



USS Henry L Stimson SSBN 655 Association
Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2021
Holiday Inn, Erlanger KY
Reunion #11



Meeting called to Order: 1400

Pledge of Allegiance: Tom Krauser, President led in the Pledge

Purpose of the Stimson Association: Tom Krauser, President read from the Association Bylaws:

- **The Bylaws Article 1 Part II. a. The purpose of the Association is to promote the memory of the USS Henry L Stimson (SSBN-655) and to foster good fellowship and camaraderie among the shipmates who served aboard the ship.**

Invocation: Sandy Hastie, CAPT CO B for 1 patrol 1980 (Oct-Dec)

Recognitions were made for the following in attendance:

- Would all Past Stimson Association officers please stand
- Dick Young, Reunion Chairman for 2021 reunion.
- CAPT Sandy Hastie, the CO of 655B 1980
- Would anyone who is attending a Stimson Reunion for the first time please stand and let us know who you are, when you served on the Stimson, and where you are currently from.
- Lindsay Nelson; Steve Duquenoy; Bill Rowan; Bruce Stefanik; Harry Daughtery; Jim Ermish;

President's opening remarks and introduction of present Officers:

- Housekeeping Items: Please talk loud enough to be recorded
- Present Officers:
 - President Tom Krauser
 - Vice President Steve Novic [not present]
 - Treasurer Ken Meigs [present via ZOOM]
 - Secretary Nick Nichols
 - Chaplain Jake Morris (not present)

Secretary Report: Nick Nichols

- Past minutes sent to everyone.
- 2018 Draft Minutes – these minutes have been posted on the web and a copy emailed to all reunion attendees.
 - Motion to Approve: unanimous approval.

- Association memberships:
 - Present reunion up date: 102 registered; 97 attended
 - On the Eternal Patrol list: 235
 - Regular: 742 with active email; 220 not able to contact due to no email/phone number; 381 on the looking for list
 - If you talk to a shipmate on FB tell them about the Stimson and to contact me to be added to the Sailing List
 - Life: 73 with 8 on Eternal Patrol
 - Number of departed shipmates added since last reunion: 40

Treasurer's Report: Ken Meigs is on Zoom to clarify. **Nick Nichols** will make report

- The Association is extremely solvent. Currently in the bank: \$10,644.47. Our books are always open for any Association member to view.
- All of the money is in one bank account and divided into three funds for record purposes:
 - Association: \$6170.98
 - Reunion: \$1848.49
 - Charity: \$2,625.00
- IAW our bylaws, for those who are not life members of the Association we request a \$10 dues voluntary donation at each Association Business Meeting. Please see me to make your donation.
- Since the 2018 Reunion there have been 3 Association members join as Lifetime members. LTM (Life Time Membership) is a onetime donation of \$100 dollars.
- Nick Nichols made the following motion:
 - Motion made for the Association to grant a LTM to Randy Allen, ET1(SS) G 78-80, USSVI MAL.
 - DISCUSSION: From the time our website began, Randy has been paying our yearly fee of \$20 for our domain hosting. Just this year he has asked the Association to begin paying the yearly fee and that has been taken care of. This will be now paid by the Association.
 - This motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

- **Historian/Memorabilia: Larry Knutson** not present. **Nick Nichols** will make report
 - As most all of you know, the storage area where Larry was storing our memorabilia and documents was broken into between November 13 and 28, 2020. After a thorough investigation by the local police, it appears the target of the theft was the 4 Pelican boxes most of our items were stored in. What you see on the tables are all that is left along with the banners. There has been some discussion on whether we should begin collecting items from shipmates willing to donate them but a decision has not been made at this point. Possibly a committee will be setup to determine what we will now put in our memorabilia.

- **Webpage: Nick Nichols:**

- This is a constant work in progress.
- The Eternal Patrol page you will see many more Memorial Page links than we had at the last meeting. The majority of these are due to the hard work of Don Ort in finding obituaries, headstone pictures, and even calling families to get more info. BZ Don!!
- Monthly eNewsletters are being sent out and placed on the website. We have recently increased our storage to 2GB to allow me to place more on the site.
- Recently there has been an issue with our email host and the use of bulk mail. Evidently some of the email sent from our @ssbn655.org domain has been flagged as spam/junk. This could have been the shipmate doing this or their ISP could have instituted stricter restrictions on bulk mail. Either way it is causing me a lot of problems getting email to all of our members. I am working on a way to verify everyone I have addresses for are wanting to receive my emails, especially the monthly newsletter. In the meantime, I'm using different ISPs and email addresses to get around this problem. I hope to have it worked out soon.
- There is a new page on the website that will be used to put individual qual certificates and information. Send it to the webmaster for inclusion.

