

History of the Kitsap Pipe Club

As best as I have been able to piece together the club started in July or August of 2014. It was started by Adam Morse and Doug Owen. Doug owns the Cargo Hold in Poulsbo. It is a nautical gift shop with a pipe & tobacco shop at the back. Adam worked for Doug there and Doug had worked for the Tinderbox in Portland for many years before moving here and buying the Cargo Hold.

Between the two of them there was a tremendous amount of tobacco knowledge that they shared with their patrons. We have a surprisingly large pipe smoking community up here in Kitsap county and Doug is the only real tobacconist anywhere close so sooner or later everybody ends up at Doug's.

Adam thought that a pipe club would probably be popular here so he made arrangements with the Point Casino to use their cigar lounge one Saturday a month for pipe club and the Kitsap Pipe Club was born.

The Point cigar lounge was a less than ideal situation, they are really about cigars and only grudgingly let us use it. They only gave us from noon until 2 initially, then extended us until 3 but they were always pressuring us to buy more food and drinks and chased us out at 3 on the dot. I joined the club in October or November after I meet them at a SPC meeting that they attended to see how other clubs do it. We continued meeting at the Point for a little over a year but we outgrew the little room pretty quickly.

The Whitehorse Golf Club let us use their patio for a few meetings and that was nice when the weather was good but it was outdoors. One of our members was a member of the Poulsbo Eagles Lodge and he made arrangements for us to use their patio. It was a large covered space with walls on 3 sides so we had shelter. We could also get food and drinks but it was still outdoors. We met there for a few months but kept looking for something better.

I had carved out a small space in my garage for me to smoke in and Adam was over one day and we started talking about a new home for the club. We ended up deciding to rework my garage and get some more furniture and start having our meetings here. We scrounged couches and chairs from garage sales and Goodwill and made the lounge that we have now. It was an instant hit, the club loved it and we have been meeting here ever since.

Doug promotes the club at the shop and keeps a sign up sheet for the mailing list so we have a constant flow of new members. I think that having an anchor like the shop is a big plus for a club. We have a lot of young Navy guys that come and go depending on their duty assignments but our membership runs the whole spectrum from early 20's to late 70's. When Adam moved to California I took over the running of the club with Doug's support. We joined the UPCA to try and expand what we could offer our members and to be able to hold our own slow smoke competition.

We are still figuring out the dues thing and are always looking for more activities that we can do as a group. I would love to do a joint activity with the SPC so the two clubs could meet each other but I still haven't figured out what that would be. Our newsletter goes out to more than 400 recipients and out of that we have around 350 active subscribers. We usually get somewhere between 6 and 20 people at our meetings with a one time record peak of 35.

- Tom Medchill