

The Historian's Report,
in Brief Outline Format,
of the Summit Old Guard
for the Year 2018

A. Officers Serving in Year 2018

- 1. Director: Dr. Thomas J. Dolce, serving his second straight year as Director**
- 2. Vice Director: Richard Aiken**
- 3. Past Director: John Luckstone**
- 4. Recording Secretary: Paul Tukey**
- 5. Corresponding Secretaries: Doug Garno and Harvey Feuer**
- 6. Treasurer: Steve Varley**
- 7. Membership: Jim Hewitt**
- 8. Historian: Francis McAndrew**

B. Supporting Staff

- 1. Many dedicated people, too many to list here, served in very important supporting roles during the year to make the organization function as well as it did.**
- 2. Without their dedication and selfless service, we would not have had the organization that we are all so very proud of as we move very close to our 90th year of existence.**

C. Statistical Details

- 1. We had 50 meetings during the year.**
- 2. One week we had a snow storm that forced a closure of all schools and public building in New**

Providence. Hence, there was no meeting that week.

- 3. The second missed meeting was caused by a heating system failure in the New Providence Methodist Church's meeting room that we were using as a meeting venue while our usual meeting venue at the New Providence Municipal Building was undergoing extensive renovations.**
- 4. So, we set a very good record for completion of scheduled meetings in 2018.**
- 5. As to attendance at meetings, we also had a very good year. Our average attendance was 105 members, with some meetings reaching much higher levels.**
- 6. Our greatest number of attendees at a meeting was at our 4,000th meeting on December 4th, 2018 (141 people attended). More details on this particular meeting will come later in this report.**
- 7. Our total membership for the year was 285. We gained 32 new members, but suffered losses of 34 due to deaths and resignations. Efforts are underway to enhance our number of members. Note the table that follows to see the membership changes in 2018.**
- 8. We did not have the usual Ladies Day in October 2018 because of an inability to get a sufficient number of people to sign up for the festivities**

planned for The Grand Summit Hotel. This annual social event, where members bring their wife or “lady friend” to a very festive lunch with speaker dates back to the one held in October of 1949.

9. John Luckstone and others have been working on ways to revitalize Ladies Day, but initially on a smaller scale. Hopefully, these efforts will bear fruits in 2019 and subsequent years.

10. We did have a very good picnic at a local New Providence park. Sixty-two members attended the picnic, an annual event open only to Summit Old Guard members.

11. Our financial situation, without getting into specific numbers, was very sound throughout the year. It has been improving year by year. As you might imagine, adding more members to our organization will aid in this endeavor.

D. Meeting Venue Changes During the Year 2018

1. The Town of New Providence had long planned to renovate its formal Council Meeting Room. This is where we have met for many years.

2. So, we had to locate a temporary but suitable meeting venue, hopefully nearby. As good fortune would have it, through the efforts of Don Gossett (a member), we were offered the use of the meeting

room at the New Providence Methodist Church, just a few blocks away.

- 3. Our first meeting there was in January 2018, and we continued to use that room until mid-year.**
- 4. Then, we moved back to the New Providence Municipal Building into a newly renovated meeting room.**
- 5. We all owe our gratitude to Don Gossett and especially to the New Providence Methodist Church for its kindness in aiding us in a time of great need.**

E. Some of the More Memorable Presentations of 2018

- 1. As noted earlier, we had 50 meetings in 2018, and thus 50 presentations. All of the presentations were very good, but a few stood out as exceptionally good based on audience responses, etc. We call your attention to the following four that captivated our audiences.**
- 2. The meeting where we celebrated our 4,000th meeting was certainly the best. All general arrangements were planned by the co-chairmen, Mitch Erickson and Kai Heyer. You will find a dozen and one-half pages (following) that cover this event in some detail.**

