

Submariners Association

Recognised by the Ministry of Defence
Patron: Admiral of the Fleet the Lord Boyce KG GCB OBE DL
Vice Patron Admiral Sir James Perowne KBE

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President

Rear Admiral Niall SR Kilgour CB

Honorary Chaplain to the Association:

Reverend Paul B. Jupp

NATIONAL COUNCIL CONFERENCE MINUTES OF THE CONFERENCE

Held in the
Holiday Inn Leicester
on
Saturday 25th March 2017

1. **WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Conference, then gave a safety talk with particular reference to emergency exits and reminded those assembled of the 'No Alcohol' rule for the Conference and they were requested to remove any drinks that might be present. He then reminded those attending that only one Delegate per Branch was permitted to sit in the front sections of the seating arrangements and that all the Observers should be located in the rear sections. He then advised the Observers that they were not permitted to take part in the debate but had a useful role in assisting their Delegates to accurately report back to their Branches what went on during Conference. Prior to the Roll Call the Chairman took the opportunity to inform the assembled Delegates that the rules for debate would be explained at the appropriate time, however a Delegate wishing to speak should raise their hand and when asked to stand should clearly state their name and Branch for the benefit of the National Secretary who was recording the proceedings. The Chairman then requested the Delegates to make themselves known and following a count by the Tellers a total of 33 Delegates were found to be in attendance:

2. **ROLL CALL National Management Committee:**

Present	Absent
Admiral Sir James Perowne KBE (Vice-Patron)	Lord Boyce KG GCB OBE DL (Patron)
Rear Admiral Niall SR Kilgour CB (President)	Mr Ray Gritt (Vice President)
Cdr. Bob Seaward OBE (Vice President)	Rear Admiral Tony Whetstone CB (Vice President)
Mr Dave Barlow (Vice President)	Mr Frank Powell (Committee)
Mr Jim McMaster (Chairman)	
Mr Nigel Mellor (Secretary)	
Mr Ian Atkinson (Treasurer)	
Mr Keith Bishop (Membership Secretary)	
Mr. Iain Mackenzie MBE (Committee & Parade Marshal)	
Mr Chris Freeth (Committee)	
Mr Stuart Brown (Committee)	
Mr Frank Pas (Committee)	

Mr Brian Tate(committee)	

Branches Represented:

Australia (proxy)	Medway Towns
Barrow-in-Furness	Middlesex
Basingstoke	Merseyside
Bath	Northern Ireland
Beds & Herts	Norfolk
Birmingham	North East
Blackpool & Fylde	North Staffs
Brierley Hill	Nottingham
Dolphin	Peterborough
East Kent	Plymouth
Essex	South Kent
Gosport	Sunderland
Hull	Sussex
Leicester & Rutland	Scottish
Lincoln	Wales
Manchester	West of Scotland
	West Riding

Total number of Branches represented = 33

Mr Ian Atkinson (National Treasurer) confirmed that all who attended were in date with their annual subscriptions.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the following branches (20):

Blyth & Wansbeck	Morecambe Bay
Burton on Trent	New Zealand
Bridlington	Poole
Cheltenham	Portsmouth
Colchester	Royal Berks
Derbyshire	Sheffield
Dorset	Shropshire
Exeter	Taunton
Gatwick	Teesside
Indalo Spain	Vectis

4. DEPARTED SUBMARINERS

The meeting stood to observe one-minute silence in memory of those members of the Association and indeed all submariners who had Crossed the Bar in the preceding year.

5. PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

President's Address to The SA Conference 25th March 2017

Vice Presidents, Chairman, Members of the NMC, Delegates, Fellow Submariners, I have three things I would like to say, firstly I would like to thank on your behalf Jim McMaster and his National Management Council for their huge amount of work they are a very dedicated team, I would like to say a huge thanks to you and your team.

Secondly, I have travelled over 3,250 miles on Submariners Association Business visiting many Branches across the Country including, Blackpool, Barrow, Faslane, Exeter, Plymouth, Chatham and so on including London I have been made extremely warmly welcomed and I have to say that liquid has not been in short supply. A huge thank you to the Branches I have had the chance to visit.

