

ACTION STATIONS!

HMCS SACKVILLE - CANADA'S NAVAL MEMORIAL MAGAZINE

VOLUME 34 - ISSUE 3

FALL 2015



In this issue....

THE IRON BEAST	7
GLENFIDDICH SUPPORTS WOUNDED WARRIORS	8
THE SUMMER OF '42 ~ A STORY OF HMCS SACKVILLE	9
CORVETTE MESS LIFE "...IT WASN'T THE RITZ"	12
HMCS CLAYOQUOT: A CHRISTMAS EVE LOSS	14
BARBER POLE GROUP	18
A VISIT TO POLAND	20

Editorial Committee:

Cdr *ret'd* Len Canfield - Public Affairs
LCdr *ret'd* Doug Thomas - Executive Director
LCdr *ret'd* Pat Jessup - Chair, Public Relations, CNMT

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

Editorial Associates:

Debbie Findlay - Financial Officer
Lt(N) Blaine Carter, RCN
Tanya Cowbrough
Capt(N) *ret'd* Bernie Derible
Rick Krehbiel
David MacLean
LCdr *ret'd* Dan Matte
Major *ret'd* Peter Holmes
Leading Seaman *ret'd* Steve Rowland

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

FOLLOW US ONLINE:



[HMSCSACKVILLE1](https://twitter.com/HMSCSACKVILLE1)



<http://www.canadasnavalmemorial.ca/>



OUR COVER:

RCN sailors celebrating Christmas onboard during the Battle of the Atlantic.



Permission to copy any of the material in this publication must be first obtained through the editor with appropriate accreditation given to the authors and *Action Stations!*

Action Stations! can be emailed to you and in full colour approximately 2 weeks before it will arrive in your mailbox. If you would prefer electronic copy instead of the printed magazine, let us know.

IN THIS ISSUE:

From the Executive	3
The Chair's Report	
The Captain's Cabin	
Executive Director Report	
Crossed The Bar	6
The Iron Beast	7
Blow The Man Down: A Story of HMCS Sackville	8
Glenfiddich Supports Wounded Warriors	8
Summer of '42: A Story of HMCS Sackville (Part I)	9
Corvette Mess Life: "It Wasn't The Ritz"	12
HMCS Clayoquot: Christmas Eve Loss	14
German Spy House?	15
Naval Hero William Hall	16
Craig Blake Honoured	17
Barber Pole Group	18
CMNT Trustee Award Winners	19
Maintaining Ties with Sackville, NB	19
A Visit To Poland	20
Canada's Forgotten Cold Warriors	22
I Was a Sailor Once	24
Historic Naval Ship Association AGM	25
Armistice in London	26
Mail Bag	27
The Last Word / Upcoming Events	28

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

by Commodore ret'd Bruce Belliveau, Chair of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust



Commodore ret'd Bruce Belliveau (L) with Richard Martin, Chair of the Board of Directors, Wounded Warriors Canada at the Glenfiddich presentation event at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic.

Since the last issue of Action Stations! HMCS *Sackville* completed her summer run at the berth downtown. It was a very successful season with record number of visitors, despite the terrible weather in June and July. Our volunteer tour guides continued to receive high praise from our guests and I can not thank them enough for their efforts. HMCS *Sackville* is now safely alongside at her winter berth in the Dockyard and our hopes are that we can get some major repairs completed over the next months. This includes a potential docking of the ship which will of course necessitate restricted access. The team is looking at contingencies to ensure we continue to meet on a regular basis to socialize and keep all informed. As been passed on previously, the access to Dockyard has changed again but this time the restrictions have been relaxed so while we can, Friday lunches will continue to be held on board. For out of town Trustees, don't forget to let the Executive Director or the Captain know that you are coming so that your name can be added to the Dockyard access list.

At our last Board of Directors meeting we discussed the issue of volunteers for various functions. A small working group has been established to reach out and encourage Trustees to step forward and take leadership roles. I am glad to report that we are already seeing more Trustees take up the challenge, but there is much to do and many hands will

make light work. One of the initial ideas is to ask each of you to volunteer for at least one day during the tourist season (27 June – 16 October 2016) to be the ship's representative and ensure interpretation of the ship is running smoothly. We would ask for an early commitment for planning purposes for you and the ship. This role may be termed "Officer of the Day" – more to follow on details of this initiative.

Now that the federal election is over the Project Working Group and Battle of the Atlantic Society will step up the pace of reaching out to government with respect to Battle of the Atlantic Place. Although work has continued it has been slow going over the last few months for obvious reasons. Now more than ever having influencers across the country engaging local MPs is paramount. Those involved in Chapters or perhaps interested in doing so are essential to this effort: awareness is the key.

Although the ship is out of sight, she remains our focal point with a multitude of activities going on behind the scenes. Our membership campaign continues and we have started receiving Convoy Class membership for groups. If you know of a group that may be interested contact a member of the membership committee for details.

Thanks again to the team that worked onboard the ship over the summer. If you are interested in helping out, this is a tremendous way to support the Trust and meet wonderful people from all over the world. We will be looking for additions to the team for next year, and if you are interested please contact the Executive Director.

In closing I would like to acknowledge the strong ties that have developed between the Trust/HMCS *Sackville* and Peter Mielzynski Agencies Ltd (PMA) and congratulate Glenfiddich in its wonderful contribution to the Wounded Warrior Program - described in more detail below.



THE CAPTAIN'S CABIN

by Lieutenant Commander *ret'd* Jim Reddy

At the time of writing, just after Remembrance Day, *Sackville* is settled into her Dockyard winter berth awaiting direction to shift over to the syncrolift for the long-awaited hull preservation work that has been described in earlier columns. We now expect the docking to take place very early in the new year. Measurements have been taken to cut off the upper part of the mast so that *Sackville* can move into the covered facility of the Captain (Navy) Barney Johnston syncrolift where she can be worked on out of the winter weather. In preparation for this crucial work, we have been removing everything possible from the lower spaces onboard especially the larger Engine Room and Main Magazine compartments. We expect steel survey, repair and preservation coating to take place in these underwater, interior spaces, including tanks, that will see *Sackville* floating safely into the foreseeable future. I emphasize that this docking and preservation is the most significant work package that has been undertaken in *Sackville* since her restoration thirty years ago. We expect this major project to be completed in time for Battle of the Atlantic activities in 2016.

Of course our small, onboard team could not accomplish the preparations without significant help. That came from HMCS *Toronto's* Engineering Department team of volunteers who assisted our new Chief Engine Room Artificer Chief Petty Officer First Class *ret'd* Pat Devenish.

As we settle into our winter Dockyard routine, I'm pleased to note that there has been a relaxation to last year's strict security measures that curtailed our onboard activities. We are able to resume our Dockyard Friday lunch meetings with parking privileges (paid) in the main outside lot. This is the most we could reasonably expect in the current security climate and we must acknowledge the considered RCN support to our operations.

Even in the secure confines of the Dockyard (until we are high and dry on the lift), we continue to show off the ship to various individuals and groups by appointment. This requires volunteer Trustees to contribute their time in shepherding visitors to and from the gate as well as touring them onboard.

On a personal note, my wife Pat and I, along with Trustees June Smith from Halifax, and Walt and Laura Nicholls from Petrolia, Ontario, travelled to the UK to join the "Canadian Veterans" contingent in the Whitehall Remembrance Sunday parade. Canadian participation in this grand event is organized by Capt(N) *ret'd* Rolfe Monteith, a well-known WWII veteran and CNMT Life Trustee. Taking part in this veterans' tribute where over 10,000 veterans and support groups marched before the Royal Family, one could not fail

to be impressed by the wide ranging Veterans' network in the Commonwealth. To make the point, a photo is attached of an multi-generational Sikh family we met during the parade marshalling. This included a young, ex-Royal Marine, RN doctor and also a British Army officer with senior members of the family who had served in far flung WWII campaigns from Burma to Florence, Italy. Colourful and attention-getting as their dress was, the underlying message was the worldwide breadth of the event. We all know about the highly respected Gurkhas who were also on parade but making friends with this engaging and exotic group, it readily became clear that this was a team you sincerely wanted on your side.

As we run up to Christmas and reflect on our life's adventures and our blessings, best wishes to you all.

Jim Reddy



During the Great War thousands of Sikh soldiers from India fought and died in Flanders for King and Country. A little known fact is that a small group of Sikhs working in Canada volunteered for service in the Canadian Army during the war. These men were part of a larger group of approximately 5000 Sikhs who came to Canada for work at the turn of the century. Arriving in British Columbia and working in hard labour jobs such as quarries and building railways they faced discrimination and strict immigration laws denying them Canadian citizenship. While some returned to India, many out-migrated to the United States and eastern Canada. Through research of military records maintained by the Library of Canada, ten Canadian soldier Sikhs have been identified. Of these, three were wounded and three were killed.

Pat Jessup

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Lieutenant Commander ret'd Doug Thomas

Do You Hear There?

As mentioned by the Chair in his column, we had a very good summer on the waterfront. Most of our visitors stated that they saw Sackville while walking along the boardwalk, and were drawn to see our ship and learn more about her. Many were from Ontario and Quebec as well as the United States; visitors during September and October also included cruise ships passengers from around the world. It seems that every year the number of cruise ships coming to Halifax is greater than the year before.

We need Trustees who live in the greater Halifax area to help out as guides during the summer. In the past we have had great support from retired members of the Atlantic Chiefs and Petty Officers Association. Unfortunately, they are becoming more elderly and less able to clamber around the ship – certain of them, such as Graham McBride and Dennis May, provide amazing support but we need an infusion of younger volunteers to make this work. We have had a few Interpretive Guides in recent years that have been paid through grants from the Naval Association of Canada and the Canada Summer Jobs Program, but we need a presence from our Trustees as well. One possibility is to establish an Officer-of-the Day (OOD) roster for next summer, with those who are able being “duty” for at least one day. This task would involve augmenting the paid guides as necessary and ensuring that the appropriate standard for presenting the ship are maintained. Training for any new guides and current Daily Orders to inform the OOD as to what is going on during his/her watch will be provided.

Naval Heritage Calendar: Our 2016 calendar is now available for \$10 plus tax (and shipping if necessary) from our gift shop or from CANEX outlets in Halifax, Ottawa and Esquimalt. If you would like to order the 2016 calendar for your ship, Naval Reserve Division, NAC Branch, Club or Association, we will absorb shipping fees for quantities of 30 or more. We will soon start work on the 2017 edition – the plan is to develop the next iteration as more of a naval heritage publication with excellent photos of ships and their ship’s companies, while still providing a calendar, significant naval dates, and interesting Canadian naval highlights. We need more of you to buy our calendars – for yourself and as a gift to friends and relatives. We also need your feedback and input to enhance future issues: suggestions, photos, and short “Salty Dips” are most welcome.

2016 - Battle of the Atlantic Concert: Our annual concert will be held again at the Spatz Theatre on the 26th of April, featuring the RCN’s Stadacona Band. We have hoisted in the lessons-learned from the 2015 event and will take action to streamline our reception area. I will be calling a meeting of our Concert Committee to commence planning – if you are interested in joining the team, please contact me.



Action Stations! We can always use help with photos, research, and of course quality stories and articles dealing with the Battle of the Atlantic. You can contact the Editor, Pat Jessup, at pr@canadasnavalmemorial.ca

Gift Shop Volunteer: We have accepted an offer from a leading local computerized sales services company to help us automate our inventory control and sales arrangements; they will be working on this over the winter. We really need someone with a sales background to come forward as Gift Shop Manager so that we can be up and running with this new technology and computerized support for next summer – I am told that they will keep it simple and user-friendly. If you would like to help the Trust in a meaningful way, this is a great opportunity. Please contact me to discuss.

