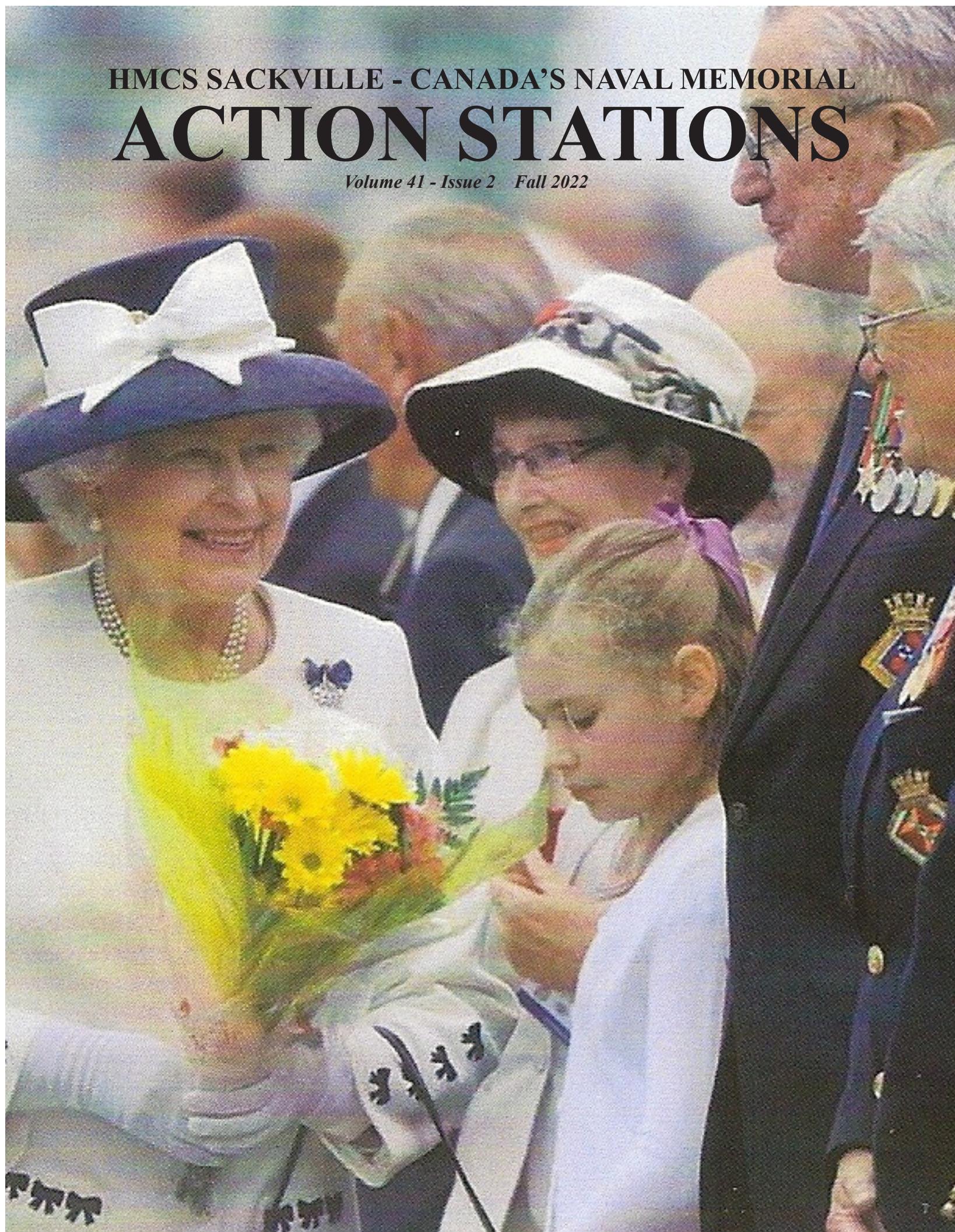


# HMCS SACKVILLE - CANADA'S NAVAL MEMORIAL ACTION STATIONS

*Volume 41 - Issue 2 Fall 2022*



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## On the Front...

The visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh to HMCS *Sackville* during the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Navy in 2010 was a significant milestone in the history of Canada's Naval Memorial and the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust. During the walkabout, Her Majesty speaks with veterans James Bond and Sherry Richardson, both former commanding officers of *Sackville*.



John Jay, Chair of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust officially welcomes the Royal Couple and invites Her Majesty to unveil a plaque commemorating the Royal Visit and recognition of HMCS Sackville as Canada's Naval Memorial.

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# From the Chair

## Capt(N) (ret'd) William Woodburn

*Dear Trustees,*

On October 11, HMCS *Sackville* returned to HMC Dockyard ending one of the most successful summer seasons enjoyed by the ship in years with more than 57,000 visitors touring the ship in a show of their support and thanks.

This achievement simply could not have happened without the selfless effort of our many Trustees who so freely gave of their time to act as guides and interpreters. They, along with the help of dedicated personnel from RCN Fleet Support and student guides from the Canada Summer Student Program worked diligently to ensure every visitor had a memorable experience. Of course, the dedication, expertise, and energy brought to bear by the crew underpinned every aspect of our success.

All that said, success wasn't only measured in terms of public visits. A number of interviews also occurred with various film, TV and on-line entities, and a podcast was produced. In addition there were a number of ceremonies and events held onboard, not the least of which was our Friday Noon Weepers. All-in-all, it was a pretty remarkable summer for the Trust.

One of my favourite anecdotes happened in June on one of the first days the ship was opened to visitors. The son of a veteran who served in a corvette during the war had made it his mission to travel from southern Ontario to

Halifax to visit the ship along with his wife and daughter. He mentioned that his father never really talked about the war but noted that his dad would always use the number 161 in raffles and lotteries. As a

young boy, he asked him one day why he would choose that number. His father simply replied that "161" was the side (hull) number

*"It goes without saying however, that the star of the show, HMCS Sackville, served as the backdrop for countless photos and was the subject of thousands of questions and comments from a curious and inquisitive public."*

of HMCS *Prescott*, the ship he served in during the Battle of the Atlantic, and the ship that saved his life more than once. His son never forgot that story and was so appreciative to finally have the



chance to set foot on a corvette.

I must admit this simple yet very personal memory expressed by the son seemed to capture so much of the reason why we strive to keep HMCS *Sackville* alive and why it is so important for us to do everything we can to ensure the ship endures for generations to come.

It becomes more evident every day that the development of a formal strategic plan will be crucial in ensuring the longevity of the ship and I'm pleased to say that our efforts in this regard have been ongoing throughout the year. We held a one-day focus session for the Board of Directors and senior crew members on September 9, and will reconvene for a three-day session at the end of November. It is our intent to present the highlights of the plan to all Trustees at our next semi-annual general meeting to be held in January.

I am also pleased to report that HMCS *Sackville* was selected

this year by Samuel Associates as the “Featured Charity” for The Canadian Defence, Security, and Aerospace Exhibition Atlantic (DEFSEC Atlantic 2022). As a result, I had the privilege in early October to address the attendees of DEFSEC at a reception held on the parade grounds of the Halifax Citadel. I must admit it would have been handy to have been born with the thunderous voice of a sergeant major in order to convey my comments to several hundred participants gathered on an open parade ground; nevertheless I gave it my best shot. It was a great opportunity to make the case to this influential group of the importance of HMCS *Sackville* to Canadians and the role the ship plays in reminding them of the immense impact the Battle of the Atlantic had on transforming Canadian industry, Canadian shipbuilding and indeed Canada as a nation. HMCS *Sackville* serves not only to Commemorate the thousands of sailors, merchantmen and airmen who lost their lives at sea during WWII, but also strives to educate all those who visit the ship about this incredible part of Canadian history, a story perhaps more relevant today than ever.

On a similar note, I had the chance to represent the Trust at the International Congress of Maritime Museums held in Halifax as a week-long event in mid-September. This was the 50th anniversary of the congress and attracted over 130 delegates from 30 plus countries. The congress was hosted by the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic and was the first time since its inception that it met in Canada. It quickly became evident through a series of presentations that the challenges we face as a Trust are being similarly encountered by curators from around the world. The importance of relevance, capacity, and funding were expressed time and again by participants and strangely enough acted as reassurance that we have made the right decision to devote our time

and energy in the development of a formal strategic plan.

In closing, I am pleased to announce that four of our members, nominated by the Trust, have been awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal. On behalf of all of us, it is my honour to congratulate Wendall Brown, Patrick Charlton, Debbie Findlay and Graham McBride for their long and outstanding support. I would also like to thank John Pickford, our Honours and Awards Chair, for liaising with Government House and coordinating our well received nominations. Once again, congratulations to our highly deserving recipients!

As always, I look forward to meeting with you at our next general meeting. In the meantime take care.



Rear Admiral Brian Santarpia presents CNMT Chair Bill Woodburn with a cheque from Maritime Forces Atlantic while Chief Petty Officer Alena Modelli, MARLANT Formation Chief looks on.

# From the Captain

## Cdr (ret'd) Gary Reddy



Cdr Gary Reddy (ret'd), left, welcomes Eammon McKee, right, Ireland's ambassador to Canada, and the commanding officer of the visiting Irish naval vessel L.E. James Joyce to HMCS *Sackville*

HMCS *Sackville* continues to maintain a prominent presence at Sackville Landing on historic, Halifax Harbour. This past summer was the best the ship experienced since being downtown Halifax with the significant support of Fleet members, our 30 Trustee guides and six Canada Summer Jobs students.

Our team welcomed more than 57,000 visitors to the ship who contributed over \$94,000. We were overwhelmed by our visitors' generosity and extremely proud that they enjoyed the experience. Many visitors could not believe the space where our sailors lived and worked. Just walking through HMCS *Sackville* gave many an appreciation of the hardships and challenges faced by our sailors during the war.

The Friday (noon) Weepers have been a moderate success. Our Trustees enjoyed the modifications made to the Trustee Mess,

the easier access to the mess via the stairs in the conference room and the new bar which is a must see.

On September 22, 2022, HMCS *Sackville* conducted a committal of ashes service abeam Sailor's Memorial, Point Pleasant Park and vice "Parkand" honoured to take 18 souls to their final resting place. Our traditional service continues to support the final wishes of our veterans and those who served.

On the same day, we were able to host Ireland's Ambassador to Canada and the team from the Irish Naval Vessel L.E. James Joyce for a commemorative service to honour and pay respects to those lost on the SS Atlantic 149 years ago.

It was a bit of a sad day on October 11, 2022 when *Sackville* slipped Sackville Landing and returned to jetty NC1 in HMC Dockyard. Queen's Harbour

Master again provided excellent support to make this move happen. It was a beautiful day to be on the water.

HMCS *Sackville* is now alongside in HMC Dockyard. We will progress some maintenance items this winter and hope to be back on the waterfront by mid-May 2023. With the approval of the installation of heat pumps, we hope to stay downtown and maintain the ship's presence, to the public, until Christmas 2023. Here's hoping!

