

Minutes of the Annual Membership Meeting

12 June 2021

The 95th Annual Meeting of the Naval Historical Foundation (NHF) was held virtually and commenced at 11:00 AM (EDT) on Saturday, 12 June 2021. The Chairman, Admiral William J. Fallon, USN (Ret.) welcomed those in attendance and stated the goal of expanding the membership further in the upcoming year.

He then provided a recap of the past year. It was a challenging year, and although he thought that the Foundation would recover from the difficulties of COVID a little sooner than we did, normal activities should be able to resume in the near future. Despite this challenge, the Foundation has generated a number of virtual programs on interesting topics.

Admiral Fallon then remembered those members and friends of the NHF that passed away in the past year:

- Director of the Navy Department Library Glenn Helm
- Former Senator and Secretary of the Navy John Warner
- Board Member Dr. Jack London
- Board Member Mr. Jim Hornfischer
- Former NHF President Rear Admiral John Mitchell, USN (Ret.)

Admiral Fallon then introduced the current President of the Foundation, Vice Admiral Frank Pandolfe, USN (Ret.) to discuss current and future events. Admiral Pandolfe began by reminding members of the Foundation's mission and outlining the committees and activities being implemented in pursuit of these goals, which were to be discussed further by each of the committee leads. He also noted that the past 12 to 18 months have been challenging due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced the closing of the Navy Museum and with it the gift shop, which is a major source of revenue for the NHF. The NHF has had to move to online events and also shift to other means of fundraising in order to compensate for this. The staff can best be described as adaptable for moving online and adjusting. Admiral Pandolfe gave a brief overview of the Awards and Recognition program to be discussed more fully later in the program. All of the awards are designed to inspire the study of Naval History. There is also a strong outreach program to the members via the *Second Saturday* webinars, the weekly *Thursday Tidings* newsletter and a quarterly newsletter, *Pull Together*.

The Membership Committee has developed a strategic plan to grow the membership which has been at about 1000 for a while. The goal for the current year is to get to 1200 but to achieve that goal we will need help from members reaching out to friends and encouraging them to join. The Finance Committee would provide a complete report, but we had a decent year due to a favorable stock market and some large gifts. However, there is a need for structural changes given that the Foundation is spending more each year than is being brought in through the regular fundraising efforts. Members can help by attending events, making contributions and recruiting new members.

Captain Jim Noone, USNR (Ret.) gave the Membership Committee Report. He stated that we are making progress with 1017 members at the end of May. He presented a snapshot of the membership numbers for the last 5 years which had declined to about 700 at the end of 2016. There was a large gain in new members in 2018 with several being signed up at an in-person event but due to not collecting contact information, most of these did not renew the following year. With no in-person events in 2020 (which are a significant source of new members), there were only 90 new members added. However, renewals improved to about 60%. Due to a new membership plan, so far

in 2021 there has been a steady growth in membership except for a drop from 1031 at the end of April to 1017 at the end of May. This was mainly due to the lack of up-to-date contact information for 13 NROTC graduating midshipmen. As previously mentioned, there is a plan to grow the membership but so far we are lagging behind and help is needed from all members to help ramp up numbers in the second half of 2021.

**NHF Membership Report
2020 Year-End/Prior Years**

<u>Membership</u>	<u>New Members</u>	<u>Renewals</u>
2020 1,005	2020 90	2020 59%
2019 1,006	2019 231	2019 44%
2018 1,131	2018 329	2018 83%
2017 908	2017 126	2017 75%
2016 694	2016 33	2016 60-70%

Rear Admiral Vincent Griffith USN (Ret.) presented the Finance and Audit Committee report. The Spring 2021 *Pull Together* has a synopsis of the 2020 financial status. He highlighted the receipt of the second half of the Wilde estate gift and the forgiveness of the Paycheck Protection Program revenue liability, both of which helped offset the impact of the pandemic. In addition, the generosity of the members and supporters helped greatly. The bottom line is that the Foundation did not generate as much revenue as expenses but did not have to take funds from the investment account. Admiral Griffith had the following recommendations for 2021:

- Monitor bank accounts to ensure the NHF is capable of paying expenses and pulling \$50,000 from the IA money market account if needed.
- Start in-person events as soon as possible to generate revenue.
- Increase membership revenue.
- Continue to solicit donations from members, corporations and friends of the NHF.

