

HARBOUR STATIONS



Friends of the Royal Navy Submarine Museum

No 38

November 2017

Editorial

Readers will note a substantial difference to this issue of Harbour Stations that reflects the “interesting times” that have gone on over the past twelve months. So here we have your committee’s view of the Museum and what the Friends are doing for it. We also wish to set a baseline of information available to all our members, through this issue and for some months afterwards through the website. Any comments on the style and format of Harbour Stations will be welcomed by the Editor.

Unusually, there is a plug for a book in this issue. This is because this book is different, and available

on line on the Friends website. I commend it to you.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Since the formation of the National Museum of the Royal Navy and the amalgamation of the constituent museum under one organisation I have been highlighting that it will take time to bed in and reach an optimal operating position. I have stressed the importance of a good working relationship with NMRN management as being key to ensuring that the Friends contributions, not just financial, are used most effectively. Those relationships are in place and on a

day to day basis work well. However, museums and other attractions across the country, for a whole host of reasons, are experiencing a difficult financial climate; the NMRN is no exception. While I would not for one moment suggest that the solution to this is for the Friends to fill the shortfall, I do suggest that when the allocation of funding within the NMRN is being made difficult decisions are having to be made.

The Friends have been and will continue to be, generous with their assistance to the museum. The contributions that the Friends make go entirely to our museum, helping to add the extra elements that make it a first-rate museum and importantly develop and maintain it as a heritage site.

As you read on through this edition of Harbour Stations you will see an informative and honest appraisal of the “state of the nation” regarding the Submarine Museum written from the Friends’ perspective by Jock McLees and I’m not going to pre-empt his comments. Instead I have a simple message. We need to expand the membership of the Friends, bringing in new members from as wide a community as possible. There is no need to have

been a submariner or the spouse or child of a submariner to be a Friend, an interest in recording and maintaining the submarine story and heritage is all that is required. Having said that I am sometimes dismayed at the number of currently serving submariners that are not members.

I would ask you all to be positive about recruiting new Friends and explain to anyone that will listen the importance of presenting and preserving our heritage. An easy way to do that is to point in the direction of our Web Site which has been transformed over the last year by Tom Herman and from where people can become members and explore the background of our organisation. I look forward to a good year for recruiting new Friends.

Jon Westbrook

A View of the Submarine Museum from the Vice Chair

Serving on the Committee of the Friends, especially since the Submarine Museum became an integral part of the NMRN in 2010,

has been something of a roller coaster experience. The NMRN was initially in a constantly evolutionary state which led to several structural changes after management reviews ... unsettling for staff and difficult sometimes to identify who to talk to about what. There are signs, however, that the situation has reached a steadier state. But, as long as the NMRN remains a cash-lean organisation, uncertainties may return in circumstances where, say, visitor numbers fall suddenly or if the MoD were to reduce Grant in Aid to the museum. But, many businesses in today's UK face similar uncertainties ... which could arguably have been worse for an independent RNSM.

The Friends Committee collectively remain optimistic and there have been a number of significant successes, many due to **your** generosity! We have a good working relationship at a senior level in the NMRN; the Executive Director of Visitor Experience is regularly accessible and generous with his time ... he also appreciates our donations!

Another link to the National Museum has been established through the Submarine Advisory Group (SAG). This group, whose mission statement was recently

posted on the Friends' website under <https://www.rnsubmusfriends.org.uk/documents/>, has been set up to advise the NMRN on matters of submarine heritage. It comprises a membership drawn from the NMRN, the serving and retired Submarine Community, and the Friends. It is chaired by John Clayden (a member of the Friends Committee) and meets quarterly. The ambience of the John Fieldhouse Building has changed dramatically with the sound and light projection onto X24 which impacts the visitor immediately on entry. For those who watch it closely and fully, it is packed with submarine historical content ... although its main purpose is to give all visitors a visual "Wow!" effect. And visitor numbers, although down from the Alliance-Upgrade high, are holding up better than expected despite a national downturn. For the visitor, access is better: the waterbus, long an aspiration for an independent RNSM, only became a reality with the advent of the NMRN. The Friends committee are not entirely happy with the way the RNSM is "signposted" from the Historic Dockyard, believing that too much emphasis is placed on Alliance to the detriment of the experience to be had by a visit to Holland 1, X24

(historic ships in their own right) and a tour of the galleries, where well-presented, good-quality artefacts tell absorbing stories of courage and sacrifice, often described with humour and in an understated way, to the fascination of a wide age-range of visitors. Yes, the story is told in a sometimes haphazard way – due in part to when and how artefacts were acquired and also to the building and site layout. The solution to this particular dilemma is likely to be hugely expensive and unlikely to be implemented anytime soon ... but it is acknowledged as a future need. Meanwhile, there needs to be a balance between the newly enhanced experience of a walk through Alliance and what is to be found in the rest of the Submarine Museum.

