



Newsletter Volume 3 No. 2 Spring/Summer 2021

Report on 2021 Symposium

The WNHA held its third annual symposium on 14-15 March, 2021. In this event we kept to the formula that proved successful in our first two symposia by covering a range of subjects and from multiple perspectives. The event this year was held remotely on board the *USS Midway Museum* and the association would like to acknowledge the generous support of the museum and WNHA board member and museum Director of History, Karl Zingheim.

James Hornfischer was the 2021 keynote speaker. He discussed his current projects and set the tone for the day's sessions. We are sad to report that Jim passed away on 2 June and we bow to his courage in showing up for naval history despite the seriousness of his illness.

Following Jim's address, there followed an interesting presentation by USS Midway's Director of Education, and photographer James E. Giles, both Vietnam veterans, about the Navy LSTs used in that war. John T. Kuehn, the E. J. King professor of Maritime History at the U.S. Navy War College followed with a discussion about the U.S. Navy in Vietnam that nicely placed the previous presentation in its greater context. Kevin Bertram of Fort Circle Games finished the day with a talk about his award winning game about the Barbary Wars, *The Shores of Tripoli*.

On Sunday Karl Zingheim gave a multi-faceted view of the research that goes behind making historically accurate, museum-quality dioramas. Hal Friedman, Professor of Modern History at Henry Ford College continued the symposium's focus on the post WWII-U.S Navy with a talk about the U.S. Naval War college's transition from the Second World War to the Cold War. Jeremy Mazur, WNHA Board Member and



Haul the Gear, and the Beer

What did the LSTs in Vietnam do?

former Marine discussed the roles of tradition in the Corp as reflected in the Marine Corp Recruit Depot Command Museum. Finally, Thomas Heinrich, professor of naval history at Banuch

College City University of New York discussed his recently released work, *Warship Builders*.

A robust question and answer period followed each presentation. The virtual format, limited direct interactions between the participants but we were pleased first by the good turnout and secondly, by the fact that people could participate in the symposium without the expense and bother of travel.

Founding President Vincent O'Hara gave a brief talk about the state of the association and its activities and introduced founding Vice President, Sam Tangredi, as the association's incoming president. Sam's comments are printed here.

It was a successful event. The WNHA has posted a video of each presentation and these may be viewed on our YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOK3RCS4-vRs5ql7mDpNTjA>



Karl Zingheim moderated the event

WNHA Q&As

The WHNA continues with its program of online events called WNHA Q&As. These are roughly ninety minutes in length and consist of an expert speaking on a subject and then fielding questions from the attendees. There are now eight Q&As in the can. If you've missed any, check out the WNHA's YouTube channel and watch them on line. *Up Next*

- 17 July. Trent Hone: *Give 'em hell: Surface Naval Combat at Guadalcanal*
- 14 August. Dr. Carlos Rivera: *The Closest Point of Approach: Akiyama Saneyuki and Contact with the US Navy, 1897-1900*

WNHA Board of Directors

Vincent P. O'Hara, Chula Vista, CA
 Sam J. Tangredi, Coronado, CA
 Stephen McLaughlin, Richmond, CA
 Karl Zingheim, San Diego, CA
 Jeremy Mazur, San Diego, CA
 Cynthia Watson, Annapolis, MD
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Design Choices: Components



A slide from Kevin Bertram's talk about game



Sam. J. Tangredi
WNHA President 2021-22

whatever inherent wisdom you can bring to the table. Those pretty much sum up the duties.

When Vince, Steve McLaughlin and I first established the organization back in 2018, we set out a series of principles and goals. Our view was that the West Coast was an underserved (there's another overused term) region in terms of naval history conferences and events, unlike the East Coast where you have the Naval War College, the Naval Academy, the U.S. Naval Institute, the U.S. Navy History and Heritage Command sponsoring conferences. That had not happened on the West Coast for many, many years. Moreover, most of those events are exclusively academic type conferences and we wanted to

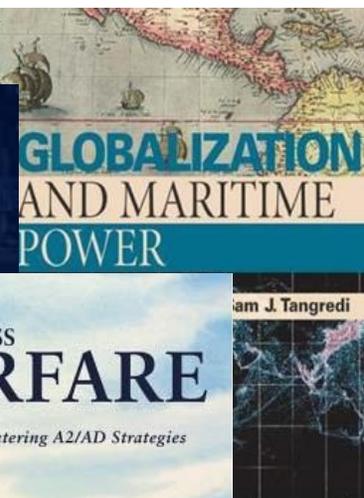
It is a great honor to take over the role as President. But I fear it is almost impossible to live up to the legacy of Vince O'Hara. Vince has poured in tremendous dedication, energy and wisdom into the role of president. I will try to live up to that. Dedication and energy I can probably give you, but as far as wisdom... well, I look forward to the ideas and guidance of the Board of Directors of WNHA.

