



Friends of the  
Royal Navy  
Submarine Museum



## MINUTES OF THE SOCIETY OF THE TWENTY SEVENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL NAVY SUBMARINE MUSEUM HELD AT THE MUSEUM ON FRIDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023

### President's Address

1. Vice Admiral Sir Tim McClement KCB OBE reported that our president, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope GCB OBE was unable to attend having been taken seriously ill while on holiday and was now, happily, recovering at home. Sir Tim thanked those attending, particularly travellers from afar.
2. He wished particularly to highlight the Friends' financial contribution to the Museum of which the refurbishment of the John Fieldhouse Building in which the AGM takes place was a good example. He further stressed the substantial Friends' commitment to the memorial wall refurbishment project as well as the encouraging news of visitor numbers to the RNSM being better than expected over recent months.
3. After noting with some concern the difficulties of editorial continuity at *All Round Look*, he went on to thank the chairman and committee for their work in ensuring that the NMRN are made aware of our community's deep interest in submarine heritage and history. He commended Tom Herman for his Monday morning online newsletters and noted the retirements from the committee of two Friends' stalwarts – Jock McLees and David Ottley, while welcoming Bob Fancy as the incoming vice-chairman.

### Attendance

4. 56 members, 23 members' guests and 9 official guests attended the meeting.

### Apologies for Absence

5. Apologies were received from: Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, Pat McCaw, Peter Jeanneret, Phil Higgins, Philip Luxton, Henry Buchanan and Giles Fletcher.

### Minutes of the Twenty Sixth AGM

6. The minutes of the twenty sixth AGM were circulated in *ARL 23* and accepted nem con.

### Chairman's Report

7. The Chairman presented his report:
  - a. **Membership.** Membership is currently healthy with a total of 897 members, an increase from 811 this time last year. 53 new members joined independently and 68 under The Submarine Family initiative (TSF). The chairman took the opportunity to encourage those eligible to join the TSF in addition to Friends membership as numbers recruited under TSF would count towards our annual grant from the TSF.
  - b. **Memorial Wall.** A project has been started to establish a new memorial wall managed by Jason Webb with Vince Dobbin acting as the Friends' POC. The funding for this comes from the residue of the Submariner Memorial Fund (approx. £140,000) and also from the winding up of the Navy Club in Mayfair (approx. £50,000). There are a number of variables to be resolved such as the footprint for the memorial vis-à-vis the Blockhouse/Museum boundary; the criteria for inclusion: target audience and the medium for construction. Recent research for the online Book of Remembrance shows that there are many errors on the existing wall and further errors may be uncovered as new research brings them to light – The wall will need to be amended and updated without detriment to its dignity and appearance, and all solutions, including electronic or modular representation, will be considered. The NMRN marketing team are currently evaluating public responses to the existing memorial wall to further inform the project. In

addition to the wall, plaques with digital QR codes providing linkage to OBOR for existing submarine memorials will be funded from the Navy Club largesse. The aesthetic merit of the plaque for the Embankment memorial has been a significant issue and is the subject of lengthy engagement with City of London Corporation, but we are confident of progress.

c. **Fort Blockhouse Closure and Disposal.** The Friends have, in conjunction with the NMRN, maintained a close watch on plans for the future of the Blockhouse site with DIO. In particular the submarine and submariner-related building and thoroughfare names should continue in whatever guise the new estate emerges. The Memorial Chapel is a significant feature of this work and we are determined that it should be treated with the esteem its historic significance demands – The NMRN is interested in taking custodianship of the building and its contents as this is within the scope of our current activities and resources. The issue of SETT has been discussed but the Friends view is that is not a priority for submarine heritage, there being more deserving cases.

d. **Online Book of Remembrance.** The online Book of Remembrance continues with a dedicated team of researchers and continues to be populated with reminders of the sacrifice behind our submarine story.

e. **John Fieldhouse Building Refurbishment.** Members attending noted the significant improvements made to the JFB since last year's meeting, the result of a project led by Jason Webb and to which the Friends provided £40000 of funding. The improvements to the JFB foyer have further highlighted the shortcomings of the mezzanine area, for which a refresh project is being planned.

