

# Submariners Association

Recognised by the Ministry of Defence  
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**MINUTES OF THE NMC MEETING**  
**held in the West Bromwich RNA Club**  
**on**  
**6th January 2018 at 1230**

**Present:** Mr Jim McMaster (Chairman)  
Mr Iain Mackenzie MBE (Vice Chairman & Parade Marshal)  
Mr Ian Vickers (Secretary)  
Mr Nigel Mellor (Treasurer)  
Mr David Woolterton (Membership)  
Mr Frank Powell (Committee)  
Mr Stuart Brown (Committee)  
Mr Frank Pas (Committee)  
Mr Brian Tate (Committee)

1) **Welcome:**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished all present a Happy New Year. He pointed out that our new Secretary Ian Vickers was attending his first NMC meeting and extended a welcome to him. He explained to Ian that everything said within the confines of the meeting was Confidential and not to be divulged or discussed with anyone outside of this meeting. This allowed all members to freely express their views and discuss matters openly, passionately and honestly without the fear that anything said may be taken out of context and used by others as a means of satisfying their own agenda. Ian agreed with this rule. It was agreed that until such times as Ian had constructed his various e-mail lists and felt confident enough to go solo I would continue to lead in the role. However, all correspondence to the Secretary will be shared between us. Everyone wished Ian well in his new role.

2) **Apologies:**

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Rear Admiral Niall Kilgour CB (President), Rear Admiral Tony Whetstone CB, Mr Ray Gritt, Mr. Dave Barlow, Cdr Bob Seaward OBE (all Vice Presidents), Mr Chris Freeth, Mr Andy Morgan (all Committee) We wish Andy a speedy recovery back to good health. CPO Paul Swaby (Serving Rep) Paul set out from home as usual to attend the meeting but his car broke down just outside Maidstone causing him to reluctantly abandon the trip and limp home again.

Mr Ian Atkinson sends his apology for not attending due to ill health. Ian is the outgoing Treasurer but has agreed to remain 'available' for guidance and consultation whilst Nigel gains full knowledge and confidence in this complicated and important Role.

At this point all present agreed that the NMC and indeed the entire Association owed Ian a massive vote of thanks for all the work he has carried out whilst performing the role of Treasurer. His honesty, integrity and commitment are an example to all of us and even during the period when he was subjected to unwarranted and inaccurate criticism from certain quarters Ian carried on working on our behalf. His cheerful disposition coupled with an extraordinary work ethic are standards we should all seek to emulate. Our thanks go to Ian. THANK YOU and BZ.

3) **Minutes of July 2017 NMC Meeting:**

You may recall that July was the last time we sat together for a full, formal meeting as we decided that we should be represented at the Service in West Minster Abbey on the afternoon of the Saturday before our Embankment Parade. To attend this important service we would need to cancel our scheduled meeting on the Saturday afternoon. To accommodate this we decided that we would hold a Video Conference Meeting in late in October (Nigel has provided Minutes of that meeting) and on the Saturday we would meet late in the afternoon with the purpose of tying up any *loose ends* for the Embankment Parade the following day. So having said that can we agree that the Minutes are an accurate record of both meeting? This was Proposed by Frank Pas and seconded by Nigel Mellor. All present agreed.

4) **Outstanding Actions:**

With reference to the Action Grid, (**Annex 1**) it can be seen that most actions are now complete with only a few still 'On Going'. The Committee felt that this would be a proper place to add a short note of explanation regarding **Action Item 290717-01**.

Andy Morgan took the action to consult a solicitor (a member of his extended family) and find out if the Submariners Association would be suitable for or benefit from holding Charitable Status. This is a point which comes up every few years and this is the fourth time such an enquiry has been carried out as far as I am aware so clearly members do need an answer. Unknown to Andy or anyone else, I (JMCM) also spoke to a solicitor, a Captain in the Royal Navy Submarine Service, and the independent conclusion from both gentlemen is the same. Charitable Status would not be the best route for our Association. The reasons are many but to summarise briefly it would mean a restructuring of the Association and its governance, e.g. we would have to have a Board of Trustees. The rules for Charitable Status are different in Scotland and England. How we use our finances would be strictly regulated and constrained. We would be expected to give out 80% of our money annually. It would be very difficult to receive donations from another charity without very specific rules being adhered to. Finally, we are just too small to reap any substantial benefits from Charitable Status. We could grow and most definitely intend to grow but that takes time! The above reasons are in no particular order of importance but intended to give you a picture of what would be involved. The advice from both solicitors as has been consistent as it has been in the past, in that we should carry on as we are.