This leads me to my first pitch to all members and those who are interested in becoming members in order to sustain the organization. I ask you to additionally consider becoming a Board Member.

Diverse is an over-used term these days, but we know that the greater the complexity—let's call it that—in Board membership, different ages, life experiences and ethnicity (all, of course, united by a combined love of naval and maritime history) does provide differing, wider perspectives and perhaps more diverse ideas, advice, recommendations.

So I urge you to be a member of the Board and help shape future symposia, activities and programs. The duties are light: a zoom meeting every other month or so, more meetings as we build the symposium program, having some ideas on what you think the WNHA should, do and

create something more inclusive for all those interested in naval history... we have professional scholars involved, obviously, but we wanted to bring them together will popular authors, bloggers and naval history website creators, gamers, modelers, maritime artists, veterans, buffs of all types—perhaps someday musicians. ...All together in an intimate organization in which we could all learn from each other and perhaps collaborate on new activities.



And that is one principle we certainly intend to maintain—the intimacy. We would like to have more members, but large or small we will retain the intimacy so that you all can build individual relationships with each other to mutual benefit.

I think we achieved this under Vince's leadership. As far other more specific goals, you can see some of these on the back of the

have largely been the product of Vince's efforts—the symposia, of which he has led the organization; the monthly questions and answers/experts talks which was his idea in response to COVID, and the newsletter which he edits. There are other goals; some of them which require a bit larger membership.

That leads me to another pitch to those who might be considering membership and those considering remaining members. All the membership dues go to financing the symposium and the monthly Qs and As. (During COVID that means paying for the tech.) This is a completely volunteer organization. The dues don't go to anything else, except that the next time we have an in person symposium (which from now on will include a zoom or other virtual format for those who can't come to San Diego), if you come—you get lunch.

In the past we have try to peg our symposium to the week of the annual USNI/AFCEA WEST symposium and military trade show (which is free by the way) in order to maximize participation (particularly to those who want to stick around San Diego for another couple of days on the weekend). In 2022, AFCEA/USNI WEST is scheduled for February 16-18. I am going to propose to the Board that we have our symposium February 19-20. That's not definite—the Board will discuss, but that is just so you keep the approximate dates in mind.

I have some additional ideas on collaborative activities including publishing—particularly for you whom have not or do not regularly publish, along with other types of activities. For example, I am trying to get us involved in providing expertise for a Handbook on World War II in the Pacific that the Naval War College is planning on preparing...not a certainty for participation, but a possibility. And there are other such projects. But the key to all that remains an intimate organization in which we are not just members, but friends.

So to sum up, my request to you as President:

- Be a member
- Consider joining the Board
- Be yourself and do what you love concerning naval history.
- Be a friend.

Thank you for your support of WNHA.

Member Notices

Members Michael Whitby and Stephen McLaughlin have published articles in *Warship 2021*. Whitby's article is "From Greyhounds to Sheepdogs: Home Fleet Destroyers at the Turning Point of the Battle of the Atlantic, March-May 1943." McLaughlin contributed the lead article: "Stalin's Super-Battleships: The Sovetskii Soiuz Class." *Warship* is an annual purchase for the editor and this fine issue demonstrates why.

The WNHA's president, Sam Tangredi is the co-editor of an important new work on Artificial Intelligence entitled, *AI @ War: How Big Data, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning are Changing Naval Warfare*. (Naval Institute 2021) Sam also won First Place in the Naval Institute General Prize Essay Contest. His winning piece, entitled "Sun Tzu Versus AI: Why Artificial Intelligence can Fail in Great Power Competition" was published in the May issue of *Proceedings* magazine.