Executive Director Rear Admiral Sonny Masso, USN (Ret.), filling in for Board Vice President Marty Bollinger then gave a report on the Naval Academy Superintendent’s Leadership and Vision Award contest, which was sponsored by the late NHF Board member Dr. Jack London. Mr. Bollinger has led this program for all four years of its existence and each year the quality has gotten better. The three winners this year were:

- First Place: Midshipman 3/C Jennifer Sun
- Second Place: Midshipman 3/C Nels J. Waaraniemi
- Third Place: Midshipman 3/C Brett Brady

Dr. David Rosenberg gave a report on additional recognition programs. He first recognized the winners of the 2020 Captain Kenneth L. Coskey National History Day Prize for high school students. The 2021 competition will be held later this June. The winner of the Vice Admiral Robert F. Dunn History Essay for NROTC midshipmen was Mahlon Sorensen from Yale University. His winning paper was published in the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 editions of *Pull Together*. The deadline for the 2021 Dunn competition is 30 June. Midshipman (now Second Lieutenant USMC) Robert Schrader received the Captain Edward L. “Ned” Beach Jr. award for academic excellence in history.

Dr. Charles Chadbourne was recognized as the 2020 NHF Volunteer of the Year for his many years of service to the Foundation, most notably for his work on the Teachers of Distinction program and as editor of the *International Journal of Naval History*.

Finally, the three winners of the 2021 Commodore Dudley W. Knox Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Naval History were announced. The three winners are:

- Dr. Kathleen Williams
- Dr. Robert Browning

- Dr. Thomas Hone

Rear Admiral Sam Cox USN (Ret.), Director, Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHHC) gave a status report on the activities of NHHHC. He began by recognizing the loss of several stalwarts including Dr. London, Senator Warner, Admiral Mitchell and Jim Hornfischer. Admiral Cox had nominated Mr. Hornfischer for a Navy Distinguished Public Service Award which was approved and presented to him along with the NHF Distinguished Service Award before his passing. Within NHHHC, Mr. Glenn Helm, NHHHC's Senior Librarian for over 30 years was lost to COVID which was a serious loss but fortunately the only one.

The National Museum of the U.S. Navy (NMUSN) was closed due to the pandemic but has reopened as of Memorial Day weekend. During the closure NHHHC was able to work on and reduce their backlog. The first pre-sail conference for the USS *Constitution* was held. The Constitution is going to do a number of turn-around cruises this summer and although Admiral Cox does not know how many seats he will have control over, he requested that the NHF identify deserving persons and provide him with those names to add to his list.

One major NHHHC project is the rebuilding of one of the warehouses as the new home for the operational archives and research repository. This will cost \$41M and will be named the Samuel Eliot Morison Naval History Research Center. Ground was broken earlier this year and the projected opening is June 2022. Another project is the upcoming \$36M drydocking and overhaul of the Historic Ship *Nautilus* which will extend its ability to host visitors for another 30 years. Working with Naval Reactors, obtaining the standards for a museum ship was identified as a more cost-effective option than scrapping the vessel.

In 2019, NHHHC worked with the late Paul Allen's research vessel *Petrel* to locate and tentatively identify the wreck of the destroyer USS *Johnston* (DD 557), lost in the Battle of Samar. This year identification of the wreck as the *Johnston* was confirmed by NHHHC, working with Victor Vescovo and his submersible, and extensive data was collected which is still being analyzed and modeled but will be made available when complete.

