A LIFE WELL LIVED

CNM Trustee Paul Brunelle, a resident of Camp Hill Veterans Hospital in Halifax recently made a significant donation to the CNMT in recognition of his “past service connections and admiration for Canadian naval personnel during and after World War II”. It is most fitting that we introduce you to Paul who joined the RCAF in May 1939 as an “Air Armourer.” A highlight of his early service was being part of the Guard of Honour for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth at Niagara Falls in their pre-War visit to Canada. After initial Air Armament training, he was posted to RCAF Station Dartmouth with #5 Squadron, and for the next 2 ½ years was employed in technical duties supporting Stranraer flying boats, and as aircrew flying ASW patrols and a subsequent short posting to a Canso Squadron based at North Sydney, before being posted to RCAF No. 6 Bomber Group in England and finally on-loan to the RAF Bomber Command Experimental Section until V-E Day.

Mr. Brunelle was technically very innovative, making important contributions in designing equipment to enhance training, aircraft maintenance, and weapon handling and accuracy, and this ability was recognized by the award of a British Empire Medal and, later on in his naval career, a commission in the RCN. Pictured: Executive Director, Doug Thomas visiting Paul Brunelle in Camp Hill.
In February I was not anticipating another issue of Action Stations before my scheduled departure as Commanding Officer on 6 May 2012 thus said my au revoir in that issue. Editor Pat Jessup, being very efficient has this issue out while I am still in Command so a few comments are in order.

In reflecting back on the past decade in which I have been active with the ship and the Trust I come to the conclusion that the Trust team has made great progress in increasing the profile of SACKVILLE and her position as the Naval Memorial. The three successive Chairs of the Board have all worked hard, particularly on the naval and political level to increase awareness of SACKVILLE and her significance to Canada. At the ship level there has been constant work to build on the efforts of the original conversion team to maintain the ship and improve the habitability and preservation of this grand old lady. I see success in the effort to increase local visibility as evidenced by the high demand for the ship to be present for significant naval, corporate, and civic functions on the waterfront. We know what we need to do to preserve the ship as a permanent memorial. The challenge is to get new blood to pick up the torch from the veterans who have done their bit and to identify the financial and material resources necessary to achieve the objective. These are all very big challenges and if SACKVILLE is to survive as a permanent Canadian Naval Memorial, all trustees, friends, the navy, and all levels of government will have to ponder how they can contribute.

One last personal comment, On 29 March I participated in the retirement from the RCAF of one of our trustees, Major Elizabeth Brown Shaw. Yes, she is my daughter. She and her husband, Lieutenant Colonel Max Shaw and their two children are about to embark on a 47 ft. yacht and point to the horizon on a cruise of indefinite duration. We wish them bon voyage, and look forward to their return and active trusteeship.

Plans are well underway for the Battle of the Atlantic Weekend. The BOA concert will be held on Tuesday, 24 April at Pier 21. Our memorial dinner will be held onboard on Friday, 4 May and the ship will deploy by tug for Memorial and Committal Services on Sunday 6 May. Seating for the dinner will be full by the time this issue is received; your only hope for a late seat would be a cancellation. Space on the ship for Sunday activities is also limited. Contact the CO or 1st Lieutenant to see if you can be accommodated.

THE NAVAL MEMORIAL PROJECT
Ted Kelly, Chair – Memorial Action Committee

Members of the CNMT new and old are probably quite aware that the fundamental object of the Trust is to preserve HMCS SACKVILLE. In the years since restoration, the efforts of many have been directed to that goal, but progress has often been of the one step forward, one step back variety. So, in an effort to bring all trustees up to speed, I thought a review of the Why, What, Where and When of this preservation effort would be helpful in understanding where we are today, how we got here and what lies ahead.
First, the Why! – It will soon be 27 years since a small group of former naval officers formed the Canadian Naval Corvette Trust to acquire the former HMCS SACKVILLE, restore her to her wartime configuration and operate her as a naval museum. – One might have asked those enterprising gentlemen why “SACKVILLE”? She was hardly the most impressive vessel that fought under the Canadian Flag and unlike Britain’s HMS VICTORY or the American USS Constitution, she was not the major participant in a pivotal event. She had of course been in the thick of the convoy battles and had distinguished herself in a number of U boat engagements. But more than that, the founders of the Trust recognized that her significance lay far beyond that of her own service or that of the gallant men who sailed her.

