

HMCS SACKVILLE - CANADA'S NAVAL MEMORIAL ACTION STATIONS

Volume 39 - Issue 2 Fall 2020



ACTION STATIONS

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Ship Refit Update



Commander (ret'd) Gary Reddy, CO HMCS *Sackville* in an October 20 ship refit update to Trustees reports, "things are moving along smartly since *Sackville's* docking September 23 in the Synchrolift Shed, HMC Dockyard," including:

- Weekly progress meetings are held and include *Sackville* project manager CPO1 (ret'd) Art Forward, CNMT Chair Bill Woodburn, Past Chair Wendall Brown and Fleet Maintenance Facility (FMF) personnel. CPO1 (ret'd) Jeff Morrison, CPO1 (ret'd) Pat Devenish, PO1 (ret'd) Reid Hall and PO2 (ret'd) Chuck Goldberg continue to provide constant support.
- Blasting to clean the hull and remove coating in preparation for cladding and to prepare for a paint ship routine along with pumping ship's water tanks completed.
- Next steps include the plate shop making templates for hull cladding; the electrical shop working on the ship/shore connection and electrical breakers; assessing issues with the ship's diesel generator; refurbishment of Carley floats and depth charges; and organizing fire sentries for start of hot work in ship.

Front Cover: HMCS *Sackville*

Coming back from her first Committal of Ashes returning to her summer berth on June 23rd, 2020.
Doug Struthers photo.

Back Cover: HMCS *Buctouche*

Members of the Flower Class corvette HMCS *Buctouche* (K179) gather for a ship's company photo prior to the end of hostilities in

1945. The ship, built at Lauzon, QC in 1941, served as a convoy escort in the Newfoundland Escort Force operating out of St John's and later with the Western Local Escort Force. She was recognized for rescuing survivors of British and Norwegian merchant ships torpedoed in the North Atlantic. *Buctouche* (with her pennant number not shown) had a role in the Hollywood movie 'CORVETTE K225' starring Randolph Scott.

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Bob Lockhart of Fredericton, right, a former mayor of Saint John and well known maritime broadcaster is joined by members of his family for photo op during a visit to HMCS *Sackville*. The ship's connection to New Brunswick was recalled by the visitors, given that *Sackville* was built and commissioned in Saint John (1941) and carries the name of the Town of Sackville.

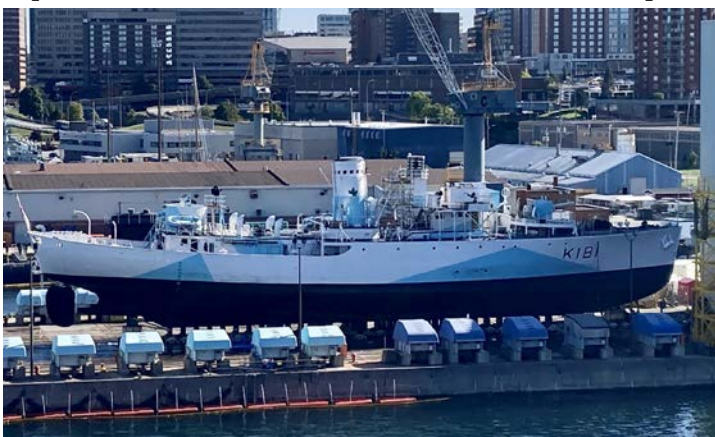


In 2019 Frans H Boetes (President of Maritime Restoration) visited HMCS *Sackville*. He became a life Trustee during his visit and tour of the ship.

Photographed with Life Trustees Sherry Richardson (left) and Heather Armstrong (right).

<https://www.maritimere restoration.com/>

Bill Gard photo.



Donald D'Entremont photo.

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From the Chair

Capt (N) Bill Woodburn (ret'd), Chair of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust

Dear Trustees, this is my first “Action Stations” column as your newly elected Chair and I freely admit that I am humbled to be following in the footsteps of Wendall Brown. He is a man who has put his heart and soul into the Trust for so many years and served all of us so passionately as Commanding Officer of *Sackville* for nine years, and as our Chair for the past three. I cannot thank him enough for the advice and friendship he has so freely given me since I joined the Board of Trustees. I'm also truly grateful that he continues to be such an active member, working on our behalf to ensure *Sackville* remains a living testament to the legacy of the men and women who have served in the Royal Canadian Navy, and who continue to serve to this very day.

I appreciate that many of you may not know me very well, so permit me to briefly introduce myself. I served in the RCN for 32 years and prior to that was a proud member of the Canadian Grenadier Guards Regiment in Montreal for 9 years. My father was a veteran of WWII and served overseas as a Sergeant with the 17th Duke of York, Royal Canadian Hussars. So yes, I learned early in life and, at times, witnessed first-hand the need and the importance to re-member the struggles, sacrifices, and incredible accomplishments made by so many who have served. During my career, I had the good fortune to command HMC Submarines *Onondaga* and *Victoria*, HMCS *Montreal*, and CFB



Bill Woodburn (far left) giving his sister-in-law, Lise Poirier and her husband Richard Buttle a tour of HMCS *Sackville*, June 2019.

HALIFAX. I guess you could say I'm a bit of a mixed breed - Guardsman, Submariner, and Sailor. I retired in 2015 as Naval Staff, Chief of Staff in Ottawa and shortly thereafter joined the Board of Trustees. In time, I sincerely hope to meet many of you in person.

I find myself writing this article

on the tail end of an important week for *Sackville*. It started on Monday, 21 September with the solemn duty of performing a Committal of Ashes Ceremony at sea, off Point Pleasant Park. Prayers of Committal were performed for eight members of our naval community including Lieutenant Commander (retired) Jim Reddy



***Sackville* making her way to her Summer berth along the waterfront in 2019. Doug Struthers photo.**

our beloved Captain who spent so many years actively supporting and commanding the ship. In addition, we had the honour to pay homage and say farewell to Sub-Lieutenant Abigail Cowbrough who perished late April in a tragic helicopter crash in the Ionian Sea. It was clear that our ship held a special significance to the family and friends who attended and offered comfort and a sense of connection during an especially emotional time.

Upon returning to Dockyard the ship made ready for the approach of Hurricane Teddy, expected to arrive in Halifax the very next day. I am pleased to inform you that she rode out the storm exceptionally well thanks to the excellent preparations made by the crew. Two days later, on the 25th of September, *Sackville*

was up on the Synchro Lift and moved into the Submarine Shed to complete a refit that started back in 2018.

I mention all this to highlight the vibrant day-to-day life our ship leads and give you a glimpse into the important role she plays on the Halifax waterfront bringing awareness to the general public and providing service to our broader naval family.

The docking this time around will finish cladding of the hull below the waterline (including the keel) and will address some electrical upgrades that have been outstanding for some time now. Once completed, it is expected the work undertaken on *Sackville* by the Fleet Maintenance Facility will extend the life of the vessel for a number of years to

come as an interim measure. Likewise, completion of the cladding will allow the Trust to shift focus towards telling *Sackville's* story and preparing for her longer-term health, with the aim to completely re-skin the ship below the waterline at some future date.

Essentially, the work now underway in Dockyard will buy us the time we need to further develop and refine our plan. No doubt, the road ahead will test us on many levels and be complicated by the impacts of the global pandemic as we go forward. Nevertheless, together we can meet this challenge and I look forward to working with you and on your behalf to preserve *Sackville* and tell her story. Stay strong and be safe!

From the Captain

Cdr Gary Reddy (ret'd)



Six university students were “taken on strength” of HMCS *Sackville* as interpreters for the summer and successfully worked around the limitations of COVID-19 to greet and brief visitors at the ship’s jetty and Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. Shown at rear, from left: Ben Cleary, Meaghan Bulger, Kathie Clyburne, Ben Wilke, Will Traves and Jocelyn Leon. Front, from left: Rick Powell, summer guide/visitor program coordinator; CPO Craig MacFadgen, ship’s coxswain; Gary Reddy, commanding officer and Bob Klein, executive officer. Doug Struthers photo.

Greetings Trust members. It was an honour to be approached and asked to consider assuming the position of Captain of HMCS *Sackville*. I, like all of you, was extremely saddened by the loss of Jim Reddy. His dedication and love for our ship was ever-present in all his actions. He was a strong advocate and driving force behind the numerous successes and accomplishments achieved by *Sackville*. I can only hope to maintain the momentum of Jim’s great work. I know he is with me and helping me along the path that lies ahead.

Jim and I are not related but always believed there was a family connection. He was from Antigonish, NS

and I was from St. John’s, NL. Thus, we always referred to each other as the ugly cousin. I must admit, I did enjoy a few free wets as our names were frequently confused. Thanks Jim!

Since March, COVID has really stalled our activities. That said, the *Sackville* team has been active on-board. We have been building our organization and I am delighted to report that Commander (ret’d) Bob Klein has taken on the 1st Lt position. Bob has been a great asset and team builder. The other team members include: CPO1 (ret’d) Art Forward – Chief of the Ship; CPO1 Craig MacFadgen, Coxswain; CPO1 (ret’d) Jeff

Morrison, Chief Shipwright (HT), CPO1 (ret'd) Pat Devenish, Chief ERA: PO (ret'd) Reid Hall, Chief ET: LCdr Hal Shiels, Communications Officer; Lt(N) Rick Rowe, Deck Officer: LCdr (ret'd) Rick Powell, Trustee Guide Coord; PO (ret'd) Chuck Goldberg and Grant Thompson. We welcome you to consider joining our team as we prepare for post-COVID life.

Causalities of COVID included the Friday lunch, Battle of Atlantic Sunday and commemoration ceremonies for the 75th anniversary of D-Day. We were very keen to return the ship to her summer berth at Sackville Landing on the Halifax waterfront. On 23 June 20, this became a reality as QHM tugs assisted her return. It was not Ops Normal but it was great to have the Naval Memorial visible to Halifax Boardwalk visitors, and our extensive social media audience. We were blessed to

be able to hire six enthusiastic summer students as interpreters, supplementing our steady cadre of Trustee Guides. Unfortunately, traffic on the waterfront was stagnant. However, those who did venture to our area were greeted by the interpreters, in period uniform, and received presentations on the ship and the role she, and her sister ships, played in the Battle of the Atlantic. As there were no activities onboard, the daily routine was restricted to greeting visitors on the jetty while respecting COVID protocols.

We did conduct three sailings to Point Pleasant Park for committal of ashes services. All were very special events and allowed us to continue the tradition of fulfilling our fellow sailors final wish, including that on 21 September 2020 when *Sackville* committed the ashes of LCdr (ret'd) Jim Reddy, and S/Lt Abbigail Cowbrough who died in the tragic heli-

copter crash in April.

On September 3rd our summer was over as the ship returned to Dockyard to make preparations for our docking on the 23rd. Of course, Hurricane Teddy had other ideas and we delayed until the 25th. What a beautiful day it was. The pictures captured the impressive sight of *Sackville* being raised from the water. Now we begin the final phase of cladding the hull. This work will place the ship in a solid position for the next 10 years.