- 3. The mayors of both New Providence and Summit read formal proclamations. And both had many kind words to say about the Summit Old Guard.**
- 4. An outstanding presentation was one by our member Foster Osborne, which dealt with a contrarian's view of Winston Churchill. Since the vast majority of Americans hold Churchill in very high regard for his leadership of the United Kingdom during World War II, this presentation kept our audience spellbound throughout. The audience stayed nearly 20 minutes after normal closing time to hear all of the presentation and engage in the lively Q&A.**
- 5. Another outstanding presentation was one on the origin of the American flag, and all of the many iterations that it went through over the years. The historical nature of the subject (Betsy Ross, et al) and plain old patriotism carried the day here. If you (and I hope not!!) need a moving example, just think of the American flag being raised by U.S. Marines on Mount Suribachi, Iwo Jima on February 23rd, 1945 after 36 days of deadly hand-to-hand combat between 80,000 U.S. Marines and Japanese defenders.**
- 6. Still another outstanding presentation dealt with political polling. Most people have rather strong reservations about polls, but the admission that**

only 5% of the people called on the telephone in a poll agree to talk to the polling technicians was a shocker to all. How do they extrapolate the views of 5% (intellectually challenged or just yakers) out to 100%? Of what value should political poll results be viewed?

- 7. Talks by two of our members, Nolan Asch and Dr. Phil Eisner, also ranked high on our list of favorites. The audiences were wowed by their intellectual prowess, but somewhat perplexed by (just a few in the audience) by the abstruse nature of Dr. Eisner's talks.**

F. Major Revision in the Components of the Music at Meetings

- 1. The musical part of our meetings occurs at the beginning of the meeting. It had always consisted of songs from our songbook, most being American standards and seasonal songs.**
- 2. The changes implemented were to drop the usual songbooks and put the song lyrics on the screen. Then, Broadway Show tunes, patriotic songs and International music replaced the former selections. Finally, Mort O'Shea became the leader of the chorus, and he was bolstered by 6 or 8 fine singers. The old versus the new was a case of night and day.**

It's now a great part of the meetings. Our thanks to Paul Tukey and Mort O'Shea.

G. Activities

- 1. As you might imagine, golf is alive and well, with many of our Old Guard members playing often at the Summit Municipal Golf Course.**
- 2. Fishing had a group of followers who enjoyed casting their lines for the big ones in the waters off the Jersey Shore. Let's hope that they didn't catch "the really big one" that required a bigger boat!**
- 3. With President Trump in office the Timely Topics folks had a wealth of topics to cover whenever they met. From all outward signs, our Congress in Washington has not decided to be as logical as these thoughtful Old Guard members.**
- 4. Bocci has been played (weather permitting) at the Bell Labs (now Nokia) by a loyal crowd of Old Guard members. They just love the game.**
- 5. Many Old Guard members played bridge every week. It turns out that the biggest component of the bridge players were women (wives and friends), filling up as many as 16 tables some weeks. It's really a big deal!**
- 6. The Technology Users Group met twice a month to cover the latest computer programs, etc. TUG has**

often discussed hearing aids, something many of our members have found very useful.

7. We started a new group for members who like math. It is not yet a big group, but those who participated in it loved it.

H. Trips Committee

1. The best trip of the year was the one where members traveled to Philadelphia to see the Alexander Hamilton Exhibit. Nolan Asch was present to comment on many of the things viewed by attendees. Those who went on this trip made a side visit to the U. S. Mint and had lunch at an old and very famous restaurant in Philadelphia.
2. The poorest trip was one that never happened. It was to be a bus trip to New York City, where people were on their own until it was time to return to New Jersey. Since only a few signed up, the trip was cancelled.
3. All in all, the Trips Committee had a very successful year in 2018, including a number of great lunches at some very fine restaurants here in New Jersey.

I. Special Recognition for Four Members

1. Elected to Life Membership.
 - a. Richard Naths (joined in 2007).

- b. Thomas Tobitsch (joined in 2009).**
- 2. Elected to Unsung Heros.**
 - a. Olin Friant (joined in 2007).**
 - b. Joe Geist (joined in 2002).**
- 3. All four members have provided great support for the Summit Old Guard over the years.**

J. Conclusions

- 1. The year 2018 was a certainly a very good year, as the foregoing covers in brief fashion. We hope that the year 2019 will be even a better year than we experienced in 2018.**

Historical Committee, Francis McAndrew, April 2019.