Doug Thomas
execdir@canadasnavalmemorial.ca
902-721-1206



Executive Director, Doug Thomas with wife Frances, at the Wounded Warriors cheque presentation at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic on the 9th of November. PMA presented a cheque for \$123,000 to Wounded Warriors Canada and many Trustees of CNMT were in attendance. Photo: Bill Gard

CROSSED THE BAR



Commander *ret'd* Donald Stephenson Jones, RCN, WWII and Korean Veteran, P.Eng. (Marine Eng., Air Eng.) February 17, 1924 – June 1, 2015 Passed away after a brief illness in hospital. Predeceased by his loving wife Pat (nee Drew). Loving father of David (Wendy) and Alison (Michael). Proud grandfather to Laura (Ali) and great-grandfather to Sammy. Friends are invited



to a Celebration of Life on Friday, October 23, 2015 at 10:45 a.m. with Reception following at Beechwood Funeral, Cemetery and Cremation Services, 280 Beechwood Ave., Ottawa. Interment with military honours at the National Military Cemetery of the Canadian Forces. Donations to the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust - HMCS Sackville, Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation, the Royal Canadian Naval Benevolent Fund or charity of choice, would be appreciated.

Lieutenant Richard (Dick) Calley Pearce, who served as navigating officer and 1st Lt in HMC Ships Arvida, Matapedia and Forrest Hill during WWII passed away in Toronto (Dec 1914) at age 93. He joined the RCNVR early in the war and in later years chronicled his training, including HMCS Kings and convoy escort experiences that included the St John's-Londonderry, Northern Ireland run and the Triangle run (Halifax, Boston, New York, St John's). After the war he was engaged in the publishing business with the Northern Miner and the Northern Miner Press, served as chair of the Council of Printing Industries in Canada and was a Life Member of the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy and the Prospectors and Developers Association. He is survived by his wife Betty, son Michael, daughters Susan and Jan and a number of grand and great-grandchildren.



Gordon Andrew Richards, age 89 of Lawrencetown, passed away peacefully on Sept 7th, 2015 at the Dartmouth General Hospital. Born in Dartmouth he was a son of the late John and Laura Jean Richards. In his early career during WWII, he served aboard HMCS *Sackville* as an engineer. Later in life he worked as a marine engineer at the Dartmouth Shipyards until his retirement.



In his younger years Gordon enjoyed fishing and hunting as well as a good game of croquet or badminton at the family cottage. But most of all he enjoyed spending time with his family and friends. Gordon is survived by his Loving wife of 64 wonderful years Lillian Grace (nee: MacDonald), daughter Shelly Peraud; sister Maureen Wilson and many nieces and nephews. Besides his parents Gordon was predeceased by his sisters, Gladys and Kathleen; brothers Edgar, Frank and Jack.

Rodney William Gerald Carson, RCNVR, a veteran of the Second World War who served in HMCS *Shawinigan* prior to the ship's loss in 1944 passed away in Winnipeg in October at age 89. He was landed from *Shawinigan* for medical treatment before the corvette was torpedoed by U-1228 in the Cabot Strait Nov 24, 1944 with no survivors. After the war he became



an independent insurance broker operating R.W. Carson Agencies for more than 50 years. Later in life he and his wife Marilyn travelled and attended Battle of the Atlantic commemorations in Londonderry, Northern Ireland and most recently the 70th anniversary BoA commemorative events in Halifax where he was a speaker at the BoA dinner at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. He was predeceased by his wife Patricia, son Rodney William Jr and brother Sidney Thomas; survivors include his wife Marilyn Dorothea and children Sandra Lynn, Shawn Thomas, Christopher Thomas, Gregory Alan and Shannon Elizabeth.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE - LONDON, ENGLAND



This is the 87th year of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey in London where those lost in the service of their country are remembered in a solemn outdoor display of crosses along the footpaths. Commonwealth countries are assigned a specific site on the Abbey grounds and Canada's plot displayed the names of those lost in Afghanistan and most recently in Iraq. During the opening ceremonies with Prince Harry and the Duke of Edinburgh in attendance the Dean of Westminster reflected: "With full hearts at this, our Field of Remembrance, let us pray for the peace of the whole world."

Photo: Pat Jessup

THE IRON BEAST

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



In 1870, Jules Verne conjured up an epic experience aboard *Nautilus*. His characters voyaged for 20,000 leagues under the sea, enthralling readers for decades with the beauty, mystery and intrigue of the deep. Having been one such reader, recently I was thrilled to sail in HMCS *Windsor* in order to congratulate the crew for attaining the highest level of operational readiness. The drilled submariners of *Windsor*, their oneness with their iron beast, and a stealthy probe of Nova Scotia's rocky coast are the inspiration for this Admiral's View.

Everything about their boat's interior is cramped: accommodations take second place to machinery. There was vacancy for me on an empty torpedo tray that was surprisingly cozy, albeit my neighbour gave me the chills. I comforted myself in the knowledge that it is one of the most sophisticated and reliable combat systems in the world, one that induces a respectful standoffishness from prying surface forces.

In the Control Room, sonar operators sit shoulder-to-shoulder with weapon directors tucked under the curving ceiling thick with plumbing and wires. At a control panel illuminated like a Christmas tree, the helmsman flies the boat much like an aviator pilots an airplane. Behind him sits the first operator, trimming the boat level by gently adjusting water or air into ballast tanks, ready at an instant to help the stubby wings drive the boat to the surface or deep to safety.

The Navigator guides the submarine's progress, the Attack Coordinator the tactics. They have brought the boat up from safe depths offshore into shoal waters of the coast. We glide gently beneath the swells, with just enough depth below the keel to evade passing ships. Two periscopes dominate the room, but are used most sparingly in order to avoid detection.

Seventeen sailors pass eight-hour watches in this small space. They operate the most modern sonar and weapon

systems in the world, and practice the art of stealth every minute of the day. *Windsor's* powerful effect is achieved by hiding in the obscurity of the sea, where light, radar and magnetics have little effect. Sound is the illuminator of the deep as whales and shrimp confirm. But it takes decades to master the art and science of using it to advantage. Despite the march of time and technology, *Windsor* remains at the forefront of advancement in undersea operations. She is the master of covert surveillance, choosing when and where to enter the operational theatre, her stealth assured by the consideration of silence in all elements of her design. Ashore, operational staffs secretly guard information on the boat's movements so that prying eyes must work very hard to attempt to put a pin on their chart.

Aboard the submarine, the captain is the focus of the cumulative skill and experience of the crew. Festeoned with stopwatches, he follows a disciplined drill using crisp increments of time to drive instantaneous calculations for pressing home his mission or evading should a patrolling force detect them.

He orders the periscope up, grasping its controls as they rise from the bowels of the boat. Crawling on his knees he sweeps the periscope around, keeping the lens just barely above the sea's surface and covering the full horizon in mere seconds. The crew knows his routine, listens to his narrative while contributing depth, speed, sonar and bearing information into the dialogue.

A sailboat is detected making for a bay. The rattle of an anchor chain confirms a buoy nearby. A lighthouse tower betrays a rocky islet still unseen to the boat's watery eye. Straining ears listen for approaching warships and aircraft, while computers process the sound, tease out the location of the source, and classify new targets by telltale frequencies. For hours the crew remains acutely focused on their surveillance objective, relaxing only when they have safely reached the sanctuary of deep water where complex ocean layers conceal their next move.

Below the control room, a rested watch briskly dines. Meals at 0300, 1100 and 1900 punctuate the day, the cooks and steward working their magic in a broom closet kitchen. A friendly, fun and nourishing galley is central to good morale and mission success. In the after part of the submarine, two engineers tend to the generators, batteries, ventilation and pumps. The work is hot and busy for everybody and training drills are a constant in their daily lives.

A very proud *Windsor* is somewhere out there in the North Atlantic, eating up thousands of leagues under the sea, contributing surveillance information to the benefit of Canadian security, and providing her crew all the challenge and intrigue befitting a classic novel.

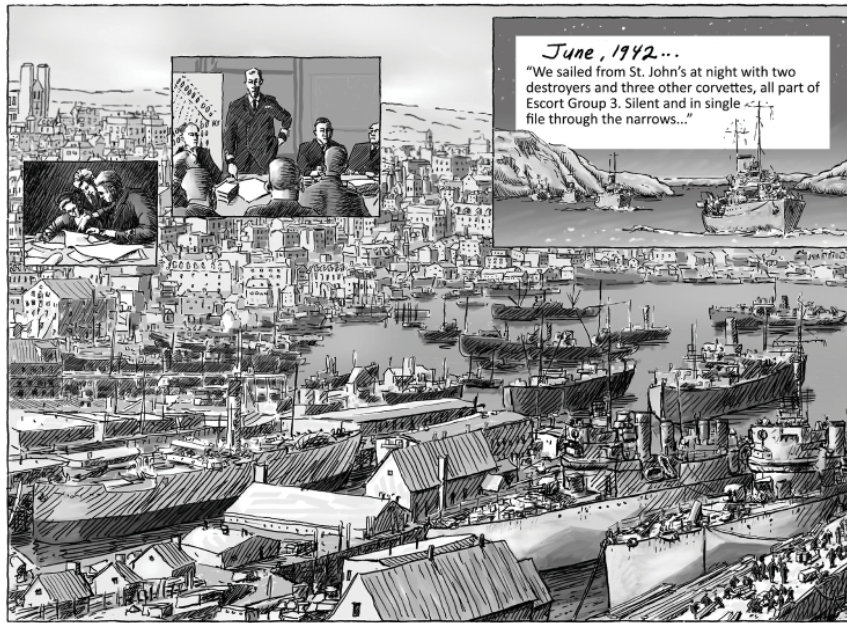
BLOW THE MAN DOWN - A STORY OF HMCS SACKVILLE

by Richard Rudnicki and Brian Bowman

It's hard, when you look at HMCS *Sackville*, berthed in the shadow of modern warships, to visualize the tradition behind her: the square-rigged, tall ships of Nelson's day, guarding shores and shepherding merchants from the New World. Ever ready to take the weather gauge, hold the line, run out the guns, and blow the man down. Yup, it's hard to imagine Sackville as a first-rate, ship-of-the-line. But she held our line of battle, and she put the man down, too, several times. As a naval symbol for Canada, she's as great a ship as 'Victory'. Underrated, understated, capable and tough – that's our *Sackville*. How Canadian is that?

Halifax artist, Richard Rudnicki, and Brian Bowman, a prairie-based writer, have teamed to produce a graphic novel that puts the reader aboard *Sackville* to pitch and roll, wear

the food, taste the weather, and feel the tension as the sea erupts, the ships go down and the U-boats crowd the escorts. It's an accurate, illustrated story covering *Sackville's* most



active period of the conflict. And it is also a story of Canada, the build up to war and the home-front effort as seen through the eyes of a fictional protagonist – a prairie boy, whose early experience of pitch and roll came with hooves and a saddle. There's a girl, some growing pains, some tough times and a lot of action – all to show you the ones who served and way it truly was.

It's been a full year since the keel was laid, but this tale is now afloat and Richard is busy with fitting her out. There will be trials ahead, but if she passes, "Blow the Man Down" should be ready for sale when *Sackville* is under glass.