The Crew would like to thank you all for your support and encouragement. If you have not done so, please like our Face Book page – HMCS *Sackville* – and follow our posts. Check out a Friday (noon) Weepers – the CNMT notices will keep you apprised of when they are taking place.

***We wish all a safe and healthy winter and Merry Christmas!***

# Crew Profile: LCdr (ret'd) Rick Powell

## First Lieutenant of HMCS Sackville

Born in Dartmouth NS but raised across Canada as his father was in the Navy, Rick went wherever his dad's postings took him. However, a large portion of his school education was in Nova Scotia. He graduated from Riverview Rural High, Coxheath, NS in 1963 and attended Xavier Junior College in Sydney NS. While there he applied to join the RCN and was enrolled in the Regular Officer Training Plan (ROTP) in 1964 attending Saint Francis Xavier University in Antigonish graduating with a Bachelor of Administration Degree (Major in Management) in 1968.

Upon Graduation he embarked on his Navy career as a MARS (Maritime Surface/Subsurface) Officer. The first few years at sea he served in HMCS *Qu'Appelle* and was a member of the Commissioning crew of HMCS *Iroquois*. After completing his Long Course at CFFS Halifax was posted to HMCS *Margaree* May 1976 - Feb 1978 first as Weapons Officer then as Combat Officer and First Lieutenant. After a short posting to MARCOMHQ (SO Ops) Rick was then off as a training officer on staff at Canadian Forces Officer Candidate School (CFOCS) in Chilliwack, BC. In Aug 1980 Rick was back at sea in the Second Canadian Destroyer Squadron in Esquimalt as the Squadron Weapons Officer. From 1982 - 1987 he served at NDHQ Ottawa in the Maritime Requirements and Intelligence Directorates. From 1987-90 he was posted overseas to the NATO Intelligence Centre at CINCEASTLANT HQ in Northwood U.K. Rick re-

turned to Canada in 1990 to NDHQ Ottawa again to carry out assigned duties in the J3 NBC and DCDS Operational Readiness Directorates. In 1995 it was back to NS serving as the Deputy Region Cadet Officer at the Region Cadet Support Unit (Atlantic) in Shearwater NS retiring in 1998 having reached Compulsory Retirement Age (55).

However, that was not the end of his time in uniform. Rick transferred to the Reserves as Cadet Instructor Cadre (CIC) Officer and remained at RCSU(A) as the NS Cadet Detachment Commander until his final retirement from the RCN Jan 2009 having completed just over 44 years in Her Majesty's Service.

While still serving Rick joined the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust in 1985 when the *Sackville* had just been designated as "Canada's Naval Memorial" wanting to learn more about "the little ship that could" continuously punch above her weight during her history. Although a member of the CNMT on/off over the years it was in 2019 that he became actively involved with *Sackville* when he was asked to take on the role as the Trustee Guide Coordinator, a role in which he still continues. In February 2022 Rick was appointed First Lieutenant.

**Editor's Note:** Those not familiar with the term might be interested to know that "First Lieutenant" is a Royal Navy term, and also in certain Commonwealth Navies, for the second-in-command or Executive Officer (XO) in ships. During World War II the First Lieutenant was Second-in-Command of ships of de-



1st LT Rick Powell photographed at the Commitall of Ashes Ceremony this past September

stroyer size or smaller. In large ships commanded by senior Captains (Cruisers, Aircraft Carriers, Battleships) the Second-in-Command was the "Commander," and the First Lieutenant was Third-in-Command and concerned with organizing the Watch and Station Bill, Senior Bridge Watchkeeper, Seamanship Evolutions, etc.



# BoA Veteran Douglas Himmelmann

Two members of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville*, Commander Bill Gard (ret'd), former CO of *Sackville* and Chief Petty Officer Craig MacFadgen, former Coxswain of *Sackville* paid a courtesy visit to Battle of Atlantic Merchant Navy veteran Captain Douglas Thomas Himmelman in mid-June.

Doug was born in Riverport, NS March 11, 1923, to Captain Thomas and Jane (Ritcey) Himmelman. Raised in Lunenburg, he attended Lunenburg Academy. He started his seagoing career in 1940 at 16, fishing for two years with his father who was captain and part owner of the M/V *Besemer*.

He joined the Merchant Navy in 1941 and served as mate on both coastal and foreign trade tankers. For his wartime service, he received the 1939-1945 Medal, the Atlantic Star, the Pacific Star, the Voluntary Service Medal and the Victory Medal.

In 1950, Doug attended navigation school in Halifax and acquired his Certificate of Competency as Master. He then served as master on several freighters which sailed between Eastern Arctic and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In 1956, he was appointed to the Atlantic Pilotage Authority in Halifax as a ship's pilot until his retirement in 1982.

For a time during the 1970s, as co-owner and president of Metro Marine Company Doug operated Halifax Harbour Launch Service. Later with three partners, they purchased a ship from Ireland called the 'Lady Scotia' and formed the Halifax Caribbean



Bill Gard, left, and Craig MacFadgen visit with Captain Doug Himmelman in Lunenburg

Steamship Company and established a shipping service between Halifax and Caribbean ports.

After retiring, Doug delivered many vessels between Iceland, Denmark and South America and also captained motor yachts between Canada and southern United States.

For a season, he had the pleasure of being master of *Bluenose II* which he sailed on the Atlantic coast and on the Great Lakes. He considered this to be one of the highlights of his career.

Doug and his family made many memorable pleasure trips to the Caribbean on family-owned sailing yachts. He also was well known as the 'cook' on many voyages with his son Hans on his yacht the 'Delawana.' In 1980,

he sailed his cousin Barry Himmelman's yacht 'Wind Dancer' from Dana Point, California to Lunenburg, a voyage which took 67 days and covered approximately 7,000 miles. For a number of years he sailed the schooner 'Calanova,' winning many racing events.

Doug loved to travel, cook, dance, curl and entertain. He was very loyal to his friends and always made a special effort to visit friends whether they were confined to home or in hospital. He also took time to speak to school children regarding his wartime Merchant Navy experience.

He has a gift for remembering many poems as well as seagoing experiences which he can recite at any given occasion; he also

loves to read.

Doug served as president and in other executive positions of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 23 of Lunenburg and was appointed a life member of the Branch. He is also a Life member of the Lunenburg Yacht Club, past member of the Lunenburg Curling Club, and past board member of the Atlantic Pilotage Authority.

He is a member of the Company of Master Mariners of Canada, the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, the Halifax Naval Association of

Federal Retirees, the German Canadian Cultural society. He was Chairman of the NS Branch of the Merchant Navy Veterans Association, as well as a member of the Nova Scotia Schooner Association. He also served as a volunteer driver with the VON.

As charter president and member of the Fisherman's Memorial Society he was instrumental in the installation of the Fisherman's Memorial monument on the Lunenburg waterfront.

In 2009 and 2012, he received

the Merchant Navy Convoy Cup medallion and the Queen Elizabeth Jubilee medal respectively.

Doug was married to his wife of 52 years, Elizabeth (Betty Mailman) who passed away in 2002. He has three children: sons Hans and Tom and daughter Jan; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Doug is supported by his companion Louise Strickland who visits him regularly in the Veteran's wing of the Lunenburg hospital where he resides.

## Sub Lt Neil Chapman 1942

During a July visit to HMCS *Sackville*, Martha Chapman had some questions regarding her father Sub Lieutenant Neil Chapman's Second World War service, including his time in Sackville. She met with Chief of Ship Art Forward who showed her a wartime Christmas photo of crew members displayed in the ship's Mess that included her father. In early August 1942, *Sackville*-- while escorting a west-bound convoy off the Grand Banks-- engaged three German U-Boats in a 24 hour period, putting two of them out of action. Newspaper accounts of the time commended Sub Lt Chapman and other members of the crew for their actions during the engagement. In a follow-up email to Art, Ms Chapman commented, "Thanks for the personal tour. It was very moving for me."



# Pat Jessup Recognized at Special Send-Off Reception

By: Cdr (ret'd) Len Canfield

It was a special send-off reception and the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust (CNMT) Board of Directors and crew of HMCS *Sackville* spared little effort to recognize and thank Life Trustee Lieutenant Commander Pat Jessup (ret'd) who is moving from Halifax to Ontario to be closer to her family.

Pat, with lengthy service as a CNMT Director, has been involved in different aspects of Trust and ship communications for 20 plus years, including mainstream and social media; special events; collections and displays; welcome aboard ship promotional materials, and until recently the editor of Action Stations that evolved from a newsletter to a full-color magazine under her creative guidance.

*“In 2006 I met with the Minister of National Defence and mentioned the Memorial Cross for husbands and fathers. Shortly afterwards, Captain Nicola Goddard lost her life during action in Afghanistan and the Privy Council allowed her husband to receive the cross. Now, military personnel can designate three individuals to receive the cross if they die in the service of Canada. This was initiated by the awareness and thoughtfulness of Pat Jessup and Tom Waters.”*

Captain(N) Bill Woodburn (Retd), Chair of CNMT, welcomed Trustees, family members and other guests to the regular Friday gathering and luncheon in the recently renovated *Sackville* Mess. He thanked Pat for her numerous communications activities over the years including collaborating with her late husband, Lieutenant Commander Jim Reddy, commanding officer of HMCS *Sackville* until his passing in promoting Canada's Naval Memorial.

On her own or in collaboration with Jim, Pat was also active in a number of different military support and civilian organizations and causes.

The Chair, along with Commander Gary Reddy (ret'd), com-



Life Trustee Pat Jessup cuts the special send off reception cake in the ship's Mess as part of the program recognizing her years of service in support of CNMT/HMCS *Sackville*.

manding officer, of *Sackville* invited fellow Trustees and guests to offer remembrances and comments regarding Pat's military support and community contributions over the years.

Among the speakers, Steiner Engeset, former Norwegian Honorary Consul for Nova Scotia thanked Pat and the late Jim

Reddy for their support in promoting the Convoy Cup sailing races. The Convoy Cup recognizes those who served, including those who sailed out of the historic wartime port of Halifax.

Susan Melvin recalled Pat's lifetime interest and involvement in art and lengthy association with the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

Lieutenant Commander Sherry Richardson (ret'd), a former commanding officer of *Sackville* said many Trustees will recall Pat's role in organizing the reciprocal

Battle of the Atlantic commemoration visits involving the Trust and the Royal Naval Association, Londonderry, Northern Ireland prior to the COVID pandemic. Londonderry as the eastern end of the Atlantic convoy route played a significant role during the pivotal Battle of the Atlantic.