The passing of the British North America Act in 1867 and the Statute of Westminster in 1931 marked the points in time when Canada was accorded recognition as a fully distinct national jurisdiction. History however, has shown that it is not the words of a document that shapes a country.

It is rather, the deeds and accomplishments of its citizens, from which the substance and character of a nation are drawn. HMCS SACKVILLE is the symbol of one such achievement, perhaps the most significant in Canada’s short history.

In the years prior to WWII, the Royal Canadian Navy, short of 30 years since its inception was a ‘rag tag’ organization lacking in almost every aspect. It was seen by the government of the day as of little importance and by its own members as an appendage of the Royal Navy.

The change that occurred in a few short years represented an extraordinary achievement for Canada as a country and the RCN as a national institution. Key to this transformation were the efforts of the thousands of Canadians who developed the Navy into a capable self-reliant force at sea – one which bore the brunt of battle and provided the leadership in what became the seminal victory in the path to eventual triumph in WWII.

It is fitting that SACKVILLE, as the last corvette, is Canada’s naval memorial and that she is preserved, such that Canadians in the future may know their heritage and remember the deeds of their forebears.

The What! - It has long been recognized that preservation of SACKVILLE requires that she be protected from the elements, which means putting her under cover. The ship was part of the original Queens Landing Project (QLP), which was a joint effort with the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic and the private developer the Armour Group. After reviewing the developer’s concept of the project and commissioning a detailed technical study it was determined to be in the Trust’s best interests to withdraw from the private sector part of QLP. This forced a re-think.

After reviewing the possibilities, it seemed that the best approach for the Trust was to go it alone. John Jay, the Chair at the time, sought and received support from the Province of Nova Scotia, the City of Halifax, and the federal government, through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA). With this degree of encouragement and the support that was evident in talks with representative groups from the private sector, the board under the present Chair Hugh MacNeil approved the Naval Memorial Project (NMP) as the best the way forward.

The purpose of the NMP has been defined as having three objectives:

- Preservation of HMCS SACKVILLE;
- Telling the story of a century of naval service; and
- Honouring those thousands of Canadians who sacrificed their lives in service

These objectives are to be achieved within a structure to be built on the Halifax Waterfront, that will be a unique iconic piece of architecture that will defining for Halifax and Canada in the same way as
the Sydney Opera House identifies Sydney and Australia or the Eiffel Tower which symbolizes Paris and France.

To steer this project, the “Memorial Action Committee” (MAC) was established. From the first meeting on Sep 25, 2011, the MAC recognized that there was much to learn. Discussions were held with a number of knowledgeable people including the architect, Douglas Cardinal, of Museum of Civilization fame and Yves Gosselin, former Chief Architect of the National Capitol Commission. The objective was to gain insight into how a major construction project such as the NMP is brought to fruition. As one might expect, the process is broken into phases, the major ones being:

- Pre design Phase;
- Design concept Phase;
- Detailed design phase; and
- Construction

The activities of the predesign phase are the preparation of the Project Brief (PB) and the selection of a design architect. The PB is the document, which contains all the information necessary for a design architect to proceed. A working group under Bryan Elson has completed an initial draft of the Architectural Program (AP). This is one of the main elements of the PB defining the functions and content of the structure. The remaining elements of the PB relate to geo technical, environmental and regulatory aspects of the site.

A sub group of the MAC is currently reviewing a short list of Project Management (PM) companies, which have the capability to help the Trust in completing the PB and selecting a design architect.

The selection of a design architect for the NMP is critically important and although the original notion was to conduct an international competition, we have since learned that there would be a number of drawbacks with that method. After consultations with knowledgeable sources, the MAC concluded that a national competition would equally suit our circumstance and be less costly while still giving us access to some of the best architectural minds in the world.

**The Where!** - The site allocated to the Trust for development is an ideal property, situated just to the south of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. It encompasses the jetty where the ship is currently berthed during the summer season. From an architectural point of view it is the best centrally located property on the Halifax waterfront.