GLENFIDDICH SUPPORTS WOUNDED WARRIORS



Glenfiddich, the world famous scotch brand, presented Wounded Warriors Canada with a cheque for \$123,000 during a charitable presentation at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Halifax Nov 9. Glenfiddich has been a proud supporter of Wounded Warriors since 2012 and to date - through leveraging sales of Glenfiddich 15 Year Old - has raised more than \$425,000 to aid Canadian Armed Forces members, veterans and their families. Peter Mielzynski

Agencies Ltd (PMA) represents a number of the world's premium spirits and wine brands, including Grant's whisky and Glenfiddich single malt scotch.

"At Glenfiddich, we are truly fortunate to be partnered with an organization that shares in our ethos of "families helping families" by providing relief for those in need." said Nicole Oliva, National Brand Manager for Glenfiddich Single Malt Scotch. "This year marks the fourth year of our partnership with Wounded Warriors Canada and we look forward to ensuring that our veterans and their families continue to receive the best care possible, for many years to come."

PMA has also been supportive of CNMT and HMCS *Sackville*, including contributing to the production costs of the Canadian Naval Heritage Calendars. Taking part in the cheque presentation, were from left: Nicole Oliva, CNMT Trustee Jack Kelly, Philip Ralph, Richard Martin, Scott Maxwell and Elizabeth Havers, Glenfiddich national brand manager and MC for the presentation.



THE SUMMER OF '42 ~ A STORY OF HMCS SACKVILLE

by Carl Anderson

For every ship, in every navy, there are countless stories. This is the story of the RCN Flower Class corvette HMCS *Sackville*'s first summer - the summer of 1942, as recorded in her deck log, in official RCN documents, and by her commanding officer Alan Easton in his memoir *50 North: Canada's Atlantic Battleground* (1963).

PART 1- Commissioning and Work Ups

The summer of '42 for HMCS *Sackville* (K181) really began a year earlier with the commissioning of another RCN corvette, HMCS *Baddeck* (K147). She was commissioned on 18 May 1941 in Québec under the command of Lieutenant (Lt) Alan H. Easton, RCNR. Following work ups in the St. Lawrence estuary and time spent patrolling off Halifax, Nova Scotia, *Baddeck* was assigned to escort the Canadian National Steamships 8,200 ton liner/troopship SS *Lady Rodney* between Québec and St. John's, Newfoundland, and sub-sequently to Jamaica. Serious engine problems forced *Bad-deck* to abandon *Lady Rodney* on two occasions. The first, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, required her to return to her builders in Québec for repairs. The second occurred enroute to Jamaica when *Baddeck*'s engine continued to perform badly and her fresh water evaporator failed, forcing her to make a slow return to Halifax for further repairs.

Upon completion of those repairs, *Baddeck* and four other RCN corvettes were assigned in October 1941 to escort the slow convoy SC-48 from St. John's to Liverpool. Nine of SC-48's 52 merchant vessels were sunk by enemy U-boats south of Iceland. HMCS *Baddeck*, her submarine detection equipment (asdic) out of service and still experiencing engine problems, diverted to Iceland to land survivors of the Norwegian ship *Barfonn* and to seek much needed repairs. After two idle months in Hvalfjord, *Baddeck* returned to Canada and was temporarily decommissioned to undergo a complete engine overhaul.

In April 1942, Lt Easton assumed command of the corvette HMCS *Sackville*, which was at that time temporarily unmanned and out of commission. *Sackville* re-commissioned under Easton's command in Halifax on Monday 6 April, and *Baddeck*'s ship's company transferred to HMCS *Sackville* that day.

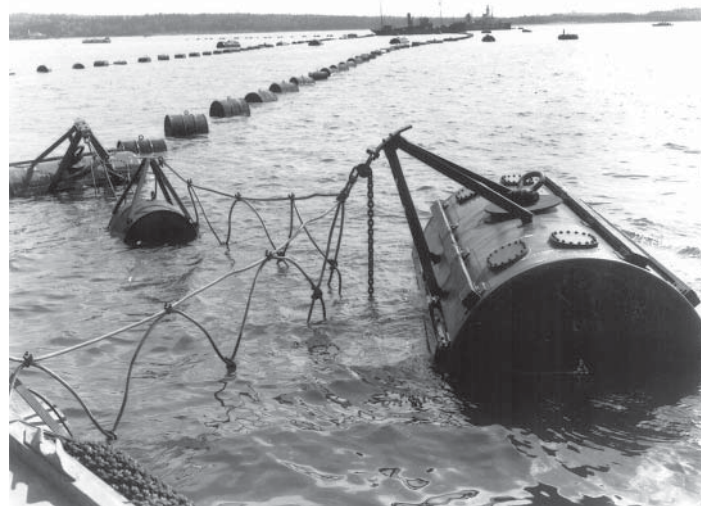
Sackville spent the remainder of April in Halifax preparing for her working-up program (WUP). Her sailors gave the ship her Western Approaches two-tone camouflage paint scheme over the ten days 20-29 April 1942. Finally, on 4 May, Easton took *Sackville* out of Halifax Harbour for the first time to begin the ship's workups - for many of the ship's officers and men, the second WUP in a year.

A corvette's working up, as conducted in the Royal Navy, was recalled in 1945 by Nicholas Monsarrat in his book *Three Corvettes*:

"Daily we exercised everything. We abandoned ship, we repelled boarders, we got out the kedge anchor... we

closed up action-stations against the stop watch, we fought fires, we prepared to tow, we put an armed landing party ashore. We fired guns, and signalled, and took soundings, we demolished the target at gun-practice... we made a supreme hash of our first depth-charge drill due to a fault in the electric buzzer-system. But we learned quickly during those weeks; almost before we knew it had happened, we emerged a ship's company instead of a crowd of individuals, we took shape as a disciplined force with a routine practised and practised again..." One procedure they decided not to practise, however, was jettisoning the Confidential Books to prove that they would sink.

Sackville's working up started as she passed outward through the Halifax boom gate at midday on 4 May 1942. She rendezvoused off Chebucto Head with the destroyer HMCS *St. Croix* (I81) and the Royal Navy submarine P-512, a former US coastal and harbour defence sub acquired for training purposes by the RN in March 1942. A scheduled gunnery exercise was postponed on account of fog, and *Sackville* returned to harbour to land gunnery officers. She sailed in late afternoon for St. Margaret's Bay, west of Halifax, but was recalled to spend the night in Halifax alongside minesweeper HMCS *Cowichan* (J146) and the corvette HMCS *Galt* (K163).



Anti-submarine boom at the mouth of Halifax Harbour stretching from the York Redoubt to McNab's Island

The next morning found *Sackville* waiting for weather to clear, hands cleaning ship, painting, putting up splinter mats, and waiting for *Galt*. The two ships got under way just after noon and proceeded 46 nautical miles (n.m.) to St. Margaret's Bay where *Sackville* anchored for the night 10 n.m. inside the bay at Head Harbour, north of Clam Island. The following day, 6 May, she weighed anchor at 0830 and

proceeded down the bay to begin seven hours of A/S (anti-submarine) exercises with the submarine *P-512*. This was followed by OOW (Officer of the Watch) exercises, depth charge practice, and boat crew exercise.

After breakfast on the second full day of working up, one of *Sackville's* officers and four ratings were transferred to the sub *P-512* to observe A/S exercises from the sub's point of view. At midday, *Sackville* departed St. Margaret's Bay in company with *Galt*, *P-512*, the corvette HMCS *Chambly* (K116), and the armed yacht HMCS *Ambler* (Q11). The flotilla proceeded eastward toward Halifax and at 1435, with Pennant Point abeam, *Sackville* went to Action Stations to commence A/S exercises. Twenty minutes later she fired a depth charge pattern on a doubtful contact, then broke off the attack. As she proceeded to carry out A/S sweeps in the vicinity of Sambro Island, her deck log recorded numerous aircraft sightings. She broke off exercises briefly to transfer a sick crew member to a harbour craft in the approaches to Halifax Harbour, then proceeded back to sea and met up again with *Galt*. They steamed towards the entrance of St. Margaret's Bay, *Sackville* carrying out night manoeuvres.

Arriving at midnight, the ships were prevented by poor visibility from entering the bay. *Sackville* therefore conducted night patrols between Pearl and Betty Islands until morning. Shortly after sunrise on the 8th she passed Peggy Point to enter the bay where she again anchored off Clam Island for breakfast. The day was spent cleaning and painting ship. At midnight a sham raiding party from HMCS *Galt* attempted to board HMCS *Sackville*, but was successfully fended off by *Sackville's* fire hose.



Having successfully repelled boarders, *Sackville* weighed anchor and proceeded out of the bay shortly after midnight. An hour later she exited St. Margaret's Bay and around sunrise on 9 May began an A/S sweep in company with the now-friendly HMCS *Galt*. Numerous aircraft were spotted over the next three hours as *Galt* and *Sackville* continued A/S sweeps, joined by the armed yacht HMCS

Raccoon (S14). *Galt* and *Sackville* broke off A/S exercises at 0930 and returned to St. Margaret's Bay for further OOW manoeuvring exercises. At 1100 *Sackville* was taken in tow by *Galt*, which was in turn towed by *Sackville* for over an hour. Next, her officers spent two hours practising berthing the ship alongside Dan buoys moored in the bay for this exercise. The Dan buoys were then retrieved and the ship proceeded to her customary anchorage at Head Harbour, from which an 'action party' was landed that evening on nearby Clam Island.

All hands fell in to clean ship on the morning of Sunday 10 May while staff officers and engineer officers conducted

inspections. A sports party was landed in the afternoon while the rest of the ship's company continued 'make and mend' and cleaning ship. Early the next day, 11 May, *Sackville* was made ready for sea. The ship's company assembled on the after deck and a general drill was conducted, followed by a lecture on depth charges.

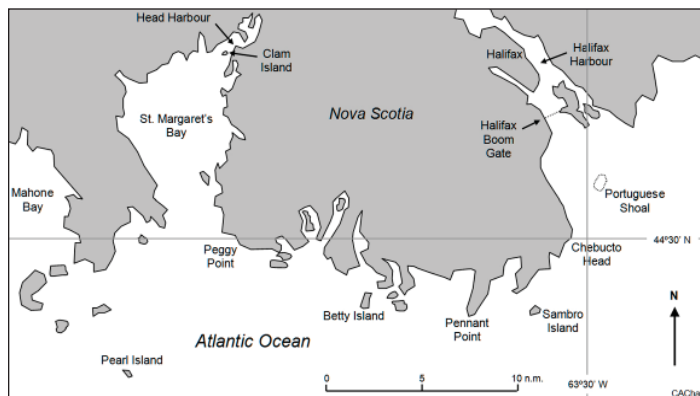
Sackville's log omits details of the general drill, but Monsarrat, in *Three Corvettes*, recalled a general drill from his time as First Lieutenant in the RN Kingfisher Class sloop HMS *Guillemot*. The Captain called for "seamen to lower both anchors, and heave them in by hand... rig a sounding boom and take a sounding; rig a dan-buoy ready for dropping, and get hawsers ready to tow aft. Stokers shore up the mess deck... torpedo party fix up temporary emergency lighting. Signalmen dismantle the main aerial and rig a temporary one that works. First aid party remove injured man from the bridge by stretcher, and get him below. Pipe 'fire in the steering compartment.' Gun crew man the gun and clear it for action, and send away the motor boat to pick up survivors", all against the Captain's stopwatch.

At noon *Sackville* departed Head Harbour for sea and another day of work ups. By 1400 she was conducting rocket and smoke float exercises en route to a target shoot with the 4" gun and a small arms shoot. Shoots were cut short, however, and *Sackville* proceeded to Halifax, where she secured alongside the corvette HMCS *Saskatoon* (K158) at No. 5 jetty.



