

HAMPTON ROADS SHIP MODEL SOCIETY

NO. 71

NEWSLETTER

May 1992

We celebrated our 25th anniversary by *not* having a meeting in April! And a fine time was had by all. For starters, about a dozen members gathered at the Watermen's Museum in Yorktown on the 4th to install our exhibit of models that most of them delivered that morning. Along with the models came newly built and freshly painted exhibit shelves, a large sawhorse table, sheets of acrylic, tools, very professional-looking labels and lots of expertise. We took all day to assemble the exhibit, with a total of 23 models, and the results are worth it. It includes five models by our last three founders, Tom Tragle, Paris Aiken and Marvin Bryant, all of whom have dropped their last anchor in the past three years. The exhibit was enjoyed by museum officials and dignitaries when the museum opened for the season the next day. It continues through May 3.

We had our own opening reception on Friday evening, the 10th, joined by our families and our three guests of honor for the weekend, Betty Lou Tragle, Helen Aiken and Helen Bryant, who cut three ribbons at the gallery entrance in honor of their husbands. Members of their families and museum officers were also present. Fine refreshments were served by Women of the Water, an organization of museum supporters.

Saturday, April 11 was the big day, starting with a morning cruise to Fort Wool, an historic site in Hampton Roads, and past the Norfolk Navy Base. Thanks to Michael Cobb, curator of Fort Wool, for an excellent tour of the site. We were joined on the cruise by members of the Washington Ship Model Society and the Hampton Roads Chapter of the Steamship Historical Society of America. On returning to Hampton, many of us walked down the street for our first visits to the new Virginia Air and Space Center/Hampton Roads History Center, a splendid addition to the local scene. It had opened six days earlier.

On Saturday evening, we were joined by still more members of the Washington Society for the anniversary banquet at Seawell's Ordinary (the food is anything but!) an old tavern in Gloucester, where our first several banquets had been held, starting about 1968. John Cheevers, outgoing skipper, had to leave with Ellen at the end of dinner (no, she hasn't had the baby yet!), so new skipper Bill Altice had to pinch hit his part of the later ceremonies. Highlights:

1. Thanks to Bill and Mary Fox for doing so much of the work on the show and the weekend. Also to all who helped.
2. Thanks to our wives for their patience, and for letting us out once a month; the annual dinner is always really for them.
3. A reminder of Jack Bobbitt's achievements in winning a silver medal and the NRG Award in the Mariners' Museum's Ship Model Competition.
4. Thanks to the outgoing officers, and welcome to the new.
5. Presentation of the Founders' Award to Bill Clarke, recognizing his superb work as chairman of the Nautical Research Guild Conference.
6. Presentation of a plaque for John Cheevers, made from copper from USS CONSTITUTION.
7. Presentation of certificates to "new" members who had not yet received them: Hugh Melton, Jim McCurdy, Scott Newell, Graham Horne and, in absentia,

Nick Rumsey and Harvey Williams.

8. Introduction of John Fryant, skipper of the Washington Ship Model Society, who presented us with a handsome "birthday card" of fine woods and engraved brass, including six half models of Chesapeake Bay boats. Thanks, guys! Details next month; meanwhile, see it at the Watermen's Museum.

9. Introduced Bill Fox, who reviewed highlights of our first 25 years.

10. Introduced Betty Lou Tragle, who offered gracious thanks on behalf of "Pete" Aiken, Helen Bryant and herself.

11. Introduced our speaker of the evening, John Colby of Christchurch School, who delivered a fine presentation on Civil War events in Virginia which led to the first enlistment of blacks into the U.S. Navy.

May Meeting: Friday, May 1 (Note change to First Friday) at Bill Clarke's home, 196 Odd Road, Poquoson. Strawberry time! Call 868-6809 or 865-7300 if you need directions. Bill Altice will bring some of Marvin Bryant's books, for members. And remember that Dues are Due if your label says "D".

On the Bridge:

Skipper: Bill Altice 748-4880
Purser: Alan Frazer 865-7300

1st Mate: Leonard Wine 588-5831
Historian: Bill Fox 253-0310

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c/o Alan D. Frazer
108-G Indian Summer Drive
Yorktown, VA 23693-1034

TO: