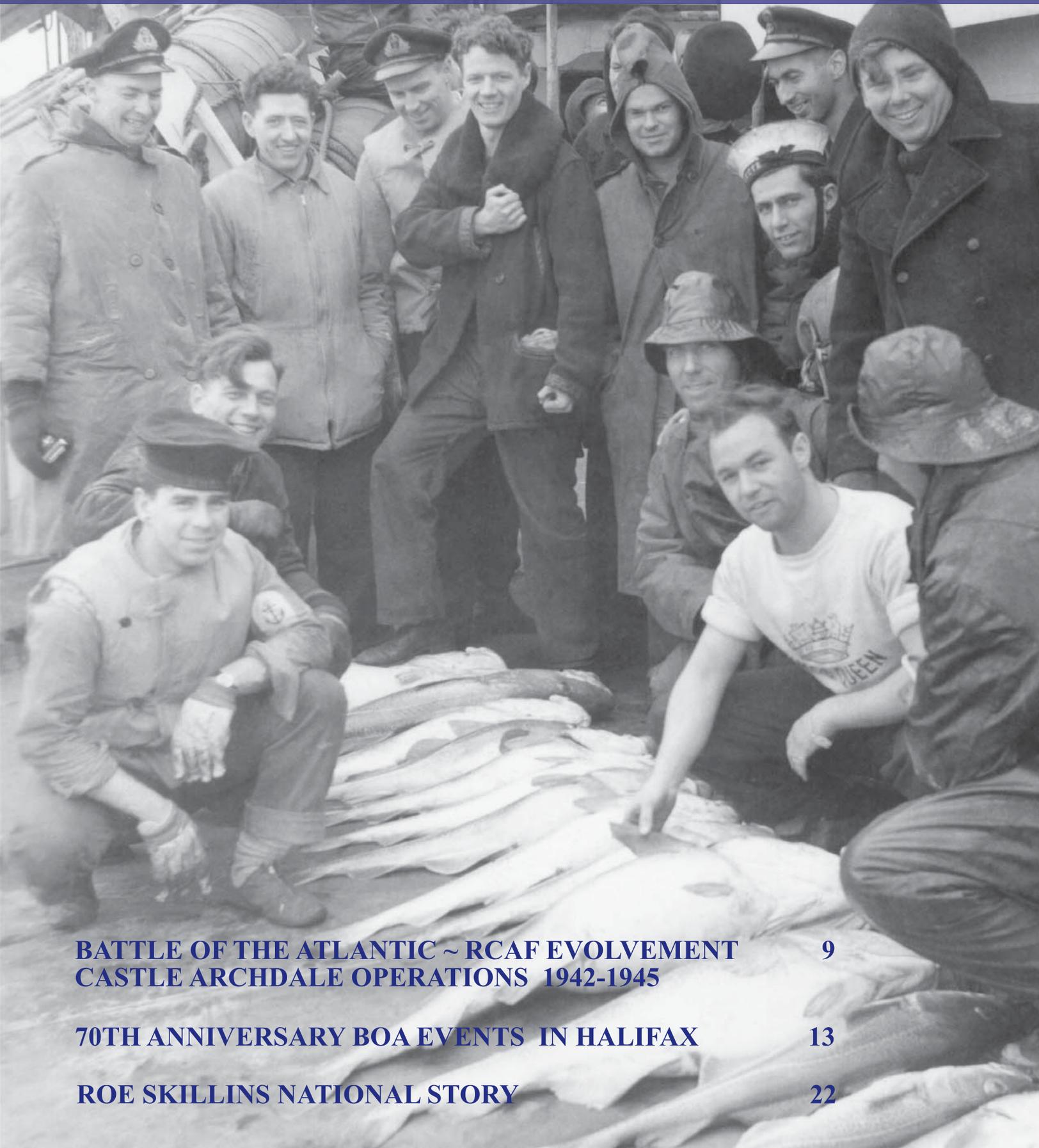


ACTION STATIONS!

HMCS SACKVILLE - CANADA'S NAVAL MEMORIAL MAGAZINE

VOLUME 34 - ISSUE 2

SUMMER 2015



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ACTION STATIONS!

Volume 34 - Issue 2
Summer 2015

Editor: LCdr ret'd Pat Jessup
pr@canadasnavalmemorial.ca

Layout & Design: Tym Deal of Deal's Graphic Design

Editorial Committee:

Cdr ret'd Len Canfield - Public Affairs
LCdr ret'd Doug Thomas - Executive Director
Debbie Findlay - Financial Officer

Editorial Associates:

Diana Hennessy
Capt (N) ret'd Bernie Derible
David MacLean
Lt(N) Blaine Carter
LCdr ret'd Dan Matte
Richard Krehbiel
Major Peter Holmes

Photographers:

Lt(N) ret'd Ian Urquhart
Cdr ret'd Bill Gard
Sandy McClearn,
Smugmug: <http://smcclearn.smugmug.com/>

HMCS SACKVILLE
PO Box 99000 Station Forces
Halifax, NS B3K 5X5

Summer phone number downtown berth: 902-429-2132
Winter phone in the Dockyard: 902-427-2837

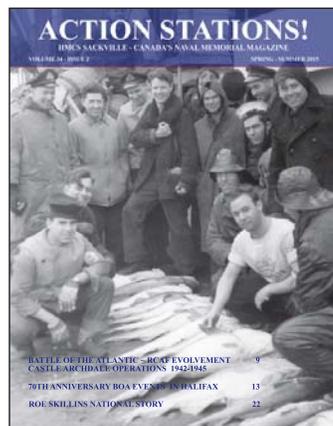
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OUR COVER:

In April 1944, HMCS Trentonian joined the East Coast fishing fleet, when her skipper Lieutenant William Harrison ordered a single depth charge fired while crossing the Grand Banks.

*Roger Litwiller Collection,
Allen B. Singleton, RCNVR*

*Photo courtesy
Douglas Campbell, RCNVR*

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The Canadian Naval Memorial Trust publishes obituaries, not only of Trustees but of the wider naval and military family. When forwarding material to the editor please include a photograph.

FROM THE CHAIR ~ CANADIAN NAVAL MEMORIAL TRUST

Commodore ret'd Bruce Belliveau



Commodore ret'd Bruce Belliveau, Chair of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust (R) and Merchant Navy Veterans Captain Gregory Spinelli, Don James, Arthur Gaudet at the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia's Battle of the Atlantic reception.

It has been an exceedingly busy period for the Trust since the last issue of Action Stations! Of course the highlight was the annual Battle of Atlantic (BOA) events in late April/early May. This year was particularly special as it marked the 70th anniversary of the end of the war in Europe and the Battle of the Atlantic. We were very pleased to host a delegation from the Royal Naval Association headed by Robert Buchanan who led a robust contingent from Londonderry, Northern Ireland. Our Irish visitors were included in all events and started their journey with the Admiral Desmond Piers Naval Association candlelight vigil and dinner in Bridgewater. This was followed by a reception at Government House with the Lieutenant Governor, His Honour Brigadier General J.J. Grant. The next event was the BOA Concert where we had a capacity crowd, the biggest ever, and were entertained by the Stadacona Band, Liz Rigney, Michelle Durling and our own version of Ko-Ko, Lord High Executioner of the town of Titipu performed by VAdm ret'd Dusty Miller who seems to have everyone on his 'little list'. It was a terrific evening and we are thankful for the sponsorship of the Shannex Group this year helping make it a total success.

There was a full BOA mess dinner at the Stadacona wardroom and the Trust held its annual dinner ashore at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in order to accommodate more guests. Both dinners were excellent but my personal highlight was at the Trust dinner as we listened to ten BOA veterans (who travelled from across the country) give a short dit on their personal experience. On BOA Sunday we held the committal of ashes ceremony off Point Pleasant Park on board HMCS Halifax. Over 170 family members made the trip and the Halifax could not have been more accommodating! It was quite a week for our Irish guests and the Trust and Trustees as well. As usual the heroic efforts of

a few Trustees made it all happen and I am thankful for their efforts. Having said that, many of these events could be in jeopardy if new faces do not step up and take a leadership role as I cannot in good faith continue to ask these same folks to continue to give at the level they do.

This spring saw the Paying Off of HMCS Iroquois. The Iroquois ships' company has been a stalwart supporter of the Trust over the years and many a Trustee, myself, Bill Gard and her cox'n Don Mackey who were all shipmates together in Iroquois, have a strong connection to her. I can say it was quite emotional to be on the bridge one last time with my Captain, VAdm ret'd Larry Murray as we said goodbye to a grand old lady!

We were fortunate as well during this period to receive from Trustee Walt Nicholls from Petrolia, Ontario, a very generous donation of his father's wartime hammock. His late father - also named Walt - was an asdic operator in HMCS Jonquiere. We also received a perfectly preserved silk and felt souvenir pennant from Richard Kriebel who's father served in the Ville de Quebec. These are rare finds indeed and it is important that we continue to look for those items of great significance to have and protect for future generations.

The ship has had a great run on the Halifax waterfront so far with visitor numbers up despite the poor start to summer weather. Work on the Battle of Atlantic Place continues and we still need all Trustees to engage locally with politicians and the business community to ensure this national project gets the recognition it deserves. Lots of work ahead of us, but so worthwhile.



VAdm Larry Murray and Commodore ret'd Bruce Belliveau at the helm one last time.

THE CAPTAIN'S CABIN

Lieutenant Commander ret'd Jim Reddy



Jim Reddy doling out pancakes with PO1 Lisa Klaassen who is currently posted to HMCS Charlottetown.

As will be reported in this issue, we enjoyed a most a most successful Battle of the Atlantic series of events. One of my favourites was the fundraising breakfast put on by the Fleet Galley in the Dockyard. This is the galley/cafeteria in the South end of the yard near our winter berth so it becomes an opportunity for the ship to mark the end of our winter work period with the Navy and civilian staff that we see regularly through the cold months. The breakfast is quite a social event as Trust members help with the serving but underlying the success is the preparation by the galley staff that results in a very high quality and healthy morning meal. After the “rations” are paid for, profits go to the Trust. Last year the proceeds were in the four figure range. Sincere thanks to CPO1 Pat Devenish (now retired and our newest volunteer!) and the Fleet Galley staff.

Then as the weather improved, we faced all the usual work in preparing for the summer season. After participating for the first time in the early June, Halifax “Open Doors” weekend, we opened to the public on June 18th. Our June, paid visitor count was notably up over 700 from just over 500 last year. July numbers and August numbers were also up even though a cool trend in the weather affected waterfront traffic. We saw that the weak Canadian dollar kept many Canadians at home this summer – much to our advantage.

Regular visitors to the ship this summer would have noticed a difference in the “style” of our ship’s company. Because of current demands on RCN personnel, the Navy was unable to provide us the traditional team of young sailors that make up our gangway safety and security watch, we hired students to make up the required numbers. The university students in their Sackville golf shirts did their homework and interpreted the ship well but of course demonstrated a more casual approach than a uniformed RCN sailor. The ship’s company was reinforced as usual by our regular, volunteer guides notably Graham McBride, Dennis May, Bert Walker, Tim Friese, as well as our re-enactor David Harrison.

Earlier, in April, we received the hull survey report from the Dockyard surveyors. It highlighted the areas in the hull that will need a closer look when Sackville is out of the water this coming winter. It also allowed the Docking Work Package (DWP) to be estimated. Currently, the plan is to dock the ship this fall and move her into the Captain Barney Johnston syncrolift building where work can progress regardless of weather. The hull inspection and preservation work, which will include steel repair is the most extensive maintenance undertaking to take place since Sackville’s restoration over 30 years ago. When completed, the ship’s floating integrity will be assured for the foreseeable future. This DWP is being provided by the Royal Canadian Navy and the Department of National Defence (DND. The Provision of Services Agreement through which DND provides this work, is currently being finalized.

While the ship is high and dry, our normal onboard activities will be interrupted for some months. The 1st Lieutenant Scott Smith is planning a schedule of Friday lunches that will take us to alternate venues that could include the Peregrine, local Legion branches and the Owl’s Club. The lunch gatherings will keep us in touch and informed on the DWP progress. There might also be an “outreach” benefit to the Trust as we gather in these other locations and spread our message. The Friday lunch schedule will be distributed by email.

ANIMATION UPDATE

The onboard displays continue to evolve and improve and with the recent addition of the WWII oilskin and sou’wester worn by Ernest George Crewe, RCN, the Chiefs and Petty Officers’ Mess is now complete and open to the public. Joining the RCN in 1940, Telegraphist Crewe served in HMC Ships Quinte, Bellechasse and Warrior as well as HMS Campania, and in the Admiral’s Yacht for Admiral Mainguy during his seven year career. Like many sailors, George was superstitious. Throughout the war he carried a medicine bag given to him by a native Indian from Lethbridge and attributes his good luck in returning home unscathed to the powers of his talisman. More of George’s wartime naval experiences and dits can be read at:

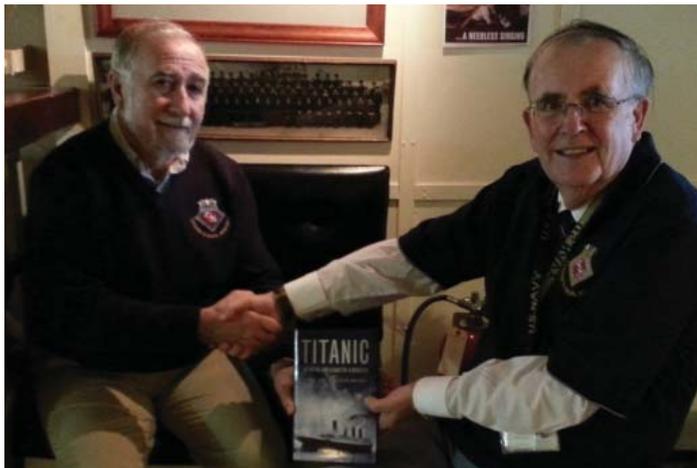
<http://www.forposterityssake.ca/GALLERIES/PERS-CREWE-GEORGE.htm>



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Lieutenant Commander ret'd Doug Thomas

Do You Hear There?



Life Trustees Doug Thomas and Roger Cartwright on the occasion of Roger's May visit to the ship where he presented us with a copy of his book on the Titanic.

As some of you will know, Battle of the Atlantic activities in the Halifax area were well-attended and highly successful this year. Part of the reason may have been the publicity surrounding the 70th Anniversary of VE Day, and some of it is due to you – our Trustees and supporters – who attended these events and passed the word to others. Thank you!

Our volunteers were a huge help in providing local transport to visitors from the Royal Naval Association in the UK, and veterans and their families from across this country. They also helped organize media coverage, made our visitors welcome at various events and worked hard to make our concert at the Spatz Theatre a sold-out success this year. Bravo Zulu to all of you!

The flood of people who bought tickets on the night of the concert highlighted some issues which will be sorted-out for next year. There will be an initial meeting of the 2016 Concert Planning Committee in September. I will approach members of the 2015 Committee first, but if you are interested in being part of the team, please let me know.

Naval Heritage Calendar: Our 2016 calendar is now available. If those of you across the country would like to order them for your ship, Naval Reserve Division, Branch, Club or Association, we will absorb shipping fees for quantities of 30 or more. We need more of you to buy our calendars – for yourself and as a gift to friends and relatives. We also need feedback to enhance future issues: suggestions, photos, and short items to enhance and broaden its appeal.

Action Stations: Pat Jessup will continue as Editor of our publication until we can find a replacement. In the meantime we have hired a graphic designer - Tym Deal - to alleviate some of the workload by taking over the layout and design

component. We can always use help with photos, research, and of course dits and articles dealing with the Battle of the Atlantic. If you can help in any way, please contact Pat at: pr@canadasnavalmemorial.ca

Life Trustee Roger Cartwright and his wife Joan from the UK visited us on the 12th of May. Roger is a lecturer and maritime history researcher and author, and he was in Halifax with the Cruise Ship Marina. He presented an excellent talk to us about the Battle of the Atlantic which he gives to passengers on the many cruises where he is a frequent lecturer. It was interesting to hear Roger's interpretation of that campaign, and the manner in which he had added music to his presentation. We gave him some of our Battle of the Atlantic Place material and a video, and he said that he would inform passengers on this and future cruises about our Project.

One of the topics Roger and I discussed was the fact that Canadian-built Flower Class corvettes served in the US Navy. There were 15 ships being built in Ontario shipyards to Royal Navy order, and eight of them were transferred directly to the USN on completion in 1942 and 1943, commissioned as Patrol Gunboats, and operated as convoy escorts. They were armed differently from those operated by the RN and RCN, and fitted with a dual-purpose 3" 50 gun in place of the forward 4" and the after 2-pounder pom-pom. They were given dashing names, such as the USS Action and the USS Brisk!

SCHOLARSHIP SEASON APPROACHES at Royal Canadian Naval Benevolent Fund



The Fund awards Scholarships to dependants of naval and former naval members. Applications are accepted between September 1 and October 31 each year. Go to our website for details.

Our Mission: To relieve distress and promote the well-being of members and former members of the Naval Forces of Canada and their dependants.

Contact us: Toll free at **1-888-557-8777** or visit www.rcnbf.ca

CROSSED THE BAR

Mildred Therese (Millie) Belliveau, a proud navy wife and mother of Commodore (ret'd) Bruce Belliveau, Chair of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, passed away in Halifax Aug 8 at age 88. She was a long-time resident of Shearwater and Dartmouth with a summer cottage at Malagash. She was predeceased by her husband Raymond and sister Molly; in addition to Bruce, she is survived by children Susan, Jane, Philip, Donald and Andrew and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Lieutenant Commander Bernard (Bern) Homer Brinen (ret'd) of Middle Sackville, NS, who served as a marine engineer in the the Navy for 37 years, passed away July 20 at age 88. He is survived by his wife Gloria, children Larry, Susan and Sheila, a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, sister Bernice and brother Walter. He was predeceased by sister Pauline and brothers Wallace and Grenville.



Stuart Albert Carscadden, a Merchant Navy veteran of WWII and an active church and community worker died in Halifax March 28 at age 95. During the war he served in MV Kaikoura and the Lady Nelson. Following hostilities he worked for the CNR dining car service before joining The Chronicle Herald as a proofreader, retiring in 1982. A long-time resident of Lantz, Stuart was an Anglican lay reader for more than 50 years and active in a number of organizations including volunteering at the IWK-Childrens Centre, Marriage Encounter Group, Transport 2000 and the Merchant Navy Veterans Association. He was predeceased by his wife Lola and daughter Audrey; survivors include daughters Jane, Mary and Anne and sister Audrey.



Captain (N) Leonard Joseph (Len) Cavan, of Sambro Head, NS who commenced his career as an able seaman and would go on to command HMC Ships Assiniboine, Huron and Preserver and serve as Commander CFB Halifax passed away in early June at age 85. In 1985 during the 75th anniversary of the Navy he served as tour co-ordinator/manager for the Canadian Forces Tattoo that performed in major centres across the country. Survivors include his wife Shirley; son Richard and daughter Kelley; he was predeceased by son Terry.



Clarice Anna Derible, a CNMT Trustee and wife of Capt (N) Bernie Derible (ret'd) passed away in Halifax Aug 25 at age 76. She trained as a registered nurse at Glace Bay General Hospital and commenced her nursing career at the Victoria General Hospital, Halifax. In addition to her husband, she is survived by children Bernard, Rick and Michelle; sisters Sharon and Pat; brother Roger and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Barbara Ann Foster, active in the military support community and president of the White Ensign Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion passed away in Halifax in January at age 69. She was a former member of Commissionaires Nova Scotia and a familiar figure at Maritime Forces Atlantic headquarters where she was employed for a number of years. She was predeceased by her husband Peter; survivors include sisters Brenda and Sherill, and brothers Robert, Barry and Lloyd.



Harold George (Hal) Gillis, who joined the Naval Reserve in 1942 and served in several ships during WWII and in HMC Ships Magnificent and St Laurent following hostilities, passed away in Ottawa June 10 at age 92. He was a graduate of NS Technical College and following retirement from the Navy in 1973 he joined the Mechanical Contractors Association of Ottawa. He was active in church and community affairs including Kiwanis and the Navy League of Canada. He was predeceased by his wife Pearl and is survived by son James. Throughout his years as a Life Member, Hal was exceptionally generous to the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust.



Fernand Joseph (Pedro) Guinard, who served in the RCN during the Second World War passed away in Dartmouth, NS June 18 at age 95. After retiring from the Navy he worked as an insurance underwriter in Montreal and maintained a lifelong interest in the sea and sailing, including training cadets. A trustee and active supporter of the the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, Pedro was one of a number of WWII veterans welcoming Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh during the Royal Couple's visit to HMCS Sackville in 2010. He was predeceased by his wife Edith; survivors include daughter Donna, sons Gary and Paul and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Angus Lewis Macdonald, QC, a prominent Nova Scotia lawyer and jurist who joined the RCNVR during WW II when his father Hon Angus L. Macdonald served as Minister for Naval Services died in August at age 89. Upon discharge from the Navy in 1946 he entered Dalhousie University and graduated from the law school in 1951. He practised primarily as a trial lawyer and was appointed to the appellate court of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court in 1973, retiring in 1992. A Life Trustee of CNMT, he was active in a number of legal, medical and community organizations. He was predeceased by his wife Evelyn and sisters Eileen and Corline; survivors include his stepchildren Judith, Karin, Wayne and Alfred; sister Oonagh and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Commander Gerald James (Jerry) Maloney CD (Ret'd),



who commenced his career in naval air (observer) in 1952 and would later serve in senior public affairs positions in Canada and abroad passed away in Bedford, NS June 11 at age 84. He served in HMC Ships Magnificent, Bonaventure, Crusader and Buckingham and later with the Canadian

Defence Liaison Staff, London; in Cyprus and the Gaza Strip with the United Nations; NORAD HQ, Colorado; National Defence Headquarters, Victoria and Halifax. His last appointment before retirement was Senior Information (PublicAffairs) Officer, DND OIA Atlantic, Halifax 1975-1981. He was a member of several naval support and community organizations including the NS Naval Association of Canada and the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust. He is survived by his wife Elizabeth, children Catherine, Peter, Kelly and John Patrick, sister Marnie and seven grandchildren.