I ask everyone to follow ship activities on our FaceBook page – HMCS *SACKVILLE*. We are having good success in reaching out both Nationally and Internationally: “Like” our page and stay in touch.

In closing, thank you to the team. We are a big family, all working towards a common purpose. Come join us!



HMCS *Sackville* during the Committal of Ashes Ceremony performed on August 18th, 2020.
Doug Struthers photo.

Sackville's Connection to the Film "Greyhound."

By Douglas Struthers



Photo from: <https://www.cinemablend.com/news/2549872/greyhound-ending-what-happened-and-what-it-means>

HMCS *Sackville* has a direct connection to the Tom Hank's film "Greyhound." Maybe K181 isn't on the hull of any ships in Greyhound but *Sackville* can be found throughout the feature film.

The World War II film is set in the Battle of the Atlantic during the heady years of the war. The story is based on the 1955 novel *The Good Shepherd* by C. S. Forrester with captain Krause (Hanks) commanding the fictional US Navy destroyer USS Keeling and in overall command of the escort force protecting a convoy in the mid-Atlantic

in 1942.

By early 1942 the German U-boat (submarine) fleet under the command of Admiral Karl Donitz had just launched Operation Paukenschlag (Drumbeat) when Germany's vaunted U-boat fleet attacked the east coast of both Canada and the United States in order to sink ships sailing primarily solo and unescorted. At the same time, U-boats continued to attack Atlantic convoys in groups called Wolf Packs. A Wolf Pack would consist of a group of U-boats called in to track and then attack a convoy of merchant ships. In 1942,

Donitz's U-boats were enjoying their second "Happy Time" of sinking Allied merchant ships, vital to sustaining Britain and Russia in the war against Germany. This is the period depicted in Greyhound, which sees Krause and his convoy battling a German Wolf Pack in a life and death struggle. The aim of their mission was "the safe and timely arrival" of the convoy at its destination.

"Greyhound" focuses on USS Keeling, represented by the USS Kidd, a Fletcher-Class destroyer preserved in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Kidd is in her war-

time configuration, so filming was done on onboard, together with Lidar-generated images and other digital effects to show the ship at sea. The film also has plenty of footage of corvettes throughout the attacks on the convoy. The film could not use any real corvettes

because the only remaining Flower-class corvette worldwide is no longer mobile;

she (HMCS *Sackville*) is found in Halifax operated by the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust. In order to create realistic and accurately designed corvettes for the film, the Trust hosted a LIDAR scanning expert onboard the ship in late 2016. Industrial Pixel VFX, based in Vancouver, is the company which specializes in 3D scanning and onset data collection. They have worked on everything from X-Files to Star Trek to Greyhound. During December 2017 Industrial Pixel VFX's Alex Shvartzman

scanned *Sackville* from bow to stern, port to starboard, and through various decks of the ship. He also scanned the hull and photographed *Sackville* from water level in the Dockyard in order to create the most accurate representation of the

Editor's note: It is a terrific and exciting movie, especially the action scenes. Not to be missed!

ship. The process made it possible to re-create the corvettes in the film's convoy battles. One of the unique features of LIDAR-scanning is its ability to not only capture stunning surface detail but also colour. The Western Approaches camouflage colour (off-white with geometric patterns of pale green or blue) scheme found on *Sackville* and many wartime escorts is well presented in the film.

Corvettes of the Royal Canadian Navy were the back-bone of WW2 convoy duty, assisting

in escorting some 25 000 ships across the Atlantic. 122 Corvettes were built in Canadian shipyards ranging in location from Port Arthur to Kingston, Ontario to Saint John, New Brunswick and many other places in between. We get to

see in the film Greyhound the challenging and sometimes overwhelming conditions which were present for the young crew and officers onboard what British Prime Minister Winston Churchill called the corvettes: "cheap and nasty." It was amazing to have HMCS *Sackville* and Industrial Pixel VFX bring these small but vital ships to life in a major motion picture for a new generation to see, for older generations to remember, and for all to appreciate.

Of further interest is that Greyhound also tapped into the RCN's currently operating Halifax class frigate HMCS *Montréal* to get authentic North Atlantic scenes, and the WW2 and Korean War Tribal class destroyer HMCS *Haida* located on display in Hamilton, as well as HMCS *Sackville* in Halifax. All three of these Canadian ships played a role in the making of the film Greyhound - a movie honouring those who served in the longest battle of the war; the Battle of the Atlantic.



Photo from: <https://filmgoblin.com/trailers/greyhound-trailer-takes-us-back-to-wwii-with-tom-hanks/>

HMCS Sackville Committal of Ashes Ceremonies

The most honourable duty conducted by HMCS *Sackville* is Committal of Ashes. *Sackville* remains tasked to ensure that the last wish of departed Veterans, their spouse, and Serving members is completed to a high military standard. On Battle of Atlantic Sunday, *Sackville* deploys to a position South of Point Pleasant Park and abeam the Naval Sailor's Memorial. With the assistance of QHM tugs, the ship maintains position in the stream for our committal service.

The ship's crew supported by CFB Halifax Base Chaplain's office, Trustee volunteers, QHM, and Fleet personnel make ready for this solemn and important service. Ashes, carried by their loved ones, are piped aboard and escorted to the quarterdeck. The cold move to Point Pleasant Park provides an opportunity for loved ones to reflect on and remember the service of their loved one.

The ship's Chaplain, Padre Andrew Cooke, conducts the service from the quarterdeck. Trustees prepare the Sideboard, piping party closes up, the church pennant is hoisted close up, and the ensign half masted. After prayers, NOK come fwd and place their loved one's ashes on the sideboard. The committal pray is offered, the sideboard party commits the ashes, and the piping party pipes the "Side". The sequence is repeated for each family.

A final goodbye is offered as *Sackville* lingers for family to pay their respects and remember!

We Will Remember Them!



Sherry Richardson continues to assist in the tipping board portion of the "Committal of Ashes" ceremony. Doug Struthers photo.





23rd of June, 2020

Naval Air Officer Kenneth
Frederick Brown
CPO Robert Ernst Morehouse

18th of August, 2020

Leading Seaman ER William Ralph
Gamble
Corporal Edmund Whalen Devenish
Mrs. Elizabeth Devenish



21st of September,
2020

Telegraphist Kenneth
James Gilbert
Naval Cadet Stephen
Alan Pederson
PO1 Gary Allen Bass
PO1(E Tech) William John Krilow
Lt(N) Harry Stanley Suto
Captain (N) Raymond
Charles Hunt
Sub-Lieutenant (N)
Abigail Cowbrough
LCdr James Patrick Reddy

Profile of Lt. Cdr Alan Easton: Part 2

By: Carl Anderson



In March 1943 Lt. Easton sought a posting ashore. He made his request to RCN headquarters in Ottawa, but it was denied on account of the acute shortage of qualified commanding officers.

Easton was given command of a larger ship, however, HMCS *Matane*. She was the first of Canada's new River Class frigates to be built on the east coast, and was scheduled to be launched at the end of May and commissioned in October 1943. Thus, between *Sackville*'s return from escort duty in December 1942 and the expected commissioning of HMCS *Matane*, Lt. Easton had nearly ten months ashore in Halifax. He wrote in his 1963 memoir *50 North* that those months in Halifax, with

his wife and young daughter, were for him the happiest time of the war.

His time ashore in 1943 was temporarily interrupted, however, when Easton received orders to relieve the hospitalized commanding officer of the corvette HMCS *Battleford*. She had arrived at Halifax on 23 Apr 1943 as a member of Escort Group C-1 and after a two-month refit *Battleford* joined Western Local Escort Force Group W4 in mid-June 1943. Lt. Easton served as *Battleford*'s C.O. from 06 July to 20 August 1943 during which time *Battleford* spent two days (16–17 August) supporting the escort of an eastbound convoy of 55 merchant ships starting a New York to Liverpool run.

Easton was promoted to Lt Cdr

(Temp.) RCNR as of 1 July 1943, and *Battleford*'s commanding officer returned to duty on 5 July 1943.

HMCS *Matane* was commissioned under Easton's command on 22 October 1943. Following work-ups off Bermuda, *Matane* joined three other frigates in December 1943 for a three-week U-boat hunt on Flemish Cap east of Newfoundland's Grand Bank. Rather than threatening Allied shipping, the U-boat had been transmitting weather reports to Germany for over a month. The Canadians stopped the radio transmissions but were unable to destroy the submarine. Next, they returned to Nova Scotia waters to hunt for a submarine that had been loitering around Sable Island, apparently acting as a spotter. They returned to Halifax in January 1944.

By 1944 many modern escorts were joining the Battle of the Atlantic with longer range and improved radar and anti-submarine equipment. Support groups of frigates and destroyers were being formed that could not only supplement regular escort groups, but could rapidly go on the offensive against enemy submarines.

In late February *Matane* joined support group EG9 consisting of two frigates and four corvettes, including Easton's first ship, HMCS *Baddeck*. HMCS *Matane* had the distinction of carrying the support group's Senior Officer (SO), Cdr(A) A.F.C "Frank" Layard, RN. Easton and Layard were nearly the same age and both had gone to sea as boys, Easton in the merchant marine, Layard in the Royal Navy. The two men, in their 40's, were older than most of the officers then

commanding RCN ships. They had frank discussions of the differences between RCN and RN traditions and attitudes. On more than one occasion Layard's dissatisfaction with *Matane's* performance elicited Easton's defence of the men of his ship. Easton's memoir *50 North* and Layard's published diaries, however, both speak of the great respect the two officers had for each other.

The group was sailing toward the Azores when it was ordered to intercept an eastbound convoy two days sailing to the north. The support group fanned out well ahead of the convoy to present the enemy with an additional defensive line of ships, any one of which could quickly be ordered to go on the offensive. The group's northward excursion required the ships to re-fuel at sea, a first for both *Matane's* C.O. and her sailors. Their inexperience resulted in the parting of the oil transfer hose, much to Easton's embarrassment.

Group EG9 was then ordered to intercept and lend support to two further convoys and then return to its base in Londonderry. There Easton was ordered to return to Canada for a new ship.

On 3 April 1944, he turned over command of HMCS *Matane* to EG9's senior officer, Cdr(A) Layard, RN. Easton's orders were then abruptly changed and instead of returning to Canada he was given command of the RCN River-class destroyer HMCS *Saskatchewan*. She was the former British F-Class destroyer HMS *Fortune*, which had been refitted as an escort destroyer and transferred to the RCN in May 1943.

In his book *50 North* Easton referred to his first three commands as 'The Knave' (the corvette *Baddeck*), 'The Queen' (the corvette *Sackville*), and 'The King' (the frigate *Matane*).

Now he was in command of the powerful escort destroyer HMCS *Saskatchewan* - 'The Ace'.