Former Nova Scotia MP Peter Stoffer recalled that in 2003 when Pat and Tom Waters toured the Memorial Chamber in the Peace Tower, Ottawa she asked why there was not a seventh book

of remembrance for those who made the ultimate sacrifice from 1953 onwards. She also indicated that the Memorial (Silver) Cross should be allowed to be presented to husbands and or fathers (as women also serve in combat). As a result, I introduced legislation on the seventh book of remembrance in which the Minister of Veterans Affairs at the time took notice and then introduced the seventh book on Nov 11, 2005.

## CNMT Chairperson Commendation

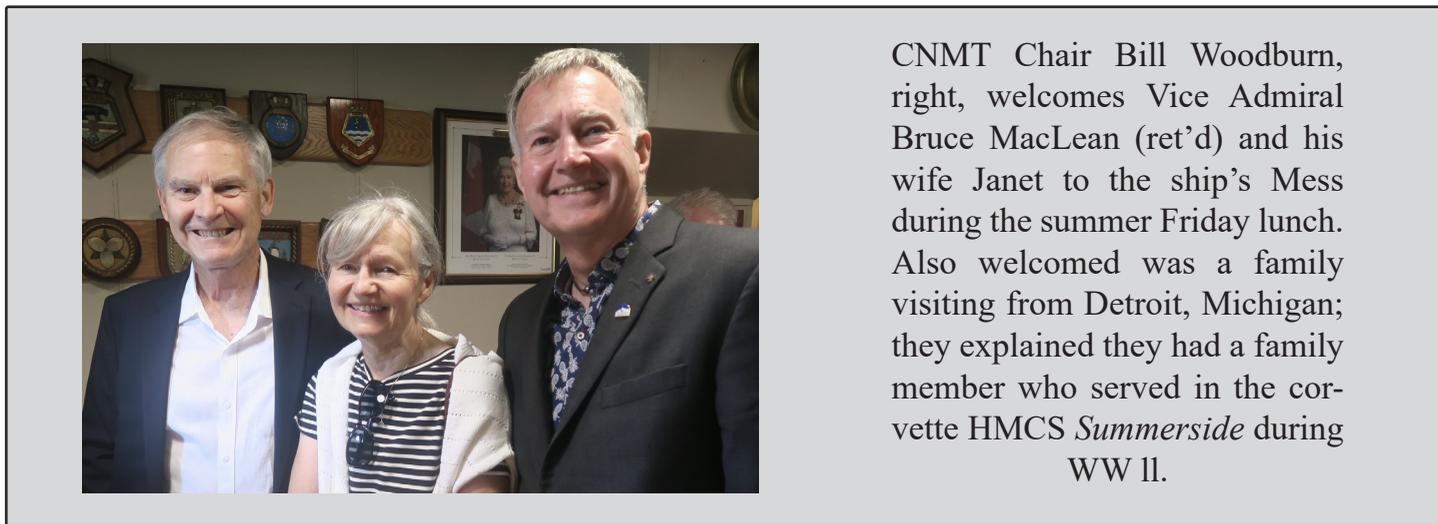
CNMT Chair Bill Woodburn, right, presents Robert (Bob) Naugler of Fleet Maintenance Facility (FMF) with the CNMT Chairperson's Commendation for his role in HMCS *Sackville* refit 2020 - 21. Bob was the ship's primary contact and liaison for the refit and the first recipient of the commendation based on the new CNMT Honours and Awards program.



# Trust and Mess Events



Captain (N) Bill Woodburn (ret'd), Chair of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust (CNMT) addresses business and community representatives attending Samuel Associates reception at the historic Halifax Citadel. The business leaders were attending DEFSEC 2022 (Canadian Defence Security and Aerospace Exhibition Atlantic) held at the nearby Halifax Convention Centre October 4-6. CNMT/HMCS *Sackville* was selected as the charity of choice for the reception. (Bill Gard photo)



CNMT Chair Bill Woodburn, right, welcomes Vice Admiral Bruce MacLean (ret'd) and his wife Janet to the ship's Mess during the summer Friday lunch. Also welcomed was a family visiting from Detroit, Michigan; they explained they had a family member who served in the corvette HMCS *Summerside* during WW II.

Long time CNMT/HMCS *Sackville* supporter and CNMT Director Peter Stoffer, centre, presented a cheque for \$6,000 to fellow Directors John Pickford, left, and Tony Goode, right, in the ship's mess during the regular Friday noon luncheon. The cheque represented proceeds from a dinner held at Pier 21 in May marking the 75th anniversary of the end of WW II in The Netherlands. Peter was one of the primary organizers of the 75th anniversary event.





CPO2 Conrad Johnson, COXN HMCS *Sackville*, accepting a \$1000 donation from the PMC of the C & POs Mess at Stadacona; CPO2 Dan Dagenais.



HMCS *Sackville* is always pleased to welcome visitors onboard and on September 16 the crew and other Trustees were pleased to have a familiar face return to the ship after a two year absence due to pandemic travel restrictions. Geraldine Martin returned from the UK to Nova Scotia for the 23rd time, in the company of William Kennard from Shanklin, Isle of Wight, and kindly made another of her yearly donations to *Sackville* which was graciously received by crew members Art Forward and Chuck Goldberg. A big thank you to Geraldine, William, and the Royal British Legion of Shanklin, UK. Geraldine and William were guests for lunch in the *Sackville* mess.

(Doug Struthers photo)

# Liberation of the Netherlands Dinner



## Peter Stoffer reports...

The 75th plus 2 anniversary of the Netherlands was held on 14 May 22 at Pier 21 in Halifax (delayed 2 years due to the Pandemic). As a Dutch born Canadian who also came through Pier 21 in September 1956, I thought that it was important to say once again Thank you to our liberators from Canada and her allies. Over 400 people attended the event. The highlight was when George and Geraldine Zwaagstra (both youngsters in the Netherlands during the war) were able to say a special thanks to Capt Earle Wagner and 2 other WWII veterans.

Peter Stoffer

Chairperson

75th plus 2 anniversary of the Netherlands



Rear Admiral Brian Santarpia and Steiner Engeset, right, chat with guest speaker Capt Earle Wagner at The Netherlands anniversary dinner.

The event also raised 21,000.00 dollars for 4 veteran and first responder organizations:

**The Society of Atlantic Heroes**

**Paws Fur Thought**

**Military Family Resource Centres**

**Canadian Naval Memorial Trust**

# Sackville's New Whaler

By: LCdr (ret'd) Doug Thomas

When HMCS *Sackville* was dedicated as Canada's Naval Memorial on the 4th of May 1985, the ship had a fine new wooden whaler built as a project by the Apprentice Course at Fleet School Esquimalt. That was over 37 years ago, and it is no surprise that time hasn't been kind to a wooden whaler exposed to the elements, even if the ship never leaves the harbour!

The Trust contracted with Big Pond Boat Shop in Martin's River to build a replacement wooden whaler based on the original plans. It should be delivered to us by the end of November 2022 and will be available next year for embarkation in the ship, or perhaps sailing in the harbour. This picture shows our whaler in the final stages of construction – it looks fantastic.

For those wondering what a whaler was used for, there is some interesting information online. Did you know that the 27' wooden whaler was designed by Captain (later Rear-Admiral) Montagu, Royal Navy in 1889. Captain Montagu was the second son of the Earl of Sandwich, joined the RN at the age of 11, and had a very colourful career including command of the three-masted, square-rigged steam corvette HMS *Gannet* – now a museum ship at Chatham Historic Dockyard in Chatham, England. Montagu developed a double-ended wooden boat that could be sailed or pulled by oars, and it became the principal working boat of Commonwealth navies from 1890 until about 1950. In the Canadian Navy the wooden whaler was replaced in the 1960s by a Fibreglas version used as a sea boat and rescue boat until the 1990s. Navies have generally replaced the whaler with RHIBS (Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats) which are fast and very capable, however if their engine fails there are no oars or sails as a backup!

I have memories of sailing and instructing wooden whalers as a sea cadet and sea cadet officer, as a naval officer launching and recovering fiberglass whalers in destroyers, sailing whalers in the Caribbean during Caribops, and in the annual Polar Bear Regattas in Halifax Harbour. Whalers have proven to be seaworthy and durable and are still widely used by civilian sailors.



# Crossed the Bar

**Vice Admiral Charles M. (Chuck) Thomas (ret'd)**, the former Commander Maritime Command (MARCOM) and Vice Chief of the Defence Staff (VCDS) passed away in Victoria, BC in September at age 85. He commenced his naval career in 1954 in the first class of the Venture Plan and would serve as executive officer or commanding officer of several ships, including HMC Ships *Preserver* and *Fraser* and the Fourth Canadian Training Squadron. He served at National Defence Headquarters and was closely involved with the Canadian Patrol Frigate Program, followed by his appointment as Commander MARCOM 1987 (during which he supported an agreement to maintain and preserve HMCS *Sackville*) and VCDS (1989). He was predeceased by his wife Maxine and daughter Megan; survivors include daughter Jody, sisters Lahni and Linda and several grandchildren.



**Commander Peter Campbell (ret'd)**, who joined the RCN in 1944 as a cadet at Royal Roads Military College and would serve 34 years before retiring in 1978 passed away in Victoria, BC in February at age 95. During his career he served in Victoria, Vancouver, Kingston, Toronto, Ottawa, Saint John and Halifax along with postings in Washington and Portsmouth, Greenwich and Northwood in the UK and as commanding officer of HMC Ships *Jonquiere*, *Annapolis* and *Thunder*. Following retirement he resided in Pender Island, BC, later moving to Oak Bay, Victoria. He was active in community and service support organizations including Naval Association of Canada, Canadian Club of Victoria and a Life Member of the Royal Canadian Legion. Survivors include his wife Elizabeth, children Barbara and John and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

**William F. (Bill) Conconi**, active in community and youth leadership programs and president of the Naval Association of Canada passed away in Victoria, BC May 21 at age 80. An interest in sailing developed in the Sea Cadet movement continued throughout his life, including organizing the Oriole Adventure Challenge for youth to spend five days sailing aboard HMCS *Oriole*. He also served as Commodore of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club. He was a teacher in the Victoria school system for more than 30 years and active in the Canadian Student Leaders Association. Survivors include his wife Ellie, daughter Margaret and several grandchildren.

**Captain (N) Walter R.E. Goodfellow (ret'd)**, who had an extensive career in law including serving as a Justice of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court and as Senior Reserve Legal Advisor and Colonel Commandant of the Judge Advocate General Branch of the Department of National Defence passed away in Halifax in May. He joined the Naval Reserve at HMCS *Carleton* at age 17 and served in HMCS *Scotian* for a number of years prior to his transfer to JAG and appointment to the bench. His service with JAG included presiding over court-martials across the country and overseas. He was active in a number service support and community organizations including the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville*. Survivors include his wife Sandra, children Alan, Steven, Heather, Geoffrey, and a number of grandchildren.

