannot come ashore. The ditty bags contain toiletries and similar items. Donations are accepted at the November and December meetings of PSMS.



Photo: Joe Gudonis collection

1988 CHRISTMAS PARTY at the the Maritime Museum at 3rd and Chestnut street, Philadelphia. PSMS members decorated the tree with hand maid ornaments.

ABOUT THE NORTHEAST CONFERENCE

The Northeast Conference and Show has a board of directors consisting of one representative from each participating club. We have always had the highest attendance other than the host club. The conference is well worth the trip, and it gives us an opportunity to get better acquainted of other ship model organizations as well as members of PSMS. Traditionally we have met for dinner on Friday evening and those who don't leave on Saturday after the conference, meet again at a different restaurant that evening. Mystic Seaport is a wonderful place to visit and there are many other interesting sights.

Pat Leaf



COVID 19 and the ROTUNDA EXHIBIT

With the epidemic of the Corona Virus in 2019 came the suspension of PSMS meetings, masks, six foot distancing, elimination of people gatherings and zoom. What can an organization like PSMS do to continue on? A difficult question to answer. One member, Joe Jordan, who regularly sits the “Shack”, and continued to do so while following the Museum protocols, came up with an idea.

While sitting the Shack, he thought about the fact that there isn’t much to attract the attention of the passerby to the museum.. The existing windows on the outside were empty. The Museum has a room, at one time a classroom/theatre that faces the waterfront and was recently remodeled with glass doors. It has had many different uses; weddings, refreshment stand, and storage are a few. PSMS has used it for a ModelCon show. But most often it is unused. Did I mention that it has glass doors facing the waterfront?

It was Joe’s idea to fill those glass doors with ship models. With the blessing of the museum and the help of the boat shop, tables were built behind the doors and covered with tablecloths. The membership generously filled those tables with over 30 models. This display attracted the attention of the people passing by and the lonely young lady who took the time to send this wonderful letter (reproduced on the next page). The Rotunda show ran from November 2020 to February 2021. This was outreach at its best. Will this generate a host of new members? Maybe not. But it may have tweaked the interest of a future ship model builder and..... it made us all feel good.





Tugboat Baltimore model by Joe Gudonis

Hello PSMS members,

I am just writing to thank you for the beautiful display of model ships currently in the window of the Seaport Museum. Yesterday was the first (and hopefully the last) Thanksgiving day I have ever spent entirely by myself, and I was wandering around by the riverfront feeling somewhat sad when I noticed that people were taking pictures of something in the museum window. I walked over to find this impressive and delightful collection of ships, and this completely turned around my mood and my day. As a fan of models of all sorts and a lover of transportation, I just wanted to express my affection for these ships and the spirit of appreciation and dedication that goes into building them. During this difficult time, visibility of "the good stuff" in life is incomparably precious even in small doses.

I hope everyone in your community was able to enjoy a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

*Sincerely,
Abby Cember*



Founding Members of the Philadelphia Ship Model Society

Gordon A. Meader
Marion V. Brewington
William F. Lodge, Mrs. A.C. McBride,
George T. Ross, H.J. Millar, Taylor,
J. Shindel Kamp, John R. Hogan,
Edward S. Thomson

Past Presidents

1931 Gordon A. Meader
1932 M.V. Brewington
1935 Sketchly
1936 Henry A. Horrocks Jr.
1938 Henry A. Horrocks Jr.
1939 William R. Hunn
1940 Cat. S.C. Rowan

*

1985 Bill Crothers
1986 William C. Wester
1987 Alfred Seebode
1988 Edwin Leaf
1989 Walton Cyliax
1990 Joe Gudonis

*

2001 John Christinzio

*

2011 Mike Weaver
2012 Richard Ratgeber

*

2015 Tom Mc Elhinney
2018 Todd Wardwell
2019 Francine Serratore
2020 Fred Signor
2021 Jim Wheeler
2022 Mike Weaver

* Spence Delin
* John Esposito
* Joe Jordan
* Pat Leaf
* Jim MacIntyre
* Tom McElhinney
* Josef Messmer
* John Oddo
* Mike Zimmerman

* Dates or names unavailable.

Epilogue

With this special edition of the Philadelphia Ship Model Society Quarterdeck, we commemorate 90 years of ship modeling in Philadelphia. Hopefully, we will continue to travel the same path with the same dedication that is demonstrated in the minutes of the early meetings.

What we tried to do here is present a picture of our roots as well as our present day activities. To recognize some of the people who came before us. Members, some of whom actually sailed the 7 seas, crewed the tall ships, rounded the horn and then dedicated their efforts to reproducing models as accurately as possible. They formed this Society and shared their personal knowledge, experience and skills to educate those who had a love of the sea and model building. Many of these experiences are recorded in the early minutes and they are well worth reading. Without those minutes, there is no history.



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PHOTOGRAPHY / RON SPICER
JOE GUDONIS
EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:
STEVE BULOVA, JOE GUDONIS
JOE JORDAN, MIKE WEAVER

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