Easton took command of *Saskatchewan* on 7 April 1944 in Londonderry and on 16 April joined the westbound convoy ON 232, comprised of 44 merchant ships and their escorts bound from Liverpool to New York. After only two days escorting what was to be his last convoy, Easton turned *Saskatchewan* east toward her base in Londonderry, Northern Ireland. He gave 'The Ace' free rein and she ran eastward 500 nautical miles at thirty knots.

Easton and his navigation officer next reported to Western Approaches Headquarters in Liverpool for what turned out to be a pre-invasion conference. There he and his fellow naval officers learned the details of the upcoming Operation Overlord, the Allied invasion of occupied Europe.

Easton spent May 1944 studying the plans for Operation Neptune, the naval component of Overlord. Two RCN River-Class destroyer groups EG12 and EG14, each comprised of

four ships, would be among the Allied forces deployed to bar German air and naval forces from western approaches to the English Channel. HMCS *Saskatchewan* and EG12 were assigned to anti-submarine patrol between Land's End and Ushant, on the French coast 200 nautical miles west of the Normandy invasion beaches.

Saskatchewan and her consorts came under attack on 7 June by German submarines equipped with acoustic-homing torpedoes. Two torpedoes exploded close to *Saskatchewan*, but she escaped damage. Her deployment lasted until 11 June when *Saskatchewan* returned to Plymouth.

Easton's last engagement with the enemy was in the early hours of 6 July 1944. Escort Group EG12 set out from Plymouth to intercept four German minesweepers suspected to be escorting submarines to sea from their French base at Brest. EG12 intercepted the ships sailing westward in line astern and swung around to parallel the enemy's course, hemming them between



Picture of HMCS *Saskatchewan* in June 1943 after transfer from Royal Navy. Imperial War Museum Photograph.

Picture of HMCS *Matane*.
National Archives.



the Canadian destroyers and shoal water to the north. An exchange of gunfire and torpedoes ensued during which EG12 again reversed course to continually engage the German ships. When EG12 withdrew two of the enemy ships were thought to have been sunk and a third was left ablaze. The fate of the fourth was not observed, and it was never clear whether submarines had been present.

For his part in the action off Brest, Lt Cdr Easton was awarded a Mentioned in Dispatches in January 1945. The citation read, in part, “For outstanding leadership, skill, and devotion to duty in H.M. Canadian Ships Qu’appelle, *Skeena*, *Saskatchewan* and *Restigouche* in a successful action with enemy trawlers and U-boats.”

In 1943, when in command of HMCS *Matane*, Easton had begun to experience stomach pains that a medical examination in mid-March 1944 diagnosed as ulcers. At first he found that sleep, cocoa, milk, and food provided some relief. By July 1944, however, in HMCS *Saskatchewan*, the pain had spread and intensified so that only sleep offered any

respite. Easton stopped smoking but resisted leaving his ship for a hospital in England. Only going home to Halifax for medical treatment seemed acceptable.

HMCS *Saskatchewan*, scheduled for refit in a Canadian shipyard, sailed alone to Halifax in August 1944. There, on 8 August 1944, Easton relinquished command and underwent treatment of ulcers. He resigned from the Royal Canadian Navy on 20 October 1944.

In 1945 Alan Easton, his wife, and two young daughters, moved to Montreal. He again joined the Bell Telephone Company from which he retired as a manager in 1964.

From 1946 to 1980, the Eastons maintained a cottage on Dorval Island in the St. Lawrence River, where Easton enjoyed the quiet life. There, he wrote four books—his naval memoir *50 North: An Atlantic Battleground* (1963), *The Adventures of Captain Haylestone* (1975), *Ships Against the Sea* (1986), and *Terror on the Coast: The Wreck of the Schooner Codseeker* (1992).

After retirement, Easton travelled. One of his outstanding trips was four months spent in Africa in 1968. He

was an avid photographer, and his images of South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Seychelles appeared in the Shell Oil Company’s magazine.

In 1969 Easton continued his retirement in northern Vermont, where he bought a house in Montgomery Center, just south of the Québec border. In his early 90’s he moved to Kingston, Ontario, then to Ottawa where he spent his final years and died in September 2001 at age 98.

In his eulogy for Alan Easton, Vice-Admiral (Ret’d) Hugh MacNeil, then Chairman of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, said that Lt Easton, HMCS *Sackville*’s Captain in 1942 “can very justly be termed the quintessential example of the civilian seaman turned Naval Officer of the highest calibre. [The] Canadian Naval Memorial [HMCS *Sackville*] is in fact the ‘Soul’ of the Navy. That ‘Soul’ was shaped and imparted to *Sackville* and to the Navy by the leadership, spirit and actions of men like Alan Easton and the ship’s companies that they led.”

HMCS Sackville's Other Role: HMCS Kings Training Ship

In the summer and fall of 1944, the Naval College at HMCS *Kings* in the King's College buildings off Coburg Road had assigned to it the ex- and elderly survey ship HMCS *Charney*. She was used for the sea phase of navigation training for Acting Sub-Lieutenants on their initial courses, as well as a little gunnery with her equally ancient 12-pounder gun. However, that summer she badly needed a refit, and *Sackville* had been withdrawn from Western Local Escort Force as 'surplus to requirements' and was made available to Kings.

I made a one week's trip in her in that role, from Halifax to Shelburne along the SE coast as our 'Ushant Division' class practiced what was essentially coastal pilotage, there and back. As usual, we left in thick fog, which cleared as soon as we passed Chebucto Head, and my recollection was a sunny and easy trip down the coast while we amateurs practiced 'distance run = distance off' fixes along the way. Since our class was the first to be using the HO-214 tables as well as the older and very complicated Mark St. Hilaire mathematical sextant sight calculations, we must have tried that also, but since I was pretty rotten at it, it has con-

veniently faded from my memory. I fortunately never had to practice in reality such sun sights (Astronavigation) crossing the Atlantic.

We went in to Shelburne overnight, then made our way pleasantly back to Halifax. We makey-learnees slept in 'micks in the fore-upper messdeck – about 24 of us, and thoroughly enjoyed our salty experience in a very real wartime corvette. Our instructors, in navigation and gunnery, were from King's, so the ship's officers are not recalled after 76 years! It is remembered as a fine break after 2 months of classes.

Fraser McKee joined the RCNVR as an Ordinary Seaman in March, 1943, was commissioned, specialized in Anti-Submarine Warfare, and remained in the Naval Reserves until 1978, retiring as a Commander. He has written or co-authored six books on naval and Merchant Navy history, and continues to produce naval-related book reviews. He is a member of the CNMT and lives in Toronto.

They Answered the Call

A Poem Written by Life Trustee Grant Thompson

When the need was there, and a job
had to be done,
Fathers and Mothers, Daughters and
Sons.
They came from cities and towns,
large and small,
As they arrived to answer the call.

They took up arms and bravely
fought,
Though their lives with danger were
fraught.
They watched as their comrades did
fall,
But that did not stop them from an-
swering the call.

Now that the great wars are over,
And the battle fields are covered in
clover,
Their names are written on a great
wall,
But there are still those who will an-
swer the call.

Now they go abroad to keep the
peace,
The sight of their uniforms put peo-
ple at ease.
When disasters strike and people
need aid,
You know they will answer, when
the call is made.

They will go where needed when the
order is given
Although that location may not feel
at all like heaven.
They will do their duty to the best of
their ability,
Even though they are far from home
and family.

So, to be sure that no one forgets,
Let's make sure that someone sug-
gests,
We remember how so many gave
their all,
The day they stood up and answered
the call.

Hylands Golf Club Honours HMCS Sackville

By Capt (N) John Pickford (ret'd)

Hylands Golf Club nestled beside the Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport is a 36-hole golf course for military, RCMP, veterans and their guests. It was founded in 1960 as the Uplands Golf Club. Leading up to its 50th anniversary a memorial project to name the renamed Hylands' two golf courses and its 36 holes after specific battles, battle or regimental honours, ships and squadrons came to fruition in 2009.

A team representing the three services (I was the naval representative) had met several times over the preceding couple of years. The intent was to give each service 12 holes to name. However, it was obvious that there were some battles, conflicts or Canadian military terms common to all three services: REMEMBRANCE, PEACEKEEPERS, NORMANDY, KOREA, GULF AND KUWAIT, SOUTH WEST ASIA. That then left 10 holes per service to name. The two courses were named Uplands and Rockcliffe – an homage given the RCAF background in establishing the course and for the current base (Uplands) and the former local base (Rockcliffe).

The criteria I used in selecting the naval names were to choose significant battle honours and notable ships to reflect eras of RCN history. Obviously there were many ships from which to choose

but I wanted to include our two most famous ships that still remain with us as well as the lead ship of perhaps our most transformational post-Second World War ship construction period and the very first ship commissioned in the RCN.

As a result, the naval names etched in stone plaques with an accompanying text, on different Hylands' holes are: MEDITERRANEAN, ARCTIC, ATLANTIC, ENGLISH CHANNEL, NORTH AFRICA and BISCAY for battle honours, HMCS RAINBOW (CN JG), HMCS SACKVILLE (K181), HMCS HAIDA (G63/215) and HMCS ST. LAURENT (DDE/DDH 205) for ships. As well, the navy was successful in getting the driving range named SAINT BARBARA, the patron saint of naval gunners.

The army and air force have names ranging from VIMY and



HMCS Sackville (K181) NCSM Sackville 15th hole plaque at Hylands Golf Club, Ottawa.

HONG KONG to COASTAL COMMAND and CEYLON. Military historians at the Directorate of History and Heritage vetted all text.

This memorial project not only commemorates the sacrifices of those who served in uniform but allows, on a daily basis, those who continue to serve (and their friends) to embrace the traditions and heritage of the Canadian Armed Forces.

` The Sanctuary `
67 Spring Cross, New Ash Green
Kent DA3 8QQ

The Chairman of Trustees
Imperial War Museum
Lambeth Road
London
SE1 6HZ

2nd April 2020

Re : The Western Approaches Museum

Dear

I am writing this letter to you as a result of the attached appeal from the current operators of the Western Approaches Museum [WAM] in Liverpool. I had intended to write to you before this following a visit to WAM last year when I noted with concern that this museum of international importance was being run by Big Heritage a small " extremely vulnerable" " independent charity".

WAM , as you will know, holds the original Operations Room and accompanying complex which was the centre of the multi nation effort to defeat the U-Boat threat in what became known as the Battle of the Atlantic. That Battle lasted from the first day to the last day of World War Two and remains by far the biggest maritime campaign ever undertaken by the Royal Navy aided by other nations. Without success in that battle there was no prospect that victory would have been secured. WAM ranks with Churchill's War Rooms in historical, national and international importance.