Vincent P. O'Hara and Stephen McLaughlin published an article in the May-June issue of *Naval History Magazine* entitled, "Forgotten Victor: the Soviet Navy in World War II."

If you have any news that you wish to include in a subsequent issue of this news letter please contact the editor at info@wnha.net. This can include notice of events as well as recent publications, works in process, items of interest.

Writing and publishing opportunity for WNHA members: *HANDBOOK OF WORLD WAR II in the PACIFIC* (contracted with Routledge publishing)

A long-term goal of WNHA is to provide opportunities for collaborative publishing. The idea is to give members a chance to write on topics they are passionate about with our established authors providing assistance, if needed. Many of you are very expert on your particular slice of naval history, but rarely does the world consider anyone an expert whose knowledge and views have not appeared in hard copy print.

Another goal is to put together our established authors so that they can achieve co-authored work in which the sum is greater than the parts... particularly since there are at least two sides to every battle (perhaps every issue) and not everyone can be a detailed authority on all a topic's aspects.

An opportunity has come our way for the members of WNHA to collaborate with the faculty of the U.S. Naval War College (and others) on a handbook on the WWII Pacific war. The edited volume has already been contracted by Routledge, an academic publisher based both in the U.S. and Britain that may not be well known to general readers, but publishes a great deal in military history and social sciences. Many of the books on a particular topic are published in a series edited by a noted authority; for example, Geoff Till is the editor for their works on naval history.

Academic "handbooks" are designed to function as a comprehensive single reference on key topics of a subject consisting of numerous succinct chapters. Presumably they are used as a course text or reference for university students that will give them an overview of the subject. Not all handbooks are 'created equally;' some are more comprehensive than others and some focus on 'new approaches' or 'emerging theories' with the assumption that the 'tired old stuff' has already appeared in numerous previous volumes.

The NWC-led handbook is one of these

'new approaches' efforts, designed to provide space for 'other voices' and more controversial interpretations... the sort I'm sure many WNHA would like to examine.

Some of the authorities who have already agreed to write (and who have presented at our symposia and hence we consider members) include Craig Symonds and Geoff Till. The overall project is led by Professor Sally Paine of NWC (whose expertise is the war in China).

I have gone ahead and taken a leap of faith in signing up to be the coordinator/editor/water boy for six of the 50 chapters... that is, I pledged responsibility for making them happen with the premise that they would collaborative efforts by WNHA members. ALL participants would get byline credit. Some of the chapters may have one or two participants and some many, depending on interest.

The six chapters are tentatively entitled:

16. The Access and Anti-Access Campaigns
18. Joint and Combined Operations and the Principles of Concentration and Continuity
19. The Development and Diffusion of Technology
20. Fog, Friction and Chance
34. Amidst a World of War: Voices from the Theater (in which I envision we can write about Soviet Union's attitude, Thailand versus the French State, Ecuador's war, Pacific Islanders versus Japanese, Indian Ocean, Australians, Italian and German interests in Pacific, etc., etc.)
47. Legacy of the War: U.S. Primacy in the Pacific (in Japan, Taiwan, trust territories, etc.)

These chapter topics are based on preliminary statements of interest from WNHA members who previously responded (Vince, Hal, Carlos, Rich, Brian, Tom, etc.), but they are open to EVERYONE's participation.

Depending on interest, we will determine how the chapters will be put together—such as a round-robin effort, individuals doing individual topics and an editor stitching them together, or other.

The chapters are expected to be no more than 5000 words. The due date for the Chapters is AUGUST 2022.

Yes, 2022, but I would like participants to sign up early so I know that they will get done without Divine intervention. Again, I took a leap of faith in being responsible for them and don't plan on having to write them all myself.

I think there could also be a lot of spin-offs from your efforts, such as co-authored articles for *Naval History*, *Warship*, etc. (such as Vince and Steve's brilliant article on the WWII Soviet Navy in the June 2021 *Naval History*). Perhaps your preliminary research could be presented at our Annual WNHA Symposium in February 2022.

So who is in? If you want to participate either write me directly at samjtangredi@gmail.com or contact the association at info@wnha.net.

Below is the full table of contents, and if you are interested in another chapter, I can facilitate your involvement.

Sam

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