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# Washington Ship Model Society Hosts 1983 NRG Conference

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by William E. Lee

Since the year 1929, a small group of men interested in matters relating particularly to the sea and ship models and their construction, have been associated together in this nation's capitol as the Washington Model Ship Society.

Through good times and bad, during peace and war, the fortunes of the Society have varied, but the members have carried on with an excellent spirit of mutual helpfulness. Strong friendships have developed, much research into nautical antiquities has been done, and many splendid ship models have been built.

The primary purposes of the organization as stated in the Bylaws are: "For the mutual benefit to each other in modelmaking, for the exchange of ideas, and to preserve for posterity exact replicas, in miniature, of historic vessels." These ideals have been faithfully adhered to throughout the Society's beginning.

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## IN THE BEGINNING...

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The Society had its inception at the home of Kenneth A. Foote on 8 October 1929, at which time were present: Kenneth Foote, John C. Carlton, and William Hoeke. The trio discussed the desirability of forming a club for people interested in building ship models, and at several subsequent meetings with kindred spirits the idea was developed. On 30 September 1930 at a gathering in the Foote home, it was decided to form a club and hold regular meetings on the second Tuesday of each month except during July and August.

Informal meetings were held at the homes of various members for several months until it became apparent that a more regular organization was desirable. On 13 January 1931, Kenneth Foote was elected President (Captain) and William Hoeke, Secretary, for the ensuing year. They became the Society's first regular officers.

A large membership has never been desired, yet any person of good character and genuinely interested in shipmodeling and maritime matters has been welcome to attend the meetings.

Following a precedent established before the formal organization of the Society, the meetings have been held in the homes of various members, and generally the procedure is as follows. First, a short "get-together" social gathering is held, then the minutes of the last meeting are read for the benefit of those present. Any business requiring the members' attention is brought up and disposed of in the usual manner. Next, a round table discussion is held on shipmodeling, improved means of construction, and ship lore. The host then gives a tour of his workshop and



SOME OF THE SOCIETY'S MEMBERS are (from left to right, back row, standing) Merritt Edson, Ken Lloyd, John Allnutt, Bill Royall (skipper), and Ed Quam. Second row, seated: Phil Eddy, Bill Lee (with pipe), Gene Larson, Bill Royall, Jr., and Pat Flaherty. First row, seated: Ken Dorr, Joe McCleary, an unidentified guest, and Carroll Carter. (Photo by John Fryant)

members can examine his under construction or completed models. The evening concludes with light refreshments served by the lady of the house. A spirit of helpfulness and good fellowship always prevails.

In addition to the regular routine outlined above, the members are frequently entertained by a guest speaker of note: naval officers, travelers, merchant seamen, and others describing aspects of nautical interest, ships, and ship models.

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## MODELS DISPLAYED

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An exhibit of ship models built and collected by the members is held each year at some prominent location in the city of Washington. The number of models and the members' excellent workmanship have received favorable comment in the Capitol's newspapers and from the many visitors to the exhibition.

The Richmond Ship Model Society of Richmond, Virginia and the Hampton Roads Ship Model Society of Hampton, Virginia are two organizations that have formed as a result of the Washington Model Ship Society. All three comprise the Tri-Society which holds a workshop in a central location every March and a banquet every fall.

This year it is the Washington Ship Model Society's honor to host the Nautical Research Guild Conference at the Old Colony Inn, Alexandria, Virginia, during the weekend of October 14-16. Those wishing to receive more information on the Conference should contact Eugene Larson, 9223 Presidential Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22309. Modelers who would like to know more about the Washington Ship Model Society can write to William E. Lee, 505 Ivy Circle, Alexandria, Virginia 22302. †