Many of you may be feeling that our projects are proceeding very slowly ... too slowly! Regrettably, that is true. Some are ongoing; some are temporarily on hold. This is partly due to external influences: a large NMRN project to develop a Discovery Centre in the Historic Dockyard, as well as relocating the RM Museum there, includes a submarine element which means that resources we would otherwise use are preoccupied; our Garden of

Remembrance designer has been recuperating after a very serious injury and unable to attend; and turbulence in the leadership of our own Museum has made continuity difficult. In the latter case, the RNSM is about to receive its fourth General Manager in three years. The new incumbent has been selected; she is Claire Baverstock, who has risen through the ranks of the NMRN and takes up the post in early December. At the time of writing, I have had an introductory meeting with Claire to discuss her vision for the RNSM and for her to hear about the Friends' aims and aspirations. She was receptive and is already busying herself gathering information about her future domain on site. We have agreed that she will meet with the Friends regularly.

As you are aware an amendment to the Friends' constitution was passed at the AGM to enable us to be more outward looking in future and embryo links are being forged with like-minded organisations such as the Courageous supporters in Devonport and the Scottish Submarine Centre in Helensburgh. With respect to the constitution, the Committee is aware that it is overdue a fuller examination, and such amendment that is necessary, to ensure that it meets the changed

circumstances in which we now find ourselves.

While guiding an independent specialist – enlisted by the NMRN to advise on a format for the proposed Discovery Centre in the Historic Dockyard – around the Submarine Museum, we agreed that our Museum has:

- much more than just Alliance (impressive as she certainly is);
- a unique contribution to the interpretation of Alliance through the use of Submarine Volunteer Guides;

but also has:

- high quality artefacts on display, including:
 - three complete historic submarines;
 - a large number of interesting and well-labelled artefacts on display, although somewhat haphazardly presented;
 - a great many fascinating stories to tell through the artefacts on display;
 - a significant number of heroic people to celebrate,

including through the VC display and especially if linked to relevant artefacts; an important role as a Memorial;

but needs:

- enhanced display interpretation in the JFB using staff or technology.

Whilst striving to see completion of projects already in the pipeline, the Friends Committee keep in mind that we already have a fine Museum which the RNSM staff run smoothly, keep clean and presentable, thereby winning a huge number of accolades from visitors. However, we believe that improvements are possible. Moreover, we also see a role for the Friends in managing the expectations of the Submarine Community at large, especially where these occasionally appear to conflict with the objectives of the NMRN. Submariners expect a lot of and for their Museum. This includes stressing to NMRN staff that, to the Submarine Community everywhere, our Museum is a Heritage site, a Memorial and the nearest thing to an Alma Mater the Submarine Service has now that Dolphin is no more. This belief

makes it important for the Friends to educate NMRN staff – in a constructive way, and at every level – of the need to recognise the uniqueness of this important part of the NMRN they work for.

We know the Submarine Museum to be a stellar attraction in the NMRN's catalogue, but to the Submarine Community it is also a monument to unparalleled sacrifice through its displays, artefacts, memorials and its three historic ships.

Projects of Interest to the Friends - Status:

Garden of Remembrance – Phase 1 complete. Phase 2 designed; funds identified, awaiting designer's return to health.

Book of Remembrance – Phase 1 (names of those who sacrificed their lives, listed by submarine) ready in e-format and checked; Phase 2 (names of those who sacrificed their lives, listed individually); raw data collected but not yet collated and formatted; awaiting resources for completion.

Board of Donors (to the Garden of Remembrance) – Yet to be designed and costed. Record of Donors being kept. ***Destination***

Submarines – Illuminos & Weapons. Sound and Light illumination of X24 complete; donation to cover net cost transferred to NMRN Finance Department. Movement of Polaris missile and TLAM into the JFB progressing; £25K set aside to cover net costs; awaiting survey of JFB structure due to under floor heating.