If it is not already in the plans of the Imperial War Museum to protect this museum by ensuring it is in a position to take over responsibility for WAM should Big Heritage find it impossible to continue their involvement I would urge you to raise this at your next meeting as an agenda point. Ultimately WAM should come under the custody and care of IWM regardless of any difficulties which any operator may have and I trust that that can be achieved.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course as to this proposal.

Yours faithfully



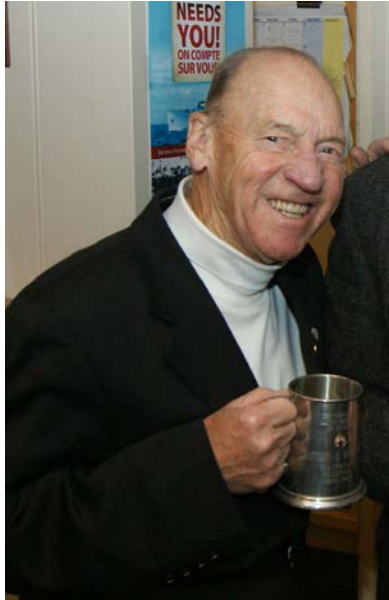
J.E.P. Whittaker
Proud son of Ed 'Lofty' Whittaker – HMS Vidette – Convoy Escort
Encl.

For further details:

<https://liverpoolwarmuseum.co.uk/>

Crossed the Bar

Captain Angus MacDonald, a Merchant Navy veteran of the Battle of the Atlantic, master mariner and active supporter of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville*



passed away in Halifax March 23 at age 93. Born in Glasgow, Scotland he went to sea at 17 and during his first voyage survived the sinking of his ship when the vessel was torpedoed in the south Atlantic. After the war he continued his maritime career and with his family moved to Canada in the 1950s. He made significant contributions to the maritime sector through his work with Transport Canada, Canadian Coast Guard, the Nautical Institute, Canadian Executive Service Organization and the international Oceans Institute. He was a founding member and past president of the Atlantic Division of the Company of Master Mariners and active in a number of organizations and community affairs, including Fort Massey United Church, Halifax Burns Club, Mission to Seafarers and Sea Venture Society. In 2018 he was awarded the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers and in early 2020 received the UK Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service. He was predeceased by his wife Mary in 2019; survivors include son Alan, Daughters Lindsay and Alison and several grandchildren. Contributions in his memory can be made to CNMT/HMCS *Sackville*, Mission to Seafarers, NS Sea School or Fort Massey United Church.

Chief Petty Officer 1st Class Donald Henry (Buster) Brown CD2 MMM (ret'd), who joined the RCN at 17 as an engineering mechanic and concluded his naval career as Maritime Command Chief Petty Officer in the 1990s passed away in April at age

78. He served in a number of ships and submarines during his career, including six years with the Royal Navy submarine service in the Mediterranean and Far East (Singapore). On returning to Canada in 1968 he served in the subs HMCS *Onodaga* and *Okanagan*, later as Chief Engineerroom Artificer (ERA) HMCS *Skeena*, Commander Sea Training Chief ERA, HMCS *Protecteur* coxswain, Submarine Sea Training Group Chief ERA and HMCS *Terra Nova* during Gulf War operations, followed by appointment as Command Chief. He was active in a number of organizations including the Royal Canadian Legion Dominion Command, Submariners Association of Canada (East), Royal Canadian Naval Association and the Atlantic Chief and Petty Officers Association. Survivors include his wife Gerri, sons Jeff and Brent and several grandsons.

George Eric Rick McLeod, a naval veteran of the Second World War and a long-time supporter of HMCS *Sackville* passed away in Camp Hill Veterans Memorial Building, Halifax September 9 at age 94. In civilian life he was employed at the Canadian Forces Ammunition Depot, Bedford; played and coached a number of hockey teams and active in the Red Cross, Salvation Army and St Johns Church. He was predeceased by his wife Dorothy and is survived by sons Mike and Stewart and a number of grand and great grandchildren.

Lieutenant Commander Kenneth M. Isles (ret'd), a marine engineer who served 29 years in the RCN passed away in Dartmouth April 16 at age 90. A veteran of the Korean War he served in the Naval Reserve (HMCS *Scotian*) following retirement from the regular force. He was active in a number of community affairs and service support organizations, including Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville* and the Nova Scotia Branch of Naval Association of Canada. Survivors include wife Barbara, children Jim, Joyce, Maureen, Harold and Terry; a number of grand and great-grandchildren and sisters Edna and Nancy.

Louis Henry (Lou) Howard MiD, a veteran of the Second World War who was recognized with Mention in Dispatches (MiD) for his actions while serving in the minesweeper HMCS *Sarnia* passed away in Ottawa May 4 at age 96. He joined the UNTD at University of Manitoba in 1942, enlisted for active service in 1943 and following training at HMCS *Cornwallis* and HMCS *Kings* was commissioned. While serving as a 21 year-old sub-lieutenant in *Sarnia* his ship was involved in the rescue of 27 survivors of the minesweeper HMCS *Esquimalt* sunk by U-Boat 190 off the approaches of Halifax Harbor April 15, 1945 (the last RCN ship sunk during WW II). His MiD citation reads in part: “This officer...went over the ship’s side (waist deep in near freezing sea) to help bring men aboard and...was personally responsible for saving a life after applying artificial respiration for over an hour...” Following hostilities he pursued a career as a civil engineer and public servant (real estate appraiser) and was a supporter of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville*, the Crow’s Nest Officers’ Club, St John’s and other organizations. He was predeceased by his first wife Marjorie; survivors include his second wife Hyacinthe, children Jo-Lynne and Wayne, a number of grandchildren and sisters Claire and Shirley.

Leonard Charles Newton, a corvette veteran of the Battle of the Atlantic passed away April 23 at age 97. He was predeceased by his wife Charlotte and daughter Dale Silver; survivors include sister Laura, brother Doug, son Trevor and daughter Heather. Born in Vancouver, he enlisted in the Navy at 19 and served as a stoker in the corvette HMCS *Sudbury*. In 2019, he returned to Halifax to tour *Sudbury*’s sister ship HMCS *Sackville*. Discharged in 1945, he joined the Vancouver Fire Department and retired as a captain.



John Harold (Vernon) Toole, of Halifax, a veteran of the Second World War who served in HMCS *Algonquin* passed away in May at age 95. During his career he worked for a number of companies and operated his own manufacturing agency J.H. Vernon Toole Ltd covering the Atlantic region. A long-time trustee of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville* he was active in a number of fraternal, church and community organizations; the Masonic Order was a driving force in his life. Survivors include his wife Jean (Peggy) and daughter Kathleen (Kate).



Caroline Phelps Scott, a former health care practitioner and administrator and active supporter of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville* passed away in Halifax September 21 at age 93. She attended Queens and Dalhousie Universities and graduated in medicine (her mother had served as a nurse during the First World War). During her career Caroline worked in public health in Victoria, BC and in the 1960s-1970s with the precursor to Health Canada and the Bureau of Pharmaceutical Advisory Service. Her late husband John (Jake) Scott survived the sinking of HMCS *Athabaskan* in 1944 and after his passing in 1989 she maintained the naval connection through *Sackville* and participated in Trust and ship activities. Survivors include children Heather and Bill, a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren and several nephews and niece. Following cremation a burial at sea is planned.

Bedford Magazine Explosion - 1945

*The Late Life Trustee LCDR Murray Knowles RCN(R) (ret'd) Remembers
the Bedford Magazine Explosions of 75 Years Ago*



Lieutenant Commander Murray Knowles, a veteran of the Battle of the Atlantic presented Prince Philip with HMCS Sackville tie during a visit by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh to Canada's Naval Memorial in June, 2020 as part of the RCN's Centennial celebrations.

On Wednesday 18 July 1945, having finished my day as Staff Officer (Operations) in the dockyard, I walked up North Street, as I had been in the habit of doing, to enjoy the usual camaraderie in Admiralty House. At 1815 while part way through dinner, a loud blast struck the building breaking some of small glass mullion windows. Instantaneously almost everyone shouted "look at the column of smoke rising toward Bedford Basin."

Picking up my cap, I immediately ran out, raced through the courtyard to Gottingen Street, ran down North Street and burst into Operations. I immediately informed my superiors: Captain James C. Hibbard and then Commodore Cuthbert Taylor, CO Atlantic Coast; Captain Gus Miles CO STADACONA and Captain O.C.S. Robertson, CO Dockyard, who quickly arrived. The scene in Operations soon evolved into a situation of extreme concern, anxiety, bedlam and confusion, with numerous telephones in use, four on my desk and probably another eight or

ten telephones on other desks in the large Operations centre.

Since the German surrender well over 150 ships sailed by Operation 3 in compliance with our signals to put ashore all ammunition at the Bedford Magazine. Unfortunately, much had to be piled on the two small jetties and along the adjacent

roads because of a lack of storage space. In addition, the Bedford Magazine held hundreds of tons of highly secret explosives, sufficient to blow the City of Halifax off the face of the earth. Much of this ammunition was stored in specially designed underground vaults and segregated buildings.

The blast at 1815 p.m. shook the whole metropolitan area, shattering windows in much of the north end. The mushroom of smoke from the initial blast formed clouds of dark brown and black smoke billowing toward the northern sky covering a wide area obscuring the beautiful evening sunset toward the west. Information about the explosion, fire and flames began to trickle back to Operation while we watched through binoculars as the fiercely burning magazine jetty caused a vivid panoramic spectacle from our commanding position.

The next 26 hours would become a time of enormous life-threatening danger during which we would be confined to our posts and indeed

were the only few humans remaining in the north end of the entire city. Our orders were to keep transmitting information to Naval Headquarters in Ottawa as the conflagration and explosions continued to worsen.

With great courage and seemingly no fear for his own safety Captain Robertson, already honoured for wartime bravery with the OBE and George Cross, accompanied by two officers and several ratings boarded a harbour craft and proceeded to Bedford Basin where they monitored and reported on the situation from perhaps a mile from the burning jetty and explosions.

Naval Headquarters in Ottawa, having been apprised about the pending or expected worsening of the spreading fires, advised the Mayor of Halifax to commence immediate and total evacuation of the north end of Halifax and Dartmouth and the whole shoreline of Bedford Basin. Trucks and drivers from all 3 services assisted in the evacuation of civilians, many of whom recalled the disaster of 6 December 2017 as explosions continued during the night.

At 1930 Captain Hibbard instructed me to signal all ships secured alongside Dockyard jetties or at anchor out in the harbour to slip from their berths forthwith and proceed to an anchorage south of George's Island. One cannot imagine such unprecedented circumstances in Halifax harbour. Some thirty or forty warships: destroyers, frigates, corvettes, minesweepers and lesser craft all took action to comply with the signal. The situation was compounded because regular shore leave and make and mends meant only partial crews were on board. As well, many

of the wartime experienced captains, officers and crew had been demobilized or were in the process, which meant that junior officers and skeleton crews, often without much experience in ship handling would with much apprehension have to move the ships from the jetties. Some ships were able to raise steam in less time than normal and moved on their own. Amazingly, apart from very minor collision the ships got underway and all reached the area south of George's Island by 2200.