**Margaret Elizabeth McBride**, a long-time volunteer with her church and the wider community and wife of CNMT Life Trustee F. Graham McBride, passed away in Halifax in October at age 89. In addition to her husband, survivors include children Carolyn, Victoria and Ian; eight grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral service will be held November 5 in Calvin Presbyterian Church, Ashburn Avenue, Halifax.

**Commodore John Arthur Gruber OMM CD (ret'd)**, who joined the Navy in 1955 and trained in aeronautics and marine engineering passed away May 19 in Ottawa at age 90. During a 32 year career he served at sea and held a number of appointments including deputy project manager Canadian Patrol Frigate Project and Director General Maritime Engineering and Maintenance at National Defence Headquarters. He was a long-time supporter of HMCS *Sackville*. Survivors include wife Maxine, daughters Marta and Heidi, two grandsons and brother Robert. Donations in his memory may be made to the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville*, Ottawa Mission or charity of choice.

**Commander David (Dave) F. McCracken (ret'd)**, who had a lengthy career as an engineering officer in the Navy, passed away in Ottawa July 3 at age 76. A native of New Brunswick, he joined ROUPT in 1964 and attended the Royal Naval Engineering College, Plymouth, England. He served in a number of ships including HMC Ships *Mackenzie*, *Athabaskan* and *Protecteur*; Ship Repair Unit Pacific and the Directorate of Marine and Electrical Engineering, National Defence Headquarters. Following retirement he joined Fleetway Technical Services and served as general manager of the company's Ottawa office. Survivors include his wife Jane; children Stephanie, Heather, Andrew and Sarah; brothers Paul and Danny and a number of grandchildren.



**Ernie Takalo**, the last survivor of the sinking of HMCS *Athabaskan* April 29, 1944 in the English Channel passed away in Thunder Bay, ON in October at age 98. He joined the Navy at HMCS *Griffon* at 17 and was serving as a stoker 1st class when the Tribal Class destroyer was hit off the coast of France with heavy loss of life; he was one of a number of survivors rescued by HMCS *Haida*. He was a member of the Friends of HMCS *Haida*, Royal Canadian Legion and the Thunder Bay Naval Association. He was predeceased by his wife Margaret; survivors include son Ron, daughter Lynda and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

**Elizabeth (Liz) Wilcox**, a prominent Nova Scotia artist and widow of the Commander Russ Wilcox passed away in Bedford, NS July 17 at age 91. A graduate of the NS College of Art and design, she was recognized as an accomplished water colour painter by the Society of Painters in Water Colour; her works hang at Halifax City Hall, NS House of Assembly, Government House and CFB Halifax Stadacona Wardroom. Survivors include children Dave, Larry, Barb and Andy; a number of grandchildren and a great grandchild.

**Howard Wilson**, who joined the RCN following high school and served in the aircraft carriers HMC Ships *Magnificent* and *Bonaventure* passed away in Halifax in October at age 85. Following his release from the Navy he worked with Thales Group (aeronautics) at CFB Shearwater and was associated with the Sea King helicopter program, followed by service in security and marketing operations at Robert L Stanfield International Airport. He was active in the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust (executive committee); the sailing community, including the Dartmouth Yacht Club and the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron, and the QEll Foundation. He was predeceased by his first wife JoAnne; survivors include his wife Yvonne; stepdaughter Janet; brothers David, Wayne and Glen and sister Diane.



**Albert Alexander (Bert) Walker**, a Life Trustee of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust and active supporter of HMCS *Sackville* passed away in Halifax November 9 at age 91. He played an active role in the development of the Trust's education programs including the significance of the Battle of the Atlantic and role and actions of HMCS *Sackville* for presentation to schools, veterans and seniors groups and other organizations, along with serving as a ship tour guide. Before moving to Nova Scotia he worked in the aviation industry, was a keen aeronautical historian and acted as a docent at several aviation museums in Ontario. An active yachtsman, he celebrated his 90th birthday in October 2021 at the Saraguay Club, Halifax where he was feted by friends and family. He was predeceased by his wife Pat, survivors include son Michael.



## Memorial Service for Captain Angus Macdonald



A memorial service was held for long-time CNMT Trustee Captain Angus Macdonald in September at Fort Massey Church, Halifax. His son Alan and daughters Lindsay and Alison each spoke during the service. A native of Scotland, Angus joined the Merchant Navy as a cadet during the Second World War. And 38 days after joining his first freighter in 1943, at age 17, his ship was torpedoed and sunk off the coast of South America. Angus and a number of survivors were rescued shortly after from their life boat. Following the end of hostilities he pursued a lengthy career at sea and ashore in the UK and Canada. He captured his memoirs in his book "A Lucky Man."

## Battle of Atlantic Memorial Concert

The Stadacona Band of the Royal Canadian Navy performed the Battle of the Atlantic Memorial Concert at the Spatz Theatre, Halifax May 5, 2022. After two years of online performances, the Stadacona Band was proud to bring this annual commemorative event back to live audiences.

This concert is an opportunity to reflect on the pivotal Allied effort to secure the Atlantic during the Second World War, and underlines Canada's enormous contributions and sacrifices on the seas and in our ports.

During the performance the band recounts the experience of

being a member of the RCN at sea, and what it was like for service members to discover the conditions of the European theatre of war. Members were also excited to present the true story of HMCS *Assiniboine's* sinking of U-boat U-210 in August 1942, set to David Maslanka's short symphony for wind ensemble "Give Us This Day."



# Dusty Dreams and Troubled Waters in the Classroom

By: LCdr (ret'd) Doug Thomas

A grade 8 class in the historic town of Annapolis Royal, NS studied “Dusty Dreams and Troubled Waters” during the 2021/22 academic year. The school had a class set of the book, and their teacher Ms. Anona Siwik displayed impressive initiative in organizing area naval veterans to speak to the class about their experiences and having Susan Tooke (who lives near Annapolis) discuss researching and developing the artwork.

The team that developed this graphic novel based on the real background of HMCS *Sackville* during the Battle of the Atlantic, including Richard Rudnicki and since his untimely passing in late 2019 his wife Susan Tooke; Brian Bowman who wrote the story, and yours truly who was the technical advisor (authenticity, naval terminology, etc.) were pleased that the school asked for input from us as well. As a result, on 17 June 2022 we all got together via the “magic” of Zoom.

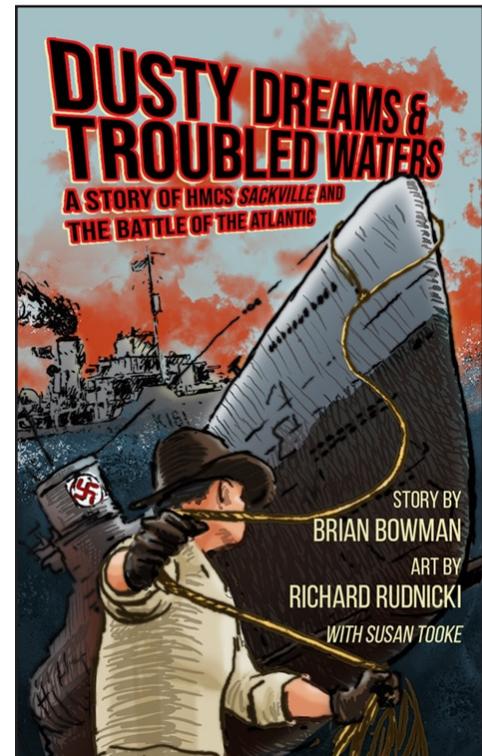
The team talked about our individual roles in developing the book and our connection with Richard and the class asked great questions. It was a very enjoyable virtual gathering and our team said we would be happy to help if the school decided to study the book again. I recently got in touch with Anona to get an update and the following is her reply:

“Hello Doug

Great to hear from you! Both the students and I enjoyed reading the book and integrating it into the course. Had things been less complicated (not requiring checking for vaccine status etc.) I would have pursued taking the students to Halifax for a tour of the ship. Funds would be the next hurdle - I do have a few ideas but if you know of funds available for these kinds of adventures, please let me know. The biggest cost for us out in Annapolis Royal is usually transportation. I loved meeting, virtually and in person, with you, Brian and Susan. The students and I had some good conversations about this when they had some time to process everything. I am not currently teaching that grade 8 social studies course this year, but I passed on the materials to another teacher, and she is going to be using it. She also teaches English language arts so incorporating the graphic novel is an easy fit! I have applied to have the book put on the NS School Book Bureau list (resources we can order for our classroom), but I have not heard whether this has gone through all the channels yet. When it is on the list it will be easily accessible to all NS teachers. I will check into this to see what I can find out.

Best wishes!

Anona”



## *Food for thought...*

Dear Trustees, We all want to get the word out about our ship and her story, and the story of the RCN and naval veterans over the past 112 years. This example of a teenage class in Annapolis Royal is illustrative of a great way of doing this. Perhaps individuals, Legions, Sea Cadet Corps, etc. would like to approach a local school or school board with a proposal to buy a class set and provide speakers and background materials as enrichment for that class. For schools in Nova Scotia studying the book, individuals and Legions could fund a school trip for a busload of students to see HMCS *Sackville*?

# HMCS Sackville Conducts Committal of Ashes Service



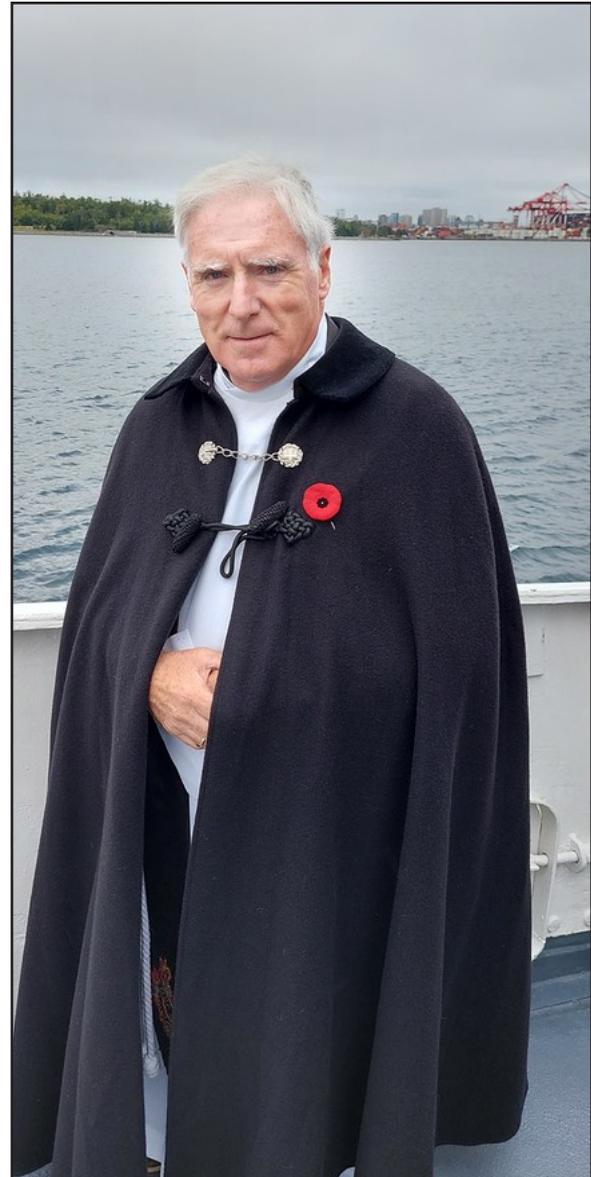
HMCS *Sackville*, under command of Commander Gary Reddy (ret'd), carried out a committal of ashes of naval veterans and serving members off Point Pleasant Park in September. The ship's crew was supported by CFB Halifax Base Chaplain office, Queen's Harbour Master (tug service), fleet personnel and CNMT trustees. The committal service involving family members was conducted by Chaplain Andrew Cook. Among the guests attending the memorial service were Eamonn McKee, Ireland's ambassador to Canada and the commanding officer of the Irish Naval Service offshore patrol vessel LE James Joyce visiting Halifax at the time..



