

United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., Charleston Base

Minutes of Business Meeting

11 April 2019

Opening Ceremonies:

- The April 2019 Base Meeting was called to order by Acting Base Commander Mike Ciesielko with a quorum of three officers and a total of 74 members present. The meeting started at 1900 with the sound of the diving alarm.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Vice Commander and recited by the members in attendance.
- The Invocation and the Tolling of the Boats lost during the month of April was given by Base Chaplain Nick Nichols. Submarines lost during the month of April:
 - **USS PICKEREL (SS-177)** April 3, 1943 – 7th war patrol Lost with all hands – 74 souls
 - **USS SNOOK (SS-279)** April 8, 1945 – 9th war patrol Lost with all hands – 84 souls
 - **USS THRESHER (SSN-593)** April 10, 1963 – sea trials Lost with all hands – 129 souls
 - **USS GUDGEON (SS-211)** April 18, 1944 – 12th war patrol Lost with all hands – 79 souls
 - **USS GRENADE (SS-210)** April 22, 1943 – 6th war patrol 76 POWs – 72 survived the war
 - **Five Boats and 370 Men Lost**
- The USSVI Creed was read by Vice Commander Mike Ciesielko, who then welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

Holland Club Induction: Bill Freligh

- Bill Freligh recognized Stacy Power as our lone WWII SubVet. In addition to Stacy, Bill acknowledged Swamp Fox Chapter members now on Eternal Patrol:
 - StM1c(SS) Willie Jones
 - QM1c(SS) Walter Curtis
 - MoMM2c(SS) Sam Whatley
- Bill Freligh – Holland Club Chairman – explained the origin of the Holland Club and read the USSVI National Holland Club Award certificate. Mike Ciesielko – Acting Base Commander – then read the certificate from USSVI Charleston Base. With assistance from the Chief of the Boat Joe Lunn, each of the following ten Charleston Base members were called individually by name and his list of duty stations was read. Each man was then presented with the Holland Club Award certificates and Charleston Base Challenge Coin. Holland Club hats – provided by The After Battery – were also given to each of the new Holland Club inductees.
 - **LCDR Craig Farr** – LCDR – Qualified on USS Tinosa SSN-606 – 1968 – also served aboard USS Forrestal CV-59, USS Saratoga CV-60, USS Illusive AM-448, USS Pledge AM-492 and USS Esteem AM/MSO-438
 - **William Hayes** – EM1(SS) – Qualified on USS John Marshall SSBN-611 – 1969 – Also served aboard USS Batfish SSN-681
 - **Larry Guthrie** – EM1(SS) – Qualified on USS John Adams SSBN-620 – 1968 – Also served aboard USS Alexander Hamilton SSBN-617 and USS Greenfish SS-351
 - **John “Bill” Kennedy** – MMCS(SS) – Qualified on USS Benjamin Franklin SSBN-640 – 1969 – Also served aboard USS Nathan Hale SSBN-623, USS Sturgeon SSN-637, USS Pintado SSN-672 and USS Von Steuben SSBN-632
 - **Nicholas Medvedeff** – HMC(SS) – Qualified on USS Carbonero SS-337 – Also served aboard USS Tennessee AOG-8, USS Grayling SSN-646 and USS John Adams SSBN-620
 - **Kirk Owen** – LT – Qualified on USS Woodrow Wilson SSBN-624 – 1969 – Also served aboard USS Henry Clay SSBN-625
 - **Harry Nettles** – QMCM(SS) – Qualified on USS Simon Bolivar SSBN-644 – 1969 – Also served aboard USS Grayling SSN-646, USS Sunfish SSN-649, USS Henry L Stimson SSBN-655 and USS Casimir Pulaski SSBN-633
 - **Donald Petersen** – MMCM(SS) – Qualified on USS Bashaw AGSS-241 – 1969 – Also served aboard USS William H. Bates SSN-680, USS Tinosa SSN-606, USS James Madison SSBN-627, USS Narwhal SSN-671 and USS Trieste DSV-1
 - **Albert Stoll** – FTCS(SS) – Qualified on USS Threadfin SS-410 – 1969 – Also served aboard USS Trumpetfish SS-425, Amberjack SS-522 and Parche SSN-683
 - **George Gallagher** was not present to receive the Holland Club Award

Distinguished Submariner Award: Mike Ciesielko

- Mike – Acting Base Commander – read the reasons for nomination given by the Base members and presented Charlie Hudson with the 2019 Distinguished Submariner Award to recognize his efforts to help Charleston Base.