Joseph (Joe) Mavrinac, a veteran of the Battle of the



Atlantic who served as mayor of Kirkland Lake, ON 1981-1997 died in Kirkland Lake Feb 21 at age 90. During WW II he served in HMCS Battleford and Trail. He was active in the hospitality industry and held executive position in a number of provincial and national

organizations, including the Royal Canadian Legion, Ontario Hotel and Motel Association, Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Ontario Civilian Commission on Police Services and a life member of the Croatian Fraternal Union. In 2001 the Joe Mavrinac Community Complex in Kirkland Lake was named in his honor. He was predeceased by his wife Millie; survivors include daughters Diane and Mary Ann.

Leonard A. (Len) Wilson, an active community volunteer



who spent his career in the life insurance industry passed away in Halifax April 23 at age 85. He commenced his career with Dominion Life, later building his own business as one of the first chartered financial consultants (CH.F.C). He was a member

of a number of organizations, including serving as chair of the board of directors of the former Halifax Infirmary; Knights of Columbus, Ashburn Golf Club and the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust. He was predeceased by son Barry; survivors include his wife Gwen, and children Karen, Terry, Stephen and Scott.

IN MEMORIAM DONATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

Commander ret'd Patrick Charlton

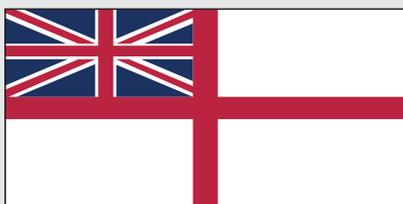
The Canadian Naval Memorial Trust has been successfully operating for decades because of the generosity and ongoing financial support of thousands of individuals from across Canada and around the world. For many, it is a deeply personal remembrance that motivates them to have a connection with the Trust and HMCS Sackville.

An In Memoriam donation honours the life of someone special in a unique way: their name is placed in the HMCS Sackville "Book of Remembrance" which is also published online at www.canadasnavalmemorial.ca. In most cases, people honoured with an In Memoriam donation are associated with past military service, but they may just as easily be a friend or relative of a CNMT member.

A memorial membership is another way to honour a relative who has passed away. Recently, a number of memberships were taken out for children and/or grandchildren in memory of a deceased family member: a wonderful legacy to remember someone special. A Life Trustee (Platinum Level) membership may be taken out with a one time donation of \$1000. A Trustee (Gold Level) membership requires an annual renewal of \$75. Was a member of your family a CNMT member? Would you like to retain their old membership number? Easily done: when completing the application, simply annotate the form or add a note to reference the deceased family member's name and request their former number.

A combined Application / Donation form is available on the CNMT website by clicking on the Donate Today / Support the Trust icon, by contacting membership@canadasnavalmemorial.ca or by writing to Membership Committee, Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, PO Box 99000 Station Forces, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3K 5X5.

<http://www.forposterityssake.ca> is a gem of a website dedicated to those who served in the RCN and the ships they served in. The site is moderated by Garry Weir to whom we thank for coordinating the acquisition of George Crewe's wet weather gear.



For those of you who served onboard Arctic convoys and have yet to apply for the Arctic Star please see:

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/help/faq/medals-decorations#arctic-apply>

Family members of a deceased veteran are also eligible to apply. - Ed.

LAST ISSUE'S COVER CHALLENGE



In the last issue we challenged the readership with identifying the photo on the front cover. Among many, we were stymied, but we felt that the image was topical in that it depicted a young Canadian sailor in the heat of battle. We were delighted with the quick and scholarly responses zeroing in on a Tribal in combat during the Korean War.

singly the “loading number” rammed the round into the breech, the breech block slammed shut and the loader moved to one side and fired the barrel himself by hammering a firing button, located either on the top of the fuze setting machine or on the side of the gun. To do so he moved out of the space that would be occupied when the gun barrel recoiled. The shield protected the “other” gun loader from being hit by the other gun recoiling. This “loading” arrangement was introduced in the post war years, and these mountings were fitted to the seven post war Tribal Class destroyers.

A slight departure from our usual Battle of the Atlantic theme we had comments and compliments from far and wide on how striking the picture was. We thought so as well and have included a sample of the commentary received:

The shell that the loading number in the photo is holding is a 4” H.E. (high explosive fitted with an impact fuze) shell. The ammunition supplied for these 4” mountings were, AP (armour piercing), SAP (semi armour piercing), HE (High explosive, fitted with a time fuze set manually or by a fuze setting machine and used for barrage firing), or HE fitted with an impact fuze used for bombardment of shore targets.

Captain (N) Bill Wilson from High River, Alberta sends:

The matelot is wearing what looks like post war anti flash gear and his all-weather jacket is far far superior to anything in use during WW2. My best guess is that as the matelot looks rather serious, the photo is the rear of a twin 4” in Korea during a shoot, such as train busting, etc.

The front page of the winter 2015 shows a 4 inch H/A, LA (high angle, low angle) gun mounting. The white “shield” between the two breeches is to protect the two matelots who load each breech. The loading system provided for the two barrels to be fired simultaneously or singly. When firing



And from Sandy McClearn:

The ship on the winter issue cover is a Tribal class Destroyer, any one of the 7 that served postwar. My guess would be one of the former three due to the close match with Haida, but the other four may have been identical in that area. The sailor is standing in front of “A” mounting. The gun is the 4”/45 Mk.16 twin that was installed in the late 1940s/early 1950s refits, or in the case of Cayuga, Iroquois and Athabaskan the gun was original equipment. The gun on the cover is trained to starboard.

Photos on left and right are from HMCS Haida, taken in 2006.

Red arrows, top to bottom:

Green arrows, top to bottom:

- Knuckle where B-mount shield starts
- Box over ammo port
- Ammo port (I think that is what it is, anyway)
- Circular ridge on deck

- Light? over breech
- Shield? plate between barrel breeches
- Breech block

BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC – RCAF EVOLVEMENT

CASTLE ARCHDALE OPERATIONS 1942-1945

Lieutenant Colonel ret'd Mike Black, Past Commanding Officer, 404 Squadron and Lieutenant Colonel ret'd Bart Konings, Past Commanding Officer, 407 Squadron



Liberator 2 - IWM

In 1942, German U-Boat successes in sinking allied shipping were so great that if continued, Britain would soon be unable to maintain its war effort against Germany. After successes of their Paukenshlag operation in the Western Atlantic in early 1942, the U-Boats returned to the mid-Atlantic in the late summer of 1942. The Allies were not able to provide air cover in this part of the Atlantic due to a lack of Very Long Range (VLR) aircraft (Liberators). Exploiting this strategic mistake, Admiral Donitz focused the bulk of his U-boat fleet operation against Allied convoys in this area. Free from the aircraft threat, the U-boats were easily able to move on the surface at night and press home attacks on poorly protected convoys with considerable and deadly success.

In spite of this awareness, RAF Coastal Command resources were being reduced by sending anti-submarine and maritime reconnaissance squadrons to the Far East. Again, Canada was asked to provide more aircrew and to authorize the establishment of two squadrons, 422 and 423, within Coastal Command, with the understanding that Canadianization of these Squadrons would occur as circumstances permitted.

Meanwhile, the Commonwealth Air Training Plan was living up to expectations if not exceeding them. Canadian aircrew were becoming available in ever increasing numbers but not all were allotted to Canadian squadrons. Many continued to be sent to RAF squadrons in Coastal Command. While the subject of Canadian squadrons to be manned and led by Canadians was a thorny subject being discussed at the highest levels, progress was slow as evidenced by the percentage of Canadians on these two newly formed squadrons. 422 managed to have a Canadian Squadron Leader but 423 Squadron did not. Less than one-third of the aircrew on either Squadron were Canadians.

422 Squadron was formed in April, 1942 at Castle Archdale, on Lough Erne in Northern Ireland. The Castle was really a very large house probably less than one hundred years old but was built on a hill of the original estate. The house contained the station headquarters and flying control, as well as some of the officers' quarters. The remainder of the personnel were billeted and operated out of Quonset Huts. The Station bordered on the edge of a picturesque, island-studded lake or Lough named Erne. The lake was the anchorage for the huge and ungainly Sunderland Flying Boat. The main drawback of the lake was the requirement to fly over the territory of Eire, during take-offs and landings. However, the Donegal Corridor established along the River Erne was established by a secret agreement between Ireland and the Allies. It allowed allied aircraft to transit over the neutral Irish airspace, saving considerable transit time to the operating areas and convoy routes.



Short Sunderland GR Mark V, ML778 NS-Z, flown by Wing Commander J Barrett, the Commanding Officer of No. 201 Squadron RAF and his crew, based at Castle Archdale, County Fermanagh, undertaking Coastal Command's last operational patrol of the war, escorting an Atlantic convoy south-west of Ireland. © IWM (CH 15302)



Look-out post 71 Eire in County Donegal, alerted Allied pilots to the fact that they were flying over neutral territory and with the number helping them chart their exact position.

With a complement of between 2000 to 3000 personnel, Castle Archdale was one of the most important coastal command and flying boat bases due to its strategic location in Northern Ireland and the use of the Donegal corridor which gave it quick access to the Western Approaches.



Aerial view of the Castle Archdale flying boat station packed with Sunderlands and Catalinas. 'Boats' were either up on the hardstanding or moored out on Lough Erne. From the beginning of WW2 Castle Archdale became an integral base for Coastal Command with its close proximity to the Atlantic Ocean.



Castle Archdale Manor House

Life for the Canadian crews at Castle Archdale was not exactly a picnic. A wartime diary of F/L Reinke reveals some of the difficulties of daily life at this isolated Boat Station. As the authors of this article have experienced themselves through many deployments to Londonderry, the Irish weather can bring days of constant rain and numbing cold and dampness. As F/L Reinke describes, "heating was a problem at times, more because of the dampness than the cold. Electric heating plates were used surreptitiously in the huts to supplement the limited coal supply. Mess fireplaces were fired with wood, cut down and split up by the officers under a 'fitness' campaign schedule- one hour per week per officer."