NMRN/RNSM: ***Mezzanine Exhibits*** – Friends awaiting update from NMRN.

Kiosk – NMRN plan to place a refreshment kiosk for use by visitors, particularly while waiting for waterbus; Plans explained to Friends, including additional seating under bow of Alliance.

Alliance Maintenance – Additional funds allocated to prevention of salt contamination of hull; and for repairs to sound effects system (new amplifier). ***Holland 1 Bldg atmosphere control*** – Funds allocated.

Other: ***Cold War Warriors – An Aural History*** based on personal experiences of Service Personnel. Participants: NMRN/Friends/Glasgow University/Scottish Submarine Centre.

DSTL offer of recordings. An offer has been made to the NMRN by MoD/DSTL to donate a number of historical recordings, made by submarines, of underwater noises including recordings of ships; The Friends believe this will be an important contribution to the submarine archives; Submarine Advisory Group monitoring progress.

Jock McLees

Member since 1996

Committee since 2007

Vice Chair since 2013

New Publication on the Friends Website

HMS RORQUAL Commanded by
Lennox Napier DSO DSC June 1941 –
December 1943

This fascinating book has been hosted on line on the Friends' Website, and can be downloaded in pdf. or ePub (good for smaller screens) for reading at leisure.

**MINUTES OF THE
TWENTYSECOND AGM OF
THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
OF THE ROYAL NAVY
SUBMARINE MUSEUM, HELD
AT THE MUSEUM
AT 1800 ON FRIDAY 30 JUNE
2017.**

The President, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, opened the meeting, with a warm welcome to all attending. We now have two Patrons, Peter Hennessy and Tim McClement, and two Vice Presidents, Simon Lister and Michael Pitkeathly, whose sage advice and wise counsel will be valuable in the work we undertake. On a sad note, we all miss Captain Tubby Crawford who passed away the day after his 100th birthday, which he was able to celebrate with his family.

Sir Mark noted the major contribution that the Friends are making to the enhancement of the Museum and thanked Jock McLees for his day to day management of our strong link with the National Museum of the Royal Navy. 2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the submarine Commanding Officers' Course. The Perisher 100 dinner took place at BRNC on Thursday 15 Jun with almost 300 serving and former submarine Commanding Officers present, sharing the spirit of the Submarine Service.

Sir Mark emphasised how vital the Friends' work is in order to preserve that ethos and capture the portrayal of the submarine story.

Present. 90 members and their guests attended the meeting, including the President, Sir Mark Stanhope, our two Vice Presidents, Vice Admiral Sir Simon Lister and Michael Pitkeathly, our Patron, Vice Admiral Sir Tim McClement and Rear Admirals Spam Hammersley, Paul Hoddinott, Mike Harris and Tony Whetstone

1. Apologies. Apologies had been received from 12 members.

2. Minutes of the Twenty-first AGM. The minutes of the Twenty-first AGM, held at the Museum on 24 June 2016 had been distributed with the Harbour Stations. There being no matters arising, nor amendments submitted, it was proposed that they be accepted as a true record. This was carried unanimously.

3. Chairman's Report. The Chairman, Rear Admiral Jon Westbrook, explained how we recruited our new Patron and Vice Presidents with the aim of exploiting their talents; Sir Tim McClement for his fundraising experience, Michael Pitkeathly for the broader reach into the submarine community and Sir Simon Lister for his close linkage with Industry,

The Chairman welcomed our guests, the NMRN staff and our independent examiner, Giles Fletcher. He also thanked the members of the Submariners' Association, whose specific contributions for the Memorial Garden refurbishment are much valued. He reminded members that if they wish to preserve Submarine Heritage by making a bequest, they can achieve that via the Friends. All Round Look gives advice on how to make a bequest.

He assured members that the committee aims to grant as much funding as it can to the Museum, with our overheads remaining at around 5% of income.

The Chairman asked members if the end of June is the best time for our AGM and invited members write to the Secretary with any comments or proposals by 1 September. The committee will then conduct a review and announce the 2018 date in Harbour Stations, due to be posted out in November.

The Chairman apologised that some of the 'All Round Look' yearbooks may have been posted in error without having the postage franked on the envelope. Our website explains the options for reimbursement.