Finally, a huge welcome to our Rear Admiral Submarines John Weale OBE, who was brilliantly trained, his initiative and energy at bringing the serving and retired submariners together is exceptional. He is a very busy man so John well trained and thank you for your work.

The president then asked if the new Vice patron Sir James Perowne would like to say a few words, Sir James replied "I Picked a good replacement"

6. MINUTES OF THE 2016 NATIONAL COUNCIL CONFERENCE

The Chairman commented that the Minutes from the 2016 NCC were long and had been in the possession of all branches for the past 12 months. As customary he would ask that we do not go through them item by item, if this was acceptable could someone Propose them to be an accurate account of the meeting

Proposed by- Mark Pugh West Riding Branch

Seconded by- Les Catlin Gosport Branch

The Chairman then asked for a show of hands to confirm that the Minutes are a true and accurate record of the 2016 National Council Conference.

FOR: 27 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 6

Motion Carried The Minutes of the NCC 2016 are now CONFIRMED.

7. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

There were two main actions from last years' conference

- a) It was agreed at last year's conference that members of Branches who attend the conference and Reunion are not entitled to claim their expenses. It would appear that this message did not get passed to all Delegates If this affects any of you it might be prudent to have a chat with your Branch secretary.
- b) It was agreed that members who reside outside of the British Isles would pay a reduced rate of subscription, this is currently £5-00 and is in place.

8. OFFICERS REPORTS

Secretary

Nigel Mellor thanked all the Branch secretaries with whom he has worked with over the past year, and for their help in updating the Secretaries Handbook. During the past couple of months, I have been working with our new webmaster Dave Woolterton to update the Site and improve its accessibility. We have created an on-line joining system whilst retaining the trusted paper version. We are starting to record all Submariners who crossed the bar on one database this will include all Submariners irrespective of being a member of the association or not.

There were no questions from the floor

Treasurer.

Good morning Gents

Firstly, I must apologise for the lateness of your report of the uncertified Annual Accounts, this was due to my ill health, indeed I have had my fingers crossed that I would receive the certified copies from the accountant in time for conference, as I didn't supply him with the accounts until much later than usual!!

I am happy to report that the increase in subscriptions was the correct thing to do, because our accounts are now showing a healthy positive balance and we are able to carry out actions we have been unable to do for quite some

time. For instance, we have donated a sum of £500-00 to R.N.B.T. (Submariners Welfare Fund). In previous Years it had been our custom to donate regular sums of money to that fund, however we had to stop that donation when we ceased to receive funding from the now discontinued “national draw”.

The accounts are presented similarly to last year with the three accounts showing detailed “Profit & Loss” figures separately, and then combined into one “Balance Sheet”

Note that the three accounts “Balance at Bank” figures are shown on page 8, Item 5.

It is worth noting that when you compare the Treasurers account with the accountants, mine show far more detail! The reason of course is that the membership demanded more and more detail, whereas the accountant’s figures are produced to the required legalities of the Accountancy profession. Another item worthy of note is the fact the NMC Costs are down.

We have been fortunate, this year to receive some donations, namely: -

- 1) £15,000 from BAE Systems (Ring fenced for Embankment Expenses over three years.)
- 2) £500-00 from WE Remember Submariners (Towards Blue Plaque funding)
- 3) A further sum from We Remember Submariners which Keith Bishop will tell you about in his report.
- 4) Stuart Brown’s company AMBUSCADE Consulting LTD have again sponsored us by covering the cost of Fridays entertainment and the wine and port for the Saturday evening meal. We are grateful to Stuart Brown, WE remember Submariners and BAE systems for their generosity.

Over the past year in my monthly reports I have tried to keep you Up to date with “Financial News” and I would like to inform you of my latest relevant “Web research”

When I took over the position of Treasurer several years ago, I looked into the possibility of having subs paid by direct debit and with more than a little help from Sir James Perowne to whom I owe grateful thanks, I was introduced to someone who had just started a DD system in his association, alas, it was not for us as it was complicated to run and the Association would be held responsible for any charges due to non-Payment.

When we started using the accountancy package, I discovered we could link in to “On-line Banking”, and did this, I also found in the small print that there was an application we could use which would enable us to link to a third party that is ideal for our needs. Basically, once the system is set up (I have almost finished this set-up) members complete an on-line direct debit form and “GO-Cardless” deals with everything and transfers the money to our account all DD details are entered under secure conditions

You will have seen our Accountancy package advertised on TV “Quick Books” and they integrate with the GO-Cardless app. So, it is a bona Fidi organisation. Financially it should save us money. (15p per Transaction!) as opposed to postage.