Introductions of New Attendees:

- One man was present at the Base meeting for the first time:
 - Stephen Renaud – FT1 – Qualified on USS Maine SSBN-741 – Plankowner – 1996 – served on both Blue and Gold crews

Old Business:

- Baseball Game – Ed Stank gave update about the River Dogs baseball game to start at 1900 on May 10. He will be placing the order on his card. He needs money for the tickets tonight or at least let him know – by tomorrow – who is going and how many tickets each man needs. The group will sit together under roof. The USSVI Charleston Base banner will be displayed. Everyone is encouraged to wear their vest. The non-refundable \$16.50 ticket price includes a \$7.00 food/drink voucher. See Ed after the meeting

New Business:

- None

Secretary – Gordon Long:

- The Minutes from both the February Base meeting and the March Base meeting have been published in the Base Newsletter and promulgated on the Base website. There were no other additions or deletions to either February or March Base meeting minutes. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer – Gordon Williams:

- The Treasurer's Report for February have been published and promulgated on the website. There were no additions or deletions. The report was approved.

Chaplain – Nick Nichols:

- **Highlighted boat of the month:**
 - 56 years ago yesterday, on April 10, 1963 the USS THRESHER (SSN-593) was lost with the loss of 112 crew members and 17 civilian technicians during deep-diving exercises. 15 minutes after reaching test depth, she communicated with USS Skylark that she was having problems. Skylark heard noises "like air rushing into an air tank" - then, silence. Rescue ship Recovery (ASR-43) subsequently recovered bits of debris, including gloves and bits of internal insulation. Photographs taken by Trieste proved that the submarine had broken up, taking all hands on board to their deaths in 1,400 fathoms of water, some 220 miles east of Boston.
- As reported by Jimmy Kimbrell: **TM1(SS) William 'Robbie' Robinson** departed on Eternal Patrol on 29 Mar. He served with Jimmy Kimbrell on USS Ethan Allen SSBN 608 Gold Commissioning Crew. His Funeral Service will be held Sunday, April 7, 2019 in the J. HENRY STUHR, INC., NORTHWOODS CHAPEL with family visitation on Saturday, April 6th 6:00 to 8:00 pm in the Northwoods Chapel. He was not a USSVI or Charleston Base member.
- As reported by Bob McNeish: **MSC(SS) Alfia Mananta Tomayo** departed on Eternal Patrol on Mar 26. His funeral service was on Mar 29. He served with Bob McNeish and Bill Freleigh on the James Monroe SSBN 622. He was not a USSVI or Charleston Base member.
- **Jim Williams**, 60 years old, from the Sangaree area of Summerville, He was a FTG on the Polk in 82 and also served on the Ray. Jim broke his hip when he fell in his workshop and has undergone 5 surgeries. These all failed due to an infection in his bones. Nothing can be done. He is now in the VA hospital in the CLC area. This is where he will stay until end of life. Jim went in to the VA on March 3. He has a wife who has in remission cancer and a 42 year old mentally disabled son. If you are at the VA downtown for any reason try to stop by and talk to him for a few minutes. He is very lonely since his family is not able to visit him.
- **Ken Curtis** is doing better. He is still working on Monday mornings at the VA clinic at NWS doing his DAV function.