Finally, Admiral Cox gave an update regarding the plans for a new National Museum of the United States Navy, located outside the main gate of the Navy Yard where it will be more accessible to visitors. The Secretary of the Navy chose the Navy Museum Development Foundation in January to help raise the required funds. Personnel associated with it have a track record of raising \$100M+ for projects of similar scope. Negotiations for a land swap to get the proper site are proceeding and the Secretary of the Navy has allocated \$37M in the FYDP to fund a program office for the museum which will provide government oversight. The big challenge remains raising the funds for construction, however.

In closing, the NHHHC is continuing to produce publications and responding to taskers from the fleet. Its profile with the fleet has been raised over the past few years.

Next the NHF Executive Director, Rear Admiral Sonny Masso, USN (Ret.), gave a report on the Foundation's activities for the past year. The NHF has had a busy year and is looking forward to reengaging with live events beginning in August. There have been some personnel changes with Tyler Robinson replacing Sean Bland in March as the Membership Director and as editor of *Thursday Tidings*. Ensign Bland has returned to his ministerial studies and preparations for a naval career. Two significant volunteers have also joined, Lieutenant Commander Sean Walsh, USN (Ret.) and Mr. Rory Mcalevy. A list of upcoming Second Saturday programs in the next quarter was provided. More importantly, live events are starting again with the following planned:

- A luncheon on August 12 at the Army Navy Country Club to present the 2020 Knox Medal to Dr. Michael Crawford and Captain Peter Swartz, USN (Ret.) and the Admiral DeMars Award for Outstanding Service to Rear Admiral Bud Langston, USN (Ret.).

- A dinner on September 24 in Annapolis following the McMullen Naval History Symposium to honor the 2021 Knox Medal recipients and to salute the USNA Superintendent's Leadership and Vision Award winners.
 - A Five Star Mess Night on November 6 at the National Museum of the United States Navy, commemorating the centennial of the arrival of the Unknown Soldier at the Washington Navy Yard via the USS *Olympia*.
 - A solemn celebration of the 80th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor in December.
- Finally, members were asked to consider contributing to the fund that Dr. Jack London established to support the USNA Superintendent's Leadership and Vision Award.

Admiral Fallon presented the slate of candidates to serve on the NHF board for approval.

The candidates were:

- Honorable Kenneth J. Braithwaite, former Secretary of the Navy
- Admiral James Foggo, USN (Ret.)
- Rear Admiral Sinclair Harris, USN (Ret.)
- Mr. Roger Krone

All were approved by the membership.

In addition, incumbent board members with expiring terms wishing to extend for another three years were presented for approval:

- Dr. Katherine Epstein
- The Honorable John F. Lehman Jr.
- Rear Admiral Larry Marsh, USN (Ret.)
- The Honorable B. J. Penn
- Dr. David A. Rosenberg
- Mr. Michael Wallace

All were approved by the membership.

The membership then voted to approve the minutes of the 2020 Annual Meeting which were provided as a read ahead. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and approved.

Admiral Fallon then announced Captain Dan Pedersen, USN (Ret.) as the 2021 Leighton Lecturer. He noted that Commander Leighton, for whom the lecture is named, had a passion for Naval History and served for many years both on active duty and afterwards as a civilian and an assistant to Admiral Hyman Rickover.

Admiral Fallon gave some background before introducing Captain Pedersen, who talked about the origins of the Navy Fighter Weapons School at NAS Miramar, the subject of his 2019 book, *TOP GUN: An American Story*. This was followed by a live Q&A session moderated by Admiral Masso with two TOP GUN graduates, retired Vice Admirals Ted "Slapshot" Carter and Tom "Killer" Kilcline.

After a final word from Admiral Fallon, Admiral Masso concluded the meeting by thanking Dr. Dave Winkler, Captain Pedersen, the panelists, and Admirals Fallon and Pandolfe.