Sackville's gun crew during work ups. Joe Rolland Collection

On the final day of work ups, Tuesday 12 May, *Sackville* slipped her berth and proceeded out of the harbour at 0900. She anchored in the harbour approaches at Portuguese Shoal to attend to problems with her port anchor cable. At noon she conducted a brief full calibre shoot of her 4" gun and then returned to her berth alongside Saskatoon and No. 5 jetty. This series of working up exercises was over, and the liberty boat came alongside at 1430 and 1700.



HMCS *Sackville* spent the 13th and 14th of May in Halifax, then departed 15 May for St. John's, Newfoundland, escorting the Furness Withy and Co. 3,740 ton passenger liner S.S. Fort Townshend. On 17 May they arrived in St. John's, where *Sackville* spent two days before proceeding to Harbour Grace for further A/S exercises, this time with the RN training submarine P-514. During further A/S exercises in Conception Bay on 22 May, *Sackville* and another warship narrowly escaped a disastrous collision when the two ships, travelling in thick fog on opposite courses at 14 knots, altered course in the same direction. With this near tragedy averted, A/S exercises continued off the Avalon Peninsula until *Sackville* returned to St. John's on 25 May. She then joined Escort Group C-3 of the Mid-Ocean Escort Force along with corvettes HMCS *Galt* and *Wetaskiwin* (K175).

In Halifax, meanwhile, the RCN Training Commander submitted his report on *Sackville's* working up program to Capt. (Destroyers) Halifax, A/Capt G.R. Miles, RCN. The report documented *Sackville's* equipment as a type SW2C Canadian surface warning radar, type 123A A/S set (asdic), 4" BL MK IX naval gun, two Colt twin 0.50 machine guns, four depth charge throwers, and 72 depth charges carried. It was noted that the Commanding Officer, the First Lieutenant, and the navigating officer each had 12 months escort service (in HMCS *Baddeck*), and that the two Sub-Lieutenants had 6 and 7 months experience respectively.

Sackville's performance was judged to be 'fair' in fire stations, lookout exercises, aircraft exercises, and RDF (radar) recognition. The ship's performance was 'satisfactory' in OOW exercises with submarine, anchor work, secondary steering, pistol and rifle firing, and preparation to abandon ship. Also 'satisfactory' were towing and being taken in tow, streaming a fog buoy, rigging and laying a Dan buoy, escort duty, and R/T (radio telephone) exercises. She was 'good' in OOW exercises by day and night, ship handling,

lifeboat crew exercises, and boat hoisting and lowering. (Boat work was noted to be the "ship's hobby.") *Sackville* stood out as 'very good' at collision stations and firing at a sleeve target. ("One of the best shoots carried out by a corvette. Gun armament quickly and efficiently manned.") The ship was also judged 'very good' in repelling boarders. Her sailors' effective use of the fire hose to repel HMCS *Galt's* midnight raiders earned *Sackville* the commendation "Do not try and board this ship at night without previous signal and identification card." It was also noted that the ship won in softball and in competitive evolutions (sing song).



Painting by Yves Berubé reproduced with the kind permission of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

The ship's efficiency in Gunnery earned praise from the Training Commander who commented "Gun armament was quickly and efficiently manned... One of the best (full calibre) shoots carried out by a Corvette." Organization of the A/S unit was also deemed 'good', as was the reloading drill. Reloading of a full pattern of 10 depth charges was accomplished in 57 seconds. The report stated "The Commanding Officer has given much time and thought to the A/S organisation and the ship has a good A/S team." In communications, the Yeoman was rated as 'good', the remaining hands, 'fair.' They were found to be "keen but require a lot of practice. W/T (wireless telegraphy) and coder ratings were efficient, and were quick to decode test messages."

Commanding Officer Lt Easton was judged to be 'quiet,' "but has a firm grip on the officers and men." It was apparent to the Training Commander that "a big effort was made... to make the ship clean and efficient - a state which had hitherto been lacking." He concluded by saying he considered that HMCS *Sackville*, "after a few months running, will be an efficient fighting unit." The coming summer months of 1942 would confirm the Commander's optimism as HMCS *Sackville* took her place alongside HMCS *Galt* and *Wetaskiwin* in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Part 2 of The Summer of '42 will appear in a future issue of Action Stations.

CORVETTE MESS LIFE “...IT WASN’T THE RITZ”

by Commander ret’d Len Canfield



Lieutenant Tom Wood, official war artist, watercolour of HMCS Drumheller Mess.

Much has been written about the major role of Canada’s ubiquitous corvette in helping ensure Allied victory during the pivotal Battle of the Atlantic (1939-45). One of the best first person accounts of what it was like to serve in corvettes – particularly mess life – is Mac Johnston’s *Corvettes Canada* (2008).

Modern day military recruiters promoting slogans like ‘no life like it’ probably didn’t have the crews of ‘roll on wet grass’ corvettes in mind when developing their recruiting pitches.

As leading signalman Bill Acheson who served in HMCS *Fennel* 1942-43 comments in Johnston’s informative and highly readable 228-page book, “...if ever a term was apt and fully descriptive, it is the word ‘mess’ as it applied to the

fore and lower messdeck of a (205-foot) corvette at sea... particularly in heavy seas...with more than a dozen men crammed into a space not much larger than an average living room...here they eat, sleep and live together with all their belongings...”

With hammocks slung over the mess tables where the men ate and socialized “...it wasn’t unusual to be sitting at the mess table... and have two smelly feet suddenly set next to your coffee or breakfast, but you got used to it,” recalls Ted Cunningham, an able seaman in HMCS *Arrowhead* 1940-41.

Mess life was certainly no ‘bed of roses’ for many corvette sailors. As Jim Alward, a telegraphist in HMCS *Sackville* 1942-44 relates: “Water in the washrooms – it was scarce and rusty. The shower was dormant for the trip. One could wash to the waist, but it was most reckless to take off everything lest the bell would go. I did not relish standing half naked on the bridge at my action station.”

J.H. McMenammon, a stoker in HMCS *Port Arthur* 1942-43 notes: “Life in a corvette was very hard. You had to be young to put up with it. Living conditions defy accurate description, especially during rough weather.”

The late Max Corkum, who served as navigating officer in HMCS *Moose Jaw* 1943-45 (and later as CO of HMCS *Sackville*) recalled: “Living conditions for all ranks were far from ideal, although officers lived better than sailors from the standpoint of space. We all ate the same food from the same galley.”

For Morley Barnes, a stoker in HMCS *Kincardine* it was “the stink of these ships...about 100 men all cooped up in this tin can. Fresh water was very scarce, laundry and showers were nonexistent...add to this burning oil, vomit



Stand easy in the Stoker’s Mess of the corvette HMCS *Kamsack*, February 17, 1943. Photo: Lieutenant Gerald M. Moses. LAC / PA-204360



Destroyers were cramped as well. HMCS *Iroquois*, Plymouth, England, October 1944. Photo: LAC / PA-180509

from seasick personnel, rotten socks, body odour from not washing, dirty clothes... and you will get the drift of odour. The smell could keep you awake half the night.”

At the same time, navigating into your overhead ‘sleeping quarters’ was no easy evolution. ”Bad weather also invoked the law of physics in the basic act of getting into your bed...a hammock suspended from steel rods on the deckhead. To get into your hammock, you grabbed the rod and swung yourself up and in. Timing was essential. If the ship was lifting to a sea, it was virtually impossible to push yourself off the deck, let alone swing up into the hammock (but)...if you waited until the ship was falling off the crest, a slight push of the toes was enough for you to float effortlessly up to the hammock.”

As Leo McVarish, an able seaman asdic in HMCS *Alberni* 1943-44 succinctly noted, “...it wasn’t the Ritz.”

But despite the living conditions the volunteer sailors crewing the unglamorous corvettes (described by Winston Churchill as the ‘cheap and nasties’) admirably did their duty in escorting and defending Allied merchant convoys against U-boat attacks throughout the war.

Many of the veterans interviewed for Corvettes Canada recognized the sea keeping capabilities of the RCN’s 123 corvettes, commenting: “they would roll on wet grass... rode the waves like a cork...could stand almost anything the weather handed out...great sea ships...(even though) they were like trying to ride a bucking bronco...(and) the messdeck could have three to four inches of water sloshing back and forth as the ship climbed each wave, went over the top and back down the other side.”

It is probably safe to conclude that corvette living conditions left a lasting impression with many sailors.

OPERATIONS ROOM OFFICER 0003



BACK ROW (L-R): LT(N) D. CHODAT, LT(N) M. DEMPSEY, LT(N) J. YATES, LT(N) A. DUGUAY, LT(N) D. CIOTTI,
LT(N) MCMILLAN

FRONT ROW (L-R): LT(N) R. DEFOREST, LT(N) D. VANDERSTELT, LT(N) L. GUNDERSON, LT(N) E. MONETTE,
LT(N) D. ROY, LT(N) C. CHAO, LT(N) MACDONALD, LT(N) S. LIDDELL

Operations Room Officer Course ORO 0003 recently had their photo taken onboard HMCS Sackville, at their request. The ORO course is conducted at the Naval Operations School in Halifax and provides well-trained officers to assume the role of Operations, Weapons, and Combat Officers in frigates and destroyers in today’s fleet. Currently the course is eight months long, followed by a three-month Command Development Course in Esquimalt for successful candidates.

HMCS CLAYOQUOT: A CHRISTMAS EVE LOSS

“The Canadian Naval Chronicle 1939-1945” by Fraser McKee and Robert Darlington
Published courtesy of Commander ret'd Fraser McKee.



HMCS *Clayoquot* - courtesy of artist Pat Burstall

Named after a Vancouver Island Sound, *Clayoquot* was one of many steam- and diesel-powered Bangor-class minesweepers which served in the RCN during, and a few after, WW II. Many of these vessels were employed as anti-submarine escorts prior to the invasion of Normandy, when 16 Canadian Bangors joined the Allied mine-sweeping effort off that coast.

Clayoquot served in the Gulf of St. Lawrence Escort force for much of 1942, during which time she rescued 55 survivors of the corvette HMCS *Charlottetown*, torpedoed and sunk off Cap Chat on the 11th of September. She served with the Sydney Local Escort force during much of 1943, was transferred to HMCS *Cornwallis* as an A/S training vessel for most of 1944, returning to Halifax in October to the local escort force. On 22 December 1944, *Clayoquot* was in Halifax harbour, and many of the ship's company were on Christmas leave in the area. Her captain, A/Lt. Cdr. Craig Campbell was at his home in Chester, some 30 miles from Halifax. He was a pre-war member of the Vancouver Division of the Volunteer Reserve, and he and many other VRs served in the RN in the early years of the war to fill in some of their shortages. He returned to Canada to command Fairmile Q 090 and the 76th Motor Launch Flotilla, and had been appointed to *Clayoquot* in late July 1944.

Meanwhile *U-806* was lurking in the approaches to Halifax and making its presence known. It is interesting to note that *U-806* was commanded by Kapitän-Leutnant Klaus Hornbostel, who had been a gunnery officer in the pocket-battleship Admiral Scheer in the action when HMS *Jervis Bay* was sunk while defending Convoy *HX-84*. Many German heavy ships were withdrawn from service commencing January 1943 and their ship's companies were transferred to the U-Boat Force.