For 422 Squadron aircrew, the national makeup of the squadron was not as important as the lack of aircraft to fly. Although formed in April, 1942, they did not receive their first aircraft until July of that year. Even then, the

two obsolescent flying boats available were Saro Lerwicks, suitable only for training. A month later, the Squadron received the first of three Catalinas but these were soon lost to other RAF requirements in another operational area. The coveted Catalinas were in short supply because the Americans required all their air resources for war operations in the Pacific against Japan. The few crews qualified on these aircraft spent the next three months ferrying Catalinas from Canada to the United Kingdom.

During this period, there was much discussion over the acquisition of the Sunderland Flying Boat which many crews thought not only ungainly but underpowered for its role in long range operations. The Catalina was the much preferred aircraft and even had a slightly longer radius of action. Because all maritime patrol aircraft lacked the range necessary to cover the middle of the Atlantic, a huge area was available for U-Boats to operate with impunity. With aircrew becoming more proficient at sinking submarines close to both Atlantic coasts, it did not take long for the U-Boats to take advantage of this operations area. The Allies did have one aircraft that could give them capability over the entire Atlantic Ocean. However, the strategic bombing cartel were absolutely against releasing any Liberators from their bombing role for Maritime Operations. Although discussions at the highest level on this issue were acrimonious at best, it took direct intervention by Winston Churchill to achieve the release of thirty Liberators to be modified for Very Long Range Operations. Unfortunately, 422 Squadron did not receive this valuable air resource.

The first Sunderland was not received by the squadron until November of that year and then after the Squadron was moved to Oban, Scotland. After training on the Sunderland, operational status was not obtained until July 1943. However, the Squadron did not return to Castle Archdale until November of that year.

On the 18th of May 1942, 423 Squadron was the twenty-first RCAF Squadron to be formed overseas and the last coastal reconnaissance squadron. Based at Oban under the command of an RAF Wing Commander, the squadron was assigned to fly the Short Sunderland aircraft. Its first operational patrol was flown on the August 23, a 13- hour submarine search by F/L Musgrave and his crew. On the 2nd of November 1942, the Squadron was moved to Castle Archdale. Here it would remain until the 4th of June 1945. When the squadron formed, it was composed mostly of RAF personnel, but this would change as more Canadian aircrew would become available.

Of the five RAF squadrons and two RCAF squadrons operating out of Castle Archdale, 423 squadron (RCAF) and 201squadron (RAF) were stationed there for the longest time, resulting in greater opportunities and successes, especially from mid-1943 onward.



201 Squadron circa 1942 at Castle Archdale

In late January, 1943, both 422 and 423 Squadrons Canadian aircrew would be issued “Canadian identity disks”, and their aircraft would get a distinctive decal denoting the nationality of the squadron. The decal, which consisted of a red maple leaf on a field of RAF blue and surrounded by an outer roundel of dark blue, would be the forerunner of those used by the RCAF today.

Despite the fact that the Commonwealth aircrew continued to be regarded as colonials by the British, an RCAF identity was finally emerging and on the third of May the squadron crest was approved by the King in May 1943.

The first success by the Squadron was made by F/L Musgrave and crew on May 12. As described in the Squadron’s History, F/L Musgrave and crew had set out on an escort mission for convoy HX 237 and was only fifteen minutes into the mission when his crew surprised U-456 on the surface. In accordance with orders from German U-Boat command, U-Boats discovered by aircraft on the surface were to engage the attacking aircraft with their cannon and machine guns.

While the convoy and its escorts were informed of the submarine, the Sunderland’s gunners returned fire with hits observed on and around the conning tower. The sub managed to hit the aircraft with a cannon shell, but did not cause any serious damage.

Coastal Command policy required that, if available, surface combatants be brought in to fight the surfaced submarine. Accordingly, when the corvettes HMCS Drumheller and HMS Lagan came within range they added their four-inch guns to the fray.

The U-boat decided it had seen enough and quickly submerged. Musgrave saw the sub’s violent turn to port and dropped two depth charges slightly ahead of the swirl. Soon the corvettes were in place and they added their own patterns of depth charges to the attack. It would be confirmed later that the submarine was sunk. (Post war records would confirm that the submarine attacked was U-753)

F/L Musgrave had provided the squadron with its first official kill, shared with the two corvettes. Others crews captained by F/O Bishop, F/O Russel, F/L Fellows and F/O Farren would also be successful.

The wartime accomplishments of 423 Squadron were considerable. Crews flew 1401 operational sorties, over 300 convoys were entrusted to the unit’s protection, with only eight failing to be located and escorted. For all its long hours of flying, the Squadron made twenty-five sightings of U-boats. A total of twenty-two attacks were made, which yielded five official kills. 423 crews further damaged three U-boats, and possibly another. On top of its undersea victories, the Squadron was also credited with damaging a Junkers JU 88, and was responsible for saving the lives of at least twenty-nine people.

All of this came at a cost, however. The Squadron lost a total of six aircraft, along with forty-nine personnel killed and fifteen injured. Those who lost their lives are buried in the war graves section of the Irvinestown Catholic and Church of England cemeteries.

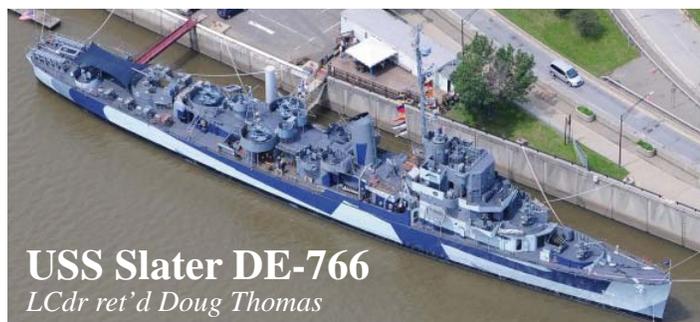
422 Squadron was not as successful in destroying U-boats as its sister Squadron, 423. Operations for 422 Squadron were many, varied and usually uneventful. Most operations consisted of convoy support or what was known as the “Moorings Patrols”. This latter scheme involved flying daily patrols between the Faroe Islands and Iceland, partly in an attempt to close the eastern portion of the “air gap” in the middle of the Atlantic in which the current Maritime patrol aircraft did not have the endurance to cover. These patrols were also established to counteract the use of Norwegian bases by enemy U-Boats.

In spite of many eventless patrols at 2,000 feet, fighting boredom, cold and the unforgiving weather, the Squadron managed one success in sinking a U-Boat. This did not occur until March, 1944 when a Sunderland, captained by Warrant Officer W.F. Morton, sank U-625, approximately 300 nm west of the Irish coast.

Bonds established between 422 and 423 Squadron members and the communities of Irvinestown and Enniskillen during the war are still strong today and the White Icelandic Whooper Swans still migrate to Lough Erne, as they did during the war.



Depth charges explode around the stern while machine gun fire hits the bows and conning tower of U-625. Photo from Imperial War Museum, C-4289



USS Slater DE-766
LCdr ret'd Doug Thomas

Looking good in 2015. Thanks to Stephen Mayotte for sharing this great aerial shot.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Destroyer Escort Historical Museum (USS Slater), Bartley J. Costello III, visited HMCS Sackville in 2014, receiving what he described as a complete and interesting tour of our ship from our very experienced and knowledgeable Graham McBride. He wrote about our ship, and corvettes generally, in the Museum Newsletter and mentioned sharing stories with our Trustees during his visit.

The USS Slater, a vessel comparable in size and capability to Canadian River Class frigates in WW II, is preserved in Albany, New York as a memorial to the tens of thousands of mostly reserve sailors who served in USN Destroyer Escorts (DE) in WWII. DEs were very busy as convoy escorts, as members of hunter/killer groups with escort carriers late in the Battle of the Atlantic, and they also served in the Pacific War. Examples of their service in the Pacific War included the USS England (DE 635) which sank 6 Japanese submarines in the span of 12 days) and the DE Samuel B. Roberts (DE 413) lost in the Battle of Samar while protecting escort carriers from Japanese battleships, including the huge 63,000 ton Yamato with 9-18.1”guns.

The genesis of the DE program was a British request for escort ships through the Lend-Lease Program. The requirement was for a ship that could be built quickly, about 300’ long, capable of 20 knots and fitted with an open bridge and a dual-purpose armament. The result was the Ewart and Buckley Class British Destroyer Escorts: a total of seventy-eight units were delivered to the Royal Navy under Lend-Lease as Captain Class frigates named after famous RN captains. These ships were welded rather than riveted, and could certainly be built quickly – HMS Halsted was built in 24 ½ days! (A Canadian connection was that some of the Captain Class were delivered by RCN ships’ companies going to the UK to pick up British-built River-Class frigates.)

The BDE design was also employed and modified (6 subclasses) for American use: 377 were completed for the USN, and many of these – particularly the later Rudderow and John C. Butler Classes – continued in service into the 1970s. Others were sold or loaned to other navies; for example the USS Slater served in the Greek Navy from 1951-1991, after which she returned to the US to become a museum ship.

The USS Slater is a member of the Historic Naval Ships Association, as are HMC Ships Sackville, Haida in Hamilton, and HMC Submarines Ojibwa in Port Burwell in Ontario and Onondaga in Rimouski, PQ.

If any of you tour an historic naval ship, photos and comments about your experiences would be most welcome for Action Stations.

www.ussslater.org

70TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATING THE END OF THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC IN HALIFAX

Following a refreshingly quiet fall, the winter of 2015 just about did us in. Apart from the worst weather in years our very small volunteer cadre was almost overwhelmed with preparations for the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the Battle of the Atlantic involving a robust program of eight days of commemorative events. We were delighted to host a delegation from the Royal Naval Association in Londonderry Northern Ireland – which has hosted us for many years, as well as Trustees from across Canada including four BOA veterans and their families from away. Larry Hartman came from Vancouver and Phil Clappison from Kitchener – Waterloo, from Sackville's original crew; James Albert Robinson travelled from Edmonton and Rodney Carson (HMCS Shawinigan) from Warren, Manitoba; and, together with our own local veterans, their memories sharp and a swagger in their step, made our annual ceremonies exciting and memorable. We were also very pleased that Diana Hennessy chose to spend her first Battle of the Atlantic here in Halifax since the passing of her beloved husband, Vice Admiral Ralph Hennessy, last June.

Despite our lack of boots on the ground each of the events was to say the least - magical. Some of the highlights included our sell-out Battle of the Atlantic Concert, the BOA dinner and the at-sea ceremony, which was shifted to HMCS Halifax this year.

Because of the generous support from sponsors we were able to offset some of our costs and were able to sponsor in turn our BOA veterans at the concert and dinner. Thank you to Shannex Parkland Retirement Living, and Life Trustees June Smith and Phil Clappison.

This year's coverage of BOA70 was enormous with national stories carried by both CTV and CBC and various print media. The attendance of original crew members of our ship heightened media interest and resulted in the discovery of another Sackville sailor, Alf Geldart in London, Ontario, who came forward after seeing his old wartime chum Larry Hartman on TV. Their online reunion can be seen on [YouTube: ST Patil Veterans Reunited](#).