The website is regularly accessed by a growing number of members, which is encouraging as it reduces our costs of sending our Harbour Stations. The Reference has a growing collection of documents of historical value, while “Dits and Bits” continues to attract stories of recent and current activity.

4. Election of Committee

Members. Committee members serve for three years and may be reelected for a further three years. Jon Westbrook, Tricia Stephens, John Clayden, Michael Bates & Tom Herman have all agreed to be considered for re-election and the Submariners’ Association has recommended David Ottley for re-appointment. This was proposed by Giles Fletcher; seconded by Nigel Stevenson and carried unanimously.

5. Adoption of Accounts. The Treasurer drew attention to the 2016/17 accounts, which were published in All Round Look (ARL) and were on the reverse of the agenda. He pointed out that the accounts in ARL were in error, the ones on the back of the agenda were the only correct ones and explained that the past year has been financially very good, with an income of over £30,000.

Subscription income was very similar to last year's, but this year we benefitted from a number of donations and a bequest. Some donations were in memory of deceased members, and there were also several generous donations from Submariner Association branches, specifically to be used for Memorial Garden further improvements. The very generous bequest was from the estate of the late Rear-Admiral John Hervey, OBE, CB.

Grants to our Museum have been less this year and have mainly comprised funding for the first phase of the Memorial Garden project and further contributions to the visitor experience by improved signage.

As a result, the balance sheet looks rather too healthy, however, the Committee has agreed to fund a major project “Destination Submarines”, designed to improve the visitor experience on arrival in the John Fieldhouse Building. This grant will be for £40,000. A further £8,500 in grants is already committed, mostly for the memorial garden, so at the end of this Financial Year, the balance will be more modest, but still with reserves in order to be able to react to short notice requests.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Paul Hoddinott; seconded by Roy Dixon and carried unanimously. Appointment of Giles Fletcher as auditor was proposed by Peter Jeanneret; seconded by Chris Walker and carried unanimously.

6. Amendment to the

Constitution. The proposal to amend our geographical reach, to include Courageous and Helensburgh, was published in All Round Look. The amendment was proposed by Justin Hughes; seconded by Nigel Stevenson and carried unanimously. The Committee will conduct another review to ensure that the constitution meets Charity Law and proposals for changes to the constitution should be forwarded in writing to the Secretary for consideration by the committee.

The meeting closed at 1820.

A raffle was held, comprising the following prizes; Two tickets to the HMS Victory Gun Deck Dinner, won by Mike (Legs) Diamond, two books (Barrow Built Submarines by Lt Cdr Barry Downer and A Submariner's Tale by Chas Cooke) and a bottle of Chateauneuf du Pape. The sum of £380 was raised.

Date of Next Annual General Meeting

After requests from members and after discussion out of committee a decision was made to move away from the June timing for the AGM and hold it after the Summer Holidays. So for 2018 the Annual General Meeting will be held in the John Fieldhouse Meeting at 1800 on **Friday 31st August 2018.**

Have you recently changed your address, or even your email address? If so, please would you let the Hon Membership Sec know, preferably by email at memsec@rnsbusmusfriends.org.uk

Thank you.

CALLED ALOFT

Deaths notified since All Round Look 2017

Mr D W Sitwell	May 2017
Mr Hugh Wickham	
Mrs Sybil Stevens	
N B (Brigham) Young	May 2017
Captain Peter Cobb	June 2017
Captain M L C (Tubby) Crawford	June 2017
Lt Cdr Peter Trevalion	July 2017
Commander W G F Organ	August 2017
Lieutenant Peter Lewis	August 2017
Captain I W Powe	September 2017
Captain A D Barlow	September 2017
Mr David C Blamey`	October 2017

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL NAVY SUBMARINE MUSEUM

President: Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope GCB, OBE

Vice Presidents:

Vice-Admiral Sir Simon Lister, KCB, OBE & Michael Pitkeathly MBE

Patrons:

Lord Hennessy & Vice Admiral Sir Tim McClement KCB OBE

Chairman: Rear Admiral Jonathan Westbrook CBE

Vice Chairman: Jock McLees

Committee Members

Michael Bates, Chris Groves, Justin Hughes, Guy Sitwell & Tricia Stephens

Serving Submariners' Representative: WO 1 Andrew Knox RN

Submariners' Association Representative: David Ottley

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