Naval Headquarters, Ottawa refused to allow Operations to abandon our headquarters in the Dockyard, insisting they be kept fully informed of the ongoing fire and explosion. Well past midnight I can well recall Captain Hibbard at my desk telephoning his wife saying "My dear, please take the children right away, drive to Chester and stay with our friends. The situation here is dreadful and we have just been advised that more serious and greater explosions will occur throughout the night." Intermittently, throughout the night we would indeed see the flash first in the distance followed in a few seconds by a sudden strong rush of warm air then the ear shattering blast shaking our building heavily.

Those of us who had served on D Day, 6 June 6 1944 were told beforehand that we would be expendable during Operation Neptune. However, during these morning hours at Operations in the Dockyard, there would be approximately thirty officers, wrens and sailors still at our posts, the entire Dockyard having been evacuated as well as the whole northern section of the city some hours earlier.

Sure enough the big explosion came at 0400 with an enormous flash through the distant smoke, about 1 1/2 miles away. We ducked (regardless of ranks) quickly falling flat, sprawling and crawling under desks and chairs seeking protection. The

loud blast was preceded by a rush of warm air. To this day, it is believed that our building of six stories and brick construction, which had additional wartime buildings of pre-fabricated material on each end, separated and re-joined because of the powerful blast which seemed much like an earthquake. As we recovered and crawled out from under our so called protected spots on the hardwood floor, it was a sight to behold. All covered in white powder and dust from the floor presented quite an amusing picture whereas a few moments earlier our presence was the usual spit and polish. Indeed, we were by this time a motley lot and unshaven as well. Although coffee and sandwiches had been brought in, most of us seemed to have little desire for food.

The morning of 19 July, dawned bringing with it a beautiful sunrise after a very long night for thousands of terrified citizens, who had fled the city seeking shelter and safety, were encamped on the Commons, the south end Gorsebrook Golf Club and of course, at various locations on the various roads on the outskirts of the city. In Operations, lack of sleep, extreme tension, drawn and strained expressions clearly began to appear following a harrowing night. We continued to receive radio communications from Captain Robertson, still located in one of the harbour craft, as he cautiously approached the area of burning jetties where the fires and explosions seemed to be less dangerous. The early morning hours enabled city and naval fire equipment to work toward the magazine entering the road from the Dartmouth side of the harbour. As if their risks were not enough, the parched woods surrounding the magazine slope caught fire and burned for two days.

As the morning hours slowly passed, we continued the evaluation of the magazine situation through

information received from Captain Robertson until word was passed to civic officials that the fire and explosions were under control and that citizens could return to their homes. The casualties miraculously were few, only one man being killed. By good chance, the first explosion happened at 1815 when the day shift had been replaced by the smaller night shift.

In Operations, Captain Hibbard instructed me to signal all ships lying at anchor south of George's Island to return to their berths. The first destroyer came alongside about 1100 and the task was completed by late evening. He directed all staff to, to brush off the dust from uniforms and if possible, to be clean shaven. At noon, the Minister of National Defence for Naval Services, Hon. Douglas Abbott, and the Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral J. C. Jones arrived in Halifax. Following introductions, warm handshakes, a few words of appreciation and a "well done" from the Minister and Vice Admiral Jones, I apologized for a somewhat bedraggled appearance. I further commented, "Thank yo Sir, it was a long night and indeed a whole new experience unlike running in on a submarine attack in the North Atlantic." He smiled and said, "those days our training and years of experience placed us in some control, but not in these circumstances facing such a potential disaster."

The cause of the fire and explosion had its origin in one the lighters alongside the magazine main jetty. One of these small vessels was blown out into the Basin while the other was buried in the road leading to the magazine property about a third of a mile apart. Although only one man was killed, it was a miracle that only a few naval personnel and civilians were injured. Haligonians and Dartmouthians would once again give prayerful thanks.

Trust and Mess Events



Serving members continue to support HMCS *Sackville*, including the Chief & Petty Officers and Warrant Officers & Sergeants Mess. Chief Petty Officer Craig MacFadgen presents a cheque for \$500 to Wendall Brown, former CNMT Chair.



Wendall Brown, former CNMT Chair presented a mounted photo of HMCS *Sackville* to Rear Admiral Craig Baines, Commander Maritime Forces Atlantic as a memento of his support for Canada's Naval Memorial prior to the admiral taking up a new appointment at National Defence Headquarters.



Colours executed aboard HMCS Sackville (K181) July 25th, 2020 the day HMCS Toronto (333) departed Halifax Harbour for Op REASSURANCE.
Clarence Hemeon photo.

The Office of the Governor General has advised that the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers has been awarded to Lieutenant Commander James Reddy, former CO of HMCS Sackville who passed away on August 25, 2019. This medal was given in recognition of his dedication in preserving HMCS Sackville and presenting her a a living artefact of the successful "Battle of the Atlantic Campaign".

The following is an amendment to the Winter Issue of Action Station, Page 17

Jim was committed the sea on 21 September off Halifax from HMCS Sackville. He is survived by his wife Pat, his children, Stephen and Elizabeth, his step-children, Rory, Shane and Meghan, and seven grandchildren.



Battle of the Atlantic service May 3rd, 2020 was held at Commodore Park, Dartmouth NS.

Last Post, 2 Minutes of Silence and Rouse was observed with Wreath Laying. Due to COVID 19 restrictions there were no others in attendance, but there were some people in the neighborhood observing the ceremony from their yards and driveways. In attendance; Rev. Steven Cochrane, Lifetime Trustee HMCS Sackville, Chaplain Royal Canadian Legion Centennial Branch #160, District F Chaplain NS / Nunavut Command.

Petty Officer Second Class Alexander Cochrane, Navy League Cadet Corps Sackville, and Lifetime Trustee HMCS Sackville.

PO2 Sarah MacDonald-Miles, RCSCC Magnificent.

Steven Cochrane photo.



World War 2 Memoirs

Memories and Events of my Time in the Navy

By Ivan E. Chamberlain



I joined the naval reserve in May 1943 at HMCS *Star* in Hamilton because I had been a Sea Cadet and always dreamed of going to sea. I think I made the best choice of all the services and have never regretted being in the navy. That said, I was one of the lucky people who survived without a scratch -many did not.

I took basic training and a gunnery course at HMCS *Cornwallis*, learning to disassemble and assemble ships' guns. I also took aircraft recognition to be an anti-aircraft gunner on board the corvette HMCS *Lindsay*. When I joined the ship, I could not believe my eyes. She was beautiful, all freshly painted in camouflage colours and my home for the next year and a half. I was met by the gunnery officer, Sub-Lieutenant Leonard Brockington, who showed me around the ship and the forward mess deck where I stowed my gear and hammock.

After I settled in, I was taken up to the bridge where I was shown my gun position, the port bridge Oerlikon. It was right beside the door to the ASDIC (antisubmarine detection) shack, so that every time we went to action stations, I could hear the ASDIC pinging as we tracked something submerged. It could possibly be a school of fish or worse, a submarine. We did a number of workup exercises around Halifax, and, although we were mostly a green crew with no experience, like fine wine we improved with age!

Lindsay was an Increased Endurance class of corvette which most importantly meant that a water tank was replaced by a fuel tank, so that she could cross the ocean without refueling as most older corvettes could not. Her design was such that her bow had a sharper angle and flare. She was a completely different ship than the original short fo'c's'le corvettes and was the forerunner to the frigate which was originally called a twin screw corvette. Winston Churchill called our type of ships "cheap & nasty". They were a very seaworthy ship and someone described them as being able to roll on wet grass. In any event, my first trip across the ocean started from Halifax and ended up in Londonderry, Northern Ireland with a stop in St. John's, Newfoundland.

We left Halifax in daylight and I was off duty at the time. We could still see the outline of Halifax in the distance when I started think-

ing about sea sickness. My stomach started to roll and I was determined not to be sick. The duty watch was on the upper decks painting and as I went out to get some fresh air, I decided to paint along with them to take my mind off my stomach. I think I painted most of the way to "Newfyjohn" but I overcame my sick feeling and was never sea sick again in my life.

You have never seen waves until you have sailed the North Atlantic. In a ship that was 206 feet long, 33 feet wide, a top speed of 16 knots and with a crew of 103 bodies, she would ride up and down those waves like a cork. You could not walk along the waist of the ship without holding on to the life line. The worst part for me was climbing up the rope ladder to the crow's nest. You could only go up one step at a time when the ship was perpendicular. The rest of the time you hung on for dear life. It was very scary. It was lucky that I only got that duty a few times. There were many times when the ship was rolling that all you could see underneath you was water. In convoy work, you took up different stations around the convoy at eight hour intervals. You were always on the lookout for ships or submarines.

During a convoy you would be assigned starboard or port sweep at night time and then move to stern sweep during the day. The senior officer's ship was usually a destroyer or a frigate leading the convoy. There would be three other corvettes, one on either side, and one astern. If you



HMCS *Lindsay*

had a ship that had difficulty keeping up to the speed of the convoy, which was always the fastest speed of the slowest ship, you had to leave it to his own devices and hope for the best. Usually the speed of the convoy was about nine knots. There were some real old tubs out there as they used anything that could float. You hated to leave them but it had to be done for the sake of all the other ships.

Arriving in Londonderry was the most beautiful sight anyone could ever see. You had to wait at Moville at the mouth of the Foyle River to refuel and wait for high tide. While waiting, the bum boats (row boats) would come out from the Irish Free State, usually with a father and son in a boat loaded with Irish whiskey and silk stockings. The father would stay in the boat and send the young lad up onto the ship to barter and trade items. We would trade seven pound cans of corned beef from our survivor's rations for silk stockings or anything else we could give the ladies. As rationing was not in force in the Free State, they had luxury items that were not available elsewhere because of the war. There were claims that the Free State was refuelling German submarines but

we never saw any.

When the tide was high, we would proceed up the Foyle to Derry. You could see the river bottom through the brown water and it looked like we would scrape bottom, but we never did. As we passed the Wrens' barracks, they would lean out the windows and wave bed sheets at us, welcoming us to Derry. We would give them a blast on our ship's siren in return. They could tell it was a Canadian ship by the maple leaf painted on the funnel. While in port in Londonderry, the dockyard installed four more Oerlikons before we went to sea again. We had pre-invasion work-ups out at sea near Larne, although we had no idea at that time that an invasion was in the future. We fired at towed targets, had radar exercises, hedgehog shoots and night shoots with star shells, rockets and 20mm Oerlikons.

We sailed for Plymouth but had trouble entering port. We went to tie up but were sent out again because we were not in the rig (uniform) of the day. We were in blue jeans as we attempted to tie up at the dock and Plymouth was a pussier (regulation) port. The British would not tolerate us colonials in other than proper rig. We didn't care what we looked like

as long as we got the job done. Canadian ships tended to be more casual than the British.