The following sitrep submitted by Londonderry and Area 12 Chairman S/m Robert Buchanan provides an excellent overview of the week's activities. - *Ed*.

LONDONDERRY BRANCH PILGRIMAGE

Robert Buchanan

Friday, April 24. After 20 hours travelling, Shipmates (S/m) from Londonderry, Limavady & Cork branches, led by Londonderry and Area 12 Chairman S/m Robert Buchanan, arrived in Halifax NS where we were met by the CO HMCS Sackville, Jim Reddy and a convoy of Trustees of Canada's Naval Memorial and conveyed to CFB Halifax, our home for the next 11 days.

and Canadian Merchant Navy, lost in WWII. The guest of honour was Rear-Admiral John Newton, Commander of Maritime Forces Atlantic and Joint Task Force Atlantic and our MC for the evening was Shipmate Verne Lunan, Branch President. After the very moving ceremony, we enjoyed a fine dinner and great hospitality with the shipmates of the Royal Canadian Naval Association. On behalf of the Londonderry Branch, S/m Robert Buchanan received a presentation from S/m President, Verne Lunan and then returned the compliment by presenting a crystal glass engraved with a picture of the International Sailor Statue, which stands proudly in the old RN base in Londonderry.



Admiral Desmond Piers Naval Association members at the start of the Candlelight Commemorative Service.

Saturday, April 25. We were transported 100km to our first official event in Bridgewater NS to partake in the Battle of the Atlantic Mess Dinner hosted by the Admiral Desmond Piers Naval Association (ADPNA). The dinner was preceded by a Candlelight Commemorative Service for the Ships and Ships Companies of the Royal Canadian Navy



Robert Buchanan, RAdm John Newton, ADPNA President, Verne Lunan and Rosemary Thompson following the BOA dinner in Bridgewater.

Monday, April 27. Our group was invited to a reception at Government House, Halifax where we were hosted by the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, Brigadier-General The Honourable J.J. Grant, CMM, ONS, CD (Ret'd). His Honour and her Honour Mrs. Grant graciously welcomed us and we enjoyed their hospitality and the chance to meet old friends and make new ones.



Their Honours (R) welcoming new friends from Northern Ireland to Government House.

Tuesday, April 28. The shipmates made their way to the Spatz Theatre Halifax to attend the Battle of the Atlantic Memorial Concert. It was a very enjoyable event, led by The Stadacona Band of the Royal Canadian Navy and featuring Nova Scotia's Provincial Men's Choir, Nova Voce, among other performers. The RNA visitors got a special mention in an adaptation of "I've Got a Little List" from the Mikado performed by no less than Vice Admiral (Ret'd) Dusty Miller!



VAdm ret'd Duncan Miller reading from his little list.



Old friends Robert Lindsay, RNA-Londonderry and Trustee John Dugan, Red Deer reacquainted at Government House reception.

Wednesday, April 29. The RNA group was hosted to lunch onboard HMCS Sackville. CO, LCdr Jim Reddy (Ret'd) and his team made us very welcome and we enjoyed chowder and homemade scones made by Cdr. Wendall Brown (Ret'd), the previous CO of HMCS Sackville. A number of shipmates were then given a guided tour of HMCS Iroquois by PO2 Matthew Jones. Cdr ret'd Bill Gard, former skipper of HMCS Sackville, and Rosemary Thompson, from Shrewsbury, UK enjoying the Wednesday meet and greet onboard.



Trustees Don Mackay, Angela Soucie, Elaine Mackay, Ray Soucie and Robert and Lesley Buchanan onboard for the Meet and Greet. Ray was instrumental in 2005 in starting up the first of our very successful pilgrimages to Northern Ireland and establishing ties with the Royal Naval Association – Londonderry.

Thursday, April 30. The Wardroom in HMCS Stadacona (Stone Frigate) was the venue for their Battle of the Atlantic Mess Dinner. The Guest of Honour was Rear-Admiral John Newton, by Thursday we were old friends! The Guest Speaker was Captain Angus McDonald MN (born in Glasgow, Scotland) who mesmerized all in attendance with salty dips about his time at sea during the war, in particular how he survived a torpedoing on his very first voyage. He went on to serve on several Atlantic convoys and also aboard a ship carrying cargo to Burma.



Trustees from away attending the Wardroom BOA Mess dinner. On the left, Dr. John Dugan, Marilyn and Rodney Carson, Warren, MB and on the right, Laura and Walt Nicholls from Petrolia, Ontario.

Friday, May 1. HMCS Iroquois, Canada's East Coast Flagship, was Paid Off after 43 years of loyal service to Canada in the Royal Canadian Navy. The RNA shipmates attended the ceremony at Her Majesty's Canadian Dockyard in Halifax along with hundreds of sailors who had served onboard Iroquois over the years. It was quite obvious it was an emotional ceremony for the serving sailors and veterans in attendance which included many of the RCN's senior officers, including the Chair of the CNMT, Commodore Ret'd Bruce Belliveau.



RNA contingent braving the chilly weather during the paying off ceremony for HMCS Iroquois.



HMCS Iroquois ship's company parade for last time.

Later that evening we attended a pre-dinner reception in HMCS Sackville and then proceeded ashore to be piped into the adjoining Maritime Museum of the Atlantic for the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust's Battle of the Atlantic Dinner, commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the end of the War at Sea. MC was Commodore Bruce Belliveau (Ret'd), Chairman of the Trust. Guests of Honour were Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, Brigadier-General The Honourable J.J. Grant, CMM, ONS, CD (Ret'd) and Her Honour Mrs. Joan Grant, Rear-Admiral John Newton and his father Chief Petty Officer First Class Ret'd John D. Newton and His Worship Mike Savage, Mayor of Halifax. It was a really enjoyable evening with great food and good company. The Trust presented the Londonderry Branch with a beautiful model of Canada's famous racing yacht, Bluenose and the Norwegian Consular representative, Steiner Engeset, presented a plaque with tributes to veterans. The Trust was presented with a number of crystal glasses to auction off towards their fundraising efforts.



Saturday, May 2. The RNA group took part and laid wreaths at the Canadian Merchant Navy Veterans, Battle of the Atlantic Remembrance Ceremony. The Guest of Honour was Brigadier-General The Honourable J.J. Grant, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia. S/m Robert Buchanan, Chairman Area 12, read a poem written by S/m Eddie Lavery, Treasurer of the Londonderry Branch. The poem is called Morning Dawn and is a very fitting tribute to those who gave their all during the Battle of the Atlantic.

On Saturday evening we joined the shipmates of Royal Canadian Naval Association “Peregrine” Branch as they commemorated Battle of the Atlantic with a Ceremony of Lost Ships followed by their annual Mess Dinner. Shipmates from our group were encouraged to take part in the ceremony and the hospitality was second to none.

Sunday, May 3. Each year HMCS Sackville has been towed out into the Harbour and stationed off Point Pleasant Park where the Halifax Memorial is situated. They then hold a joint land and sea ceremony. Following the joint service the ship then has a committal ceremony and the Ashes of Naval Veterans who have crossed the bar during the year are buried at sea.

As HMCS Sackville is the last of the Flower Class Corvettes that fought their way across the North Atlantic time and time again, and indeed spent some time in Londonderry between convoys, the decision was taken, not to take her out this year. By kind permission of Rear-Admiral John Newton, Commander of Maritime Forces Atlantic and Joint Task Force Atlantic, the At Sea Ceremony was held aboard HMCS Halifax. Her Commanding Officer, Cdr. Graham Roberts and his crew extended a warm welcome to the bereaved families and also to the RNA shipmates. Tea, coffee and large buns were served in the hanger on the way out and a hot lunch was served after the ceremony. S/m Robert Buchanan presented Cdr. Roberts with a crystal glass engraved with a picture of the International Sailor Statue. Cdr. Roberts responded by presenting a plaque with a picture of HMCS Halifax carved on it.



This was the end of the official events and we were then invited to attend the Royal Canadian Naval Association “Peregrine” Branch to “Splice the Mainbrace”.

The RNA group wishes to thank all our Canadian Shipmates for their unstinting hospitality during the 70th Anniversary Commemorations in Nova Scotia. We have extended invitations to come across the pond and join our commemorations in Londonderry in 2016. We are indebted to Pat Jessup, Jim Reddy and the team of HMCS Sackville Trustees for their warm hospitality, for organizing transport, and ensuring we were able to share in all the official events.

Editor’s note: During BOA2017 week, the Old Triangle Irish Alehouse in Halifax became our informal home-away-from-home while not “on duty”. A special thank you to Brian Doherty and his team for taking such good care of our visitors from away and those of us here in Halifax.



Alumni of the Trafalgar School for Girls in Montreal, LCdr ret’d Sherry Richardson (left), Head of St. Margaret’s Bay and Diana Hennessy, Ottawa reminiscing with pleasure old times at the Triangle.

Ed note: At a recent mess dinner at the Crow’s Nest Club in St. John’s and as reported in Scuttlebutt, Sherry was presented with a set of wings from “The Ninety-Nines, Inc.” – an international organization that promotes the advancement of women’s aviation through education, scholarships and mutual support while sharing their history and passion for flight. The Ninety-Nines was established in 1929 by 99 women pilots and their first president was none other than Amelia Earhart. To complete pilot training at the age of 78, Sherry certainly exemplifies the highest standard of excellence and she is a model for all young aviators. Well done, Sherry! And a special Bravo Zulu from Richard Ratcliffe, from Downsview, congratulating Sherry on becoming the first female aviator in the Royal Canadian Navy!

In communities across Canada, Battle of the Atlantic ceremonies commemorated the 70th anniversary of the end of war in Europe and at sea. Speaking at the City of Barrie’s ceremony in Ontario, Local Navy League branch president Diane Chislett remarked: “The purpose of the Battle of the Atlantic ceremony and parade is to ensure that our community’s involvement in the war is never fully forgotten. It also reminds us about the role the Navy and Merchant Navy played in the war. The equipment and personnel that were transported from Canada to Britain, and from Britain to the shores of France and other battle fronts, would not have made it to their destinations without the navy and merchant navy.” Dignitaries at this year’s ceremony in Barrie, former Mayor Dave Aspden, The Honourable Julian Fantino, Associate Minister of National Defence and Rear Admiral Elizabeth Steele, RCN.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC: SERVICE AND COMMITMENT OF ASHES CEREMONY ABOARD HMCS HALIFAX

by Alexander (Sandy) McClearn

On Sunday, May 3, I was privileged to be able to tag along and photograph the service and Committal of Ashes ceremony marking the 70th anniversary of the end of the Battle of the Atlantic. Normally, this would occur onboard HMCS Sackville, the world's last remaining Flower class corvette. For the 70th anniversary, however, they needed something a little bit.....bigger.



HMCS Halifax reflected on the still calm waters of Halifax Harbour before departure on Sunday morning.

HMCS Halifax is currently testing the new CH-148 Cyclone helicopter, and took time off from these duties to play host to the ceremony this year. Guests were escorted to the ship before 0900.