**The When!** – There is much to be accomplished before a shovel hits the ground and we can only put a timeline on the Pre Design phase and can’t as yet do it with any accuracy. We do however expect to have a (PM) company on board by the time this article goes to press. We would hope that the Project Brief can be completed by Autumn 2012 and have an architect selected within 6 months of that date. Once the PM has read into the task, the schedule can be established.
The Future! - The NMP represents a major step forward for the Trust. That it will be challenging, there is no doubt. The support however from all levels of government and all quarters of the public has been more than encouraging. Thanks to Mr. Joe Ramia we will open an office for the project in April. MT&L, the pre-eminent Communications Consulting firm in Halifax has offered to help us in planning the extensive communications that the project will require. These are just a couple of examples that illustrate the enthusiastic backing that we are encountering whenever we talk of the NMP. It leads one to believe that the time is right. It’s exciting to think we can make this project happen. With the support of every Trustee, we will be able to show that the idea which sparked the acquisition of the ship by that small group of people 27 years past has really blossomed.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S UPDATE
Doug Thomas

Do you hear there?
Our office on Bedford Row in Halifax, just above Sackville’s summer berth near the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, is now painted out by a team of keen volunteers, furniture, carpeting, and office equipment will soon be set up, we are now searching for an administrative assistant and we anticipate the office will officially open in April. Any information on new telephone numbers or email addresses will be promulgated in Action Stations. As previously mentioned, the office is primarily in support of the Memorial Project, but general Trust activities will take place from there also.

We will soon hire a Manager for the Memorial Project. The PM will be responsible for project definition and organizing an architectural design competition for this exciting development on the Halifax waterfront. You will hear more about this in future Action Stations and at our AGM on the 6th of July, which will be held in the Officers’ Mess in CFB Halifax. Please see Ted Kelly’s report on the Naval Memorial Project in this issue.

For those of you within driving distance of Halifax, or those further afield who wish to attend, don’t forget the annual Battle of the Atlantic Musical Gala - a benefit concert by the Stadacona Band and vocalist Liz Rigney for HMCS SACKVILLE and the Trust - to be held on the evening of 24 April at Pier 21. We will be providing more details on our web site and various newsletters and other advertising media closer to the time. Locals should put their name on the list in Sackville’s Mess or call me to book tickets, which have been reduced from previous years and are only $15 each. Former Chair, Vice Admiral Duncan “Dusty” Miller will be our MC for the evening and the new Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, His Excellency Brigadier-General J.J. Grant, CMM, CD (Ret’d), will be in attendance as well as Rear-Admiral David Gardam, Commander Maritime Forces Atlantic.

Finally, we are always happy to have volunteers to help out with our many activities. Recently, Ross Thompson stepped up to the plate and will assume the role of Gift Shop Manager from Don MacKey. We always need guides to help with tours while the ship is at her summer berth - this can be very fulfilling - and we have a number of projects in the works that just need some additional “horsepower” to get them underway. If you have some extra time to devote to the Trust, please call me at 902-721-1206 and we can discuss what might be available. Pictured: ROMEO group of volunteers who painted the new office space – L-R: Roger Chiasson, Ward Skinner, RAdm ret’d Dave Morse , VAdm ret’d Dusty Miller. Absent from photo George Borgal.
NATIONAL COUNCIL
HCapt(N)Myra Freeman

CNMT National Council is delighted to welcome one of its Life Trustees as its newest National Councillor, Dave Aspden. Dave served as a Reservist for many years, and had a thirteen year policing career. Following his retirement, he continued to serve his community of Barrie, Ontario as a City Councillor and then as Mayor from 2006 -2010. Dave is an enthusiastic supporter of the Canadian Naval Memorial and he is building support for the Trust in his area by taking every opportunity to create greater awareness within the community. He is proud that Barrie has a deep military history with its connection to the corvette, HMCS BARRIE, and that many Barrie streets are named after naval officers. Dave took responsibility to secure donations from the Barrie Legion Branch #147 for an HMCS SACKVILLE wreath which was placed at the Barrie cenotaph this past Remembrance Day as well as a donation of $500 to the Trust from the 3rd Annual Grey Cup Event at the Officers mess of the Barrie Armouries. Bravo Zulu, Dave! Anyone interested in adding support to Dave’s efforts can reach him at daveaspden.da@gmail.com.

