CHESAPEAKE BAY FLAG ASSOCIATION

Minutes — August 29, 2020 — Zoom Online

11:00 am to 2:30 pm (EDT)

Attendees: **Al Cavalari, Art Etchells, Betty Brown, Chris Bedwell, Chris Maddish, Connor Wright, David Wagner, Ethan Stearns, Gus Tracchia, Jack Lowe (president), John Andrews, Jon Radel, Josh Dorfman\*, Keith Bassolino, Mark Anthony Henderson, Mel Mason, Nick Artimovich, Peter Ansoff, Steve Knowlton, Tom Carrier (recording secretary), Tom Fahres\***

\*-First timer

***Meeting to Order***

Members arrived online on the Zoom platform for a virtual meeting hosted by President **Jack Lowe** in Bethesda, Maryland with members joining from DC, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, and New York.

President Jack Lowe brought the meeting to order at 11:00 am (EDT) and welcomed the newcomers and the second-time attenders.


NAVA Past President **Nick Artimovich** began the meeting with a memoriam of [Dr. Harold Langley,](https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/washingtonpost/obituary.aspx?n=harold-langley&pid=196579442&fhid=5745&itid=sf_local-obituaries) Naval Historian for the Smithsonian Institute and prominent, longtime member and contributor to NAVA and CBFA, who died July 29th, 2020 at the age of 95. Hal hosted a CBFA meeting at the Smithsonian in the early years and contributed at other meetings through the years. Our hearts are at half-mast for our friend and longtime vexillologist.

Each member gave a short introduction, where they are from and their general interest.

***Business Matters***

Jack Lowe brought several issues to the attention of the members:

* Asks members to submit articles and flag-related items to **Vexillum** in care of **Steve** at steven.knowlton@princeton.edu
* Will share emails of vexillologists who want to **downsize their collections** either as a donation, for modest sale, or trade.
* Announced a **NAVA plan to create a program where donated flags** will be sent to teachers, libraries, and learning institutions to help teach history, language, culture using flags as teaching tools. Details to follow. **Betty**, of the Library of Congress, suggested that libraries have certain requirements for donations and donors should check with the libraries first, but it was also suggested that flag books are woefully underrepresented in local libraries and those would be most welcome as donations anytime.
* Jack said the CBFA **website is being updated** and asked what members would want on the website. **Ethan** suggested recordings of meetings would be helpful and **Chris B.** would add a section of flag reference materials. **Jon** suggested that a website with a WordPress account where members could upload content directly or send in content to be uploaded by a member who would maintain the site. **Nick** suggested adding photos of collections and images of flags found on travels.
* **Tom C.** suggested that perhaps the website could add an **auction or donation area** for flags, although Jack thought that a payment and distribution issue would make it more of a logistical problem and tasked **Tom C.** and **Chris B.** to explore ways to see if it can be a possibility even beyond CBFA to a national reach.
* Jack mentioned that NAVA was considering an **affiliates program** to promote regional flag-studies groups and asked whether CBFA would want to become an affiliate of NAVA. After discussion, it was determined that there wouldn’t be additional dues (CBFA doesn’t have dues; the auctions help manage finances just fine so far) and wouldn’t affect membership in FIAV (CBFA has been a member of FIAV since 1995). **Peter** mentioned that the affiliates program would only formalize what chapters have been doing all along. **Jon** suggested that the benefits of affiliates would ‘be just fine.’ There was no general disagreement with the proposal. Jack will follow up with NAVA and update at the next meeting about the affiliate program.

***Presentations***

**David** gave a detailed PowerPoint presentation on the history of the Nordic cross throughout history that included the Nordic states, UK counties and even Russia.

**John** presented “Introduction to Vexillological Research in Archives” with a focus on flag research during the time of social distancing requirements. The conclusions are: research your research, stay focused, be specific, put in the time, document everything, and say thank you to the staff.

**Keith** provided a history of the Coast Guard ensign with an update on prior research starting with the Quasi-War with France in 1799 and its beginnings with the collecting of customs to border patrol, and the changes in flag design throughout.

**Josh** spoke about his work with the Great American Flag Preservation Group. More information on the fascinating history of the Great American Flag can be found at https://www.greatamericanflag.org

***VexiBits***

Jack asked **Connor** if there was any additional information or any movement on the flag he had designed for Catonsville. Connor said, “not yet.”

**Jack** showed off his Flag of Bhutan t-shirt and his face masks of Maryland and Montgomery County.**Connor** then showed his face mask with a stylized version of Maryland. Jack hoped that someone was collecting images of flags used on masks.

**Chris B.** showed off some early flag catalogs he got as part of an order that he hadn’t expected and was charmed by the different types of flags and their costs for the time. He also showed a large bag of flags he intends to auction when CBFA meets again in person.

**Connor** showed some personally produced fantasy flag designs for citizen militia groups, a Maryland flag design and other flags.

**Peter** showed his grandfather’s officer Coast Guard sword with an early US Coast Guard seal design to match up with Keith’s earlier presentation.

**Nick** mentioned his daily posting on the FOTW Facebook group and showed some of his collection of flags and flag literature. **Nick** specializes in obsolete flags and historic US flags and ephemera.

**Betty** showed us her 49-star US flag background and told of her love for 49-star flags.

**Al** presented a selection of his flag-featuring post card collection. Oner series was the Betsy Ross House over the years. Among the various flag and flag-related designs was one that was woven onto a card with yarn. **Tom C.** mentioned that this type of card was created by Grandma Moses with mosquito netting to sell for extra money but turned to painting instead in her 70s because arthritis prevented her from using needle and thread.

**Chris M.** called into the CBFA meeting from aboard the Kalmar Myckel, a Swedish tall ship, in Mystic, CT and gave us a virtual tour of the training ship and the flags flying aboard.

The virtual meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted

**Tom Carrier (**recording secretary)