5) **Correspondence:**

The vast majority of correspondence received is by e-mail and is usually distributed as and when it arrives. One letter arrived recently from the Hull Branch which stated that their members (no numbers were mentioned) wanted to investigate holding our annual reunions in naval areas with some connection to the Submarine Service. The Hull branch gave no indication as to who should organise this, what the criteria would be and who would ultimately be responsible for the outcome. It was pointed out to the sender that it is quite clear in our Rules & Constitution, NMC Standing Orders Section 4 -

*The National Management Committee shall generally organise and arrange all the National events of The Association including but not necessarily restricted to: National Council Annual Conferences, reunions and memorial parades*

The NMC are volunteers elected by the members to run the Association on their behalf which is exactly what they strive to do. Clearly the members of the Hull branch have no idea of the complex, high expectations and varied requirements of the Reunion attendees who will accept only the best for their annual 'get-together'. The Hull branch were reminded that to alter the R & C they must present a properly worded proposal to the Delegates at the NCC who would then debate and vote on the matter thereby determining the opinion of the majority of Association members. No such proposal was submitted.

The NMC decided that an independent Feasibility Study should be carried out on the above issue and the results made known to the members of the Association.

6) **Officers Reports**

**Secretary's Report** - Jim McMaster

This Report is given by JMCM as the new Secretary, Ian Vickers, is still not fully up to speed.

All correspondence has been distributed as stated above and all relevant information distributed to branch secretaries for distribution to their members. The assumption being that branch secretaries are in fact carrying

out this very important function. It is the only way that we the NMC can ensure that all Association members are aware of all Association events and happenings. If your branch secretary is not keeping you fully informed please let the NMC know.

**Treasurer's Report** - Nigel Mellor

Nigel explained that because our Accounts were with the external auditor he was unable to supply us with a full Income and Expenditure Report. However, he was able to give us an accurate indication of our overall balance.

**Balances as of 05/01/2018**

<b>Business Account</b>	<b>Balance at Bank</b>	<b>£45,833. 86 (including Ring-fenced £10,000 for Embankment)</b>
<b>Blue Plaque Account</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>£5540. 12</b>
<b>Reunion Account</b>	<b>Balance at Bank</b>	<b>£15,953. 22</b>
<b>Slops Account</b>	<b>Balance at Bank</b>	<b>£314. 89</b>

At this point Sandy Powell pointed out that for future plaques he will do all that he can to condense the wording so that it fits the standard round plaque. Using the square form is more expensive and will be avoided in future.

Everyone congratulated Nigel and Frank Pas for finally getting the Slops Account into our NatWest account. This will make it so much more transparent and easier to deal with.

Finally, Nigel assured us that the complete audited Balance sheets will be available for distribution in time for the NCC.

**Membership Secretary's Report** - David Woolterton

David started his report by explaining the wording on his Membership Status Sheet. This is a result of JMcM asking what the terminology meant. Once explained by David it all became clear. Obviously another Senior Moment for the Chairman!

The membership status is as follows:

Membership on 31 December 2017 - 1697

There are still 145 applicants being processed prior to becoming full members.

During this period 74 members Crossed the Bar

David informed us that there were now 119 members paying by Direct Debit which is encouraging and we would earnestly request that all members seriously consider this method of payment for the annual subscriptions. There is an action on Nigel and Stuart to write to all branch secretaries explaining in detail how the system works and the benefits associated with the system. (200717-03)

**Serving Reps Report** - Paul Swaby (read by Nigel in Paul's absence)

As far as my Serving Rep report goes, I have very little to present, however, the following bullet points are provided below:

- DRASM has included LT Roberts VC and PO Gould VC Blue Plaque events on the Submarine Service Calendar. The requested manpower of 6 serving personnel has been put forward and this will be sorted out closer to the time. I will keep in contact with WO1 Taff Care who has been tasked with identifying the personnel.
- I attended the Gosport Branch monthly meeting, last November, and was made to feel most welcome, even got a hand clap after thanking them for their hosting me.
- I fully support you amendments concerning the re-write of the Rules and Constitution concerning the full inclusion of all trainee submariners into the welcoming arms of the SA. The management of those failing to make the grade should not present an issue. I also see it as an opportunity for the SA to take an active mentoring role of our young volunteers. Whilst I have not been able to discuss this issue with RASM/DRASM, I believe they would most definitely welcome it with open arms and consider it a further positive step in further integrating the Serving arm with the SA Veterans.