Shortly before departure, Sea Cadets from RCSCC Swiftsure carried aboard the ashes of the 29 veterans who were to be committed to the deep that morning.



We were joined onboard by Battle of the Atlantic veteran Philip Clappison, who served in HMCS Sackville when he was 18.



After Halifax departed the jetty, and backed out into the harbour, we headed south along the Halifax waterfront and took the western passage past George's Island. On our way, Halifax was saluted by ships in HMC Dockyard, as well as by Trustees onboard HMCS Sackville – the last corvette. Sailors onboard Halifax stood at attention as they received the salute.

Halifax sailors receiving a salute from a ship alongside in HMC Dockyard.





HMCS Halifax soon arrived at her position off Point Pleasant Park, and was joined by two Glen-class Navy tugs, who helped her maintain station. From our vantage point we could see the platoons of Naval personnel marching past the Bonaventure Anchor memorial on their way to the Naval Memorial in Point Pleasant Park for the ceremony ashore.



(Above) Cdr Graham Roberts, Commanding Officer HMCS Halifax, Philip Clappison and Commodore (ret'd) Tino Cotaras during wreath-laying ceremony. (Bottom left) Padre Leonard Bednar during the service.



During the service, the ship's bell was rung for each of the twenty-four RCN vessels lost during the Second World War, as well as for a representative 24 (of 73) merchant vessels lost, and finally for RCAF Squadrons that lost aircraft during the Battle of the Atlantic.



Padre Leonard Bednar during the service

Following the Battle of the Atlantic service the committal of ashes ceremony was conducted onboard.



Halifax sailors and a Swiftsure sea cadet pipe the remains of each veteran as they pass over the side.



The ashes of Stoker Charles Dunbar pass over the side.

The containers of ashes were placed on the burial board, under a flag (either the RCN Ensign, or the Maple Leaf, depending on their service). When the appropriate time came, the burial board was elevated, and the ashes slid down and into the water. In the case of the above, I was quite happy to be present; Trustee Charlie Dunbar brought me along to my first of these services many years ago. I thought it was only appropriate that I should be there to photograph his final voyage.



Members of the ship's company HMCS Halifax, including the CO and Cox'n, salute as a veteran's ashes are committed to the deep.

Once the committal ceremony was completed, HMCS Halifax, her Battle of the Atlantic commemoration mission complete, returned to her berth in HMC Dockyard.



Sailors handle Halifax's lines as she comes alongside.

Thank you to the ship's company of HMCS Halifax for hosting the ceremony this year.

Trustee Sandy McClearn, P.Eng., PMP, LEED AP BD+C is an avid photographer and blogger. You can see more of his work at <http://smcclearn.smugmug.com/> Follow Sandy on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/sandymcclearn>

NEW ARCTIC/OFFSHORE PATROL SHIP TO BE NAMED HMCS MAX BERNAYS



Rear Admiral Bill Truelove, Commander Maritime Forces Pacific/Joint Task Force (Pacific); Marilyn Bernays, daughter-in-law of CPO Bernays and Max Thompson, great-grandson of CPO Bernays during naming ceremony of HMCS Bernays held CFB Esquimalt Naval & Military Museum.

One of the new Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships (AOPS) will be named in honour of a decorated Battle of the Atlantic veteran, the late Chief Petty Officer Max Bernays.

Bernays distinguished himself in early August 1942 while serving as coxswain in HMCS Assiniboine when the destroyer engaged in an intense surface gun action against the German submarine U-210. While steering the ship and with both the wheelhouse and bridge on fire, Bernays ordered two junior sailors to get clear leaving him alone at the helm to dispatch more than 100 telegraph orders to the engine room. Eventually Assiniboine rammed and sank U-210 while suffering one fatality and 13 wounded during the engagement in the North Atlantic.

For his valour and dauntless devotion to duty, CPO Bernays was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal by the British Admiralty.

The 103 metre, 6,440 tonne AOPS have been designated as the Harry DeWolf Class in honour of wartime naval hero Vice Admiral Harry DeWolf. The six ice-capable ships will conduct sovereignty and surveillance operations in Canadian waters on the Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic coasts. They will also assist other units of the Canadian Armed Forces in the conduct of maritime-related operations and support other government departments as required.

MERITORIOUS SERVICE



James White of Enfield, NS, a grade nine student and sea cadet is drawing public attention for his award-winning HMCS Kootenay project and making new friends among veterans.

In October 1969 HMCS Kootenay was part of a task force exercising in UK waters when the Royal Canadian Navy suffered its greatest peacetime loss of life. A gearbox exploded sending a fireball through the engine room and thick smoke along 3 Deck (Burma Road) and into the main cafeteria and messes, killing nine sailors and injuring 53. A skilled response by the crew saved the ship and the loss of more lives. The incident is commemorated annually in Canada.

James, a member of 324 Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps Bonaventure toured HMCS Sackville, Canada's Naval Memorial and learned about the important role Canadian corvettes and sister ships played in winning the pivotal Battle of the Atlantic.

Following his visit to Sackville and intrigued with the history and artifacts displayed and discussion with the veteran hosts, James had a chat with his grandfather. It turned out his granddad was serving in HMCS St. Laurent, one of the eight ships in company with Kootenay when the explosion occurred. With granddad's insight the young man became interested in the Kootenay story, researched, compiled notes and wrote an outline piece.

Later, when James' school (Riverside Education Centre) announced their participation in a heritage fair, James selected the Kootenay story and set to work creating a heritage fair project. He progressed from successful regional competitions to winning a provincial heritage fair competition held in Halifax.

For James, "it was a great experience...I've done these projects before and didn't get too far but this time I went a lot farther than I expected. And I got to meet a lot of really cool people...including survivors from Kootenay...and they were honored that I was doing this because they felt people had forgotten about it."

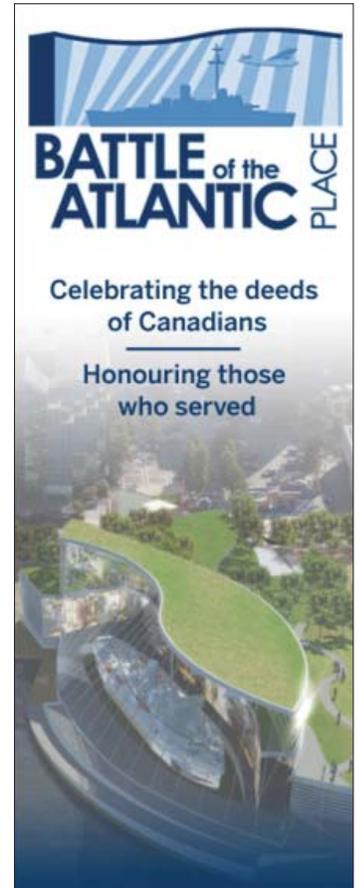
James has been asked by HMCS Kootenay survivors to lay a wreath at the next memorial service. As well, he has received requests to speak to cadets and students to help increase awareness of a 45 year old incident that is an important part of our naval history.

FOCUS ON HALIFAX MEMORIAL

Many of you will have heard of the proposal to place a war memorial in a rather isolated area of Cape Breton Highlands National Park, at Green Cove. Part of the rationale is that it was the last place many soldiers saw on leaving Canada to fight abroad in World War II. It seems to me much more likely that soldiers departing Canada to fight in Europe would have sailed from Halifax in a convoy, after arriving there overland by train. Nevertheless, this private effort, which seems to have the support of Parks Canada, is competing for dollars and publicity with Battle of Atlantic Place and preserving a true Canadian icon, The Last Corvette: HMCS Sackville. Please read the following letter from one of our Life Trustees (and a Cape Bretoner):



Concept Drawing: Battle of the Atlantic Place



*Captain (Navy) ret'd Roger Chiasson,
Royal Canadian Navy, Halifax*

I am writing as a concerned citizen and Navy veteran regarding the planned construction in Green Cove, Cape Breton, of the Never Forgotten National Memorial statue, also dubbed the "Mother Canada" statue. Parks Canada is inviting comments regarding the monument's environmental impact. I doubt that any flora or fauna or granite substrate will suffer significantly from the monument's construction. What I am concerned about is that the survey, for which there is a very narrow response window, misses the point. Regardless of its purely environmental impact on flora and fauna, I and many others (to wit recent letters to the editor in this paper) believe that it will desecrate the natural beauty of the park. But, more to the point, I believe it detracts from what I consider to be a far more worthy monument to which we as a nation should dedicate ourselves.

There is already an iconic tribute being planned for the Halifax waterfront - namely the Battle of Atlantic Place project (www.battleoftheatlanticplace.ca) to permanently house Canada's Naval Memorial, HMCS Sackville. The Sackville project in my opinion is more relevant to

Atlantic Canada, in that it celebrates Canada's Maritime contribution to the allied WW II effort, and is located in a Maritime urban centre, thereby providing maximum access and maximum awareness among Canadians and other visitors of our critical contribution to the defeat of Axis forces during a near-death blow to our freedom and democracy.

I am dismayed that our Government, through Parks Canada, has consented to provide pristine parkland to a private venture for the construction of the monument. The current solicitation for comments on the environmental impact of the project implies tacit approval, without any evidence that the majority of Canadians are in favour of it. Since the Never Forgotten monument is a private venture, it ipso facto does not require the consent of the majority of Canadians, and I have no objection to it being constructed on private land. I strongly believe that the Government is jumping the gun, and should revisit the apparent decision to allow the monument to be built on public land intended to protect Cape Breton's natural beauty. Rather, the Government should be supporting the Battle of the Atlantic Place project as more befitting of an East Coast monument to Canada's maritime contribution to our freedom. That said, I believe that the two projects are not mutually exclusive.

ROE SKILLEN'S NATIONAL STORY

by Rear Admiral John Newton, Commander Maritime Forces Atlantic and Joint Task Force Atlantic



RAdm John Newton sharing salty dips with wartime Sackville sailors, Larry Hartman (L) and Phil Clappison (R) during Battle of the Atlantic week commemorations in Halifax.

As I drove to the Admiral Desmond Piers Naval Association dinner in Bridgewater on April 29th, I worried that I was not up to the task of speaking about the Battle of the Atlantic to the veterans. No amount of reading prepares one to speak meaningfully on the sacrifice of others.

Yet the great struggle remains part of our living consciousness. Veterans are still alive, and their children painfully remember the physical and invisible injuries of returning parents. Thanks to their sacrifice, our country blossomed on the democratic traditions secured, profited from the freedom of the seas on which the global economy floats, and was able to influence world affairs as a result of the respect earned.

For six years of hellish combat, the Royal Canadian Navy helped keep Britain and the allied war effort resupplied. Combat losses were irreparable as merchant ships rained to the bottom, 3500 in total, victims of U-boats and unfor-giving weather. 175 shepherding warships were lost, and the toll was 72,200 allied sailors and merchant seamen killed.