- **SOCIAL MEDIA: FaceBook Page: Loree Riggs**

- Loree is one of the Association FaceBook administrators. He discussed a few things about our FB page.
- For the last 5/6 years we've had a FB presence.
- This is a closed private page and you must be approved to post anything. To get approved to have access contact the administrator.
- Criteria: 1) must be a shipmate and able to document it; 2) spouses of departed members; 3) direct family members
- How to verify: 1) check requesters page for any submarine association; 2) check 655 Sailing List for name and then approved if on there; 3) if no documentation then they receive a note showing reason for asking access and they must send email to webmaster with info to be added to sailing list; 4) if they do not respond to be added they will not be given access to the 655 FB page.
- Posts are limited to one that is directly related to 655. If not related the post is deleted and the admin that deletes it will contact the one that made the post.
 - No Ads, nothing to be sold on our FB page
 - No Politics
 - No bad language
 - No dirty/inappropriate cartoons
- There are 4 administrators to manage the page: Derek Lyons; Ray Varkalis; Glen Clark; Loree Riggs
- Motion: Move that the Henry L. Stimson Association recognize the Henry L. Stimson Facebook Page is the official FB page of the Association. Motion passed unanimously.
- The FB page is used to promote the Reunion.

- **Ship's Store: Tom Krauser:**

- Storekeeper Position has been eliminated.
- We wish to thank Jim Weaver for his years of service as the Storekeeper for the Stimson Association. Jim is stepping down for health reasons.
- There are many websites that offer Stimson materials for lower prices than we can procure them so at the recommendation of Jim Weaver and the Board the position of Storekeeper will be eliminated. We will list sites that shipmates have used and recommended on the Stimson Webpage. If you know of a site that you recommend please send the details to the board (Tom Krauser or Nick Nichols) so we can add it to the Ship's Store website page.
- There will be a Note on the web page that the Association does not profit from or fully endorse these vendors. If any shipmate has bad experiences with any of these vendors, we will remove them from the list if necessary.

Old Business:

- **Stimson Bench at the Cold War Memorial - Nick Nichols**

- Stimson Bench and other benches at the Cold War Memorial in Charleston have been better maintained since Rusty Pickett setup the Cold War Memorial Maintenance and Preservation Fund (CWMM&P). Our donation last year was the first of many to raise funds for the yearly working party to clean benches. The Charleston Base SUBVETs have been taking the lead in the working parties but anyone can go and clean their boat's bench at any time. The CWMM&P fund is maintained by USSVI Charleston Base Treasurer and money only issued to Rusty whenever he has a working party day for maintenance and cleaning of the CWM area. Last reunion a motion was made and passed to donate \$100/year to this fund if requested.
- I will report that the first donation of \$100 during 2018 is the only one that's been made (and needed). There were enough donations from other commands to keep the fund solvent since then.
 - Motion made: Stimson Association makes a \$100 donation to this fund during each of our reunions. More than that is not needed at this point. Motion seconded and passed unanimously.

- **Open item from the 2018 business meeting**

- Tom Bradish asked if Cold War Memorial was a 501c3 organization – answer no
- He then asked if our Association is a 501c3 organization - answer no
- At the 2018 meeting Ken Meigs discussed the various issues of setting up a 501c3 for our Association
- Tom Bradish offered to check on to setting up a 501c3 for the Association and will report back at the next reunion

- **Establishment of a 501c3 for the Stimson Association – Tom Bradish**
 - Tom gave a very thorough presentation of the procedures to establish a 501(c)3
 - The question was raised if it would be worthwhile to establish a 501-tax exemption for our Association.
 - Tom discussed the IRS Code 501 requirements
 - In 2020 the Standard deduction has been significantly increased which makes charitable tax deductions less appealing
 - For the Stimson our income comes from our donations.
 - He then discussed a 501(c)19 for military groups and stated this is what we would apply for.
 - Our Association would be required to be Incorporated.
 - All the IRS does is grant you the tax exemption but the state must determine if we are an official Association in the State of Oregon.
 - At this point Treasurer Ken Meigs (via Zoom) made comments on the procedures he has made for the Association to access our funds in the event of something happening to him.
 - More discussion about what it would take to get all the paperwork to become a 501(c)19.
 - Tax forms must be filed on a yearly basis.
 - Tom's recommendation is after researching the rules he believes it is not advantageous to go through the trouble to establish the Association as a 501(c)19.
 - Motion to not pursue becoming a 501(c)19 was seconded and passed unanimously.
 - President Tom Krauser thanks Tom for his outstanding briefing.