Again my apologies for not being able to attend, obviously in need of a new car. I will pop in to see you during the next few weeks, once I have settled into my new office, as I have a few ideas to discuss about how to further develop my role once based in Faslane.

I wish you all a Happy New year and hope to catch up soon Paul. Serving Rep.

As this is the end of the Officers Reports I would like to take this opportunity to thank David Woolterton and Nigel Mellor for their hard work and dedication on taking over their various roles since the passing of Keith Bishop. Their hard work is paying off. Thank you and BZ

7) **Discuss 2018 NCC Proposals and Recommendations** - All

The Draft NCC Agenda sent to NMC members for consideration was of course a '*work in progress*' as we may need to modify it prior to distribution to branches. For example RASM may wish to address the assembled group at some stage of the proceedings. I will contact him and ask. Lord Boyce may not arrive at the venue until sometime after the NCC so he would not be able to address the group.

Before discussing these Proposals I would remind you all that it is not in our remit to veto any Proposal. All we need do is ensure that the meaning is clear and not offensive in any way.

Proposal No. 1 from Norfolk Branch is clear. However the NMC should add an explanatory note for the benefit of the full membership explaining that the Memorial does not belong to the SA and is in fact a National Monument of Historical Interest and Grade II\* Listed. This is part of our heritage.

Proposal No.2 from the Scottish branch is clear but they have chosen not to submit any background information. The NMC should point out that to police this would be almost impossible and that there already exists an International Submariners Association.

Proposal No.3 from the Scottish branch is clear but they have chosen not to submit any background information. The NMC should present the membership with a note on the future liabilities and costs we expect to incur

Proposal No.4 from the Scottish branch is clear but they have chosen not to submit any background information. The NMC should point out to members that this would contravene R & C Section Clause 3 section D (ii) Clause 10 also covers this matter. This would require Membership Sec. To hold a register of all Associate members.

Recommendation 1 is considered satisfactory with only a couple of slight modifications.

Recommendation 2 is also considered satisfactory with a couple minor changes and in some places a much fuller explanation of points.

Post of National Chairman. There is only one candidate therefore no vote required.

Vacancy on NMC. There is only one vacancy and two candidates therefore a vote will be required.

It was felt that a note should be sent to the candidates explaining why there is only one vacancy this year. The new Secretary Ian Vickers agreed to contact the volunteers and pass on the reason.

8) **Up-Date on 2018 Annual Reunion** - Iain Mackenzie

Iain started by expressing his disappointment at the poor response from NMC members with regards to formally booking their accommodation for the Reunion. Iain pointed out that he will not do business 'by word of mouth'; all bookings must be done in the proper manner using the Forms provided.

A good percentage of the rooms in the hotel booked for us have now been taken so the message is, if you have not already done so, please get your Booking Forms and menu choices to Iain as soon as possible. Last year there were 180 people at the Reunion and so far this year there are approximately 140 bookings so things are progressing well. However please be aware that all rooms not taken up by 24 February will be 'returned' to the hotel for their use. Please do not miss this opportunity to spend a couple of days in the company of your oppo, spinning dits and consuming moderate quantities of alcohol. Do it now!

It was decided after debate that there will be a raffle at the Reunion. Stuart Brown and Sandy Powell will take charge of this event. Profit from this raffle will be donated to charities yet to be decided.

9) **Blue Plaque Up-Date** - Sandy Powell

Sandy has provided comprehensive reports on the next three Submarine Service VC Blue Plaque recipients which are contained in **Annex 2**

Sandy has worked very hard to overcome some resistance to the location plans for some of our Blue Plaques but has diligently worked to make a strong case for fixing our plaques in prominent positions.

10) **Embankment Parade 2017 Wash-up** - All

The first thing to be said about this year's Service of Remembrance is that the sound system we now own is perfectly adequate for the event. Finally, after several years everyone attending could hear what was being said.

A number of suggestions have been put forward as possible improvements to the overall event, for example can we have the Drumhead Altar constructed in a ceremonial manner, could we have a suitably sized Ensign hung at the stairs; these will be discussed with the Parade Marshal in advance of the 2018 Parade. It was noted that tea and coffee was available this year and I know that this was appreciated by some members. For your information we have already booked Middle Temple for our 2018 Service this year.