At the past Board meeting, it was passed that the minutes of the meetings will be forwarded to all National Councillors. If you are not receiving the minutes, kindly email myrafreeman@gmail.com to ensure you are kept updated as to the developments of the CNMT.  

Ed note: Portions of this issue may be copied without permission provided copyright is not indicated and full credit is given to both the author(s) and Action Stations.
Sixty-seven years ago on April 16, 1945, for a heart stopping twenty minutes, the engines of HMCS SARNIA were stilled, and as a twenty–one year old sub-lieutenant, I joined my mates on the scramble net to rescue the twenty seven survivors of the torpedoed HMCS ESQUIMALT and the bodies of the thirteen who did not. Those of us present that day got on with our lives but the needless waste of forty-four young lives has never been far from our minds.

The sinking of ESQUIMALT by U-190 has been told several times in the official histories of the Canadian Navy. This retelling goes beyond the facts and touches on the sad consequences of bad communications and missed opportunities resulting in so many deaths and the psychological toll on those who survived and of their families.

SARNIA and ESQUIMALT had been taken off convoy work and ordered on a Search and Destroy Mission because a U-boat was thought to be lurking outside the Halifax harbour. The two ships were to meet at C buoy, April 16, 1945, at 08:00 hours.

At 0630 on that fateful day, U-190 had already fired one acoustic torpedo striking ESQUIMALT on the starboard quarterdeck. She sank in less than five minutes. There was no time to send an SOS. The Captain, Lt. C. Robert Macmillan, in true naval tradition, was the last to leave his ship.

Meanwhile, SARNIA at 0800 found that ESQUIMALT had failed to arrive and Lt. Bob Douty, Captain, signaled Dockyard this information. The first of a series of inexplicable lapses occurred. There was no reply to his report.

0920: Lt. Douty signaled dockyard that he would sweep ESQUIMALT’s patrol area. Once again no response. 0940: SARNIA made a strong ASDIC contact with a suspected U-boat, dropped two sets of depth charges with no results, and resumed her sweep of the area.

Finally, at 1114, dockyard asked if ESQUIMALT had joined. Our terse reply “Negative”. 1125 SARNIA was finally given the signal to search for the missing ship. 1140: Dockyard indicated the BURLINGTON, DRUMMONDVILLE and KENTVILLE were to join the search.

Meanwhile, just over the horizon, Macmillan and his crew of seventy were in the frigid Atlantic where hypothermia was taking its deadly toll on his crew. Unbelievably, an RCAF patrol flew over them around 0800 and reported them as fishing vessels. Around 0830, two coastal patrol ships came within a mile of the survivors but also missed them.
1200: A RCAF patrol from Shearwater flew over us and signaled by light, “Survivors Ahead”.

1300: SARNIA was dead still in the water as we picked up the twenty seven survivors and the thirteen who had perished. 1540: SARNIA secured to Jetty No. 5. Help was at hand.

The Board of Inquiry in May found that Bob Macmillan was at fault for failing to zigzag and to stream the CAT gear.

Some crew members claimed they were zigzagging but did not know about the CAT gear. No witnesses were called from Dockyard. This verdict weighed heavily and perhaps, unfairly, on the shoulders of Lt. Bob Macmillan. He seldom spoke of his war experience.

This story, however, does not end there. A poignant epilogue has been written in words and music as clarification of what transpired and perhaps, a vindication of Lt. Bob Macmillan and the crew of ESQUIMALT.

Scott Macmillan, son of Bob Macmillan is a musician and composer. As a child and throughout his life, he knew, somehow, that his father’s war experience had marked him and had shadowed their lives as well. His son, Ian, is a film maker. Scott has written a four part concerto, “Within Sight of Shore” telling the tragic history musically while Ian developed the visual written history. Combined, this documentary makes a powerful statement. The CBC has bought the documentary and it has been aired nationally. The Sackville Trust has honoured Scott and Ian by acknowledging their work. The ESQUIMALT story is now secure.