U-806 attacked a small convoy on the 21st, damaging the Liberty ship *Santucky* and made an unsuccessful attack on the 22nd off Chebucto Head. These attacks raised awareness ashore that there was an active submarine threat in the Halifax Harbour approaches, and *Clayoquot's* ships

company were recalled from leave (22 were unable to get back prior to sailing and were replaced with men from the manning depot). The frigate HMCS *Kirkland Lake*, *Clayoquot*, and another Bangor, HMCS *Transcona*, sailed on the morning of the 23rd to carry out an anti-submarine sweep through the area that Convoy *XB.139* (a convoy to Boston), the liner *Pasteur*, and the troopship *Lady Rodney* would be passing through.

On 24 December, while taking station on Convoy *XB.139*, *Clayoquot* was zig-zagging but had not streamed her CAT-gear (torpedo decoy) because she was not in contact with a submarine and the annoying noise made by the decoy would mask her asdic (sonar) reception. K-L Hornbostel in *U-806* believed that *Clayoquot's* course alteration was to attack him, and he fired a GNAT homing torpedo in self-defence. This was the type of torpedo that CAT-gear was designed to decoy, but as it was not deployed *Clayoquot* was hit aft and several of her depth charges exploded causing catastrophic damage. The ship sank within 10 minutes, only three miles from the Sambro Light Vessel. 4 officers and 4 men were lost in the explosion and sinking, but all 76 who abandoned ship were recovered within 40 minutes and taken ashore. It is likely that many more would have died except that all off-watch men were forward drawing their tot of rum before the noon meal.

Transcona streamed her CAT after *Clayoquot* was hit, and detonated another GNAT 10 minutes later. With all of this activity *U-806* departed the immediate area and settled on the bottom, while numerous warships hunted without success for two days.

Note: *U-806* survived the war, surrendering to the Allies at Wilhelmshaven in May 1945. After the war, *Clayoquot's* captain, Craig Campbell, who commanded two more ships, remained in the RCN after the war, and *U-806's* captain Klaus Hornbostel – who joined the post-war Bundesmarine and retired as a Captain in 1974 – corresponded after the war and became friends.



Clayoquot sailors in hospital at Stadacona. L-R. Front: Ronald Kenny, Gordon Stevenson, George White, Cliff McPhail. Back: Len Barkley, Ronald Hope, Lorne Powe.

DID GERMANS USE BEDFORD HIGHWAY HOME TO SPY ON CONVOYS?

Courtesy of Steve Proctor



A convoy of merchant ships assembling in Bedford Basin, Halifax, April 1941. LAC, PA-105262.

When Peter King looks out his expansive front window at Halifax Harbour, he sometimes wonders if the fabulous view of the Basin and Narrows he enjoys so much may have been used by a previous tenant for purposes other than pleasure.

The retired librarian says he has no credible source to substantiate his imaginings, but he believes it's possible his Bedford Highway home may have been used by German sympathizers during the Second World War to provide intelligence on ship traffic in Halifax.

As the closest major city to the sea route between North America and Great Britain, Halifax bustled during the war years as the ideal convoy-assembly point and the perfect spot for embarkation to overseas-bound troops. More than 150 convoys sailed from Halifax over the course of the war. "We bought the house with another couple 40 years ago, and when we were moving in we noticed there was a strange line of wire running along the peak of the roof from one end of the attic to the other. I didn't think much of it, but my friend was a ham (amateur) radio buff and thought it was antennae wire that dated to the 1930's," says King.



Could someone have been monitoring ship movements in the harbour through the expansive windows and secretly feeding the information by radio to German operatives? At the time, they laughed at the thought, amazed by the workings of their over active imaginations.

A further oddity revealed itself later when their cat went missing indoors. During a frantic search, they heard mewing from behind a second-floor bedroom wall. It was only when they pulled out all the drawers from a built-in bedroom dresser that they located their pet.

"He was in what turned out to be a rather large space between the back of the drawers and the wall," explains King. "It is large enough for a person to stand in comfortably. It would be a good place for someone to hide if they didn't want to be detected." King was further intrigued that there was an opening in the ceiling of the hiding spot leading into the attic. A portal between the cable and a radio?

Memory of the wire and the cupboard dimmed until some years later a renovation on the main floor uncovered a section of newspaper dating back to 1936, the time when the German war machine was throttling up.

"It's been great for party chatter. People do strange things when they are renovating, but it was definitely another curiosity of the house," says King, noting attempts to contact past owners of the property have failed.

Stephen Kimber, a Halifax journalist who has written about life in Halifax during the war years, says the idea of spies in the port city is not far-fetched.

"It's more than possible, in fact it's likely there were communication posts set up, because we know the information was getting out. There were attacks on convoys early in their passage that are almost certainly tied to intelligence gathered in Halifax."

A Canadian Press story from November 24, 1939 quotes military sources as suspecting Nazi agents in Halifax were sending shortwave wireless information to Germany about Canadian ship operations.

“The details surrounding the hour of departure and the size of a certain fleet convoy was supposed to be kept secret, yet the convoy was hardly clear of the harbour when a German shortwave radio was broadcasting the details,” states the article.

Kimber says it’s impossible to know if King’s house specifically was used clandestine purposes, but he has been told numerous times about a suspected spy at Mount Saint Vincent just down the road. In that case, there was a young female music student who arrived with too much equipment. One case contained a cello and the other was reported to contain radio equipment.

“There was a measure of wartime hysteria that kept the RCMP hopping as they investigated neighbours complaining about “suspicious people with binoculars” but I think there’s enough evidence to believe there was some spying taking place in Halifax,” concludes Kimber.

As Canada marks the 75th anniversary of the start of World War II with a variety of events, King realizes he may never know the full truth of his home’s heritage, but he’s not sure it really matters.

“Behind every door of every house there is a story. If our story has some twists we don’t understand, that’s okay.”



Photo: Joe Rolland Collection

ARCTIC/OFFSHORE PATROL SHIP TO BE NAMED IN HONOUR OF NOVA SCOTIAN NAVAL HERO WILLIAM HALL

Navy News, Halifax, Nova Scotia – 26 June 2015



Left to right: RAdm John Newton, Mr. and Ms. Adams, Honourable J.J. Grant, Ms. Sapphire, descendants of the William Hall family, the Honourable Julian Fantino

The Honourable Julian Fantino, Associate Minister of National Defence, announced today that an Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ship (AOPS) will be named in honour of Petty Officer William Hall, a Canadian naval hero, for his actions at the Relief of Lucknow, India on November 16, 1857 during the Indian Rebellion.

Then-Able Seaman William Hall was serving in the frigate HMS *Shannon*, when the ship was ordered to Calcutta,

British India, as the Rebellion broke out in 1857. A group of gunners, sailors and marines from HMS *Shannon* were formed together (the Shannon Brigade) and took part in the Relief of Lucknow. On November 16, 1857, naval guns were brought up close to the mutineers’ fortification. Gun crews kept up a steady fire in an attempt to breach and clear the walls, while a hail of musket balls and grenades from the mutineers caused heavy casualties. Able Seaman Hall and Lieutenant Thomas James Young were eventually the only survivors of the Shannon Brigade, all the rest having been killed or wounded. Between them they loaded and served the last gun, which was fired at less than 20 yards from the fortification’s wall, until it was breached. On October 28, 1859, Able Seaman William Hall was awarded the Victoria Cross (VC) for his gallant conduct under fire during the Relief of Lucknow.

He continued to serve in the Royal Navy, retiring in 1876 with the rank of quartermaster and a certificate of good conduct, and he settled on the family farm near Hantsport. When interviewed in 1900 the ageing man thought little of his glories or the Victoria Cross. As he said, “It isn’t worth very much . . . after all, only ten pounds a year. If it wasn’t for my regular navy pension of forty pounds a year besides, I don’t know how we’d get along here. The farm is small, and my two sisters live with me.” He passed away in 1904 at the age of 75.

MEMORY OF RCN SAILOR KILLED IN AFGHANISTAN HONOURED IN HALIFAX

by Ryan Melanson, Trident staff

Though his life was tragically cut short in a conflict far from home, the memory of PO2 Craig Blake will live on in the Halifax Harbour through a new ferry bearing his name.

The Craig Blake, the fifth ferry in Halifax's fleet, was officially unveiled on Thursday, September 3 in a ceremony at Nathan Green Square on the Halifax Boardwalk. Representatives from the municipality, Halifax Transit and the Royal Canadian Navy were on hand, as well as members of the Blake family.

More than 11,000 votes were cast this past January from a list of finalists as part of a contest to choose a name for the new vessel.

"There was no question. It was a landslide victory," said Halifax Transit director Eddie Robar, introducing the ferry with some help from the Stadacona Band, who performed as the ferry pulled into the dock prior to the ceremony.

PO2 Blake's wife Priscilla, joined by sons Cain and Ty, said it was difficult to express the appreciation her family feels each time her late husband's memory is honoured.

"Craig loved our city and the people in it. He would be humbled to know his name was chosen from a list of deserving and respected individuals," she said.

"I can't think of a more fitting tribute for his name than to be on a vessel that lives in the Halifax Harbour."

PO2 Blake was the first Canadian sailor to be killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan. His role as a clearance diver with FDU(A) made him an expert at diffusing explosive devices. He made an immediate impact during his short time in Afghanistan, "successfully disposing of explosives and helping to save lives," recalled Capt (N) Craig Skjerpen, Deputy Commander Canadian Fleet Atlantic.

Ultimately, it would be an improvised explosive device that robbed PO2 Blake of his life on May 3, 2010.

"This naming represents the immense sacrifice Craig made for his country, the sacrifice his family has had to make and how we all do not want to forget what Craig represents to us," Capt(N) Skjerpen said.

"He represents our willingness to do what is right in spite of the dangers that can be faced. We could not have a better representative."

Capt(N) Skjerpen described PO2 Blake to the crowd, which included many military members and a number of his FDU (A) colleagues, as a respected sailor, a devoted father and husband and vibrant friend to the Halifax community. He also summarized the chain of events that brought the RCN

to Afghanistan, beginning with the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Halifax Mayor Mike Savage pointed out the strong link between the public and the military in the Halifax area, and said it was clear the community feels a duty to honour those who have sacrificed their lives in service.

"And Craig exemplified the commitment to family and community that we see in so many of the military members that call our community home," he said.

The Craig Blake is the second recent Halifax Transit ferry to be named after a fallen CAF member, with a ferry honouring MCpl Christopher Stannix put into service in the spring of 2014.

"I hope passengers will use the ride to remember Craig Blake and Christopher Stannix, and to think about service to community and what it does to unite us," said Mayor Savage.



The new Halifax ferry is named in honour of PO2 Craig Blake, the FDU(A) diver who was killed in Afghanistan in 2010. Photo: Pat Jessup



Priscilla Blake, widow of PO2 Blake, and the couple's two sons, receive a tour of the ferry named in honour of PO2 Blake. Photo: Pat Jessup

“WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE BARBER POLE PAINTED ON THE FORWARD FUNNEL?”

by Chief Petty Officer First Class ret'd Pat Devenish, Chief Engine Room Artificer, HMCS Sackville

The original intention was to have a group insignia, which would allow the members of a Task Group or Escort Group to spot each other at sea during radio blackouts. Legend says that the idea was hatched over a drink at the Crow'snest in St. John's. The stripes were painted on during the layover in Derry (Londonderry, Northern Ireland) after Escort Group 3's first crossing in May/June of 1942. It was a dockyard officer who originally called them the Barber Pole Group. The group became well known for its exploits and future vessels which came in contact with one or more of the original six ships in the Group often adopted the insignia to show a relationship to the Group. This did not always sit well with the original six.