Many of you will know that we were invited to visit a local pub on completion of our service. The Tom Cribb pub is situated on Panton Street near Piccadilly Circus and the landlord and staff are very keen to form a long-term relationship with the Submarine Service. They made everyone welcome and provided an excellent free buffet so I guess this will become regular meeting place on completion of future Services.

11) **Up-date on National Slop Shop** - Frank Pas

Sales from the Slop Shop have been good and continue to be so. Frank has taken a full inventory of stock and with the help of Nigel Mellor and Ian Atkinson the Slops Account has been transferred from Barclay's Bank and incorporated into the main Association Accounts held by NatWest Bank. This means the Slop Shop accounts are subject to the same stringent controls and transparency as our main accounts. Work continues with the help of David Woolterton to enhance the Web Site display of goods and their prices. It is anticipated that this task will be completed soon. One of the stumbling-blocks at the moment is understanding fully the pricing structure of suppliers. The Slop Shop is a work in progress.

12) **Important dates for 2018** - All

The issue to discuss here is the matter of when we hold our NMC meetings in the coming year. These are the proposed dates and venue for our 2018 meetings;

NCC	24 March	Derby
NMC	21 April	West Brom. RNA Club
NMC	28 July	HM Naval Base Clyde
NMC	16 October	Video Conference ( 1900, ZOOM)
NMC	03 November	UJC London (1600)

These are the dates agreed.

13) **AOCB** - All

Nigel Mellor put forward a suggestion that we should try and organise a 'Road Show' where a couple of members of the NMC visit areas throughout the country and invite local branches to attend and discuss any issues they may have. The meeting to be held on a Saturday at a central location where a number of branches could attend. This suggestion inspired a lively debate where a number of scenarios and situations were discussed. The conclusion was that not only would this be expensive, it also took away yet another Saturday afternoon from NMC members, plus there could be no guarantee that branch members would attend. It was pointed out that there already existed in this electronic age plenty of avenues for members to express any matters on their mind. Those present decided that this idea would not be pursued.

Ian Vickers informed us that the International Submariners Association was concerned about the alleged desecration of war graves, particularly sunken submarines. There was some discussion and confusion as to what Ian wanted from the Association. Basically, the ISA group want the Association to endorse their intention to write letters to heads of government protesting about this illegal activity on sunken submarines. Whilst everyone present agreed that such desecration was appalling, there are government bodies who deal with such matters for example the Naval Historical Association, the Ministry of Defence and the Heritage Minister Nick Kelso and of course the CWGC. All of whom were much better placed than the SA to tackle this issue. It was agreed that with so little details and knowledge of the others involved or their motives and long-term intentions we could not put the Associations name to this endeavour.

There being no further business the meeting was closed.

The next meeting will be the NCC on 24th March in Derby.

## ANNEXE 1

### ACTION GRID - 6th January 2018

Item	Action	Action By	Status
220417-12	Nigel Mellor/Dave Woolterton to continue writing recommendations for Voting Options	NM/DW	On Going
220417-16	Brian Tate to write letter to all branches asking for nominations for biography entry in Association diaries	BT	On Going
290717-02	N. Mellor & D. Woolterton to complete Recommendation Paper regarding electronic voting systems	NM/DW	On Going
200717-03	N. Mellor and S. Brown to compose letter for distribution explain Direct Debit system	SB/NM	On Going
060118 -01	Jim McMaster to contact CWO Andy Knox for an up-date on the two WWII submariners who were assaulted in their homes.	JMcM	

## ANNEX 2

### **PLACE - ROBERTS/GOULD - MAGENNIS VC, RN - NMC REPORT JANUARY 2018 NMC MEETING**

#### **LIEUTENANT BASIL CHARLES GODFREY PLACE VC, RN (Later Rear Admiral)**

I am very pleased to confirm that the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovil have agreed to the mounting of a Blue Commemorative Plaque to Lieutenant Basil Charles Godfrey Place VC (later Rear Admiral FAA). The ceremony will commence at 1400 in Hall 2 on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

The museum has requested that the plaque be delivered to them at least 7 days prior to the event so that they can prepare the area. Owing to insurance purposes, the museum staff will also be mounting the plaque.