LONDONDERRY 2013
Pat Jessup – Chair, Public Relations and Londonderry Pilgrimage Coordinator

Following the tremendous success of the pilgrimage to Londonderry in 2011, preliminary planning is underway to participate in the 70th Anniversary commemorations of the Battle of the Atlantic in May 2013. A side trip to Liverpool to join in the Royal Navy’s observances one week later is also under consideration. If you are interested in attending please email patjessup@ns.sympatico.ca. Even though we are a year away over 20 have already signed up, so we are expecting another banner group to be heading over to the UK for these events.

As part of the Londonderry activities, a bronze statue identical to the Atlantic Chiefs and Petty Officers Association’s Sailors’ Monument on the Halifax waterfront will be installed on the old site of HMS FERRET. The monument is a tribute to the thousands of sailors from away who called Derry home during the war. Peter Bustin, the sculptor of the original statue will be engaged to create the replica which will be cast by Castle Fine Arts Foundry Ltd in Wales.

Royal Navy Association members in Londonderry have embarked on a major fundraising campaign to cover the costs of the statue and have asked for our help. If you wish to contribute, please contact me for details on how this can be done from Canada. Pictured: Sculptor Peter Bustin and the Sailor’s Monument in Halifax.
LIGHTING UP ZAMBIA
In 1996 Calgary Trustee Colin Glassco, and son of HMCS TRENTONIAN’s captain, T/Lt. Colin Stinson Glassco, RCNVR, established the Glassco Foundation, a charitable organization dedicated to providing financial and organizational assistance to children in Canada and overseas.

In 1998 Colin and his team went to Zambia to examine 2100 Tonga children for Trachoma, a water-borne bacterial disease that causes a painful form of blindness. 45% of the children tested were infected. With proper hygiene and medicine, Trachoma is treatable and preventable.

Since that visit, Colin has visited Zambia every year with a team of health providers and engineers to work in the remote Gwembe Valley, inhabited by approximately 60,000 Tonga - many without the basic needs of water and electricity.

Determined to rid the area of Trachoma the Foundation has since drilled over 400 wells, built seven schools (all with solar lighting) and three clinics in support of the program. The initiative has met with measurable success and recent statistics show that the infection rate among the children in the region has fallen to less than 10%. In Canada, the Foundation provides funding for programs for underprivileged children in Calgary and supports an annual visit to Disneyland for 135 children in the Dreams Take Flight program. [http://www.glasscofoundation.org/](http://www.glasscofoundation.org/)

WEDDING BELLS

Trustees Lou Howard and Hyacinthe Wade were married in Ottawa on 4 August, 2011. Lou was HMCS SARNIA’s Navigation/Asdic Officer during the rescue 27 sailors after the loss of HMCS ESQUIMALT.

ST. PATRICK’S DAY ONBOARD

St. Patrick’s Day was well attended by many Trustees and visitors and we were very pleased to welcome Dominique, the daughter of Commander Josée Kurtz our past membership Chair and the current Commandant of the Naval Operations School. Dominique was onboard on a fact finding mission to support her research project on HMCS SACKVILLE.
Trustee Diane Furtney was recently honoured in a Government House ceremony for her long-time service to the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG). Diane, currently serving as Second Officer and Navigator onboard the Light-Icebreaker CCGS *Sir William Alexander* was presented with the bar to the Canadian Coast Guard Exemplary Service Medal by Her Honour, The Honourable Mayann E. Francis, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia. The Canadian Coast Guard Exemplary Service Medal recognizes employees who have completed 20 years of service. The Bar is awarded for each additional 10-year period of service with the CCG.

Many Trustees will recognize long-time Trustee and guest at the event Gary Ashby who is reflected in the mirror behind Diane.

**ARRIVAL OF A VERY SPECIAL NEW LIFE MEMBER**

Ariana Blair Watson was born on 23 February and signed onto the Trust as a Life member on 7 March at the ripe old age of 13 days. Ariana is our newest and youngest Life Member! Since January 6 new members and 6 new Life members have signed on. Welcome aboard all and especially Ariana. If interested, you can either apply online at: [http://canadasnaval-memorial.ca/the-trust-2/join-the-trust/](http://canadasnaval-memorial.ca/the-trust-2/join-the-trust/) or mail in your cheque - made out to Canadian Naval Memorial Trust.