- After the vote to not pursue the 501(c)19 a request was made to add a list to the Association website to include all possible submarine related charities where our shipmates can make donations.

New Business

- Election of 2021-2023 Officers:
 - Due to the reunion being moved to 2021 because of the COVID the 2018-2020 slate of officers was extended by 1 year until this reunion.
 - President – Article II part II a. - The President shall establish the procedure of the Board and shall preside at all meetings, call special meetings of the Board, appoint the Chairman of all standing Committees, appoint special committees and convene the Board as required. Meeting may be conducted by email or telephone. The President shall prepare and disseminate an official meeting agenda no less than 10 days prior to any scheduled meeting. The President shall appoint a member to the Board to fill the duties of any vacated office.
 - A motion was made from the floor to retain the present board as it stands until the next election cycle with the exception of the vice president. Nominate Jerry Blevins for Vice President and he has said he will take the nomination.

- Motion seconded and passed unanimously. Officers for the 2023-2035 term are:
 - President - Tom Krauser
 - Vice President – Jerry Blevins
 - Secretary- Nick Nichols
 - Treasurer- Ken Meigs
- Chaplain Jake Morris is stepping down due to health issues. A volunteer has stepped forward and the Tom has appointed Bruce Stefanik as our Association Chaplain for the next two years.
- The Board moves to donate \$1000 to the St. Mary’s Submarine Museum to assist them with their building fund.
 - DISCUSSION: The Museum also houses several pieces of Stimson artifacts and has agreed to receive whatever memorabilia we have when the Association is dissolved on May 5, 2043, or at such time as there are no longer 5 paid up members of the Association.
 - Loree Riggs mentioned that the original donation included the huge bronze plaque that was outside the YN’s office.
 - Motion seconded and passed unanimously.
- The Board moves to provide a \$500 donation to the USS Cincinnati Memorial out of the charitable funds in the name of Dick Young our 2021 Reunion Chairman.
 - DISCUSSION: While all those who have served as Reunion Chairman through the years have had their challenges, no one had the kind Dick had with getting setup for the 2020 reunion only to have to move everything by a full year to 2021. He has given us a wonderful reunion to remember all the while working diligently to bring the sail and rudder of the Cincinnati to a fitting memorial in the town it was named for.
 - Motion seconded and passed unanimously
- **Bylaw Revision/s**
 - Does anyone know of any of our bylaws that should be revised?
 - **Article II, Part II. a.** Tom Krauser made a motion for a change.
 - Change “Meetings may be conducted by email or telephone.” to “Meetings may be conducted by email, telephone, or other suitable communication methods to ensure engagement of the Board Members.”
 - DISCUSSION: During Covid we had Board meetings via ZOOM which were very effective.
 - Motion seconded and passed unanimously.
- **2023 Reunion Location & Chairman**
 - Discussion was held concerning locations for the next reunion. This was unusual in the fact we actually had choices this time. The locations nominated were:
 - New York – Tom Krauser [removed before full discussion]
 - Colorado – Dan Ballard [removed before full discussion]
 - Montana – Monte Weisser [removed before full discussion]

- Atlanta – Jim Sanderson
- Charleston [Summerville] – Harry Nettles
- Arkansas [Razorback] – Nick Nichols/Gordon Long
- Arizona [USSVI National Convention] – BJ Boyles
 - Each location representative was allowed to speak. After a show of hands, the locations were narrowed down to Charleston & Arkansas
 - A vote via a show of hands indicated that the next reunion is in Charleston [Summerville].

Good of the Order.

- Nick read a letter from Harry Nettles who was the last Gold Crew COB. The letter is attached to these minutes.
- Are there any other discussions? NONE

Benediction: Sandy Hastie

Meeting adjourned: 1600

Subject: The Last Patrol

From: Harry Nettles netthar449@gmail.com

Date: 10/8/2021, 5:50 AM

To: "Nick Nichols, Chaplain USSVICB" chaplain@ussvicb.org

Nick, please convey this message to the Gold crew members who served with me on the final patrol of Stimson's wonderful and distinguished career.

"Ahoy shipmates! It has been many years since we sailed together on that final patrol of the USS Henry L. Stimson SSBN 655 Gold. It was my pleasure to have served as your Chief of the Boat. You were a great crew and I was richly blessed by knowing each and every one of you. I hope life is treating you well in your Silver Years. I am doing well and frequently and fondly think of the good ole days on the high seas with such wonderful and brave men as you. May you continue to be blessed as each of you move on with your lives and families. Mine is growing and as a great grandfather I want share my life for many more years with family and friends.

God Bless and have a wonderful and safe reunion. I sure miss you guys,

Harry E. Nettles QMCM(SS), USN Retired
"COB"