Invitations for both the Association and the Museum have been printed and 50 invitations forwarded to the FAA Museum. I have already sent invitations to the various dignitaries to attend, including the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset, High Sheriff of Somerset, Mayor and Leader of the Yeovil Council, Place family members, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Benjamin Bathurst, CO of RNAS Yeovilton and other Senior Naval Officers etc..., the majority of which have accepted. I have also invited the local Sea Cadets Unit "TS MANTLE VC" to provide six cadets as an honour guard. It would therefore be appropriate if our President wears uniform.

Following the ceremony the museum will be providing a reception.

I am also in contact with RNAS Yeovilton to determine if one of the resident Padre's will lead the dedication ceremony and the Museum's Public Relations representative to assist with PR.

The three Submarine Association Branches closest to the venue are Bath (30 miles) Dorset (35 miles), Poole (42 miles) If any of these or other branches wishes to attend they should in the first instance contact me for an invitation and to determine the number of members that can attend.

As for previous Blue Plaque dedication ceremonies our National Standard and Branch Standards are encouraged to attend.

I will keep you informed.

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#### **LIEUTENANT PETER SCAWEN WATKINSON ROBERTS AND PETTY OFFICER THOMAS WILLIAM GOULD VC, RN**

The date of Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2018 has now been agreed with The Kings School, Canterbury to mount the Blue Plaque to Roberts VC and Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2018 for Petty Officer Gould VC on the Dover County Council (CC) Offices (previously the Dover Library).

However, in view that the building at Dover is Grade II listed, Dover CC are now going through the process of approval or otherwise which I have been informed will not be until sometime in February. As part of this process Dover CC have asked me to confirm which plaque will be used and if the securing lugs/bolts will be positioned within the mortar joints of

the bricks in the intended position on the Library. I have now confirmed that we will be using a round 18” diameter plaque but am unable to confirm that the securing lugs will be mounted within the mortar joints. The reasons for this is that Paul Swaby has discovered that the construction of the Library is with hand-made bricks which are all different sizes, therefore it will be difficult, but not impossible, to mount the plaque as requested by Dover CC.

The process of obtaining listed building consent for mounting the Gould VC Blue Plaque is overall delaying the process of inviting the dignitaries as some of which will be invited to both Roberts and Gould VC ceremonies. On that note I took the opportunity of informing Admiral of the Fleet the Lord Boyce/Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports during the Embankment Parade of the tentative date for Gould VC Blue Plaque as it would be good if he could attend.

I am currently communicating with Paul Swaby and one of the Dover County Councillors who have overall been a great help in conducting direct liaison with Dover CC and also in trying to speed up the process of gaining approval to mount Gould VC Blue Plaque.

Paul Swaby has also informed me that RASM has agreed for a small contingent of Submariners to attend both Blue Plaque events at Canterbury and Dover.

Furthermore, the Kings School has a Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and it has been suggested that it would be appropriate if they formed a guard of honour for the Dedication Ceremony. Rear Admiral Niall Kilgour CB has therefore agreed to attend in uniform.

The pictures below show the agreed site at The Kings School, Canterbury and the proposed site in Dover - You should note that the Dover site is immediately adjacent to the War Memorial Garden and considered most appropriate.



Proposed site Canterbury



Proposed site Dover

It is requested that the National Standard, local branches Medway Towns (Dover 46m/Canterbury 30m), East Kent (Dover 20m/Canterbury 19m) & South Kent (Dover 22m/Canterbury 25m) be encouraged to attend both events with their Standards.

I will keep you informed as to progress.

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**LEADING SEAMAN JAMES JOSEPH MAGENNIS VC, RN**

Following most useful advice from Davy George of the Belfast Branch I have managed to track down and establish contact with William Paul Magennis (his son, known as Paul) who now lives in France.

He has agreed in principle to mounting the plaque on the 'Titanic Centre', Belfast as Magennis's School and the house where his father was born has been demolished. In addition the Town Hall already has both a statue and plaque in commemoration of him.

I consider the 'Titanic Centre' would be most appropriate as they have thousands of visitors per year and the plaque would be readily seen.

I have now written to the 'Titanic Centre' with a suggestion to hold a meeting, at their convenience sometime in February 2018 to discuss arrangements. I am also looking at a date in September 2018, either Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> for the ceremony.



Titanic Centre, Belfast

I will keep you informed.

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Sandy Powell

January 2018