I am working with a Quick Books expert on getting this set up so when I have completed properly, all members will get details. It will be particularly good for serving personnel, who will be able to virtually set up and forget it will be far easier for both myself and the Membership Secretary to operate and ultimately it should save us money. Finally, we can have a link on the website for it so watch this space.

GOING OUT ON A LIMB I WOULD RECOMMEND USING THIS SYSTEM TO YOU ALL WHOLE-HEARTEDLY.

finally, one of the good things about working with an expert is-you tend to learn things unintentionally, and I picked up a money saving tip, Viz. our quick books package consists of three separate companies (Business, Blue Plaque and Reunion). My expert suggested that by only having only one company with three separate bank accounts in it we could save two thirds of the package costs!! So, that suggestion will be carried out soon after Conference, we are also looking at adding the Slops account in the same way at no further cost to the Association.

Membership Secretary-

Firstly, I would like to demonstrate the new sound system which has been purchased to ensure we have a better sound for the Embankment parade. We sought a reputable supplier and showed him a photo of the Middle Temple garden and asked his advice, he suggested this system would be suitable. We Remember Submariners had agreed to sponsor this project together with the Dolphin Branch, they have both contributed and I would like to thank them for their generosity.

As at 31st December 2016 -we had a membership of 1,697 making a loss of 247 this is made up of

208 lapsed members

65 Crossing the Bar

52 Resigned

However, since that date we have:

62 new members

11 lapsed members re-joined

5 who resigned but have come back.

I have been working with Nigel and the Webmaster to improve the site and with Dave's help we have created an on-line membership application. Since this has started I have had over 20 new members within a one week period. One area of concern is that I do get a lot of applications received from branches saying No reply from message sent. Please bear in mind if this is a serving member they may be deployed somewhere in the world that cannot receive emails.

If you are struggling to get hold of members, Branch secretaries can drop me a message with details and I can assist them in trying to get hold of the member. Please can all branch secretaries ensure we have correct contact details for their branch Members

9-Proposals and recommendations for conference.

Before proceeding the Chairman outlined the rules for the debate as follows:

The Chairman will read the Motion and then invite the proposing Branch to confirm that he has a Seconder for the Proposal and will then ask the Proposer to make his Proposal, following which he will invite the Seconder to make his contribution to the Proposal. He will then open the Debate to the Delegates. A Delegate wishing to speak should raise his hand and wait to be called to speak; each Delegate may speak only once and the Chairman has the right to curtail a speaker if he is going on too long or if he is being repetitive. When all Delegates who wish to have spoken, the Proposer will be asked to conclude the Debate and then a vote will be taken. In the event of a tie the Chairman has the casting vote in accordance with Clause 5(d) of the Rules and Constitution.

Are there any questions from the floor before we proceed?

Proposal 1

Proposed by: Sunderland Branch Secoded by: North-East branch.

. We propose that a nominal sum of £1.00 per member should be donated annually to the Submarine Memorial Fund administered by the Royal Naval Benevolent Fund.

Background Information

Since the discontinuation of the Submariners Association's Annual National Draw, the Submarine Memorial Fund, no longer receives an annual donation from the Association based on a proportion of the proceeds raised by the draw. It now relies solely on either donation from individual branches, association members' or bequests from deceased submariner's families. It is therefore thought, that in order help further in supporting this most worthy cause, which helps both serving and retired submariners in times of financial hardship, that our Association should restart the practice of making an annual donation to the fund. It is felt that the sum of £1.00 per member would be an acceptable amount and would not be detrimental to the national funds.

The Proposing Branch- Sunderland gave their reasons behind this proposal, and the Seconding Branch North East agreed that they supported this proposal,

The chairman opened the floor for discussion following the Rule of Debate

whilst the discussion took place, the Proposer requested that since the proposal had been sent in and hearing that the NMC has started sending Donations (£500 so far this year alone) again to the RNBT, it would wish to withdraw the Proposal and leave it to the NMC to donate suitable funds to this fund, if not satisfied the branch would bring this proposal back to the conference next year.