**HISTORICAL DESIGNATION FOR THE CROW’S NEST CLUB**

The Honourable Peter Kent, Canada’s Environment Minister and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, recently announced the designation of ten new national historic sites, persons, and events that define significant moments in Canada’s military history. The list included the renowned Crow’s Nest Officer’s Club in St. John’s, Newfoundland. Established in the early 1940s, to satisfy a need for a seagoing officer’s club in St. John’s, the club served as a place for men of the allied navies to relax and escape the horrors of war. When the Battle of the Atlantic ended in 1945, the Seagoing Officer’s Club closed its doors. But with the return of thousands of Newfoundlanders from overseas from service with the RN and RCN, there was a movement in 1946 to open a Newfoundland Officers Club and in June of that year, the Seagoing Officer’s Club in the “Old Butler Building” on Water Street was opened as the Crow’s Nest Officer’s Club where the club exists to this day. *Painting: Tom Wood, 1945*
US-BUILT MODEL ARRIVES

During the winter, Graham McBride was contacted by Ed Feldman of Atlanta Georgia with the news that his 4 foot plus, cutaway model of our corvette was finished and available for sale. For Mr. Feldman, a retired engineer and experienced model builder, this was the conclusion of years of research and construction which included visits to Halifax for detailed ship information. Photographs convinced an ad hoc team in the Mess that we should have the magnificent representation of the original, short fo’c’sle Sackville, pledges were collected and a plan worked to get the model to Halifax.

Mr. Feldman delivered his model to HMCS Iroquois alongside in Charleston SC, and it arrived in the Dockyard early March. The large picture shows the open starboard side while the inset shows Mr. Feldman making the Charleston transfer and the port side.

The Trust plans to show the model at various locations where it can best educate and support the aims of our Naval Memorial Trust.

THE MAILBAG

I always enjoy reading Action Stations but I feel I must write to you to keep you on station. I have written before and am doing so again. On page 11, December 2011 edition, "This period in history" mentioned "HMCS MONTREAL picks up survivors of U1209 off Lands End". Sister frigate HMCS RIBLE, and half the team, gets no mention. RIBLE picked up eighteen live Germans and later conducted a burial at sea for one other German seaman. There was also no mention of the sinking of HMCS WINDFLOWER (pictured) on December 7th, 1941.

It may be that the compiler of this table did not realize that corvettes and frigates not named after Canadian towns and rivers were still manned with Canadian crews. Canada provided crews for ten British-built frigates. Three were ETTRICK, MEON and Nene, originally RN manned but their crews were exchanged for Canadian crews. Four: ANNAN, MONNOW, RIBLE and TEME were River class, manned by Canadians for their whole commissions. Lock Class frigates LOCH ACHANALT, LOCH ALVIE, and LOCH MORLICH were fully Canadian manned for their total commissions. WINDFLOWER was one of the ten Flower class corvettes initially built for the Royal Navy (and named naturally after flowers) that were commissioned into the Canadian Navy with Canadian crews.
Aboard RIBBLE the wardroom was made up of members from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, all definitely Canadian.

Thank you for taking note of these great ships and their crews.

*Trustee Cullis Lancaster*

**WELCOME ABOARD!**

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<th>NEW LIFE MEMBERS</th>
<th>NEW TRUSTEES</th>
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<td>Ariana B. Watson</td>
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**UPCOMING SHIP’s PROGRAM AND TRUSTEE EVENTS**

*Jim Reddy – 1st Lieutenant*

- Every Friday - Noon Lunch onboard
- Tuesday, 24 April – Battle of the Atlantic Musical Gala, Pier 21
- Friday 4 May – Annual Battle of the Atlantic (BOA) Dinner onboard
- Sunday 6 May – Annual sailing for Point Pleasant Park BOA and Committal Ceremony

**LAST WORD**

As her term draws to a close, we wish
Her Honour, the Honourable Mayann E. Francis, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II’s representative in Nova Scotia, a hearty *Fair Winds and Following Seas* for a job well done.