# September 2022

## They will be remembered:

Frederick Garland Short  
3rd Engineer David Marcus Eddington  
Able Seaman Brian Joseph Andrew Watkins  
Mrs. Maxine Corine Watkins  
Petty Officer David Llewellyn Davies  
Petty Officer/Warrant Officer John Douglas Gray  
Petty Officer John Frederick "Fred" Shepard  
Chief Petty Officer Michael Edwin John Connors  
Master Warrant Officer Alexander Duncan Plumb  
Chief Petty Officer Kenneth Verner "Benji" Franklin  
Chief Petty Officer Jorgen Krogsgaard "John" Knudsen  
Chief Petty Officer Warren John Quinn  
Lieutenant (N)(RCNR) Nicholas Anthony Kupnicki  
Lieutenant (N) Joseph Peter Hugh Sproule  
Lieutenant Commander Clyde Calvert Hillier  
Lieutenant Commander Desmond Francis Nugent  
Commander Douglas Innes Caie  
Commander Robert Ashton Willson



# Canadian Destroyers of WWII

By: LCdr (ret'd) Doug Thomas

On the 10th of September 1939, the Canadian Naval Fleet was comprised of six reasonably modern and effective British-built destroyers, four new but obsolescent coal-burning minesweepers built in Canada, and several training vessels. A total of 28 destroyers served in the RCN during World War II, and seven were lost together with many of their ships' companies.

## River Class

The 14 River class destroyers were representatives of various similar classes of British destroyers. During the 1930s the RN ordered at least one new flotilla of 8 destroyers per year, usually with an additional larger unit to act as flotilla leader carrying a Captain (D) and his staff. The two initial Canadian Rivers were *Saguenay* and *Skeena*, the first new ships ever ordered for the RCN and improved versions of the British "A" class with ice strengthened hulls and luxuries for the time such as radiators in the mess decks. Each year the new flotilla would incorporate improvements over its pre-

decessors, and in 1938 four of the "C" Class were purchased (*Fraser*, *Ottawa*, *Restigouche* and *St. Laurent*) and in late 1939 the "C" Class flotilla leader *Assiniboine* was acquired. These ships were similar to *Saguenay* and *Skeena*, with 4-4.7" guns, 4 or 8 torpedo tubes, a speed of at least 31 knots, and a complement of about 10 officers and 171 men. During the war there were war-fighting improvements such as surface-search and air-warning radars, improved asdic (sonar) and fitting of depth charge projectors and hedgehog, and a many silhouettes changed with the deletion of one or two main guns to reduce top-weight and the addition of more anti-aircraft guns.

Additional ships from the D, E, F, G, and H classes were acquired from the RN and renamed *Chaudière*, *Gatineau*, *Kootenay*, *Qu'Appelle*, *Ottawa* (2nd) and *Saskatchewan*. Trustees may remember that HMCS *Saskatchewan* was the last command of Lt. Cdr. Alan Easton. The River class operated with the RN in Eastern

Atlantic waters initially, and after the fall of France were often Senior ships of Escort Groups composed of one or two destroyers and three or four corvettes. The destroyers were manned by more experienced ship's companies, were often better equipped with sensors such as HF/DF (High-Frequency Direction-Finding) which detected surfaced U-boats communicating with each other or their headquarters.

These ships were in the thick of the war and suffered accordingly. HMC Ships *Fraser*, and *Margaree* were lost in collisions, *Ottawa* to submarine attack and *Skeena* to grounding near Reykjavik, Iceland in a terrific storm. HMCS *Saguenay* was torpedoed and repaired, and then rammed by a merchant ship. She then had her mangled stern removed and was used as a stationery training ship at the New Entry Training base at HMCS *Cornwallis*. until wars-end. After the war the surviving River class destroyers were worn out and were quickly paid off and scrapped. All these distinguished

names reappeared in the 1950s and 1960s when the long-lived *St. Laurent*, *Restigouche* and *Mackenzie* class DDEs and DDHs were commissioned.

## The Town Class (4-stackers)

There was an urgent need to replace the many destroyers lost



River class HMCS *Saint Laurent* early in War



River class HMCS *Chaudiere* with reduced gun armament and hedgehog mortar forward of the bridge

by the RN in European waters during 1939/40. The US transferred 50 elderly destroyers (they were known as “4-Stackers” due to their 4 tall funnels”) under Lend-Lease to the UK, in an agreement to exchange destroyers for 99-year leases on bases in locations such as Argentia, Newfoundland and Bermuda. These ships had

been commissioned at the end of World War I and then mothballed for nearly two decades. They were referred to as the Town class because the RN named them for towns and cities with the same name in both countries. Due to the recent loss of Canadian destroyers, the RN transferred six to Canada in 1940, and later two

more. Canadian 4-Stackers were named mostly for rivers forming part of the border between Canada and the US – the exception being HMCS *Annapolis* named for Annapolis, Maryland and Annapolis Royal, NS.

With their long, narrow hulls and flush decks, they were not well-suited for North Atlantic operations - but they were better than no destroyers. Most spent an inordinate length of time in dockyard hands undergoing maintenance and repair. Others, such as HMCS *St. Croix*, were busy escorting convoys. *St. Croix* was sunk in August 1942, having participated in the sinking of two U-boats. HMCS *Niagara* was active in the Atlantic and as a member of Escort Group 4 took the surrender of U-570 which was soon commissioned into the RN as HMS *Graph*. There was a lot of “cannibalization” of parts within the class to keep the others running, and some were modified with shortened funnels and reduced gun armament to improve their seakeeping



Blue Watch Town class HMCS *Niagara* relaxing



Tribal class HMCS *Athabaskan* during a towing exercise

qualities. When the new frigates became available, they were very suitable to assume the role of embarking Senior officers and their staff commanding Escort Groups: the Towns were then relegated to training and local operations.

#### **The UK-built Tribals**

The Chief of Naval Staff and his team in Ottawa wanted a more capable Fleet after the war, and an important part of that fleet was to be large, powerful destroyers. The crème-de-la crème of British destroyers early in the war were the Tribals. The 16 British Tribals participated in a myriad of actions and only 4 survived the War. These ships were half again as large and had twice the gun ar-

mament of the Rivers.

Tribal Class destroyers HMC Ships *Athabaskan*, *Haida*, *Huron*, and *Iroquois* were ordered from Vickers-Armstrong in England and commissioned in 1942 and 1943. They were very active with the British Home Fleet, including as members of the 10th Destroyer Flotilla for operations supporting the Normandy Invasion in the Channel and Bay of Biscay. *Athabaskan* earned a reputation as “The Unlucky Lady”, particularly when she was hit by a glider bomb (an early type of Anti-Ship air-launched missile) and then tragically in late April when she was torpedoed by German surface units off the coast of France.

129 officers and men were lost, including her captain, 83 were taken prisoner, and 44 rescued by *Haida*.

HMCS *Haida* became known as “the Fightingist Ship in the Navy” having participated in the sinking of 15 German ships, including a U-boat. *Haida*, *Huron*, and *Iroquois* survived the war, were active in the Korean Conflict, and remained operational until the early 1960s. With their impressive turn of speed, they were good plane guards for *Warrior*, *Magnificent* and *Bonaventure* flight operations. *Haida* is in Hamilton, Ontario - was saved from the scrapyard initially by The Friends of *Haida* and more

recently by Parks Canada  
**Algonquin & Sioux**

These British “V” class destroyers were smaller and more lightly armed than the Tribals, but were highly-effective modern destroyers, nevertheless. They were transferred to the RCN prior to commissioning in February 1944 and operated with the British Home Fleet until 1945, including the Invasion of Normandy. They sailed to Canada in 1945 to be refitted for operations against Japan with British Pacific Fleet, but that was cancelled after the Surrender of Japan. These ships were active fleet units well into the 1960s.



V Class HMCS *Algonquin* 4.7” Gun crew during Normandy Landings

CANADA'S NAVAL MEMORIAL  MÉMORIAL NAVAL CANADIEN

 **HMCS / NCSM Sackville**



 *We Remember / nous nous souvenons* 

Painting by John M. Horton, FSMA, CSA

**HMCS Sackville protected us in war and served faithfully in peace.  
The ship continues, as Canada's Naval Memorial, to honour those who served.**

**[www.canadasnavalmemorial.ca](http://www.canadasnavalmemorial.ca)**  
(902) 492-1424

# Platinum Jubilee Medal Recipients

Brief notes on Trustees who have been presented the medal to date:

During a medal presentation ceremony at Government House, Nova Scotia Lieutenant Governor Arthur J. LeBlanc referred to Vice Admiral Duncan (Dusty) Miller as a true “Renaissance Man” for contribution to the arts, music and military. Dusty has served as a director or chair of a number of organizations, including the Lieutenant Governor’s Arts Advisory Council, Commissionaires Canada, Commissionaires Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Men’s Choir Nova Voce, Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, Halifax Norfolk Sister City Committee, Nova Scotia Medal of Bravery Advisory Committee, Pier 21, the Salvation Army and the Duke of Edinburgh Awards.



Dr Heather MacKinnon MD MSM CD, Chester, NS was awarded the Platinum Jubilee Medal by Lieutenant Governor Arthur J. LeBlanc “for services to veterans and volunteerism.” She served in the regular and reserve forces as a medical doctor in military operations at home and abroad, including Somalia. She retired as a lieutenant commander and opened a medical practice focused on serving military and RCMP veterans. She is active in several organizations including the Royal United Services Institute-NS and is an honorary lieutenant colonel of 33 Field Ambulance.