- **Roy Robertson** is in NHC Rehabilitation Center in West Ashley (2230 Ashley Crossing Dr, Charleston, SC 29414). He called me on Tuesday to let me know he's been there for 3 months. Very hard to understand his speech. I'm going to try to get over to see him in the next couple of days and then get the word out to the members.
- **Jerry Stout** reports that he is managing pain and there is some numbness in his leg but that was expected. He is in good spirits, appreciate all thoughts and concerns. He is now recovering and is cancer free!
- **Rodney McKanna's** vision has returned and he is back at work. It is good to see Rodney here tonight.
- **Gordon Smith's** cancer has returned. Nothing can be done at this point.
- **Art Hance** has been diagnosed with stage 2 aggressive prostate cancer. He had surgery on January 8 and is recovering well. He will be going in at a later date for blood work to check if all the cancer was removed.
- **Bob Snyder** was diagnosed with prostate cancer 2 years ago and given 2 years at the time. His cancer has now spread to several organs and bones. He covets your prayers for both him and his wife. Bob would like to have phone calls. Please call him at home: 843-884-0961.
- **Mike Emerson** had a procedure this week that implanted a 'watchman' in his heart. It keeps blood from forming a clot inside the heart.
- **Moon Mullins** is here tonight after having a serious surgery. It is good to see him here tonight.

Webmaster – Nick Nichols:

- The **2019 Submarine Birthday Ball** will be held on Saturday April 13 - 1830-2230. Guest Speaker is Admiral John M. Richardson, CNO. It will be at the Charleston Marriott, 170 Lockwood Blvd., Charleston SC 29403. SUBVET tickets are \$35.00 each w/WWII Vets and guest being free. I know of 22 SUBVETS and wives attending.
- There was a **CWM Field Day and Cleanup** on 20 March. There were 25 there helping. All benches and monuments were cleaned and people gone in right at one hour. BZs to all who came to help.

Submarine Veterans of WWII – Stacy Power:

- **Stacy Power** mentioned the article in American Submariner which recommended being checked for lung problems. He has done so and is happy to report that while he does have some stuff in his lungs, it is not mesothelioma.

Social Media – Nick Nichols for Lewis Leal:

- Our **Charleston Base Instagram** page is starting to be used and has some pictures from various events from the last couple of months.

Kaps for Kids – Bill Kennedy

- Last month a group of six members went to McLeod Hospital in Florence and presented the staff with a plaque. The hospital staff had a small, cookies and punch party as thanks to the Kaps for Kids group for the visits.
- Bill asked the Base members to mark the date of May 21 as Kaps for Kids will be making another trip to McLeod. He said that there is room for more to attend these visits.
- Bill is planning to set up a visit to the Shriner's Hospital in Greenville.
- Regarding a question whether the Kaps for Kids visits made it to The American Submariner, while other bases have published information regarding such trips, the activities from Charleston Base in these efforts have not. Some pictures have been sent to the Base Webmaster.

VA – Tom Lawson

- Nothing to Report

Membership – Larry Knutson

- USSVI Charleston Base membership currently has 276 members. Nothing else to report.

Scholarship – Carl Chinn

- The Scholarship Committee has a current raffle in progress for what is being called A Charleston Basket:
 - A one-night stay at the Embassy Suites (The old Citadel)
 - A \$50 gift certificate for dinner at Hyman's Seafood.
 - A \$25 gift certificate for Kaminsky's Dessert Café
 - A Horse Carriage Tour for two
 - A tour of the Aiken-Rhett House
 - A bottle of Prosecco wine
- See Carl, Marty Sessler or Rick Sparger for tickets. \$1 each or 6 for \$5.
- There are three books which the committee will auction this evening:
 - Blackmail by Rick Campbell
 - Two Tom Clancy books
- The committee has Base Challenge coins available. \$12 each.
- The committee has received only one scholarship application to date. Carl has heard of two others but the deadline for receipt of the applications is April 19.

Base By-Laws Review Committee – Carl Chinn

- Carl Chinn and Nick Nichols have been appointed to review the Charleston Base By-Laws. If anyone has input to provide regarding the By-Laws, please contact Carl or Nick.

Special Events – Rick Sparger

- Nothing to Report

CRAMA – Butch Bryar

- Butch stated that the budget goes to the SC Senate on Monday but they will not be in session until Tuesday, April 16 through Thursday, April 18. Butch requested that all Base members contact their Representatives and Senators to let them know that we should not placing \$2.7million into the education section of the budget in order to sink a submarine that was meant for education.