Proposal No.2

Proposed by: Dolphin Branch

Seconded by: Welsh Branch

That an additional Paragraph to Clause 4 is added to the Rules and Constitution – Subscriptions

Clause 4 (f)

A member will be deemed to be a life member in the year that they reach the age of 90 and exempt from paying National Subscriptions, providing they have been a member of the Association for at least 10 years

Background Information

The Dolphin Branch, like many branches, makes elder members, Life Members and pays their national subscriptions from branch funds. This proposal will reduce the financial burden on branches, perhaps allowing them to make younger members life members of their branch. We leave the number of years' membership open to debate.

I estimate that this proposal would reduce income, to National for subscriptions, by about £1,000 or 4.5%

Proposing branch-Dolphin Branch gave their submissions as to why this was a worthy proposal

Seconding branch-Welsh Branch seconded this proposal.

The chairman opened the floor for discussion using the Rules of Debate. No Delegate wished to comment and this went straight to a vote

Those for 26

Against 5

Abstained 2

The motion needed a two thirds majority and this was met,

Sir James Perowne commented that Branches would need to ensure they maintain links with those life members and ensure they receive suitable recognition at Branch level.

Proposal No.3

Proposed by: Blackpool Branch

Seconded by: Manchester Branch

We wish to propose the Association has an appointed Welfare Officer, at National Level to liaise and assist Branch level issues and help ensure the right assistance and guidance given. This would also further ensure that such organisations ethics are overseen and audited at National level in line with the Submarine Service and Submariners Association objectives alongside other Associations such as SSAFA and the British Legion.

Background

Since recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan a number of well-meaning Charities, Associations and points of support for Veterans in both the local and national level have developed. In some cases, some of these organisations and Charities are through lack of information, education or a feeling there is a need for help in certain areas for veterans causes duplication of services. This in turn reduces possible income flows for establishes or smaller charities and support organisation which consequently limited fund means reduced services available for veterans.

Reason

In most cases a service leaver takes little or no interest in the initial years following their service and the information given at leaving is lost forgotten or even outdated. Therefore, if a Submariners Association welfare section were to be established it would assist local branches to ensure correct and current information is available to all members and their families and in line with the Associations ethics and objectives. With resources stretched and branch sizes reduced a centralised information point that works alongside other organisations and the Submarine Service would ensure an efficient use of resources thus ensuring members are always fully supported at local level through the collection of regulated and accurate information relevant to Submariners and branches. This would also further ensure that any issue a branch encounters no matter how unusual or unknown about would have either an answer for or point of contact for the branch or individuals to deal with, in Confidence that such support is genuine.

At the same time, such a Welfare Officer at national level would ensure that the organisations and charities and information collected for the Submariners Association were both properly up to date and vetted for their services offered. Sadly, especially in Blackpool recent news article have highlighted that there are many charities or organisations who either are not genuine in their alleged help for veterans and prey on the good will of local communities. As a consequence, individual branches would be limited in their ability both financially and with time constraints and limited manning to vet or police such organisations at a local level.

There are also well meaning organisations who just are not suitable to assist in the way they claim, either through lack of resources, finances or ability and although their intentions are heart felt and sincere the reality is that more harm than good from the care offered could be inflicted upon individuals, families and branches who are unaware of the requirement that a more suitable organisation would be better placed to help and assist the veterans their families and the branch.

A central National Welfare Officer of the Submariners Association could ensure that charities organisations, points of contact and services offered are best suited to cater for the needs of veterans and that it would allow branches and local communities to have the confidence the best was being offered and given to its members whilst also ensuring a drain on resources though duplication would be avoided.

This clear audited channel for branches and individuals to check against would also allow them to raise money for such organisations without fear of the organisation either being bogus or disreputable and would allow local organisations recommended by branches to be correctly scrutinised by an independent team at the national executive to ensure all is what it seems without local branches being taken advantage of by professional scammers or poorly equipped organisations.

Iain Mackenzie gave the conference a detailed explanation as to the role of a Welfare Officer and some of the pitfalls attached to this title and role

Proposing Branch-Blackpool gave a detailed intro as to why the branch wish this proposal to move forward, the seconding Branch Manchester as agreed that it was a worthwhile proposal.