Vice Admiral Glenn Davidson (ret'd), whose early naval career included serving in HMCS *Scotian* presents the Platinum Jubilee Medal to Commander Rowland Marshall (ret'd), a veteran of WW II and a former commanding officer of *Scotian* (1974-78) during an exhibit of Rowland's art in Seaforth, NS. (Paul Evans photo)

Lieutenant Governor Arthur J. LeBlanc presented Lieutenant Commander Pat Jessup (ret'd) with the Platinum Jubilee Medal at a ceremony at Government House. Pat's career has included the public service, Navy public affairs and serving as Aide-de-Camp to former Lieutenant Governor Myra Freeman. She is a CNMT Life Member, long-time Board director and has served in different communications capacities for the Trust and HMCS *Sackville*. She has been actively involved with community and military support organizations including the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.



Peter Stoffer served as Member of Parliament for Sackville-Eastern Shore for 18 years. During his political career and community engagement he has been a strong advocate for advancing veterans affairs. At the same time he has been active in increasing awareness of the role and contributions of the Canadian military in liberating The Netherlands during the Second World War, including organizing the recent Liberation of The Netherlands dinner at Pier 21.

**Please keep an eye in our Spring Issue for the following recipient's bios:**

- Debbie Findlay
- Wendall Brown
- John Pickford
- Tony Goode
- Bryn Weadon
- Malcolm Palmer
- Dave Bathurst
- Don McLeod
- Bill Gard

Breaking News: At press time we're advised a number of other trustees have been awarded the Platinum Jubilee Medal, including:



**Top left:** Tony Goode is presented the Platinum Jubilee Medal by Lieutenant Governor Arthur J. LeBlanc at a ceremony at Cambridge Military Library.

**Top right:** Platinum Jubilee Medal recipients David Benoit, left and Bill Gard.

**Lower left:** John Pickford is presented the Platinum Jubilee Medal by Lieutenant Governor Arthur J. LeBlanc.

**Lower right:** Bryn Weadon is presented the Platinum Jubilee Medal by Lieutenant Governor Arthur J. LeBlanc.

CNMT Treasurer Debbie Findlay, front row centre, displays her Platinum Jubilee Medal and is congratulated by Bill Woodburn, CNMT Chair to her right and other CNMT Directors and members of the ship's company.

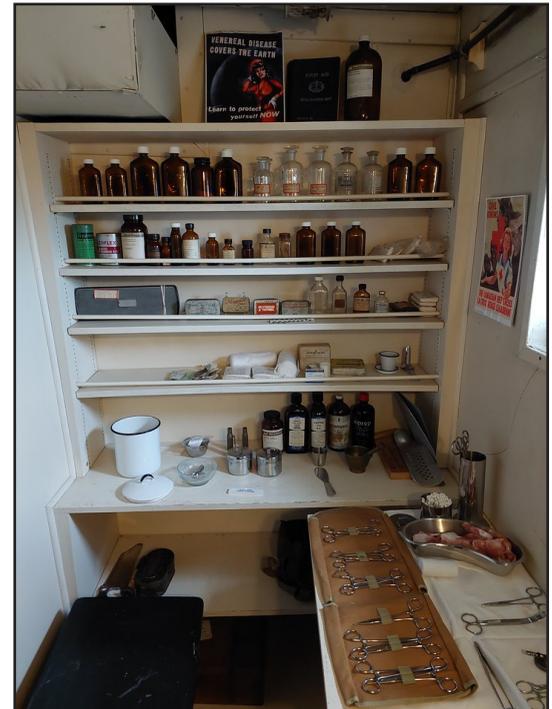


CTV Atlantic congratulates Bryce Gibson, former Coxswain of HMCS Sackville on his 100th Birthday



# HMCS Sackville goes to “Action Stations!”

By: Doug Struthers



A U-boat has been detected on the surface by radar and is likely to dive rather than fight on the surface. HMCS *Sackville* has just gone to "Action Stations!" All hands onboard run to their action stations (general quarters in the US Navy) as quickly as possible. The order shocks some of the crew out of a deep sleep while those already on watch proceed to their assigned action station positions.

The forward 4-inch gun is manned as is the hedgehog mortar on the foc'sle. Up on the bridge the lookouts and commanding officer have taken their places flanked by 20 mm Oerlikons to port & starboard. In the after part of the ship, the 2-pounder Pom-Pom is manned as are the stern depth charge racks and the depth charge throwers to port &

starboard. The ASDIC hut (sonar detection) and 271-radar stations are manned to search for other U-boats which could be in the area - after all, U-boats hunt convoys in “wolf packs.” The ship’s medic prepares for the possibilities of having to perform an astounding array of medial procedures. Quite often medics have life-threatening wounds to mend from survivors of merchant ships which have been torpedoed by U-boats. Everyone onboard is ready to perform required duties...

During the summer visitor season of 2022, HMCS *Sackville* greeted its record-breaking number of visitors with the ship going to “Action Stations!” In the After Mess, it was possible to see the Sick Berth Attendant (“Tiffany” or Medic) performing an emergency medical procedure on a wounded

rating. Period-piece medical instruments were on display, all internal lights at “Action Stations!” have switched to red. This is done because eyes react better to darkness when moving from red light rather than typical white light. In night battle, where sailors travel from inside the ship to positions on the upper deck, this is especially critical. In the forward mess, 4-inch shells are being passed from deck to deck to provide a constant supply for the forward gun. On the forward deck, visitors could see the preparing of the anti-submarine hedgehog for action, with individual mortar bombs being removed from their protective boxes in order to combat the threat from submerged U-boats.

The summer of 2023 will provide a new onboard theme for

visitors to enjoy and appreciate. It must be remembered that the war-time demands were tremendous on the young and initially inexperienced crews of the Royal Canadian Navy during what was a rapidly expanding navy with newly constructed ships including corvettes which were the backbone of convoy escort groups. 123 corvettes were built for the RCN to meet this critical demand, and the tens of thousands of young men who volunteered admirably met the challenges of fulfilling their duties, especially at “Action Stations!”



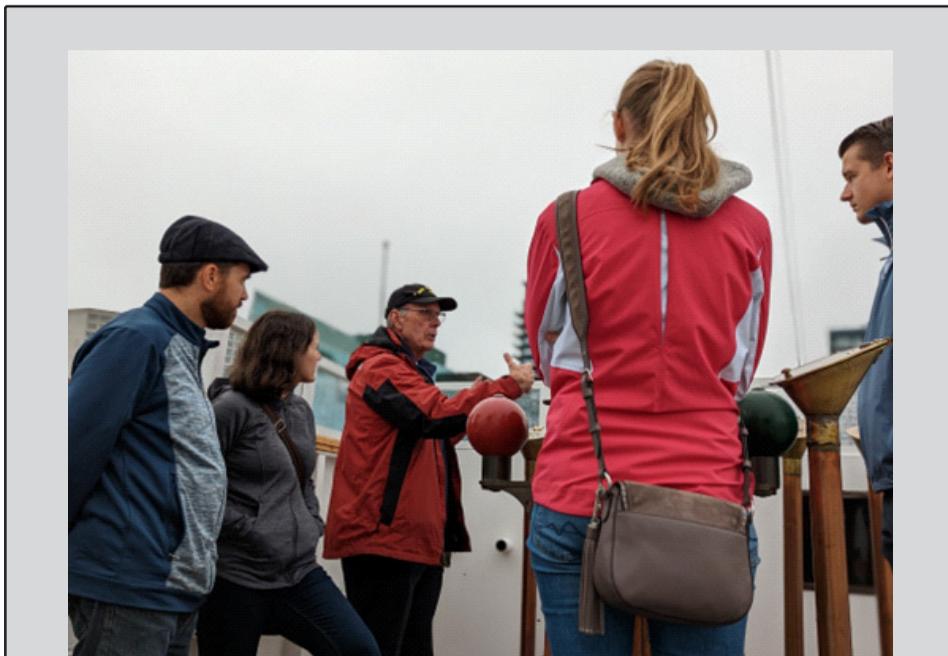
## VAC Commendation

Veterans Affairs Minister Lawrence MacAulay presented Commander Heather Armstrong (ret'd), Hammond Plains, NS with a Veterans Affairs Canada Commendation in recognition of her advocacy, encouragement and support to retired military members in pursuing their VAC entitlements. A member of the Board of Directors of CNMT, she had previously been recognized with the Maritime Family Resource Centre's Spirit of Military Families Award presented by then Prince Charles during a Royal visit to Halifax and was awarded a honorary doctorate in civil law by Saint Mary's University for her outstanding support to veterans and their families.



# Trustee Guides Meet, Engage Visitors

By Dan Desgrosseilliers



Trustee guide - Bruce Moxley explaining the challenging life on the bridge of a convoy escort to visitors from Victoria BC and Cruise Ship passengers from Germany.

Bravo Zulu! (Navy lingo for Well Done!) to HMCS *Sackville*, Canada's Naval Memorial for welcoming aboard more than 57,000 visitors between late June and mid-October 2022, almost 9,000 more visitors than a record high in 2019. Also of note, the appreciative visitors donated generously to the ship's maintenance fund.

The ship's crew, summer student guides and our team of knowledgeable volunteer Trustee guides contributed to the ship's successful summer downtown by ensuring visitors were greeted with the traditional warm maritime hospitality.

Under the leadership of the ship's First Lieutenant, Lieuten-

ant Commander Richard Powell (ret'd), our team of 20 energetic and dedicated Trustees provided seven days a week guide service to visitors from coast to coast to coast, along with international visitors primarily from the 150 plus cruise ships visiting Halifax. We had the pleasure of meeting and engaging with people of all ages, backgrounds, ethnicity and interests.

To ensure that *Sackville* provided a professional first-class experience for visitors, a plan was devised and put in place. Following a call-out for volunteers, the First Lieutenant brought us together for basic training, where he and Chief Petty Officer 1st Class Patrick Devenish (chief

engine room artificer) imparted their knowledge, experience and shared references to help us prepare for our role as guides.

The ship was then prepped for an Action Stations theme. Mannequins were dressed in appropriate battle attire and placed in various positions of action around the ship; and the ship was blacked out and rigged for red lights. Every morning, HMCS *Sackville* raised a black flag to indicate that she was in contact with or engaged in tracking and/or attacking a U-boat. This made for an effective and interesting backdrop for visitors.

Organized in watches, our Trustee guides engaged visitors in naval historical accounts and provided answers to many questions. Every day brought team members new experiences and opportunities to meet interesting people. These ranged from veterans with their amazing stories, to children, grandchildren, relatives and friends of those brave souls who served, hoping to have a glimpse of what their loved ones experienced; to those who knew very little about the Canada's Naval Memorial and came onboard the corvette to satisfy their curiosity.

In brief, our visitors truly appreciated the hands-on experience, stories, answers to their questions and the opportunity to access most of the ship. This provided them with a real feeling of what



Trustee guide - Dan Desgrosseilliers explaining the use and operation of the Hedgehog to Victoria, BC visitors, Rochelle and Riley Haws

life aboard a Royal Canadian Navy ship was all about.

Holly, one of our Trip Advisor reviewers, summed it up very effectively: "Fun visit - Lots to learn on the vessel. Staff were very friendly, knowledgeable, and a blast to meet. Can't wait to visit again."