NPS – Rick Wise for Ray Sparks

- Charleston Base will be attending the Class 1901 Nuclear Power School graduation ceremony and presenting Submarine Legacy Awards tomorrow at 0900. Rick and those members attending the graduation will leave from the Navy Exchange parking lot at 0800. Admiral Richardson (CNO) will be the guest speaker at this event.

Public Affairs – Rick Wise

- Maintenance on the Little David memorial has shifted to May.
- Rick will be resigning as Public Affairs Officer effective May 30. Rick encouraged the Base members to consider taking this important job. It does require the ability to sit down and write just a bit.
- On Saturday, April 13, Charleston Base will hold the Amberjack/Lost Boats ceremony at the Cold War Memorial located at Patriots Point. Muster time is 0930.

Fleet Reserve Association – Skip Chilton

- The FRA Auxiliary will be holding a Quarter Auction at the FRA on Saturday April 13, beginning at 1300.
- The FRA will be having a spaghetti dinner at 1600 and a comedy show at 2000 on Saturday April 13.

Recreation – Ed Stank

- Nothing to Report

Election Coordinator – Ken Hutchison

- At the May Base meeting, we will hold regular elections for both Base Commander and Treasurer. There is currently only one candidate (the incumbent) for each of these offices. We need more men to step up and be willing to take these offices. Please contact Ken via phone or email.

Storekeeper – Ken Hutchison

- Nothing to Report

COB – Joe Lunn

- Joe asked everyone to come to the Amberjack Ceremony at the Cold War Memorial at Patriots Point beginning at 1000 on Saturday.
- Joe also told everyone that at 1300 on Saturday is the pig roast at The After Battery. People come from all over the country and even Canada for this annual gathering.

Vice Commander – Mike Ciesielko.

- Mike thanked everyone for being here to attend the Holland Club inductions and the Distinguished Submariner Award.
- While we cannot eliminate the business portion of the Base meeting, if anyone has ideas to improve the meeting, please contact Mike.

Good of the Order

After Battery – COB mentioned the upcoming activities above in his remarks.

Gun Club – Mike Ciesielko

- Mike said that several men have asked about upcoming Gun Shoots. Mike will soon send out email regarding the next event. He wants to have a couple more before the weather starts getting hot.

Nuclear Historian – Rick Carlson

- Rick congratulated the nine new Holland Club Inductees.
- ENGLISH LESSON - The best, most interesting English lesson I have seen to date:
 - Did you know “listen” and “silent” use the same letters?
 - Did you know that the word “racecar” spelled backwards still spells “racecar”?
 - Also that “eat” is the only word that if you take the first letter and move it to the last, it spells out its past-tense “ate”?
 - Have you also noticed that if you rearrange the letters in “illegal immigrants”, and add just a few more letters, it spells: “Go home you free-loading, benefit-grabbing, resource-sucking, non-English-speaking, a–holes and take those hairy faced, sandal-wearing, bomb-making, camel-riding, goat-shagging, raggedy-as_ bastards with you”? Isn’t that just weird?
- FISHING:

The rain had stopped and there was big puddle in front of the bar just outside the VFW. A rumpled old Navy Master Chief Petty Officer was standing near the edge with a fishing line in the puddle. A curious young Marine fighter pilot came over to him and asked what he was doing. “Fishing,” the old Master Chief simply said. “Poor old loon,” the Marine thought to himself and invited the Chief into the bar for a drink. As he felt that he should start a conversation while they were sipping their spirits, the young jet pilot winked at another pilot and asked, “How many have you caught today?” “You’re number 14,” the Chief answered, taking another sip from his double shot of 12-year old Scotch, “2 Air Force, 3 Army and 9 Marines.”

Drawings & Auctions

- FRA Drawing – Bill Freligh
- Scholarship Book Auction – Rick Campbell book *Blackmail* – Don Ort
- Scholarship Book Auction – Two Tom Clancy books – *Submarine: A Guided Tour Inside a Nuclear Warship* and *Oath of Office* – Charles Wood
- Depth Charge – Bill Kennedy

Closing Ceremony

- Nick Nichols led the group in a prayer of Benediction. Acting Base Commander Mike Ciesielko announced adjournment of the meeting followed by three blasts on the diving alarm.
- The meeting was closed at 2013.