f. **Curatorial Issues and Acquisitions.** The JFB foyer has been main effort for the curatorial team in recent months but other highlights include

- The collections portal going live on the NMRN website.
- Material relating to the surrender of U Boats at Loch Ryan in 1945.
- Audio head of a Mk 24 torpedo embarked in HMS ONYX during the Falklands War – Gifted by the then CO Lt Cdr Andy Johnson.
- Extensive cataloguing and audit of Submarine Boat files and archive, now housed in the refurbished SH11 in PHD.
- Material from HMS STOIC in the 1940s.
- Aerial photographs of HMS DOLPHIN.
- Conservation and deep cleaning on HMS ALLIANCE which has been suffering from water ingress, also improvement to the sound system.
- Upgrade to X-24 video display and broader context on the X craft story. The Friends have pledged £14000 to this undertaking.

g. **Museum General** . As mentioned during the president's address, visitor numbers have been healthier than expected with improved performances in both retail and gallery visits, visitor numbers up to 35% above expected footfall. The process for providing relevant and specialist submarine-related literature in the museum shop has been overhauled and a more substantial range of reading matter provided for sale in addition to the more commercialised offerings. The museum's Submarine Advisory Group chaired by our own John Clayden reports that as ever, funding and finance is tight and the paucity of cash from the MoD makes initiation of new projects difficult. The improvements to the JFB are the exception rather than the rule with expenditure on site improvements and non-essential maintenance having been reduced by 25% in many areas. Given these conditions, the Friends' contribution is well-recognised and gratefully received by the NMRN Board of Trustees.

h. **Website.** Significant developments have been made on the website with an improved look and feel and better connectivity with the Submarine Family online presence. The new look and feel have been welcomed enthusiastically by users.

i. **HMS COURAGEOUS.** Despite emerging from docking and maintenance and having no shortage of volunteer goodwill there is no access to the general public as NMRN has little management bandwidth available to manage access; there is a sense that this initiative is marking time. We hope for better news in the year ahead as this historic nuclear submarine deserves wider exposure.

j. **All Round Look.** Barrie Downer's health precluded his being able to edit this year's edition and we were very grateful to Peter Christmas for reprising his editor's role in emergency. However, the so far fruitless search for a new editor has led to a review of the necessity for a hard copy yearbook, particularly given that our online footprint increases steadily in quantity and quality. The committee will discuss formally at our meeting in November but *ARL 23* may well be our last paper edition with future such material being purely web-based. The chairman reiterated his plea for a volunteer to step forward given how popular *ARL* is with the membership.

k. **Committee Membership.** David Ottley, who has been a stalwart as an ALLIANCE guide, SA member on the Friends committee, SA member on the Advisory group and in the last couple of years a Trustee on the Friends Committee has decided, reluctantly, to step down. We pay grateful tribute to David for his lengthy and selfless contribution to our heritage and he takes our heartfelt good wishes for the future. Jock McLees, after a lengthy stint as a committee member since July 2007 and Vice Chairman since June 2013, has decided to lay down his burden. Our debt to him is enormous as he has been the conscience of the Royal Navy's submarine heritage and the driving force behind so much of what has been achieved in recent years. While no longer a trustee or formal committee member, he will continue as an emeritus, well placed to provide sage advice and counsel to the committee. A vote of thanks to both our committee leavers was proposed and carried unanimously.

l. **Patronage.** The chairman was pleased to announce that Sarah Kenny OBE had agreed to become a patron of the Friends. Ms Kenny is the chief executive of BMT, a leading maritime technical consulting firm with interests in defence and security, specialist ship design and surveys, critical infrastructure, and environmental modelling. She will bring valuable counsel and influence to our work.

#### **Election of Committee Member.**

8. Bob Fancy was proposed by Justin Hughes, seconded by Peter Christmas and elected *nem con* as committee member and trustee. He was further appointed Vice Chairman succeeding Jock McLees.