On June 6/44 *Lindsay* departed the Bristol Channel, one of 19 Canadian corvettes involved in the Normandy invasion. Having received our orders from a Fairmile we sailed to join the 138th Escort Group. The senior officer/ship of the group was the British destroyer HMS *Watchman*.

In addition, there were two armed trawlers, HMT *Scalpay* and HMT *Ganilly*, escorting a convoy of nine merchant ships.

Twelve miles southwest of St. Catherine's Point, Isle of Wight, at 1755 an American Thunderbolt fighter crashed in the English Channel about one mile off our port beam. The pilot had ejected and we watched him parachute into the water. The order was given to launch our whaler. I ended up in the bow of the boat and as we approached the pilot, I could see that he was drowning with his face under water. I had the boat hook and extended it out in an attempt to catch hold of him. Just as I leaned over the side to grab him a wave pushed him into the steel end of the boat hook. I thought I had poked his eye out but on getting him into the boat we found this wasn't true.

His life jacket had two separate sections and was inflated by two cylinders of compressed air but only one was pulled. That is why he was submerged when we got to him. We got him back aboard ship into the sick bay and he survived. We learned that his fuel feed line had been severed in a dog fight and he was trying to make it back to England. Somehow in all this excitement his .45 auto-



WW2 German E Boat.

Photo from: FIS (Formation Imaging Services) MARLANT HQ

matic disappeared from his holster. Our captain, Lieutenant Thomson, threatened a search of the ship, directing that the gun should be given back to the pilot and no questions would be asked. This was done and that was the end of that affair. The pilot, Lieutenant Robert M. Meade, was treated for shock and immersion by our sick bay tiffy and transferred to a U.S. hospital ship at Omaha Beach, Normandy.

At 0225 a starshell burst above another convoy close ahead and our crew saw two vessels burst into flames. A starshell high-intensity parachute flare from HMS *Watchman* illuminated two high-speed German E-Boats near us heading north-east and making smoke to cover their retreat. They preyed upon shipping using quick torpedo attacks. During this engagement we were illuminated by an American cruiser by mis-

take and we were caught out in the open like a sitting duck. The skipper ordered full ahead in an attempt to save the ship and crew when our ASDIC operators heard the sound of torpedoes coming at us. The skipper gave a "hard to port" order and as he did, I noticed the track of a torpedo come down the port side of the ship. I hollered at Rocky Leonzio who was my counterpart on the starboard Oerlikon and told him what I had seen. He replied that he had seen the same kind of track on his side. It appeared that the E-boat had fired two torpedoes at us and one went down either side of us. The ASDIC operators reported the two torpedoes were clear of the ship and had passed astern. The 4-inch gun crew and bridge Oerlikons kept up firing until the E-boats were too far distant. They were laying a smoke screen and had disappeared from sight.

Lindsay resumed her station with the convoy after successfully repelling the enemy in this ninety-minute engagement, arriving safely at the Omaha beachhead at 9:16 hrs.

As a result of his quick thinking in this engagement Lt. Thomson was awarded a "Mentioned in Dispatches" for his role during the Normandy invasion. The citation for the award read as follows: "This officer has handled his ship with considerable skill and shown unlimited zeal throughout operation "Neptune". As second Senior Officer, he has shown intelligent anticipation of the re-

quirements, particularly during action with the five E-Boats in the early morning of June 9th, 1944." The ASDIC Operator that night, Leading Seaman Alec Cameron was also awarded with the same medal by the French Government for his role in this engagement. For the next two days the *Lindsay* was at anchor and provided anti-aircraft fire against enemy air raids on Omaha Beach, engaging three enemy aircraft during a large air attack.

On July 5/44 while escorting a convoy in the English Channel, *Lindsay* had been doing the starboard sweep during the night between midnight and 0800 and switched places with HMT *Ganilly*. We had no sooner made the switch with *Ganilly* was taking up our former position when she struck a mine and broke in half. (This was later determined to be a torpedo sinking by U-390). The bow and stern came up. The bow slid un-

der and the stern showed with the screw (propeller) still turning. She was only 200 yards away from us and sank in 30 seconds. The other trawler, *Scalpay*, picked up the captain and three others from the water. There were no other survivors.

Lindsay was a lucky lady once again on Aug. 8/44. She was assigned duty with a convoy EBC66 but because of engine trouble she was replaced by the corvette HMCS *Regina*. One of the merchant ships was torpedoed off Trevoze Head, Cornwall. However, as she appeared to be salvageable, *Regina* ordered a U.S. tank landing craft to take the merchant crew aboard and to prepare to tow the damaged vessel. *Regina* was standing by when suddenly a U-boat torpedo struck her a fatal blow. The ship blew up in a terrible explosion and sank in seconds. Only 66 survivors were rescued, 10 of them seriously wounded. This might have been the fate of *Lindsay* if the exchange with *Regina* had not taken place.

From September to December of 1944 we escorted convoys to Omaha Beach and then started taking convoys to Cherbourg to support the capture of this French port. Following that we were transferred operationally to Plymouth Command running convoys from English ports along the confined space of the English Channel. Manoeuvring at night in such a restricted and busy area with no running lights, a big danger was colliding with our forces.

On Jan.22/45 at 0645 we were lead ship in a convoy HX 331 when our radar operator reported a ship bearing down on us from dead ahead at 5000 yards. It was dark but a clear night. As the oncoming ship was closing rapidly the officer of the watch gave the "Full ahead" order to the engine room. As the on-

coming ship was on our port bow, it was their duty to give way. At 1200 yards our radar was blind and too close to give an echo. Our officer of the watch switched on our running lights and the other ship did likewise, showing her starboard steaming light on *Lindsay*'s port bow. As the oncoming ship was still rapidly closing, Lieutenant Casement, ordered "Hard to Starboard" and "Full Ahead". This was considered to be the only suitable avoiding action that could be taken. The Royal Navy destroyer HMS *Brilliant* was steaming at 24 knots and apparently her radar failed to detect us. Before the siren could be sounded, *Brilliant*'s port bow struck *Lindsay* on the port side near the bridge. Because *Brilliant* was much larger and higher than our corvette, her anchor was about flush with our deck and she tore a big hole in our superstructure, taking out guard rails, Carley floats and guns on our port side and doing considerable damage. *Brilliant* was not too severely damaged but we had a ruptured steam line and lost way until it could be repaired. We received an order to abandon ship from our commanding officer but before it could be carried out, he rescinded that order as it was found we were not taking on water.

All this time I had been sleeping in my hammock below and when *Brilliant* struck us all the lights down below went out except the red exit lights. As I scrambled out of my hammock and hit the deck, I could only see red from the lights and I thought we were on fire but that wasn't the case. I put on my life jacket and headed for the escape hatch which led to the 4 inch gun deck. It was a round hatch and with my jacket on I was a tight fit until somebody gave me a shove from below and I managed to get through.

I was running around with bare feet and received cuts to the bottom of my feet from broken glass. Steam was raised on one boiler and we set a course for Plymouth at eight knots escorted by the Free French frigate *La Decouverte*. Luckily there no casualties on either vessel.

Four days later *Lindsay* carried on to Plymouth under escort of a coastal minesweeper USS *Conqueror*. We were to undergo sufficient temporary repairs to enable us to sail to Canada where major repairs would be made. Fortunately, this collision happened in the English Channel and not the middle of the Atlantic because it would be questionable whether we could have made it to port in the ship's damaged condition. The inquiry by the Admiralty concluded that *Lindsay* was not in any way to blame for the collision. *Brilliant* was found at fault and her officer of the watch was court martialed. There was about \$75,000 damage to *Lindsay* and it would take 10 weeks to repair. Only minimal repairs were done in England and on Feb.20/45 *Lindsay* steamed independently to Londonderry. From there we escorted a convoy back to Canada and *Lindsay* was sent to Saint John N.B. to dry dock. I came home on a 42 day survivor's leave after which I returned to my ship. When I got there, I learned I was no longer part of the crew of the *Lindsay* as victory in Europe was imminent. *Lindsay* was paid off at the end of hostilities and was sold to mercantile interests in 1946.

*Ivan E. Chamberlain V 56476
December 6th 2000
Memoirs of late Ivan Chamberlain
provided courtesy of son Dave
Chamberlain and nephew Trustee
Glenn Chamberlain.*

Membership Report

Membership Update

Welcome Aboard to our newest members.
Your support is very much appreciated. Thank You !

Life Members:

Peter Barlett, Halifax, NS
Robert Blakely, St. Albert, AB
Greg Cottingham, Three Fathom
Harbour, NS
Chris Fralic, Halifax, NS
David Messham, Tantallon, NS
Peter Neville, Dartmouth, NS
Shawn Papke, Lake Echo, NS
John F. Watson, Ottawa, ON
Rick Lusk, Ottawa, ON

Annual Members:

James Anderson, Halifax, NS
Jerzy Gajewski, Halifax, NS
Geoffrey Hamilton, Bedford, NS
Stephen Horne, Fort Ellis, NS
Deborah Horne, Fort Ellis, NS
Warren Hyde, Hamilton, ON
Robert Klein, Porters Lake, NS
Chris Marriott, Halifax, NS
Delia Murphy, Dartmouth, NS
Kaela Ramsay, Halifax, NS

Phillip Rody, Miramichi, NB

Kate Scarth, Halifax, NS
Hal Sherrard, Perth-Andover, NB
Victoria Hines, Dartmouth, NS
David Gorsline, Bedford, NS

Just for the Hull of It Campaign Update

The Hull Campaign, launched in February of this year, has received over eighty donations to date and raised close to \$67,550. Bravo Zulu // Well Done to our donors and an appreciative thank you is extended to our membership and donors at large. We have a ways to go in the multi-year campaign with approximately 10% of the membership making a contribution so far. It was most unfortunate that the launch occurred just as the Covid-19 pandemic reached our shores. However, we have great faith in our supporters.

**Check out the
enclosed flyer
for more
information.**



Major Donors 2019

The Canadian Naval Memorial Trust was the beneficiary of forty-three major donations last year. Once again, the Trust was able to achieve its mission because of the generosity of its membership, corporate supporters, and the Canadian public at large. The Trust very much appreciates all contributions and issues charitable tax receipts for a donation of \$10 or more.