The RCN was not well organized and escort groups were often restructured. EG-3 had many members over the course of the war, all of whom would have felt entitled to wear the pole - indeed, wanted to wear the pole. Furthermore, ship's companies were often split to place some experienced personnel aboard new vessels. These folks also may have felt entitled to display the pole on their new ships. Thus, a large portion of the RCN sported the pole.

so would be to sail with the best. The song is still sung with much gusto aboard HMCS Sackville.



As an insignia closely associated with the Battle of the Atlantic, the ships now simply wear it as a tribute to the brave men and women who fought and died for freedom during the heady days of the Battle of the Atlantic.”

HMCS Sackville, when part of the 3rd Escort Group, as designated by the barber pole on her funnel. From the collection of Larry Hartman; Courtesy of Ray Hartman

Footnote: Escort Group C3 was part of the MOEF (Mid Ocean Escort Force) set up in early 1942 based out of St. John's Newfoundland using resources available at the time and eventually encompassed 7 Groups (C3-C9). The 'original' 6 in EC3 were HMC Ships *Wetaskiwin*, *Sackville*, *Camrose*, *Eyebright*, *Galt* and *Rimouski*. And before you are tempted to ask (!), other ships to later join EC3 included HMC Ships *La Malbaie*, *Louisburg*, *Halifax*, *Trillium*, *Mayflower*, *Bittersweet*, *St Thomas*, *Beauharnois*, *Forest Hill*, *Agassiz*, *Riviere Du Loup*, *Pictou* and *Napanee*.



HMCS Dunver K03, showing off her Barber Pole, doing a light line transfer, circa 1944, From the collection of Glendon Oliver

Other escort groups adopted the practice of painting a band around their funnels. For example, *Snowberry* sported a blue band. At close range the band was fine but would easily disappear at a distance or in low light (fog, dusk, etc.). The red and white stripes would be much more visible and the obvious choice as an identifier for a much smaller post war navy.

The Barber Pole Group was the only escort group to have a song written about it. It was well known and sung throughout the fleet. A lively tune, it was a song with which every sailor, especially those on the Newfie-Derry run, could identify. You wanted to “sail beneath the Barber Pole” to do

OPERATION REASSURANCE



Seventy years after the Battle of the Atlantic, Canadian warships proudly carry on the tradition of the Barber Pole as seen on HMCS *Toronto*'s funnel when she returned to Halifax from a six-month NATO deployment in January of this year. Currently, HMCS *Winnipeg* is on station as part of Operation Reassurance, Canada's commitment to support security in central and eastern Europe until June 2016.

CNMT TRUSTEES INTERNATIONAL AWARD WINNERS

by Lieutenant Commander ret'd Doug Thomas

Four Trustees of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, Ted Kelly, Wendall Brown, Pat Jessup and Bert Walker, were among the award winners recognized at the 2015 AGM of the Historic Naval Ships Association (HNSA) in San Pedro, California. Representing CNMT at the AGM in the retired battleship USS *Iowa* was Life Trustee and former HMCS *Sackville* commanding officer Sherry Richardson (a previous HNSA award winner and current Secretary).

Ted Kelly, Director of the Battle of Atlantic Society received the Casper J. Knight Award for his outstanding work on behalf of the Battle of the Atlantic Place Project. This award is named in honor of one of the founders of the HNSA and is the highest award the Association can bestow. It is awarded to individuals or organizations who have contributed in a major way to the preservation and exhibition of historic naval ships, and to the goals and work of the Association.

Wendall Brown, a former commanding officer of *Sackville* was recipient of the William J. Diffley Award that honors departing directors of HNSA fleet member organizations who have significantly contributed to the success of their museums/ships.

Pat Jessup, CNMT Director of Public Affairs received the Dr John C. Fakan Communications Award for her work in advancing electronic communication and collaboration between member ships and museums, serving as editor of *Action Stations* magazine and operating an active Twitter site (2260 followers).

Bert Walker was recipient of the HNSA Educator's Award in recognition of a Fleet staff member who has performed at a superior level in furthering the education program of the organization through developing a guide-book entitled "The Way of the Ship: HMCS *Sackville*" for interpretive guides and new members and conducting lectures at libraries and other venues.

Sherry Richardson, assisted by Bruce Belliveau, Chair of CNMT, presented the awards to Wendall Brown, Pat Jessup and Bert Walker at a Friday noon gathering aboard *Sackville* in early October. Ted Kelly, unable to attend, will be presented his award at a later date.

HNSA, with fleet members in 13 countries, advocates the preservation of ships and maritime history around the world. In addition to HMCS *Sackville*, other Canadian vessels that are HNSA fleet members include HMCS *Haida*, Hamilton, ON; HMCS *Ojibwa*, Port Burwell, ON; HMCS *Onondaga*, Rimouski, QC; RCMPV *St. Roch*, Vancouver; RV *Ben Franklin*, Vancouver and YFL-104 POGO, Gatineau, QC.



Three of the recipients of 2015 awards of the Historic Naval Ships Association are shown following presentation of the awards aboard HMCS *Sackville*. From left, Bruce Belliveau, Chair of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust; Wendall Brown, Pat Jessup, Sherry Richardson, CNMT Life Trustee and HNSA Secretary who presented the awards; and Bert Walker. Missing from photo is the fourth recipient, Ted Kelly. (Photo: Bill Gard)

MAINTAINING TIES WITH SACKVILLE, NB

The volunteer Canadian Naval Memorial Trust (CNMT), which owns and operates HMCS *Sackville* continues to maintain ties with the Town of Sackville, NB after which the WW II corvette is named.

Commander (ret'd) Wendall Brown, a former commanding officer of *Sackville* attended this year's Remembrance Day service in the town. He was invited to speak and in his comments noted that the 74 year-old ship continues to operate as a popular attraction on the Halifax waterfront while work advances on the long-term Battle of the Atlantic Place Project (BOAP).

Wendall said his visit was an opportunity to renew acquaintances and to brief community and government officials on the long-term plans to preserve *Sackville*. The ship will be a feature attraction of the Battle of the Atlantic Place that

will also commemorate communities after which Royal Canadian Navy ships were named.

Sackville, the last of the 123 corvettes to serve in the RCN during WW II, was built in Saint John, NB and commissioned in December 1941. The ship's most recognized service was during the pivotal Battle of the Atlantic and she was designated Canada's Naval Memorial in 1985. During the war residents of Sackville supported their namesake ship by providing the crews with personal care items, including scarves, mittens and socks along with food packages. This type of active community support was replicated by other namesake ship communities across the country.

On several occasions in recent years members of the CNMT have travelled to Sackville to participate in services and events, and in return civic officials have visited the ship.

A VISIT TO POLAND

by Commander ret'd George Borgal

In early October I was honoured to represent the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust and the Battle of the Atlantic Society as part of a small Study Group invited by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to visit culturally significant museums in Warsaw, Gdansk, Gdynia and Cracow. The two other participants in our group represented the NS Museum and Pier 21. The tour's primary purpose was to facilitate the creation of bi-national working relationships between organizations with similar mandates.

Given that the 75th anniversary of the end World War II is coming up, the Polish government would like to engage the support of appropriate museums across Canada to prepare a nationwide tour of selected Polish national treasures. The massive shipment of gold bullion was unloaded at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and then placed on a train for Montreal. Curious onlookers were told that the crates contained FISH. Some crew members remarked that the fish were mighty heavy. Such a tour would serve to commemorate Canada's role in safeguarding the treasures, and would also be a means of providing greater international awareness of Poland's history, identity and culture. It's quite a story and is described more fully at <https://todayinottawashistory.wordpress.com/2014/10/15/operation-fish>

One of the Ministry's specific interests concerned a very significant but little known World War II connection to Canada and the Battle of the Atlantic. In 1940, Poland's national treasures were secretly transported to Halifax by special convoy as part of Britain's *Operation Fish*, and then taken by rail to specially prepared vaults in Ontario and Quebec.

Over our 6 day Study Tour, we were guided through twelve museums. Of particular interest to the Trust/Society was the Museum of World War II, now under construction in Gdansk, the Naval Museum in Gdynia, and the Polish museum ship, *ORP Blyskawica* in Gdynia. I also called on the Canadian Embassy in Warsaw to brief staff about the Trust and the Society objectives, and the Battle of the Atlantic Place Project.

The Museum of World War II, Gdansk

Mandate. The mission of the Museum of the Second World War is to create a modern institution that will comprehensively present the history of the war as the greatest cataclysm of the 20th century.

One of the museum's main goals will be to show the wartime experiences of Poland and the other countries of East-Central Europe, often different from what the people of Western Europe and of countries outside Europe experienced. The museum's focus will be on the stories of individuals, societies and nations; military events will serve as background to the more significant narrative about the everyday lives of civilians and soldiers, the 'terror' of the occupation and genocide, resistance to the occupying forces, diplomacy and great-power politics. This approach is intended to convey the uniqueness of the Second World War, in which it was the civilian populations that suffered the most.

The main exhibition is conceived as a cluster of three narrative blocs. "The Road to War" will focus on depicting the political powers, the logic behind and intrinsic force of totalitarian regimes, and their strategies of shaping mentalities that resulted in the outbreak of war. "The Horrors of War" will gather together archives, stories and artefacts that describe the lives of ordinary people, providing an overview of acts of resistance, the survival of citizens in occupied cities, and atrocities and crimes suffered covering the Holocaust and other cases of genocide. "The War's Long Shadow" will highlight the key long-term effects of the war, presenting the processes and consequences of post-war politics that have established new frontiers in Eastern and Central Europe, as well as post-war migrations and resettlements.

Relevance to the Society/Trust. As for Battle of the Atlantic (BoA) Place, the museum's thematic focus and interpretive approach is a holistic treatment emphasizing the stories of individuals, societies and nations. Its design is intended to be evocative and exhibitions make use of most modern museum technologies available. The building is now under construction in Gdansk and expected to open in 2016. Construction issues dealt with would be useful in informing BoA Place's implementation.

The Naval Museum, Gdynia

Mandate. A collaboration between the Polish Navy and the City of Gdynia with a mandate to address the history and traditions of the Polish 'army' at sea over its 1000 year history, with an emphasis on Polish sailors from 1939. It has an extensive collection of naval equipment dating from the 17th century to modern times. The museum has three departments:



Painting of ORP Blyskawica in action during WW II

- The museum ships ORP *Blyskawica* and the tall ship *Dar Pomorza*
- The Historical Department
- The Exhibition Department and Open Air Exhibition of Arms and Naval Armament

The relationship between the museum and the Polish Navy with respect to ORP *Blyskawica* is a bit unclear. With *Blyskawica* still in commission, it seems probable that the museum administers the public exhibition spaces while the navy provides the crew and uses the ship for ceremonial and commemorative purposes. Since the museum was initially the creation of the naval command, there may still be a support relationship.

Relevance to the Society/Trust. The nearest museum parallel in Canada would be the Naval Museum of Halifax, although the Trust may also find value in establishing a relationship since the Trust is also responsible for interpreting *Sackville* to the public.



ORP *Blyskawica* photo contributed by Topory; Polish Wikipedia

ORP *Blyskawica*

Mandate. ORP *Blyskawica* is one of two Grom class destroyers built for the Polish Navy prior to WW II. It served in the North Atlantic, on the Murmansk Runs, and in the Channel during the D-Day invasion. It is the only ship of the Polish Navy awarded the Virtuti Militari medal, and is the oldest preserved destroyer in the world. The two *Groms* were some of the most heavily armed and fastest destroyers on the seas during World War II. In July 2006, HMCS *Haida* was “twinning” with *Blyskawica* in a ceremony in Gdynia, Poland. Both ships had served in the 10th Destroyer Flotilla during the Second World War. Former crew of both ships and the general public attended the ceremony. However, the relationship does not seem to be an active one.