As I drove, I prepared myself by thinking of heroic commanders like Harry DeWolf and his dilemma of having to abandon colleagues in the waters off the Brittany coast. I visualized the convoyed merchant ships resting their weary crews in Bedford Basin knowing full well the peril they were about to face. I considered the Norwegian whalers, regrouping in Lunenburg and training to reclaim their homeland. I reflected on the terrorization of coastal peoples as the dead washed ashore from ships sunk at Bell Island and in the Gulf of St Lawrence. With respect to the sinking of the ferry Caribou, I remembered Nursing Sister, Margaret Brooke, and her unsuccessful struggle to save a friend in the frigid waters of Cabot Strait. At the Lahave River, I imagined the beautiful River Foyle in Ireland, the welcome respite for those escort crewmen lucky enough to have survived another crossing.

Amongst the warm embrace of the veterans, I soaked up their stories and watched their re-enactment of naval cere-

mony and traditions. As the old salts conducted a candlelight ceremony, pausing to name each of the 33 Canadian warships lost, I was struck by the fact that the ship's names tell the story of our country.

Skeena, Athabaskan and Fraser are emblematic of our great rivers; plied by aboriginal peoples, fur traders and explorers. St. Croix and Louisburg tell of European expansionism, and a long feuding contest between imperial giants. Chedabucto has its history steeped in the Expulsion, resettlement by Acadians and waves of Irish in the early 1800s. Charlottetown reminds of Confederation and the birth of our nation. Regina remembers the Canadian Pacific Railroad, Northwest Mounted Police, and Great Depression dustbowl. Valleyfield is a story of the St. Lawrence Seaway, and the movement of the bounty of our continent to inter-national markets.

Then the bell struck for Ottawa and her 114 victims. I thought of Parliament Hill, rebuilt in 1919 by a nation mourning 60,000 casualties of the Great War. I imagined the shrine of Vimy Ridge in its western façade, the paintings of Canada at War adorning the Senate Chamber, and the Peace Tower where the sacrifice of so many in-service to our nation is recorded. No doubt, the legacy of the fallen at places like The Somme, Ypres and Vimy Ridge was on the mind of our sailors stoically resolved to their fate in hastily built corvettes, and grimly facing yet another clash with roaming U-boats.

As we dined, I remarked that I was struck by the idea of the national story. My tablemate quietly revealed that her father had survived the sinking of HMCS Ottawa on 13 September 1942. He and his shipmates were young men, the Captain 28, Executive Officer 24, and the ratings between 18 and 22 years old. For the previous year they had seen constant battle, weathered cruel seas and witnessed countless ships sunk.

On-watch at his gun when the first torpedo hit, Roe Skillen was sent to render assistance to the injured. Moments later, a second torpedo hastened the ship's fate. Blasted across the deck, Roe painfully managed to free his mangled legs from wreckage as he slipped into the sea flooding across the deck. For hours he clutched a Carley float as his shipmates succumbed to hypothermia. In a strange coincidence, the sailor from HMS Celandine who pulled him to safety was a British lad who attended Midnight Mass with him in St. John's months earlier. Roe lost a leg to his injuries but went on to live life to its fullest in Nipigon, Ontario, leading community-minded endeavours, working industriously and raising a family until his death in 2006.

I was humbled to meet his daughter Rosanne Jessome and hear of his story. Marrying it to the tale of our nation told by the names of lost warships, I confidently took the podium and offered my profound thanks to these remarkable men and women who served the Royal Canadian Navy in war and peace, and helped write another chapter in Canada's history.

REMEMBERING HMCS ST. CROIX

From the files of the Naval Museum of Manitoba, Fraser McKee, Bob Darlington and Douglas Thomas



Rear Admiral L.W. Murray congratulating the Ship's Company of HMCS St. Croix in St. John's after sinking U-90, July 24, 1942. LAC/PA-169228

Built in 1919 the destroyer HMCS St. Croix started her days as USS McCook – a four stacker – in the USN before being transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy on September 24, 1940. In the early days of the Battle of the Atlantic St. Croix had already distinguished herself with two U-boat kills.

In September 1943, HMCS St. Croix was the senior ship of Mid-Ocean Escort Group C-9 – which also included another ex-USN four-stacker HMCS St. Francis and the corvettes Chambly, Morden, and Sackville, plus the RN frigate HMS Itchen – when C-9 was ordered to reinforce the escort of a large west-bound convoy of 42 ships which was over-taking another convoy of 28 ships: both of them were being tracked by the Germans.

On 20 September during battle south of Iceland, HMCS St. Croix was sunk by U-305. Sixty-five members of the ship's company perished. Five officers and seventy-six ratings were saved by HMS Itchen after they had been in the very cold water of the North Atlantic for thirteen hours. The rescue came to a bitter end three days later when U-666 sank HMS Itchen. This time there were but three survivors, two from Itchen and Stoker W. Fisher from St. Croix. One St. Croix's sailors, lost in the Itchen, was Surgeon Lt W.L.M. King, RCNVR, Prime Minister Mackenzie King's nephew. The loss of St. Croix, like the loss of all Canadian ships during the battle of the Atlantic was felt across the country.

St. Croix's sinking was part of a large battle involving three escort groups, two large convoys and a well-equipped group of 28 U-boats. Nine of these U-boats had embarked a new torpedo which "homed-in" on the noise produced by the ship's propellers – especially fast-turning warship propellers rather than the large slower-turning propellers of most merchant ships. These GNAT torpedoes, combined with a new U-boat Headquarters policy to sink convoy escorts first – thereby rendering the convoy more vulnerable to attack, introduced a deadly phase to the Battle of the Atlantic. The Allies had intelligence of this development, and quickly responded with towed torpedo decoys: the Canadian CAAT-gear and British "Foxyer," but this was after St. Croix, Itchen, and the RN corvette Polyanthus were lying at the bottom of the North Atlantic – all victims of this new torpedo.



My interest in the loss of HMCS St. Croix stems from the fact that my dad's young cousin, Gordon Berrisford, was lost when the ship was sunk. My late father, Harry, served in the RCNVR as an ERA. Two of his older brothers, my late Uncles Bill and Nelson Shead, served in the RCNR as Chief Motor Mechanics. All three began their naval service at HMCS Chippawa and survived the war.

In the summer of 1960 I was in the new HMCS St. Croix as a member of the Special Escort for the presentation of the tottem pole Hosaqami to the RN to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of RCN. En route to the UK the new St. Croix may have passed near the location of the sinking of the original St. Croix in 1943. Gordon's father, William was mayor of Selkirk at the time of his loss. His mother Gladys (nee Shead) was a cousin of my dad and his brothers. (I was serving as Mayor of Selkirk on the 40th anniversary of St. Croix's loss.)

A shipmate in HMCS Buckingham, Doug Hinchliffe (now in Swan River), also remembers a family friend from Swan River, Ordinary Seaman Harold Van Sickle. He suffered the same fate as his St. Croix shipmates that tragic night in September 1943.

This year is the 72nd anniversary of the loss of St. Croix and her crew - save one William Fisher. U-305 (St. Croix's adversary that night) was lost in action with all hands four months later.

Lest We Forget,

*Bill Shead
Selkirk, Manitoba*

Editor's note:

I am from the small town of Iroquois Falls in northern Ontario, the same town that Stoker Oscar James Locke, also known as Jimmy Locke, spent most of his life before joining the navy. Jimmy was 20 when he was lost in the St. Croix as was Victor Luchan from nearby Schumacher. I grew up with his tragic story and that of the loss of HMCS Athabaskan in 1944 when another sailor from home, Harry Liznick survived the sinking but spent the rest of the war in a POW camp. As mentioned in the narrative, the losses during the Battle of the Atlantic were felt across the country and I would argue, in many communities, are still felt.

2016 Canadian Naval Heritage Calendar



The full colour 2016 **Canadian Naval Heritage Calendar** is now available through HMCS Sackville Gift Shop, CANEX stores and other outlets.



Produced by the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, the calendar captures our rich naval heritage. It includes photos, paintings, graphics and text depicting

- Ships, naval leaders and heroic actions of the Royal Canadian Navy.
- Significance of the Battle of the Atlantic as embodied in the architecturally-striking Battle of the Atlantic Place to be developed on the Halifax waterfront.

For bulk orders of 30 calendars or more, we will cover shipping costs.

Please contact the Executive Director at:

902-721-1206 or execdir@canadasnavalmemorial.ca

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www.canadasnavalmemorial.ca

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE



Lieutenant (N) Jared MacFadgen (L) is our newest Life Member and represents an increasing number of young officers from the Fleet committed to the preservation of HMCS Sackville and honouring those that have gone before. Jared, the son of our Cox'n Craig MacFadgen, first visited the ship when he was in Grade 8. Now that he is posted to Halifax he hopes to spend more time onboard and volunteering when he can.

Welcome aboard to our newest members. The latest news on the membership front is the recent Board of Directors decision to revert to two membership categories. In 2013 work began to expand the categories to four with the addition of two lower levels: Friend of HMCS Sackville and Member of the Ship's Company. This approach was specifically designed in conjunction with the launch of the 2014/15 Membership Campaign to attract new members from RCN ships and shore units (Regular and Reserve) and RCAF maritime squadrons. However, sixteen months into the campaign, the level of uptake of new members at the lower levels (and in fact at all levels) has not had the desired effect. Therefore, in an effort to streamline the administration, the decision was made to revert to two categories: Life Trustee (Platinum Level Supporter) and Trustee (Gold Level). Current members in the lower categories will be offered the Trustee category when their annual membership is renewed.

THE MAIL BAG



First let me say that I absolutely adore *Action Stations!* Years ago I became enamoured with WWII naval memoirs and over time have read as many as I could lay my hands on. I find the recollections of ex-naval personnel in *Action Stations* fascinating. Your publication further serves to quench that thirst. (Also, my son Lieutenant (N) Sebastian Harper, HMCS Calgary was featured in the last issue. Proud Papa!)

With regard to receiving *Action Stations* in electronic format, I feel like an environmental troglodyte, but I really

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Christopher Borgal, Toronto
Gordon Burns, Dartmouth, NS
MacKenzie Clark, Halifax, NS
Steven Cochrane, River John, NS
Katharine Dawson, Nanaimo, BC
Timothy Feeley, Halifax, NS
Jim Stace, Hampstead, New Hampshire
Boyle, Marcus, Toronto, ON
Jared McFadgen, Halifax, NS
Francois Nadeau, Dartmouth, NS
Henry T. Porter, Cornwall, ON
Nick Serbu, Dartmouth, NS
Jane Warman, Dartmouth, NS
David Willwerth, Ridgeway, ON

NEW ANNUAL MEMBERS

Donald Caie, Simcoe, ON
Jim Calvesbert, Dartmouth, NS
Glenn Chamberlain, Dartmouth, NS
George A. Chisholm, Halifax, NS
Ron Hawrysh, Victoria, BC
Anne James, Dartmouth, NS
Steve Jensen, Dartmouth, NS
Don Kydd, Halifax, NS
Rhonda Moravec, Stoney Plain, AB
Andrei Moroz, Halifax, NS
Greg Peet, Dartmouth, NS
Phillip Randall, Enfield, NS
Trevor Raymond, Georgetown, ON
Jim Robinson, Edmonton, AB
Ernie Spiller, Cornwall, ON
Grant Thompson, Lower Sackville, NS

like getting the hard copy of the publication. I share it with many friends, some of whom do not own computers. So, please keep sending the hard copy - for now, anyway.