Major Donor Categories

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| \$500 - \$2499 | Convoy Class Supporter |
| \$2,500 - \$4,999 | Corvette Class Supporter |
| \$5,000 - \$9,999 | Frigate Class Supporter |
| \$10,000 - \$24,999 | Destroyer Class Supporter |
| \$25,000 - \$49,999 | Cruiser Class Supporter |
| \$50,000 - \$99,999 | Carrier Class Supporter |
| \$100,000 - \$249,999 | Division Level Supporter |
| \$250,000 plus | Squadron Level Supporter |

Convoy

Anonymous (1)

Kevin Biggs, Calgary, AB (In memory of M. Jane Biggs)

Patricia Bonneau, Merrickville, ON

Kenneth Brown (Estate), Truro, NS

Harry Brown, Sherbrooke, QC

Patrick & Beverly Charlton, Tantallon, NS

Commissionaires Nova Scotia, Bedford, NS

Develop Nova Scotia, Halifax, NS

Charles A.E. Fowler, Halifax, NS

Chris Fralic, Halifax, NS

Stephen Knowles, Gatineau, QC

Labrador Sea (2004) Inc., Dartmouth, NS

(S. Engeset)

Joseph Lombardi, Mt. Pleasant, SC, USA

Neil & Shirley MacDougall Fund, Toronto, ON

Allan MacLauchlan, Cochrane, AB

Maritime Forces Atlantic, Halifax, NS

Modest Tree Media, Halifax, NS

Susan and Bruce Moxley, Hammonds Plains, NS

Oxford Naval Veterans Association,

Woodstock, ON

Malcolm Palmer, Halifax, NS

Iain Parker, Edmonton, AB

Richard Payne, Halifax, NS

Sherry Richardson,

Head of St. Margaret's Bay, NS

Dorothy Robertson (Estate), North York, ON

Peter Stoffer, Fall River, NS

Town of Sackville, NB

Hugh Vincent, Halifax, NS

Bryn Weadon, Beaverbank, NS

Jane Wilkins, Chester, NS

Howard Wilson, Halifax, NS

June Smith - Wilton, Halifax, NS

Kenneth Wykes, Portland, ON

Corvette

Anonymous (1)

Sidney Gould (Estate), Halifax, NS

Ken Mader, Halifax, NS

Ralph G. Townsley (Estate), Peterborough, ON

Frigate

Jean Daley (Estate), Toronto, ON

Linda Dean, Hamilton, ON

Charles Manore (Estate), London, ON

Naval Association of Canada

The Two Philippe

Destroyer

Ian McKee, Halifax, NS

Carrier

Robert E. Mansfield (Estate), Vaughan, ON

WRCNS Officer Celebrates 100th Birthday



Lieutenant Ada Hazen Inches (nee Mackay), a graduate of McGill University and who on joining the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRNS) in October, 1942 was described by the interview board as "a sound young woman of unusual ability; excellent character and pleasing personality" celebrated her 100th birthday in New Brunswick July 28, 2020.

She trained in radio communications at HMC *Signals School*, St. Hyacinthe, QC where she received a 'specialist qualification.' Her family reports she was posted to St. John's, NF in early 1945 where she tracked and intercepted German U boat communications to determine location of the subs through triangulation.

The accompanying photo of her in uniform, with a friend, was taken in London where she was stationed in the late and immediate post war period. She was discharged a lieutenant in June, 1946.

After the war, with her husband, J.D. Inches (an RCAF veteran), Ada went on to raise seven children and to participate in numerous volunteer activities including the South End Food Bank in Saint John, NB up until her 90s. She continues to cherish her time with family on the Long Reach, Saint John River.

Peter Chance Celebrates 100 Years



Lieutenant Peter Chance and bride Peggy, centre, are shown at their wedding reception in HMCS *Skeena*'s Wardroom in Plymouth, England 1944.

Commander Peter Chance (ret'd) of Saanich, BC, a Battle of the Atlantic veteran and long-time supporter of HMCS *Sackville* and other naval organizations joins the select Centennial club November 24, 2020.

Son Tim Chance provides the following account of a significant event in his father's life.

"My mother (Margaret Parker) Peggy was a Royal Navy Wren serving as a telegraphist monitoring wartime activity off the Northern Ireland coast in 1944. My father first met my mother in June 1944 at local

restaurant in Port Rush when HMCS *Skeena* and HMCS *Saskatchewan* were alongside in Londonderry. The two destroyers along with other escort ships of Group (EG12) had returned to Londonderry after supporting D-Day operations in the Channel.

"They were married in Plymouth, England at the Stokes Damerall Parish Church on September 13. The wedding reception was held on board *Skeena* which was in Plymouth dry dock after receiving bow damage during recent night action off the French coast.

"In October, *Skeena* was wrecked off Reykjavik, Iceland during a storm and my father finished out the war aboard HMC Ships *Seacliffe*, *Gatineau* and *Ottawa*. My mother sailed from Liverpool to Halifax aboard the Cunard Liner RMS *Scythia* in March, 1945 along with 1,750 other war brides with a final destination of Ottawa. She passed away in October 1999."

Peter Chance's memoirs are captured in *A Sailor's Life 1920-2001*.

VAdm Dusty Miller

The following is the fourth in a series of articles coordinated by Len Canfield reflecting on the early history of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust (CNMT), the acquisition of HMCS Sackville and the Chairs, other individuals and events that have played a significant role in the operation of Canada's Naval Memorial since the 1980s.



Vice Admiral Duncan (Dusty) Miller (Ret'd) served as Chair of CNMT 2004-2009 and Chair of the Development Committee 2009-2011. Significant developments/activities during his time as Chair are contained in reports presented at meetings/other gatherings and Trustee updates in Action Stations.

Advancing planning for the long-term preservation of HMCS *Sackville*, increasing the Endowment Fund and pursuing related fundraising initiatives and implementing a business-oriented organization plan for the Board and Committee structures were among the major undertakings during this period. In addition, a number of events and activities were initiated to increase public awareness of the Trust and

to attract more visitors to the ship...all possible thanks to "the hundreds of volunteers who tirelessly devote time and energy to the Trust and *Sackville*."

2005:

- Ted Kelly, Bryan Elson and Ian McKee brought the Endowment Fund to more than \$1 million, including significant donations by a number of individuals

- The Strategic Planning Committee prepared a detailed Board and Committees reorganization plan to reflect the Capital Campaign fundraising requirement, with Bryan Elson relieving Ted Kelly as Committee Chair

- Ken McMillan, assisted by Jim King, prepared a six-phase proposal for a capital campaign, including a guide for the hiring a Director of Development

- Halifax developer, The Armour Group, presented the Queen's Landing Maritime Heritage Complex concept and design (which would include HMCS *Sackville*) to the Waterfront Development Corp (now Develop Nova Scotia)

- Wavy Navy Players directed by Jacqui Good were employed as re-enactors in the ship during the summer and their ani-

mated tours to increase visitor traffic proved popular

2006:

- A well attended levee in the ship ushered in the New Year with Wendall Brown's chowder & biscuits and Ray Soucie, Don Mackey, Mike Muldoon and Mike MacFadden's 'moosers' proved as popular as ever. Also, at this special time of year a proud moment for parents and grandparents when infants Seamus William Newton Miller and Sophie Jane Newton Miller and their twin cousins Iris and Griffin were christened in *Sackville*, and all becoming Lifetime Trustees of the ship's company with their names on the ship's bell!

- The Strategic Planning Committee presented a detailed proposal to commence a capital campaign, starting in 2007-2008, to have *Sackville* enclosed within a waterfront complex, the Queen's Landing Project, and the Board approved retaining KCI Ketchum Associates to work with the Board in hiring a Director of Development

- The Trust's annual Battle of the Atlantic week program of activities and events continued to be both rewarding and labour-intensive for the ship's Captain Wendall Brown, First Lieutenant Jim Reddy and crew, includ-

ing organizing the BOA dinner onboard and the committal of veterans' ashes off Point Pleasant Park with Padre Charlie Black conducting the service

- The Board approved 'seed money' for a theatrical production called 'Corvette Crossing' and *Sackville* was moved to Alderney Landing, Dartmouth to serve as backdrop for the production's world premiere

- The semi-annual Board of Directors meeting was held in the Sackville, NB Town Council Nov 10 and the following day Directors participated in the Town's Remembrance Day activities

2007:

- Early in the New Year Kelly Power was hired as Director of Development to develop and implement a capital campaign, coordinate fundraising activities, implement a planned giving program, and increase national awareness and membership.

- Hugh MacNeil prepared a document to be used to obtain agreement from the Waterfront Development Corp that identifies how the Trust wishes *Sackville* to be presented and operated in the Queen's Landing Project.

- Former Lieutenant Governor and Honorary Captain (N) Myra Freeman agreed to be Chair of the National Councillors group at a time when the Trust prepares for a capital campaign

- Each year a number of fundraising events and activities are held in the Halifax area, including the ever-popular Battle of the Atlantic Gala at Pier 21 coordinated by Pat Jessup, and

a golf tournament organized by Neil Black and Debbie Findlay.

- Planning continued for a capital campaign kick off in September 2008 to raise \$10 million for the long-term preservation and operation of Canada's Naval Memorial. KCI Ketchum Associates were retained to prepare the first phase of the campaign (a national survey).

- Curator John Hault commenced work on a master plan on what the Trust wishes to see with regard to how *Sackville* is presented in the proposed waterfront complex, what the structure will look like, exhibit/activity areas, etc.

2008:

- During the winter *Sackville* underwent a month-long refit on the synchrolift in Dockyard, including repainting the hull and adding some double steel patches where the hull was thin

- With the ship just coming off the synchrolift and unavailable, the annual Battle of the Atlantic dinner was held at Shearwater Aviation Museum with veterans from across the country joining local Trustees for the occasion

- The Naval Centennial Committee under Charles Westropp continued working on events and activities to highlight *Sackville* during the Naval Centennial in 2010

- As part of the preliminary capital campaign, KCI conducted some 30 interviews with prominent individuals who may be able to assist financially and politically

2009-2010:

- In 2009, after a review of numerous presentations and discussions with the Armour Group (AGL) and other stakeholders involved in the Queen's Landing Project (QLP) –including the November 2005 QLP Concept presented by AGL -- the CNMT Board decided to form the Development Committee. The committee would pursue options for the long-term preservation of *Sackville*, to liaise with all levels of government and to pursue obtaining funding for the *Sackville* project in the short and long term. In addition to Dusty Miller as Chair, the committee included Hugh MacPherson, Wendall Brown, John Hault, Hugh MacNeil and John Jay.

- Board members had a number of reservations about QLP. These included the dinner theatre aspect of using *Sackville* as the stage and which would not be in keeping with the designation of the ship as Canada's Naval Memorial, the enclosure for *Sackville* was not considered iconic enough and the ship needed to be viewed from the water. When these concerns and others were not addressed by AGL, it was deemed best to use a MOU with the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic (MMA), Waterfront Development Corp and the Province and proceed with a separate project while pursuing federal and other government support.

Bill Wilson Recalls VE Day in Halifax

On the morning of 8 May 1945 HMCS *Ottawa* (H31) along with the destroyer HMCS *Restigouche* were alongside on the Dartmouth side of the Halifax harbour having just escorted the troopship SS *Sithia* into Halifax with returning wounded members of the Canadian Forces and a large number of war brides.