Relevance to the Society/Trust. The cultural relationship of *Blyskawica* to the Polish Navy closely parallels that of *Sackville* to the RCN. They both have a ‘Soul of the Navy’ role, although *Blyskawica* is not considered a memorial in any sense. Her current roles are ceremonial and educative, and she is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Gdynia. Whereas volunteer Trustees support *Sackville*,

Blyskawica has a Commanding Officer and a permanent crew to carry out ceremonial and educative functions. Also, as for *Sackville*, she is no longer seaworthy. The Polish Navy does all maintenance and upkeep.

Blyskawica’s CO would be interested in ‘sistering’ *Blyskawica* and *Sackville*, and also advised that the Polish Navy is interested in monitoring the development of BoA Place.

Study Tour Conclusions

As a result of this Study Tour, the Trust and Society will:

- Maintain a connection with the Canadian Embassy as a means to reinforce international interest in the BoA Project and to encourage interest and involvement by the Canadian government
- Initiate discussions leading to ‘sistering’ *Sackville* and *Blyskawica*
- Seek to create a collaborative relationship between the Society and the Museum of World War II, and the Trust and the Naval Museum in Gdynia to share knowledge and best practices, as well as to reinforce the interest of the Polish Government and the Canadian Embassy in the BoA Place Project
- Facilitate contact between the Naval Museum in Halifax and the Naval Museum in Gdynia
- Actively monitor museum technology development and best design and operating practices related to enhancing the visitor experience
- Liaise with museums and institutions to gain any useful insights concerning governance frameworks that could be relevant for Battle of the Atlantic Society consideration



Commander ret'd George Borgal at the helm of *Blyskawica* in Poland

CANADA'S FORGOTTEN COLD WARRIORS

by General ret'd Paul Manson - Courtesy of the author



The federal election campaign, coupled with recent compelling reporting in *The Globe and Mail* about Canada's military veterans, has stimulated welcome – and much-needed – discussion about our veterans and the ways in which they are treated.

But references in two recent and otherwise thoughtful articles follow a disturbing pattern. One article, which included tallies from Veterans Affairs Canada, referred to “685,300 Canadian veterans: 75,900 from the Second World War, 9,100 from the Korean War, and 600,300 from subsequent peacekeeping missions and conflicts, including at least 40,000 younger Afghanistan war vets.” Another opinion article took up the same theme, referring to Canadian casualties in the First and Second World Wars, Korea, Afghanistan, and “numerous United Nations peacekeeping assignments.”

Stunningly absent from both accounts is even the slightest mention of what was by far Canada's most important military activity since 1945: Our contribution to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) in the Cold War, from 1950 to 1990. It was a massive commitment. Several hundred thousand Canadian military members served in the vital cause of deterring Soviet aggression, thereby joining Canada's allies in preventing the outbreak of a third world war and the nuclear holocaust that would have ensued.

And our Canadian soldiers, sailors, and air officers were good. At one point, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, an American, told me, “You Canadians set the standard in NATO.” We were well-trained, well-equipped, and superbly motivated. In spite of unique organizational challenges, we earned great respect from our allies. Our small but powerful mechanized brigade in West Germany was an elite force, given the toughest assignments. Our air force, both in NORAD and in Europe, won numerous competitions, especially with the Canadian-built and -powered F-86 Sabre, considered the world's best fighter in the 1950s. At sea, our navy showed that it was a quality force. On several occasions, a Canadian was chosen to command NATO's Standing Naval Force Atlantic.

Canada and Canadians paid a heavy price for all this. To put it concisely, our Cold War operations resulted in more fatalities due to military service than in the Korean War, the Balkan conflicts, the Gulf Wars, Afghanistan, and peacekeeping – combined. For aircrew deaths alone, the number was 926.

Why has this been forgotten, to the extent that Cold War veterans apparently don't seem to deserve even a passing mention these days?

Some possible reasons come to mind. Much of this happened a relatively long time ago, much of it far from home – in the north, at sea, in Europe. And news media coverage was much less intensive in the days before real-time TV reporting and embedded journalists. For example, whenever a Canadian airman was killed in Europe (as more than 100 were), he was invariably buried in a small military cemetery in Chology-Ménillot, France; no ramp ceremony, no funerary procession along the Highway of Heroes, no headlines.

Then there is the mythology that has arisen to the effect that peacekeeping has been the principal occupation of Canada's military since the Second World War. Our Blue Beret peacekeepers did wonderful work back when there were real opportunities for keeping conflicting armies apart, but the reason they were so effective is that they had the skills and credibility that come from having been trained for modern heavy warfare.

Another explanation for the public silence regarding Canada's NATO and NORAD veterans is that there has emerged a troubling tendency on the part of some in this country to look upon those who did not fight in a shooting war as second-class veterans.

My entire career was encompassed by the Cold War years, including 10 years with my family in France and Germany. The Cold War, however, was not a shooting war. I have told Canadians on many occasions that my greatest pride in having served is that, from the end of the Korean War until I retired 37 years later, not a single shot was fired in combat by the Canadian military.

Our job was deterrence, and deterrence worked. We trained for war so that we wouldn't have to fight a war.

It's a shame that the story has been largely forgotten. On this Remembrance Day, my earnest hope is that Canadians, when they pause to commemorate the many sacrifices that our veterans have made through the years, will give a moment to those whose service as Cold Warriors, although unheralded, really made a difference.

Lest we forget.

General Manson was a fighter pilot during the Cold War, and retired after serving as Chief of Defence Staff from 1986-1989. General Manson served as full-time volunteer Chairman of the “Passing the Torch” campaign, which raised \$16.5 million in support of the new Canadian War Museum. His decorations include Commander of the Order of Military Merit and Commander of the U.S. Legion of Merit. In 2002 he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada.



CANADIANS SPLIT ON WHETHER YOUTH APPRECIATE VETERANS

November 10, 2015, Canadian Press wire story

On Monday, November the 9th I responded to the OC Transpo [Ottawa public transit] Remembrance Week offer of free rides for veterans wearing their medals and found myself sitting next to a University of Ottawa student.

In replying to her question related to my medals, I told her I was fortunate to have been only a Cold War warrior. Puzzled, she indicated that “Cold War” meant nothing to her. On explaining the over 40-year standoff (i.e. almost third of the time Canada has been a nation) between NATO democratic countries and the communist Warsaw Pact dictatorships, it transpired that she had heard of neither NATO or the Soviet Union.

This student was, of course, born after the collapse of the Soviet Union; but, it likely reflects on the education

system that she knew nothing of Canadian political and military history during this crucial era. Canada was an important founding member of NATO. I suspect that, instead, she was told of the glory days of peacekeeping, which had nothing to do with the Cold War.

Perhaps this seeming gap in the Canadian history syllabus should be examined.

No memory even of Canadians recently fighting in Afghanistan and over Libya as a NATO member. Help.

Colonel ret'd Robin Rousham, Ottawa

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

by Commander ret'd Patrick Charlton

Welcome aboard to our newest members. Of special note, three of the Trust's latest Life Members work in the same organization in Maritime Forces Atlantic – Naval Force Readiness (NFR).

LCdr Warren Feltham, the Senior Staff Officer Submarines/ Naval Task Group had this to say about his membership: I like and appreciate history and I want my children to have a part of it. HMCS *Sackville* is history. It is history up close and personal, it is a sum of who we are, a sum of all the events, the good, bad, and indifferent. We, as a collective society, have the commission to preserving history as to allow future generations to study it first-hand. The events of the past affect the future and present, which give us a greater clarity and understanding of how the world came to be. One of the greatest benefits of HMCS *Sackville* is that it allows Canadians a chance to learn about where we came from, who we were and the sacrifice and sense of duty that those who came before us provided, and I wanted to be a part of that contribution in some small way.

CPO2 Tim Feeley, a senior NCIOP in NFR responsible for C4I issues provided the following comments regarding his membership: My grandfather (CPO1 Harry Moore), served

in the RCN during WWI and WWII. Whenever I have the opportunity to walk onboard a retired warship like HMCS *Sackville* I think of the many sailors who sailed on these ships and the sacrifices that they made. I think of my grandfather who lied about his age in WWI so that he could go to sea and do his part in Canada's war effort. Although I never met the man, I feel that I have a very strong connection with him. Joining HMCS *Sackville* and the Trust means that I am making a commitment both personally and financially to see that Canada's official Naval Memorial HMCS *Sackville* is preserved for future generations.

CPO2 Darcy Burd, Staff Officer Communications - NFR, joined the Trust because he saw it as a method in which he could pay back the RCN and the CAF and express gratitude. He writes: I have committed the last 24+ years of service to the Navy with an ultimate goal of paying back all of which it and the CF has provided to me and my family.

Well Done to all of our new 2015 members for your commitment and contribution to help preserve, maintain and operate Canada's Naval Memorial. Please consider taking the time to pass the word to friends, co-workers, neighbours and family regarding the Trust and HMCS *Sackville*.



The Full Color 2016 Canadian Naval Heritage Calendar is now available through HMCS Sackville Gift Shop, CANEX stores and other outlets

\$10 + tax and shipping.

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.

To order, contact: Canadian Naval Memorial Trust

ross.thompson@ns.sympatico.ca or execdir@canadasnavalmemorial.ca or call 902-427-2837

I WAS A SAILOR ONCE

Author unknown - Adapted from the USN original by Fraser McKee and revised by Doug Thomas

I liked standing on the bridge wing at sunrise with salt spray in my face and clean ocean winds whipping in from the four quarters of the globe - the ship beneath me feeling like a living thing as her engines drove her swiftly through the sea.

I liked the sounds of the Navy - the piercing trill of the boatswains' call, the syncopated clang of the ship's bell on the quarterdeck, the harsh squawk of the SRE, and the strong language and laughter of sailors at work.

I liked Navy vessels - nervous darting destroyers and frigates, rolling, bobbing corvettes and minesweepers, plodding fleet support ships, fast patrol boats, sleek submarines and steady solid aircraft carriers.

I liked the proud names of Navy ships: *Haida*, *Ottawa*, *Sackville* and *Swansea*; *Fraser*, *Bonaventure*, *Preserver*, *Ojibwa*, *Iroquois*, *Vancouver*, *Fredericton* - memorials of great battles won, lengthy deployments on the nation's business far away, and challenges met.

I liked the lean angular names of Navy destroyers, frigates, corvettes - *Assiniboine*, *Athabaskan*, *Oakville*, *Chambly* and *Moose Jaw*, *Regina* and *Toronto*, *Sioux*; *Crusader*, *Camrose*, *Huron* and *La Hullose*, *Ville de Quebec* and *Algonquin* - mementos of heroes and those just doing their job that went before us. And all the other ships - named for proud Indian Nations, our rivers, bays, and islands; our provinces, cities, and towns across the land.

I liked the tempo of Navy band music blaring through the upper deck speakers as we pulled away from the tanker after fueling at sea. I liked the pipe "the Brow is now Open" which told libertymen they could proceed ashore to explore the spicy scent of a foreign port.

I even liked the never-ending paperwork and all-hands working parties as the ship filled herself with the multitude of supplies, both critical and mundane, in order to cut ties to the land and carry out her mission anywhere on the globe there was water to float her.