Please pass on my thanks to the editorial team. And kudos for being environmentally aware!

Yours,

*Stephen Harper, Newmarket ON
(Stephar1@sympatico.ca)*



Your December 2014 edition of *Action Stations* is a first class production and - speaking I suppose as much as an historian as a naval type (and ex-sort of member of the Sackville's ship's company) - as class Ushant at Kings

we made one trip in her from Halifax to Shelburne in the summer of 1944 to practice our navigation when Kings' normal training escort was in for repairs.

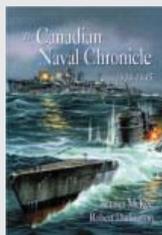
Having been editor of 2 of several journals, I believe that efforts by editors like you are the very glue that holds their organizations together. Often it's about all that more distant members get for their membership dollars, and even 'locals' don't turn out in great numbers to actual events. Without these newsletters, membership would be reduced to a few such locals. Good for you.

In this edition I was particularly struck by Commander George Borgal's article on Sackville, and his comment on p.9: "As a nation we do not have a strong tradition of celebrating our national accomplishments..." Couldn't agree more strongly. A few of us...too few...have begun objecting to the becoming-traditional recitation on Battle of the Atlantic Sunday in May and on Remembrance Day in November only a list of the 33 RCN warships that were lost. We did "win" the war (if any war is "won"), and sank more enemy warships than we lost. Other nations celebrate successes - the RN at the Nile and Trafalgar, Helgoland Bight, Matapan, Taranto, sinking the Bismarck and Tirpitz and so on. The USN is past-master at such recognitions, only occasionally commemorating losses beyond Pearl Harbour. This sometimes annoys us Canadians..."After all we don't want to be like those Americans never acknowledging wartime successes - primarily against our primary target, the U-boats. Certainly we should remember

and commemorate all those 1,900 - odd who gave everything. But to the complete exclusion of our valiant larger numbers? I suggest not.

Bob Darlington and I wrote a book to help balance that history, our "*Canadian Naval Chronicle*," recording details of both. And last year I prepared a list along those lines, which I'll include herewith.* I'd like to think we all could amend our commemorative days by at least including both categories, wins and losses, in some format. As one says to senior officers, "For consideration"!

*Commander Fraser McKee,
RCNVR, RCN(R), RCNR, CF(R)*



*Ednote: Cdr McKee's latest re-search project *The Ultimate List of Canadian Navy & Merchant Ships to be Remembered on Battle of the Atlantic and Remembrance Occasions* will be featured in detail in subsequent *Action Stations*. The "List" was recently read out at "HMCS Catarqui's Battle of

the Atlantic dinner in Kingston: at 10 or 12 tables, each was given a distinct program listing half a dozen lost ships - HMC Ships and merchantmen, and a single lit candle. All the room lights were turned off. One member at each table read out his or her list of ships, then blew out the candle. When the last list was read, the last candle extinguished, there was a moment of silence in the now complete darkness, before the room lights were lit, and toasts drunk. A moving experience," recalls the author. CNMT will seriously consider doing this at the 2016 Battle of the Atlantic Dinner.



ADMIRAL PIERS MEMOIR

LCdr (ret'd) Ian McKee

In August 1941 Lieutenant Commander Piers was ordered to sail HMCS Restigouche from St. Johns and sweep a bay then anchor as close to shore as he could. He had no idea what was going on. Shortly after he anchored a large fleet came over the horizon, including battleships, cruisers and destroyers. The ships were heading for Placentia Bay and the signing of the historic Atlantic Charter involving Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Franklin Roosevelt. Later, Piers and a few other officers were invited to HMS Prince of Wales for a Sunday service. After the service was over he asked his fellow officers if they would like to meet Churchill. He explained how he had served in Prince of Wales and knew his way around. They were to keep close to him and keep moving. He led them to the wardroom where the Prime Minister was seated in the center and lesser lights like admirals were seated around

the bulkheads like wall flowers. As Admiral Piers later recalled he went straight up to Churchill and asked him if he would like to meet some of the officers of his escort. He then introduced his ship mates and before the staff could react turned and led them out of the wardroom, back on deck, to the waiting launch to take them back to their ship.

The VIP staff were not amused but his officers thought the world of him.



UPCOMING EVENTS

With HMCS Sackville undergoing a docking work period in the late fall, Trust related events which normally would take place onboard will be shifted ashore. This would include our Christmas Party and New Year's Day Levee for example. To keep you all informed we will be sending out regular emails and posting upcoming events on our website <http://canadasnavalmemorial.ca/> Friday lunches will continue at a yet to be determined off-site location. When in doubt, please feel free to call: 902-721-1206. *Ed.*

DATE

ACTIVITIES

Saturday, 03 October

Halifax Oyster Festival (Tour guides needed)

Saturday, 17 October

Nocturne Halifax: Art at Night (Volunteers needed)

Late October

HMCS Sackville shifts from her summer berth and returns to HMC Dockyard

Friday, 27 November tbc

Fall General Meeting, Halifax Central Library

December tbd

Christmas Party (Planner needed)

2016

Friday, 1 January tbc

New Year's Levee – location to be announced

March tbc

St. Patrick's Day Event

Week of 25 April

Battle of the Atlantic display and movies at the Halifax Central Library (volunteers needed)

Tuesday, 26 April

Battle of the Atlantic Concert, Spatz Theatre
Tickets: \$15 or 2/\$25. On sale now: 902-721-1206 (volunteers needed)

Thursday, 28 April

CFB Halifax Wardroom Battle of the Atlantic Mess Dinner, Stadacona

Friday, 29 April

Canadian Naval Memorial Trust BOA Dinner – Maritime Museum of the Atlantic.
Taking reservations now. Jessup.reddy@ns.sympatico.ca

Saturday, 30 April

Merchant Navy Battle of the Atlantic Ceremony, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

Sunday, 1 May

HMCS Sackville underway Battle of the Atlantic Ceremony

2 - 9 May

Battle of the Atlantic pilgrimage, Londonderry Northern Ireland.
Registration: Jessup.reddy@ns.sympatico.ca

Roger Litwiller is an author of Canadian naval history. His latest book *White Ensign Flying* tells the story of the last corvette lost in the Battle of the Atlantic, HMCS Trentonian. Many stories from this corvette's crew and personal photos are included throughout the book, bringing the story of this incredible warship to life.



One of Roger's research projects is the collection of veterans personal photographs from the RCN. To date this collection has reached almost 1600 photos ranging from WWII to present day. Roger has generously donated the entire collection to the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust for our use onboard HMCS Sackville, in Action Stations and Battle of the Atlantic Place.

On 1 September 2015 The Maritime Museum of the Atlantic opened its fall lecture series with Roger's riveting talk about the life of RCN corvette sailors during which he related many of the stories told to him by crew members of Trentonian during their wartime service. The stories ranged from commissioning to her final moments as she slipped below the cold waters of the English Channel. If Roger is ever in your area, make every effort to attend one of his lectures. Highly recommended. - *Ed.*



*Bruce Keir collection –
HMCS Trentonian*

THE LAST WORD . . .

by Pat Jessup

BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC PILGRIMAGE – 2016 LONDONDERRY, NORTHERN IRELAND

Planning has started for a return visit to Londonderry, NI in early May, 2016. Londonderry, regarded by Canadian sailors during the Second World War as a warm and welcoming place to seek safe haven, hasn't changed significantly in seventy years. Bonds of friendship are very strong and visiting Trustees are treated like family from away. As in past pilgrimages, the format for the weekend is fairly straight forward but don't be fooled by the simplicity. Londonderry is rich in history and dare I say, the odd pub, to ensure that all hospitality needs are met. The construction of the pedestrian Peace Bridge across the Foyle connects the city centre with Ebrington Square - known during WW2 as HMS Ferret and now home of the International Sailor Memorial, adding yet another element to this fascinating city.

DRAFT PROGRAM

Thursday, 5 May	Canadian/RNA-NI Meet and Greet, City Hotel, Londonderry
Friday, 6 May	RMS Laurentic Ceremony, Buncrana, Republic of Ireland
Saturday, 7 May	Battle of the Atlantic Dinner, City Hotel, Londonderry
Sunday, 8 May	Battle of the Atlantic Parade, Church Service, and Wreath Laying, Londonderry
Sunday, 8 May	Reception, Royal Services Club, Waterside

As planning progresses, additional events will fill in the gaps so we will have plenty to do. We do not expect to have a Royal Prince next year to take our salute during the march past.

An additional outing being considered is a trip to Castle Archdale on Loch Erne where RCAF 422 and 433 Squadrons were stationed. Forty-nine crew members who lost their lives during the Battle of the Atlantic are buried in the war graves section of the Irvinestown Catholic and Church of England cemeteries 50 miles from Londonderry. <http://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead.aspx?cpage=1&sort=name&order=asc> A side trip to Castle Archdale and Irvinestown can be arranged if there is sufficient interest.

There has been some discussion about those of you from away coming to Halifax first for our ceremonies and departing as a group on the evening flight, Sunday, 1 May to Belfast via London. This is a reasonable plan and would give us a few days to acclimatize, explore Belfast and the Antrim coast before catching the train to Londonderry on Thursday. Hotels in Belfast are well-located and well-priced.

In Londonderry, the well-situated City Hotel has kept their prices quite reasonable for our group at with £85 (\$166) for a single and £95 (\$186) for a twin or double. You will recall that the rate also includes a dip in their well-maintained pool and magnificent buffet breakfast with copious coffee and tea.

Our point of contact at the City Hotel is Linda Lynch, Sales & Marketing Manager whom you may have met over the years. She has been working with our team since 2011. Her contact information is: Email: salesmgr@cityhotelderry.com, Phone: 011 44 28 7136 5800. Web: www.cityhotelderry.com

If you are interested in participating in next year's pilgrimage please let me know as I will be sending out periodic updates about the trip. If you have any questions – now is the time. Please remember that this pilgrimage is deliberately gentle – apart for an early morning stroll around the 'walls' and the occasional sampling of Londonderry's best brew.



Photo: MCpl Holly Swaine, Formation Imaging Services

Battle of the Atlantic Sunday at Point Pleasant Park, Halifax, 3 May 2015 Bell sentry, Leading Seaman (LS) Rouani Mohammed and monument sentry, LS Bassam Mothana stand their positions during the ceremony with HMCS Halifax seen in the background.

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