#### **Adoption of the Accounts**

9. Income in this period has been exceptional due to the transfer to the Friends of over £150,000 being the balance of funds raised for the Submariner Memorial Appeal. This, plus last year's donation of £50,000 from the RNVR Officers Association is earmarked to form part of a grant to NMRN for the procurement of a new Memorial Wall.

10. Annual subscription donations by members was the same as in the previous year, however income was boosted by the first annual grant of £4,100 by RNRMC in respect of new Friends who joined via The Submarine Family (TSF). It should be noted that this year's grant should be in the region of £8550, an eloquent testament to the benefits of TSF partnership.

11. The 50% balance for the development of the Online Book of Remembrance (OBOR) of £6,000 is showing in the accounts. The balance of a £1,000 grant for events related to HMS URGE remembrance was also paid. This year a grant of £40,000 was made to NMRN toward a major upgrade to the visitor experience in the John Fieldhouse Building (JFB) and funds were also provided for improvements to X24 projection.

12. A grant was also made to Chatham Historic Document for some improvements to Ocelot as part of her 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. There is still considerable scope for supporting new bids for funds, having made allowance for current commitments, a planned Friends' website upgrade, and normal retained reserve.

13. The lack of a Deputy Treasurer is a concern and recorded as a formal management risk; once again a plea went out for a volunteer willing to take on that role, possibly as a precursor to assuming the role of Honorary Treasurer.

14. The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mike Bates, seconded by Francis Dickinson and accepted nem con.

**Appointment of Independent Examiner.**

15. Giles Fletcher was proposed for appointment as Independent Examiner of Accounts and elected nem con.

**Any Other Business.**

16. There being no other business, a date of Friday 13 September 2024 was proposed for next year's meeting and the meeting closed.

**Guest Speaker**

17. Commodore Paul Dunn OBE, Commodore Submarines gave a lively, candid and informative account of the current state and activities of the Royal Navy Submarine Flotilla which was well received by attendees.

**Reception**

18. Following the AGM there was a reception and buffet supper for attendees.



**THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL NAVY SUBMARINE MUSEUM**  
Financial Statement for Period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Income and Expenditure	2022-2023		2021-2022		Balance Sheet	2022-2023		2021-2022	
	Expense	Income	Expense	Income		Asset	Liability	Asset	Liability
<b>Expenditure</b>									
All Round Look	1383		2406		Current A/C Childs and Co	2470		2861	
Committee Expenses	337		32		Deposit A/C Childs and Co	8495		61093	
General Admin	536		191		Virgin Money	-		52912	
Grants to RNSM	42859		5633		PayPal	685		518	
Grant to OCELOT 60	5750		-		Virgin Money 30 Day	236269		-	
Harbour Stations	-		104		Petty Cash	48		50	
Book of Remembrance	6000		6000		Unpresented Cheques	-		30	
HMS URGE Commemoration	950		50		RNSM GM Float	400		400	
Online Payment Fees	169		139						
Website	517		1010		<b>Net Worth/Capital</b>				
					Balance on I and E		130503		66969
					Opening Balances		117864		50893
					Totals	248367	248367	117684	117684
<b>Income</b>									
AGM	1232	1020	105						
Bequests		1000		500					
Christmas Cards	488	1143		919					
Donations		1674		52540					
Gift Aid Tax Claim		5029		5172					
Interest		1584		54					
Subscriptions		22222		22177					
Unity Lottery		1280		1279					
Michaelmas Fayre		195		-					
SMA Closure		151477		-					
TSF Grant		4100		-					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60221</b>	<b>190724</b>	<b>15671</b>	<b>82641</b>					
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>130503</b>		<b>66969</b>					

This Financial Statement has been prepared from the records of the Society of Friends of the Royal Navy Submarine Museum and I certify that it is in accordance with those records.

Peter Jeanneret  
Treasurer

Giles Fletcher  
Independent Examiner



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## FINANCIAL REPORT 2022-2023

Income in this period has been exceptional due to the transfer to the Friends of over £150,000 being the balance of funds raised for the Submariner Memorial Appeal (SMA). This, plus last year's donation of £50,000 from the RNVR Officers Association is earmarked to form part of a grant to NMRN for the procurement of a new Memorial Wall.

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