I liked sailors: officers, chiefs and POs, men and women from across the land: farms of Ontario and Quebec, small towns of the Maritimes, from the cities, the mountains and the prairies, from all walks of life. I trusted and depended on them as they trusted and depended on me - for professional competence, for comradeship, for strength and courage. In a word, they were "shipmates"; then and forever.

I liked the surge of adventure in my heart, when the word was passed: "Hands to stations for leaving harbour; special sea-duty men close up." I liked the infectious thrill of sighting home again, with the waving hands and banners of welcome from family and friends waiting on the jetty.

The work was hard and dangerous; the going rough at times; the parting from loved ones painful, but the companionship of robust Navy laughter, the "all for one and one for all" philosophy of the sea was ever present. I liked the serenity of the sea after a day of hard ship's work, as flying fish flitted across the wave tops and sunset gave way to night.

I liked the feel of the Navy in darkness - the masthead and range lights, the red and green navigation lights and white stern light, the pulsating phosphorescence of radar repeaters - they cut through the dusk and joined with the mirror of stars overhead. And I liked drifting off to sleep lulled by the myriad noises large and small, like blown air from the punkah louvres,

and the rolling from side to side that told me my ship was moving with the sea and those on watch would keep me safe.

I liked quiet middle watches, with the aroma of strong coffee or kye - the lifeblood of the Navy permeating everywhere. I liked going to the pilotage or bridge wing and looking up at the canopy of thousands of stars twinkling in the firmament.

And I liked hectic watches when the exacting minuet of lean grey hulls racing at speed kept all hands on a razor-edge of alertness. (Sometimes those shapes came too damn close.)



I liked the sudden electricity of “Action Stations, Action Stations!” followed by the hurried clamour of running feet on ladders and the resounding thump of watertight doors as the ship transformed herself swiftly from a peaceful workplace to a weapon of war - ready for anything.

I liked the traditions of the Navy and the men and women who made them. I liked the proud names of Navy heroes: Nelson and Beatty, Nelles and Hose, DeWolf and Hennessy, Stubbs and Law, Shadforth, Jimmy Hibbard and Chummy Prentice. A sailor could find much in the Navy: comrades-in-arms, pride in self and country, mastery of the seaman’s trade. An adolescent could find adulthood.

In years to come, when sailors are home from the sea, they will still remember with fondness and respect the ocean in

all its moods – the impossible shimmering mirror calm and the storm-tossed green water surging over the bow. And then there will come again a faint whiff of funnel gas, a faint echo of engine and helm orders, a vision of the bright bunting of signal flags snapping at the yardarm, the distant wink of another’s signal lamp, a refrain of hearty laughter in the messes throughout the ship after tasks well-done.

Gone ashore for good they will grow wistful about their Navy days, when the seas belonged to them and a new port of call was ever over the horizon.

Remembering this, they will stand taller and say, “I WAS A SAILOR ONCE AND I WOULD DO IT AGAIN.”

HISTORIC NAVAL SHIP ASSOCIATION (HNSA) AGM - SEPTEMBER 2015

by Lieutenant Commander ret’d Doug Thomas

The HNSA recently held its AGM in San Pedro, California, hosted by the member organization that operates the retired Battleship USS *Iowa* (BB 61). CNMT’s representative was Sherry Richardson, who has attended this meeting for many years. I was thrilled in 1985 as XO of HMCS *Fraser*, to have the opportunity to tour this ship in Norfolk, Virginia, when this magnificent ship and her three sisters (*New Jersey*, *Wisconsin*, and *Missouri*) were operational and highly rated despite their age for their firepower (9-16” 50 calibre guns and Tomahawk missiles in particular), speed, and imposing appearance. I invited the Captain and 12 officers to lunch in our wardroom, and they were very impressed with the quality of our hospitality, as I remember.



USS Iowa, the host ship

The HNSA is composed of many historically significant and iconic ships from 13 countries, including 30 states and the District of Columbia in the United States. All four of the Iowa Class are members of HNSA, as are 6 other battleships including the USS *Arizona* monument in Pearl Harbor. *Haida* and *Sackville* are two of the Canadian members. Discussions revolve around topics such as ship preservation, museum and other best practices, and ways in which

member organizations can support each other. One of the more intriguing developments was a follow-up meeting to an approach from World of Warships, an online historical war-gaming site which is interested in adding Sackville to its participants. More on this in a future issue.

On its web site, HNSA states its objectives:

To educate the public on the rich naval maritime heritage of the member ships; the roles the ships have played in their countries’ histories; and the importance of preserving historic naval ships for future generations.

To foster the exchange of information and experiences among the member ship staffs to enable them to develop

and conduct educational programs to spread knowledge of their histories to the public.

To provide information, assistance and support to the member ship staffs to enable them to manage and operate their facilities in the most efficient manner possible.

There is a great deal of information about HNSA online, and I encourage you to consider a visit to one or more of the member ships when you next travel – in Canada or abroad.

ARMISTICE IN LONDON 2015

by Walt Nicholls, Royal Canadian Legion, Petrolia

During Armistice ceremonies in London I was privileged to participate in “the Reverse Journey of the Unknown Warrior” parade, marking the arrival of the coffin of the Unknown Warrior at Victoria Station on the 11th November, ninety-five years earlier. Upon arrival the coffin was mounted on a gun carriage and transported to Westminster Abbey for burial.

Our parade followed the same route in reverse starting at Westminster Abbey and finishing at Platform 8 at Victoria Station for the Commemorative Service recalling the outbreak of The Great War. The parade represents the last journey of one of the 300,000 WWI British soldiers who have no known grave.



Unknown Warrior memorial at Victoria Station

Forming up on the eve of 10 November at the west end of Westminster Abbey, we marched up Birdcage Walk to Parliament Street, then down Whitehall to Trafalgar Square. Along the way we passed the cenotaph with Canada’s wreath prominent on the southern end, then past Downing Street, home to the Prime Minister. Numerous statues of well-known Britons, General Montgomery, Lord Mountbatten being two and various historical buildings and memorials such as Prince Charles’ residence, Clarence House and the Royal Naval Division, Australian and New Zealand memorials. Continuing down The Mall,

passing Canada Gate and our Memorial, we moved on to Platform 8, Victoria Station for the Remembrance Service at 2032, the time of the train’s arrival.

At the Service dignitaries spoke, the Royal British Legion paraded their colours, and Veterans’ associations placed wreaths at the platform. It was a most rewarding and moving experience.

On 7 November, 1920, Brigadier General L.J. Wyatt, General Officer Commanding British Troops in France and Flanders, entered a hut near the village of St Pol, near Ypres in northern France where the remains of four bodies lay under Union flags. Brigadier Wyatt was tasked with the sad and onerous job of choosing one of the six to represent the “A British Warrior who fell in the Great War 1914-1918 for King and Country” in perpetuity.

Earlier that afternoon, the bodies had been disinterred from unmarked graves in each of the main battlefields, the Aisne, the Somme, Arras and Ypres. Four blank crosses had been chosen from the forest of crosses that now covered the shell-pocked French landscape.

As well as coming from unmarked graves, the bodies all had to belong to soldiers who had died in the early years of the War, as they had to be as old as possible in order to ensure they were sufficiently decomposed to be unidentifiable. At St Pol the remains were examined to make sure they bore no identifying marks, then placed inside the hut for the remainder of the day.

When Brigadier Wyatt stepped into the hut as midnight struck, he lifted up his lantern to take in the scene. He then simply reached out and touched one of the Union flags. That was it; he had made his choice.

CNR ESSAY CONTEST PRIZE

by Lieutenant Commander ret’d Doug Thomas



The Canadian Naval Memorial Trust provides the First Prize for the Canadian Naval Review’s annual essay contest on a naval topic; this year the winning essay was *Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships: Adrift in Inflationary Waters* by Ryan Dean.

This photo shows Ryan in the forward torpedo room of HMCS *Ojibwa* (now a museum in Port Burwell, Ontario), being presented with his prize by George Roach, a retired submariner who volunteers as a tour guide. Ryan and his friends then continued a two-hour private tour of the submarine.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

David Archibald, Halifax, NS
John Bailey, Calgary, AB
Darcy Burd, Upper Tantallon, NS
Warren Feltham, Bedford, NS
Reid Hall, Dartmouth, NS
Marsha Leroux, Halifax, NS

Walt Nicholls, Petrolia, ON
Nancy Pyper, Ottawa, ON
Graham Symmonds, Anthem, AZ, USA
Anthony Salotti, Innisfil, ON
Helen Oglivie Trembaly, Dartmouth, NS

NEW ANNUAL MEMBERS

John Bell, Ottawa, ON
Glen Bovchuk, Prince Rupert, BC
Sarah Davill, Halifax, NS
Daniel Haycock, Halifax, NS
Gregory Meaker, St. Catherines, ON
Richard Winters, Dartmouth, NS

THE MAIL BAG

Remembrance Day 2015

I was visiting two of my sons in Montreal over Remembrance Day so attended the ceremony in Outremont Park, not far from where my eldest lives.

I quite enjoy the local ceremonies. At home I usually attend the local one in Aylmer rather than going downtown to Ottawa for the observance at the national memorial. The “notable” attendee was the local MP Thomas Mulcair who spoke very eloquently and laid the wreath on behalf of the Government of Canada. The only World War II veteran present, capitaine de frégate

Marcel Bélanger RCN, effectively the guest of honour and centre of attention. When he advanced slowly but steadily to lay his wreath he had to touch the arm of the police officer carrying his wreath so she could slow down. You could almost hear the benevolent smiles of



Le capitaine de frégate à la retraite Marcel Bélanger dépose une couronne au nom des anciens combattants.

the public. Afterwards he was surrounded by admirers who wanted their pictures taken with him. I was only able to get close enough to see his NAC name plate Cdr Marcel Bélanger, his wartime medals, his CD with 2 bars and dolphins on his blazer. I was wondering if any of you knew him.

Stephen Knowles

Bill Shead’s letter in the Summer 2015 issue of Action Stations! concerning HMCS *St. Croix* brought to mind memories of that cruise in 1960 when the totem pole Hosaquami was taken across the Atlantic for presentation to the Royal Navy Gunnery School at Whale Island, escorted by a contingent of native Canadians all of whom were serving in the RCN.

Commodore ret’d Mike Cooper, (SLt in 1960)



*Serving First Nations sailors with the Captain of the *St. Croix*, Cdr WSR (Bill) McCully.*

THE LAST WORD . . .



Pat Jessup and Jim Reddy were recently honoured at the Naval Association of Canada, Nova Scotia Branch's annual Garden Party at Royal Artillery (RA) Park in Halifax. They each received a National Award – a Gold Medallion for Jim and a Silver Medallion for Pat - for their significant contribution to the Naval Association and the broader naval community through their many activities, especially those involving HMCS *Sackville* and the Trust. You have only to read *Action Stations!* to understand the scope of their involvement. They are highly deserving of these awards, and to the best of my knowledge this is the first time that a married couple received the two highest NAC awards in the same ceremony.

Bravo Zulu, Jim and Pat!

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	ACTIVITIES
2015	
Saturday, 12 December	Christmas Party – onboard To register for this event please call 902-427-2837
2016	
Friday, 1 January tbc	New Year's Levee – onboard, tbc
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. Reserve 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 no later than 1 March 2016. jessup.reddy@ns.sympatico.ca



*Clayoquot survivors awaiting rescue by HMCS Fennel
24 December 1944.*

Return Undeliverable
Canadian Address to:
HMCS Sackville
PO Box 99000 Station Forces
Halifax NS B3K 5X5

CANADA		POSTES
POST		CANADA
Postage paid		Port payé
Publications Mail		Poste-publications
40016521		