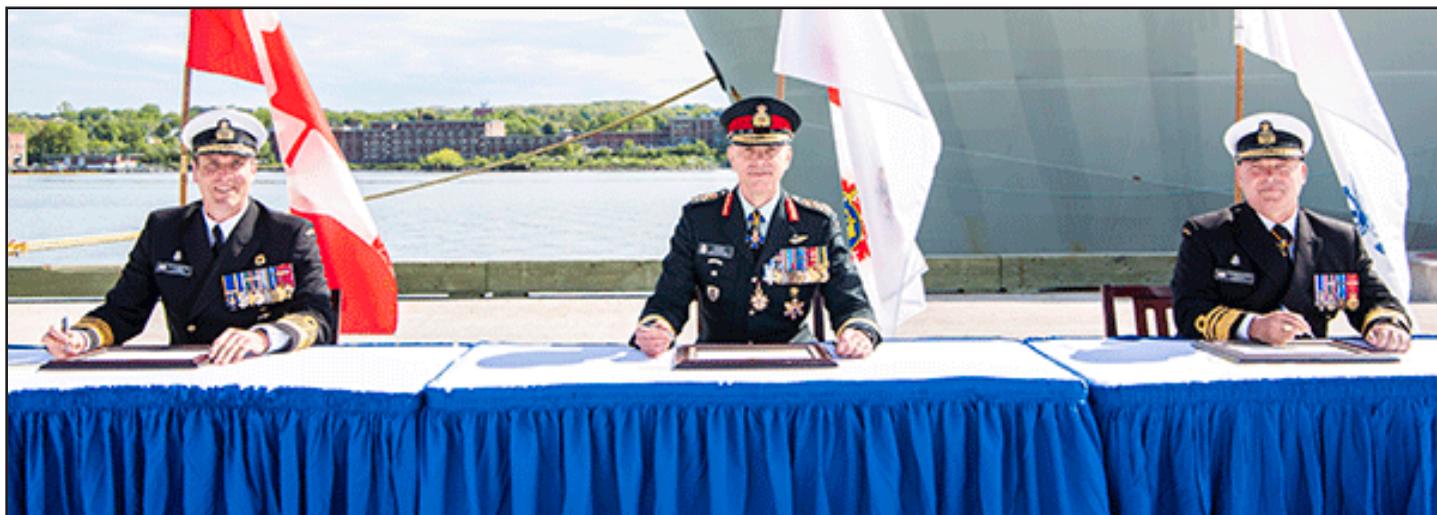
It was an honour and a pleasure to serve as a member of an outstanding volunteer team and I'm looking forward to serving again in the coming years.

**Congratulations on a job well done to this year's Trustee guides:**

- |                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Don Campbell     | Bruce Moxley         |
| Jerzy Gajewski   | Bob Stewart          |
| Dean McFadden    | Dan Desgrosseilliers |
| Hal Sherrard     | Dan Matte            |
| Andrew Cooke     | Sue Moxley           |
| Marsha Leroux    | Steve Vallis         |
| Michael McFadden | Pat Devenish         |
| Eric Sproule     | Ken McClean          |
| Greg Cottingham  | Rick Powell          |
| Stuart Lorriman  | Barry Wile           |

## New Commander RCN

The Canadian Naval Memorial Trust welcomes Vice Admiral Angus Topshee, seated left, as the new Commander Royal Canadian Navy; he relieves Vice Admiral Craig Baines, right. Presiding over the change of command ceremony was General Wayne Eyre, centre, Chief of the Defence Staff. VAdm Topshee, a Life Trustee of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, is a former Commander CFB Halifax.



# Merchant Navy Veteran Recalls Vessels Sunk During War

Captain Earle Wagner, 98, a Merchant Navy veteran of the Second World War and the Battle of the Atlantic was guest speaker at a dinner marking the 75th anniversary of the end of the war in The Netherlands held at Pier 21, Halifax May 14, 2022.

In his remarks Captain Wagner noted, “I would like to share a few events of my life that may be of interest.”

“I was born in West La Have, NS in 1923 where I attended school for 10 years. In 1940 I volunteered for the navy but wasn’t needed and in 1941 I joined the Merchant Navy and was associ-



Earle speaking to young sailors at the Bamse Sailing Race at the Dartmouth Yacht Club in August 2022

ated with the marine industry for 48 years. I served as a seaman, gunner, officer, captain of 18,000 DWT ship, navigation instructor, ships pilot, port warden and manager of a fleet of ships for DFO. I served in the Atlantic, Arctic, Pacific and Indian Oceans.

“My most vivid experience serving in the Battle of the Atlantic was in the Spring of 1942 while steaming in daylight in view of the United States east coast, I observed 14 vessels sunk, lying on the ocean floor, with only parts of the ships superstructure above water. I will never forget this devastation and tragedy of lost ships and mariners by indiscriminate submarine warfare.

“In the post WWII period I volunteered and was responsible for Merchant Navy memorials, memorial services, and other activities related to the Merchant Navy; the most notable being placement in 1993 of Canada’s national MN memorial on the Halifax waterfront. It commemorates and honours the 2,200 Canadian seafarers and 91 Canadian vessels lost by enemy action in WWI and WWII, most with no known graves.



Photo presentation at the Dartmouth Yacht Club

“Remembrance Day may be a holiday for many, but for surviving aged veterans it brings back sad and vivid memories of battles on the land, sea and in the air... and loss of family, comrades, shipmates and friends, lost in the prime of life. We should reflect and remember our history of the wars in the past century and avoid repeating history.

“Approximately 50 to 60 million lives were lost in WWII. Some how people of all countries must realize the follies of war and must learn to live peacefully with one another to avoid future wars or holocausts.”



# As Seen in Chebucto News, November 2022...

DISCOVERING OUR PAST

## Merchant Navy and civilian ships attacked by German submarines in World War II

By: Iris V. Shea

My thanks to local resident Captain Earle Wagner for bringing this topic to my attention and providing the information for this article. Captain Wagner will celebrate his 99th birthday on Christmas Day, 2022. Read more about Captain Wagner's life at <http://www.alliedmerchantnavy.com/mnctp/membership/captain-earle-wagner.html>

You may have seen Captain Wagner on one of his daily walks around Frog Pond, at the Dingle, or walking up the steep incline of Ramsgate Drive.

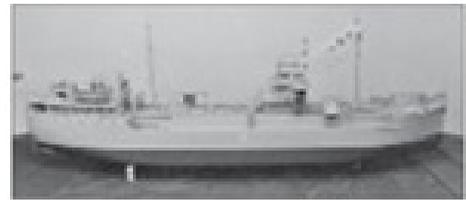
In 1943, nineteen-year-old Wagner served on the Merchant Vessel "Nipiwan Park" as it made its first trip from Montreal to Saint John, N.B. He has been active for many years since World War II in his efforts to bring attention to all those men and women who served in the Canadian Merchant Navy.

On April 16, 2004, Captain Wagner, on behalf of the Canadian Merchant Navy Veterans' Association, presented a ship model of "M.V. Nipiwan Park" to the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, Ontario. Years of fundraising across the country, spearheaded by Wagner, helped bring about this event. The original ship was

built in 1943 in Collingwood, Ontario. The model of the ship was built by Port Hawkesbury native, Mark Boudreau, and honours all Merchant Navy veterans who served in the Battle of the Atlantic. The Merchant Navy's role, as pointed out by Captain Wagner in his speech that day, was "to transport troops, equipment, materials, munitions, supplies, fuel, etc. to support the fighting forces throughout the world. A secondary role, not well known, was the use of armament in self defense against enemy attack."

Of the merchant vessels torpedoed

by German submarines between 1939 and 1945, one was the "M.V. Nipiwan Park." On January 4, 1945, in convoy with two other ships, the vessel was torpedoed off Halifax by U-1232. Two of the crew were killed, and "HMCS Kentville" rescued the 29 survivors. The merchant ship was not completely destroyed, and eventually received a new bow. It was sold after the war to Irving Oil and renamed "Irvinglake." The tragic event was not made public when it happened because of the secrecy surrounding wartime activities in our coastal waters. In fact, when the death was reported



Top: Model of M.V. Nipiwan Park

Bottom: Captain Earle Wagner, speaking to veterans at Pier 21, November 2005

of Halifax native Captain John H. Carroll, the chief officer and one of the two men killed aboard "M.V. Nipiwan Park," the caption beneath his picture in the Halifax Herald on January 8, 1945, said "died at sea." No other cause of death was given.

During World War II, Nova Scotian waters were being watched carefully by German submarines in their attempt to prevent merchant vessels from delivering sup-

plies and munitions to our troops. The ship “S.S. Angelus,” owned by the Canadian government, was damaged on 19 May 1942 by U-161, north of Bermuda. She was carrying molasses from Barbados to Halifax. Only two members of the nine-man crew were rescued by “U.S.S. Turner” and taken to Portland, Maine. The “S.S. Angelus” had been a former French barquentine captured as a prize on the Grand Banks one week prior to the attack, and sent to Sydney, Cape Breton where she was turned over to the Canadian Government.