The chairman opened the floor to debate following the Rules of Debate.

Graham Smith Brierley Hill stated he thought this position is already covered by the RNBT and SSAFA

Dave Townsend Essex explained he was the welfare officer for Essex branch and people taking on this role will have under law a Duty of Care this is very precise. Perhaps the committee could take responsibility of producing some form of advice sheet or contact list for suitable persons that have knowledge of these matters.

Bruce Bodio Bath Branch: we discussed this matter at length and feel the title of Welfare Officer is wrong, we believe there should be a pack or person who could point people in right direction of for assistance in these matters.

Les Catlin Gosport Branch, would echo statements made from previous speakers perhaps the NMC could produce a list of suitable contacts.

Alex Webb Barrow Branch: feels this role is beyond the role of one person without technical and monetary support, it is believed that this matter is being addressed by possibly Veterans UK

Andrew Kirk East Kent Branch: we believe this would be a full-time role and should be left to branches to deal with.

Chris Freeth NMC: The chairman asked me to look into this matter as my role as the CONA Representative, the RNA have relevant people in place who can deal with this and can be contacted if help is needed

The proposing branch then summed up why they believe this proposal should be voted for

The vote took place the result being

For 2

Against 31

Abstained 0

The Chairman agreed to undertake compiling a list of relevant people to send out to all branches

10 - **APPOINT A BRANCH TO PROPOSE THE 2018 REUNION TOAST** "To the Submarine service "by rota this will be the Hull Branch, the branch Delegate agreed they would be honoured to undertake this task.

11- **ELECTION OF OFFICERS.**

National Vice Chairman

There are two Nominations for the position of National Vice Chairman as follows:

Iain Mackenzie West of Scotland Branch

25 Votes

Therefore, Iain MacKenzie is duly elected as National Vice-Chairman of the Submariners Association.

National Management Committee (NMC) Members

There are three applicants for two positions on the NMC.

The applicants are:

Andrew Morgan -Welsh Branch	28 votes
Frank Pas Sheffield Branch	34 votes
Frank Powell -Lincoln Branch	30 votes

Frank Pas and Frank Powell are re-elected back onto the NMC for a three-year period, with the election of Iain Mackenzie to the post of national Vice-Chairman his place on the NMC will be taken by Andrew Morgan
Congratulations to you all for your elections onto the National Management Committee

12. Address by Rear Admiral Submarines.

Rear Admiral John Weale OBE gave an in-depth and Interesting presentation using Power point and explained his plan to ensure the Submarine service and related groups work as a single group encompassing both Serving and non-Serving submariners, he discussed several new matters this included producing a Submarine Tie, Submarine Tartan and a Submarine whisky which be introduced with the next year. He has created a space in the offices of Rear Admiral submarines for the purpose of a member of the Submariner’s Association, this will be used by the Chairman Jim McMaster for the use of conducting Association business. There followed a long and healthy discussion about how we as an Association can help move this forward. This will be discussed at the next NMC meeting and suggestions sent out to the branches

13. Short presentation by Chris Freeth

Chris explained the background of CONA and its benefits to members of the Association these include discounted holidays and travel Insurance, for further information visit the CONA website or contact Chris direct

14. Close the meeting

The Chairman wished to say a few words of thanks to the following people who work on your behalf of you for the Association

Iain Mackenzie (assisted By Dave Barlow) for finding this hotel and negotiation such a good deal on our behalf

Dave Woolterton for taking on the role as webmaster and developing the new site.

Trevor Thomas has been our National Standard Bearer for some years now. His knowledge and experience of parade etiquette has been invaluable to the other less experienced branch Standard Bearers. I would like to thank Trevor for all that he does being ever present whenever required.

Ted Hogben for representing us at the Submarine Museum Trustees meetings and keeping us in the picture with any and all developments in that sphere.

Dave Ottley our representative on the Friends of the Museum group.

Also, a big thank you to the President, vice presidents and members of the NMC who have worked hard over the last year on your behalf to ensure the Association runs smoothly and in a sustainable manner, they do take some stick from various areas but they take it in

Tot Time is scheduled to follow on completion of this NCC so there is only one think left for me to do.....

This meeting is now CLOSED – Have a great weekend.