It was somewhere around 11:15 and I was working on my Oerlikon gun on the starboard flag deck when I heard close by a merchant ship blowing its horn repeatedly. While we all knew that the war was almost over when I heard the repeated blowing of the horn my first thought was that it could be an emergency such as another “Halifax explosion”. I quickly moved to the port side and saw

the ship was between the Halifax Dockyard and the Dartmouth side and heading seaward. At the same time I passed Signalman “Soup” Campbell from Flin Flon Manitoba who was reaching out for the lanyard controlling our ship’s siren and yelling that “the war is over”. Within seconds, the entire harbour was a bedlam of noise as every merchantman and warship, large and small, began blowing their horns and sirens. It was Victory in Europe Day.

As we were all rushing around slapping backs the pipe was made to “Splice the Mainbrace, all hands lay aft on the quarterdeck”. At that point in time, while I was 20, I did not draw the daily tot of rum that I was entitled. I had found that two ounces of rum at 1100 in the morning was a little too much and made me quite unproductive for the whole afternoon. Besides by turning the tot down I received three cents in lieu which was not insignificant when I was only being paid about \$1.50 a day as an able seaman. However, this was VE Day; the war was over in Europe so I quite willingly accepted the King’s extra tot and it went down well.

While we were all enjoying the rum, the pipe was made that the Admiral had ordered “Open Gangway” which meant that anyone serving aboard ship could leave the ship at any time (unless the ship was under sailing orders) without having to appear before an officer for the routing “inspection”. But that is another rather sad story.

No one, man or woman, sailor, soldier or airman, will ever forget where they were on 8 May 1945.

*Editor’s Note: Following the end of hostilities Captain Wilson continued to serve in the Naval Reserve including commanding officer of HMCS *Tecumseh*, Calgary, followed by Honorary Captain in the RCN.*



Along with ship mates, Bill Wilson displays front page of the Halifax Chronicle announcing end of the war in Europe May 8, 1945.

3 Frigates Home from Overseas

HMCS *St. Stephen* (K454), in camouflage typical of West Coast built ships.

Photo from: Wikipedia



Trustee Walt Nicholls' father served as a submarine detector in HMCS Jonquiere, and sent the following newspaper clipping home to his parents in 1945 ...

Three Canadian frigates of the “no glory but plenty of hard work” class are tired up at Halifax’s ship-cluttered harbour today awaiting tropicalization before proceeding to Pacific theatres of war.

They are HMCS *Jonquiere*, HMCS *St. Stephen* and HMCS *St. Therese*, all back from overseas operations, and today feel a little on the lonely side for only skeleton crews remain aboard, the rest having debarked on 58-day leave as Pacific volunteers. In each of the three ships the volunteer average is well above 50 per cent and *St. Stephen*, including officers and men, boasts 72 per cent, one of the highest averages in the Canadian Navy.

Jonquiere, *St. Stephen* and *St. Therese* are names that may not strike a responsive chord to those familiar with the glorious record of Canada’s fighting Navy in this war, but like many of their equally un-sung sisters, their contribution - sweat, toil and triumph – has been an integral part of the story behind successful culmination of the Battle of the Atlantic.

Jonquiere, has spent most of last year serving with the Royal Navy in the Channel supporting convoys. Her commanding officer, Lieut. Cmdr. Andre Marcil, RCNVR took over from Lieut. Cmdr. J.R. Kidson, RCNVR three and a half months ago, had this to say of his new ship:

“She was worked very hard. On V-E Day we sailed operationally, and on our trip back to Canada we also worked at convoy duty. There wasn’t much glamour to it, just hard work, but there was one incident out of the ordinary – we think our group rammed a German sub by accident”

It happened off Londonderry as the group was forming up and moving along at a 16-knot clip. The lookout on one of the ships detected an object which turned out to be the Schnorkel breathing apparatus of a Nazi U-boat. The ship was on top of her by the time of detection.

What happened to the U-boat from that point on, Lieut. Cmdr. Marcil couldn’t say for sure. Apparently he decided to lay low, fearing if he surfaced he’d be met by gunfire” the commander of *St. Stephen* said. “We swept back and forth over the area without seeing a sign, then later an aircraft reported a possible sub. We think the U-boat crawled out to a safe distance and then was abandoned.”

There was another thrill for the *Jonquiere* crew. “We tied up alongside 32 Jerry subs which had surrendered,” Lieut. Cmdr. Marcil said, adding with a chuckle: “So we finally saw some of the subs that we’ve been chasing for so long.”

Lieut. Cmdr. Marcil was in command of HMCS *Dunver* before taking over *Jonquiere*. Before that he served with the Royal Navy in HMS *Dragon* and HMS *Liverpool* and in the Free French ship, *President Houduce*. While serving in *Liverpool*, the ship was torpedoed in the Mediterranean on convoy duty but was towed back to Gibraltar. He was liaison officer on board the *President Houduce* and participated in the Dakar duel with the Vichy-controlled French fleet.

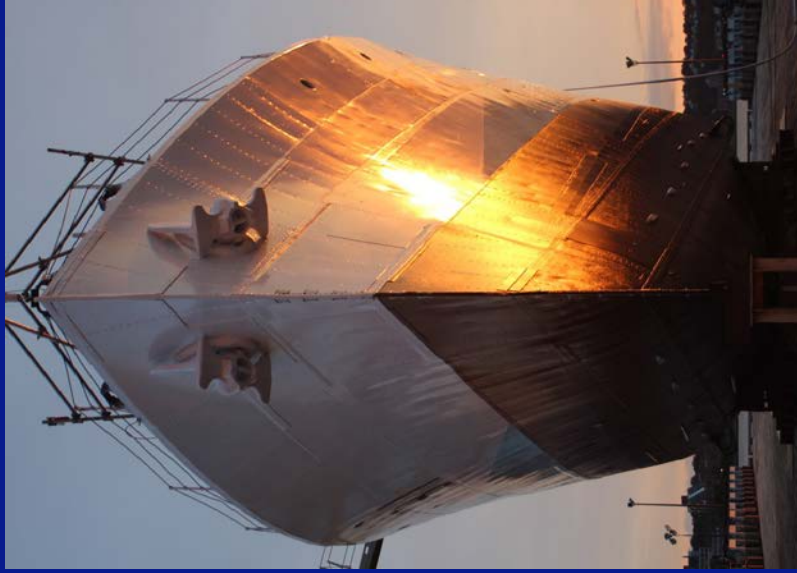
St. Stephen, commanded by Lieut. Cmdr. NSC Dickinson RCNVR, Toronto, had the distinction of bringing the last west-bound Atlantic convoy. “There were 78 ships, fully laden,” said Lieut. Cmdr. Dickinson. “Soon after we started out mines were observed in the path of the convoy – mines that had broken loose. We destroyed 24 by gunfire.”





CANADA'S
NAVAL MEMORIAL
MÉMORIAL NAVAL
HMCS SACKVILLE
CANADIEN

HMCS SACKVILLE K181



Just For The Hull Of It Campaign

Canadian Naval Memorial Trust
P.O. Box 99000 Stn. Forces
Halifax, NS B3K 5X5

Battle of the Atlantic - The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), in partnership with maritime units of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and the Merchant Navy, played a pivotal role in ensuring that the sea lines of communications and logistics were maintained during the longest and most critical battle of the Second World War.

The RCN suffered 2210 fatalities and lost 24 warships. It destroyed or shared in the destruction of 33 U-Boats and 42 enemy surface vessels. HMCS SACKVILLE, K181, is the last surviving ship of her class from that significant period in Canadian history.

The ship is owned, maintained and operated by the volunteer Canadian Naval Memorial Trust in honour of all those who have served in our Naval Service, and in particular, in memory of those who made the supreme sacrifice. In 1985 HMCS SACKVILLE was designated Canada's Naval Memorial.



HMCS SACKVILLE Today - As the last surviving ship from the fleet of 269 Corvettes built during the Second World War, HMCS SACKVILLE's situation has changed in recent years. The Trust is now working in collaboration with the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Develop Nova Scotia (formerly the Waterfront Development Corporation Limited) and the Canadian Maritime Heritage Foundation for the creation of a Canadian Maritime Heritage District on the Halifax waterfront that will include the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, HMCS SACKVILLE, CSS ACADIA, and a new Small Craft Centre.

At the same time, however, SACKVILLE's watertight integrity must be addressed to ensure that she can take full advantage of her place on the Halifax waterfront in the coming years. Specifically, the plan is to re-plate the 205-foot ship below the waterline with new 3/8 inch plate steel. The cost of such a project is in the order of \$12,000,000. When the project is complete, HMCS SACKVILLE will be safe in the water for another 50 years plus.

Donors will be recognized as supporters and provided with the following benefits: (Some donors may wish to remain anonymous)



HMCS SACKVILLE K181

| AMOUNT | CATEGORY | RECOGNITION ONBOARD AND WEB-SITE | PLAQUE | MEMBERSHIP (5 YEAR) See Note |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|--------|------------------------------|
| \$100 - \$499 | General Donation | * | | |
| \$500 - \$2,499 | Convoy Class | * | * | * for 1 person |
| \$2,500 - \$4,999 | Corvette Class | * | * | * for 2 people |
| \$5,000 - \$9,999 | Frigate Class | * | * | * for 3 people |
| \$10,000 - \$24,999 | Destroyer Class | * | * | * for 4 people |
| \$25,000 - \$49,999 | Cruiser Class | * | * | * for 5 people |
| \$50,000 - \$99,999 | Carrier Class | * | * | |
| \$100,000 - \$249,999 | Division Level | * | * | |
| \$250,000 + | Squadron Level | * | * | |

Note: Memberships can be designated for other family members, friends or colleagues.

Donor Information

Please complete the following information fields and return. Contributions may also be made online at www.canadasnavalmemorial.ca.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Donation Amount: \$ _____

Credit Card: VISA, M/C, AMEX (Circle one)

Card # _____

Expiry: Month _____ Year _____ CVC/CVV: _____

Approval: I authorize the use of this credit card to pay the amount indicated.

Pledge Option. I pledge to support HMCS SACKVILLE in the amount of \$ _____ per year for the next _____ years.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Cheques: Please make cheques payable to:
Canadian Naval Memorial Trust

Mail Address: HMCS SACKVILLE,
PO Box 99000 Stn Forces,
Halifax, NS B3K 5X5

Canada Revenue Agency:
Charitable Organization
Ref. No. BN - 11883 4720 RR0001

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BOA Page: DND/CAF
SACKVILLE Today Page: CNMT

Just For The Hull Of It Campaign

Funds raised during the Just For The Hull Of It Campaign will be designated to the CNMT Preservation Fund for the critical and necessary work to safeguard the ship.

How Can I Help?

The financial support from members of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust and Canadians (individuals and corporate) from across the country is crucial to the success of this project. Your contribution, large or small, will help. An official tax receipt will be issued for a donation of \$10 or more.