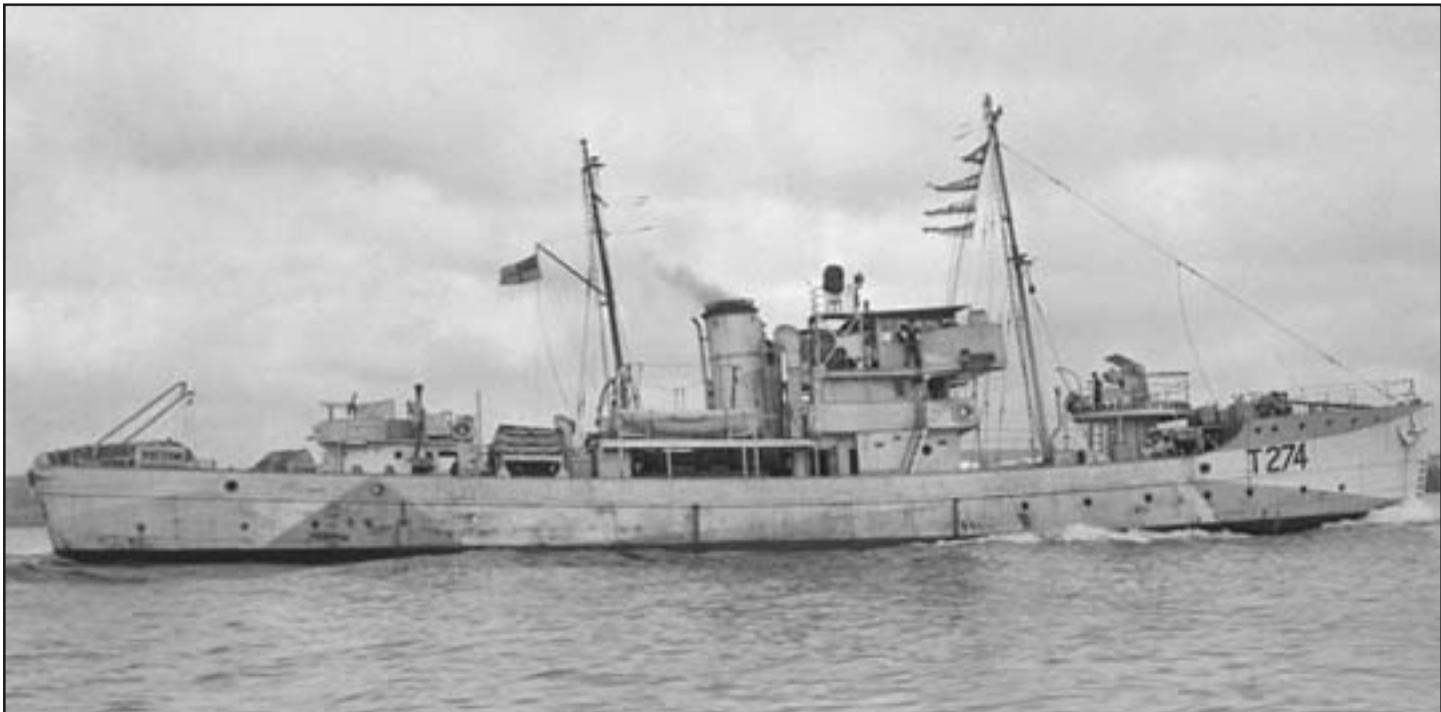
On 30 May 1942, the “S.S. Liverpool Packet” owned by Markland Shipping, was on its way from New York to St. John’s, Newfoundland, via Halifax, when attacked off Nova Scotia. Two persons were killed and the 19 survivors managed to row to Seal Island; the “S.S. Water-

ton,” owned by Bowater, was on a voyage from Cornerbrook, Newfoundland, to Sydney, Cape Breton. On 11 Oct. 1942, she was torpedoed in the Cabot Strait by U-106. There was no loss of life. Three days later in the Cabot Strait the Newfoundland car ferry “Caribou,” escorted by a mine sweeper, was carrying 238 passengers and crew from Sydney, Cape Breton, to Port Aux Basques, Newfoundland when it was struck by a torpedo from U-69. The lifeboats were badly damaged, a significant factor in the outcome; 106 passengers and 31 crewmembers lost their lives.

On 25 Mar. 1944, “S.S. Watuka,” owned by N.S. Steel and Coal, with 26 men on board, was torpedoed off Halifax by U-802 while carrying coal from Louisbourg to Halifax. “HMS *Anticosti*” picked up 25 of the crew.

“Of the 12,000 volunteers who

served aboard Canadian, British and Allied merchant ships, one seafarer in eight was lost. It was the highest ratio of loss for any active service” states Captain Wagner. Canada did not recognize the valued service of the Merchant Marines, and all but ignored them following the war. Finally, in June 2003, after much lobbying, our government declared September 3rd as Merchant Navy Veterans Day. In Halifax, a memorial to the Merchant Navy was unveiled on Nov. 11, 1993 and may be seen at Sackville Landing on the waterfront. The monument bears the names of Canadian merchant vessels on which many Canadians lost their lives while serving on board them. Captain Wagner designed the memorial; local artists Horst Deppe, Commander Tony Law (now deceased) and Jane Law, provided the expertise in creating Captain Wagner’s design.



HMS *Anticosti*, World War II Anti-Submarine Trawler

# Oliver Boyle's BoA Display Board Popular With Students, Visitors

By: Cdr (ret'd) Heather Armstrong

As a student at LeMarchant-St Thomas Elementary in Halifax, NS, Oliver (Ollie) Boyle was required to prepare a presentation for a Heritage Project; Ollie chose the Battle of the Atlantic. His presentation highlighted the ships in which his Great Grandfathers served.

His maternal Great Grandfather, Lt Fergus Cross, RCNVR, served in corvettes during the Battle of the Atlantic escorting convoys from Newfoundland to the UK. In May 1944 he was appointed commanding officer of HMCS *Chicoutimi* (K156) until September and then assumed command of HMCS *Pictou* (K146) until July 1945.

Ollie's Paternal Great Grandfather, Able Seaman Mansell Meade, served in HMCS *Sackville* (K181) as a torpedoman from 1941-1945. During his time in *Sackville* the ship was in action with two German U-Boats which were severely damaged.

Ollie's presentation consisted of a large tri-fold Bristol board with information and pictures of his grandfathers, their ships and the Battle of the Atlantic plus he was able to brief all who visited his display. Quite fittingly, he received the People's Choice Award as the top display. Following the completion of his heritage project, Ollie attended the Battle of the Atlantic ceremony at Point Pleasant Park. **Bravo Zulu Ollie!!**

And finally, on 11 October, when HMCS *Sackville* was moved from downtown to the Dockyard for the winter, Ollie and his grandmother, Andrea Cross, were given the opportunity to be on board. A well deserved treat for Ollie.



# Membership Reports

## Welcome Aboard - New Members 2022



### Life Members

Michael & Mary Florence Bartley, Barrie, ON  
Jayne Bissionnette, Tsawwassen, BC  
Bobbi Boudreau, Halifax, NS  
Wayne Brown, Markham, ON  
Constantine & Helen Cotaras, Ottawa, ON  
Allan Dobson, Cherry Burton, NB  
Jonathon Dunphy, Hubley, NS  
Douglas Harvie, Chesley, ON  
Jeffrey Harvie, Chesley, ON  
Kunihiro Ito, Toronto, ON  
Stuart Lorriman, Head of St. Margaret's Bay, NS  
Marcus Mau, Potsdam, Germany  
Matthew MacDonald, Eastern Passage, NS  
Randy Preece, Red Deer, AB

### Annual Members

George Archibald, Halifax, NS  
James Austin, St. John's, NL  
Piero Balestra, Halifax, NS  
Steven Bednikoff, La Prairie, QC  
Emily Bellman, Bedford, NS  
William Brant, Markham, ON  
John Campbell, Owen Sound, ON  
Sarah Carter, Middle Sackville, NS  
Chris Collier, Shad Bay, NS  
Julia Cottingham, Three Fathom Hbr., NS  
Harry Cralle, Carrollton, TX, USA

Mathieu Crosby, Dartmouth, NS  
Roger Cyr, Victoria, BC  
Nicole Desgrosseilliers, Timberlea, NS  
John Doran, Brockville, ON  
Elizabeth Edmonds, Bedford, NS  
Brian Jarvis, Halifax, NS  
William Jennings, Halifax, NS  
Leigh Jowett, Dartmouth, NS  
Douglas Kierstead, Ottawa, ON  
Jeff Kemp, Bigfork, Montana, USA  
Kevin Kuo, Toronto, ON  
Drew MacDonald, Dartmouth, NS  
Stefan MacDonald, Omemee, ON  
Ken McClean, Dartmouth, NS  
Neill McKay, Fredericton, NB  
John McKenna, Dartmouth, NS  
Peter Mersereau, Toronto, ON  
Gregory Murray, Middle Sackville, NS  
Keith Musselman, Dartmouth, NS  
Alan Robb, West Porters Lake, NS  
Timothy Stacey, Lucasville, NS  
Donald Stoddard, Halifax, NS  
Derek Threinen, Ottawa, ON  
Kathleen Toole, Halifax, NS  
Craig Tucker, Mount Pearl, NL  
Angus Tulloch, Halifax, NS  
Barry Walker, Ottawa, ON  
Geoffrey Wallington, Halifax, NS



**HMCS Sackville**

**Just For  
The  
Hull  
Of It  
Campaign**

**Thank You Supporters !  
Over \$384,000 Raised to Date.**

To make a contribution please visit:  
<https://hmcssackville.ca/join-and-support/donation-form/>,  
by mail (cheque payable to CNMT)  
or by calling (902) 492-1424.

Official tax receipts issued for a donation of \$10 or more.

**Canadian Naval Memorial Trust  
PO Box 99000, Stn. Forces, Halifax, NS, B3K 5X5**

## Seasons Greetings - Salutations des saisons



Photo Credit: Douglas Struthers



## Seasons Greetings - Salutations des saisons

From / de

The Board of Directors - Canadian Naval Memorial Trust  
le Conseil d'administration - Le Fonds de commémoration de la Marine canadienne



We wish you every happiness during this time of peace and togetherness and all the very best in the new year. We have much to be thankful for in 2022 because of the outstanding efforts of so many wonderful volunteers and supporters. To our veterans - thank you!

Nous vous souhaitons beaucoup de bonheur en cette période de paix et de convivialité et tout le meilleur pour la nouvelle année. Nous avons beaucoup de raisons d'être reconnaissants en 2022 en raison de la efforts exceptionnels de tant de merveilleux bénévoles et sympathisants. à nos ancien combattants- merci !

William Woodburn  
Captain(V) - Capitaine de vaisseau (Retired - à la retraite)  
Chairperson - le président



NATIONAL NAVAL RESERVE MONUMENT  
ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DU MONUMENT NATIONAL  
DE LA RÉSERVE NAVALE



# Help revitalize the NATIONAL NAVAL RESERVE MONUMENT

“THE RESERVIST IS TWICE THE CITIZEN”

## A LEGACY OF SERVICE

In 2023, Canada and the naval community in particular will celebrate the centennial of our country's Naval Reserve.

The National Naval Reserve Monument honours our citizen sailors, past and present. For a century, Canada's Naval Reservists have augmented the Royal Canadian Navy in times of peace and war, choosing service over self.

## ANCHORS AWEIGH

Unveiled in 1973 on Battle of the Atlantic Sunday, the monument was dedicated on the 50th anniversary of the Naval Reserve. Now, half a century later, it is in need of revitalization.

With your help, the National Naval Reserve Monument can once again be a fitting tribute to Naval Reservists.



## YOUR SUPPORT GOES A LONG WAY

Your financial support will help breathe new life into the monument so it will once more bring honour to Canada's Naval Reservists.



## UNIQUE IN CANADA

The Naval Reserve monument is the only monument in Canada dedicated uniquely to our Naval Reserve.



## IN OUR NATION'S CAPITAL

The National Naval Reserve Monument stands in the heart of our nation's capital, overlooking Dow's Lake and the historic Rideau Canal in front of HMCS Carleton, Ottawa's Naval Reserve Division.



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MORE INFO





Visit by  
**Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II**  
and  
**His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh**  
to  
**HMCS SACKVILLE**

Canada's Naval Memorial - June 29, 2010



La visite de  
**Sa Majestée la Reine Elizabeth II**  
et de  
**Son Altesse Royal le Duc d'Édimbourg**  
au  
**NCSM SACKVILLE**

Le Mémorial Naval du Canada - Le 29 juin, 2010