

ACTION STATIONS!

CANADA'S NAVAL MEMORIAL MAGAZINE

Volume 37 - Issue 1

Winter 2018



Our Cover



Permanently moored in the Thames close to London Bridge, HMS Belfast was commissioned into the Royal Navy in August 1939. In late 1942 she was assigned for duty in the North Atlantic where she played a key role in the battle of North Cape, which ended in the sinking of the German battle cruiser Scharnhorst. In June 1944 HMS Belfast led the naval bombardment off Normandy in support of the Allied landings of D-Day. She last fired her guns in anger during the Korean War, when she earned the name "that straight-shooting ship". HMS Belfast is now part of the Imperial War Museum and along with HMCS Sackville, a member of the Historical Naval Ships Association. HMS Belfast turns 80 in 2018 and is open daily to visitors.

HMS Belfast photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum© IWM

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From the Chair

by Commander ret'd Wendall Brown



Cora Lee Murrin-Beauchamp

Local Trustees and dignitaries braving the wind and the cold in HMC Dockyard to hear the warm and welcoming remarks from the President of the Treasury Board on behalf of the Government of Canada.

I am writing this report on 22 February, realizing that, in the rapidly changing dynamics of determining HMCS *Sackville's* future, it will be out of date by the time you read it. We will do our best through email and website to keep the membership informed as the status of the ship and Trust becomes clear.

In the 20 years, since I returned to Halifax from Ottawa and became actively involved with *Sackville*, the number of our very dedicated Second World War and post Second World War veterans, who overcame so many obstacles and committed time, effort, and funds to initially convert and preserve the ship in her 1944 configuration has steadily declined as these valiant souls have "crossed the bar". In this reporting period we have lost two significant members of this band, Capt (N) Kevin Power and LCdr James Bond. We remember with gratitude their contribution, and greatly miss their wisdom and comradeship.

It is with sadness that we noted the passing of Sonja Bata in Toronto on the 20th of February. In addition to her high profile through her philanthropic work, establishing the Bata shoe museum, and as a co-founder of the Bata shoe company in Canada and various countries internationally, she was a valued member of the Trust and served actively as a vice Chair of the Board for more than twenty years.

Many of you will have seen coverage in the media of HMCS *Sackville's* rising, with dignity, from the water on the Naval Syncrolift and moving into the Submarine Shed for a much needed refit. The Captain will provide details on the work to be done in his report and further into

the magazine is a photo essay that chronicles the docking.

The announcement, on 26 January, by the President of the Treasury Board, The Honourable Scott Bryson, was of up to \$3.5M over two fiscal years of National Defence funding, as a one time grant to the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, for urgent repairs to Canada's Naval Memorial. This was most welcome news and a testament to the concern and support of the Commander of the Navy and the Deputy Minister of National Defence.

When the Board of Directors was informed, in mid-summer, of the complications that had become apparent regarding further Navy support to the Naval Memorial, it was determined to sequentially focus on the future of the ship as the Naval Memorial in three phases. First, and most urgent was the refit of the ship. The ship is currently in the refit facility and the Naval experts are determining the action required, with the knowledge that the refit funding is in place. The Trust, while managing the refit, is now broadening its focus to the issue of post refit support for the ship and her interpretation.

The post refit support has both near term and long range components and must address the physical preservation and presentation of the ship, her significance as a Naval Memorial and as a symbol of Canadian and Naval achievement in peace and war. The Naval Memorial must also be integrated into the rich maritime heritage of this historic naval port. Progress in achieving a permanent memorial will be dependent on secure funding.

Captain's Cabin

by Lieutenant Commander ret'd Jim Reddy

Sandy McClearn



After an exterior hull blasting and cleaning, *Sackville* was rolled into the "submarine shed" four days later. The "shed" was recently constructed to shelter the Victoria class RCN boats and named for a distinguished RCN submarine engineer Captain Bernard L. Johnson. It was a wonderful winter opportunity for *Sackville* that the building was available for some months and that, with the topmast removed, we fit beautifully! The overall operation is reported on with photos in this edition. Trustee Sandy McClearn, an engineer with a flair for photography and mechanical detail, put together the article.

The Chair, Wendall Brown has outlined the January Treasury Board support announcement that resulted in our lifting out of the water on an unusually mild but very wet Sunday morning on February 11th. You can see this operation shown dramatically by way of time-lapse photography simply by going to our very modern website. The usual professional support of the Queen's Harbour Master pilots and tugs, Fleet Diving Unit, and the Fleet Maintenance Facility (Dockyard) Docking staff and riggers made this happen. You will see them all in the time-lapse video under News and Events on the website.

<https://hmcssackville.ca/current-news/you-tube-video-of-hmcs-sackville-time-lapse-being-raised-out-of-halifax-harbour>

But the onboard team had work to do as well. Beforehand, the ship needed to be trimmed for docking. This required our Chief Engine Room Artificer, Pat Devenish to move water ballast between tanks and immerse the forward part of the ship more deeply than normal to meet the Docking Officer's direction. At the same time, our Chief Boatswain's Mate team of Kevin Waterman and Danny Rowe organized all the seamanship and linehandling required for the move which brought in sailors and boat support from the fleet. You will see these sailors "whipping" around in the video. The point I'm trying to make is that the docking is a delicate and precise operation involving 60 people at a time in the Halifax winter carefully chosen days ahead by the Docking Officer with advice from the Royal Canadian Navy meteorology staff. Hence a Sunday morning. It worked!

So now there is a flurry of activity to set the blasting and coating contractor to work. The concept is to clean and coat the entire hull inside and out with a view to long term preservation. Of course, over the years, the serious corrosion has occurred on the interior hull which had never been properly coated. The contractor will start on the machinery spaces where we expect the most significant deterioration. Blasting will expose corrosion wastage and identify where steel repair is needed. All this welcome work will take months. I look forward to updating Trustees on what is the most significant preservation work undertaken in my 15-year association with *Sackville*.

Our social and information life continues. We are unable to hold our Friday lunches onboard so we are taking advantage of alternate venues. We have held a series of Friday lunches at the scenic Austenville Owl's Club on Lake Banook in Dartmouth and have also used the Dockyard submarine Wardroom. We will keep our weekly lunches running in various venues as they are important in keeping our local Trustees and visitors connected and up to date on Trust operations.

Watch our new webpage for timely and informative updates on the docking work progress.

In closing I cannot help but commenting on Bill Atkinson's obituary on page 7. Doug Thomas and I were Venture cadets during his time in command. As an aviator he took the trouble to get us all up in Trackers at Pat Bay which we deeply appreciated. Kids at the time we had no idea of his war time accomplishments.

Executive Director's Report

Do You Hear There?



South Side, St. John's by Canadian War Artist, Commander Harold Beament, Canadian War Museum 19710261-1050

Docking Work Period (DWP) or Refit will have a big impact on this year's activities. As mentioned by the Chair, funding for *Sackville's* Docking Work Period (DWP) was announced and the refit is already underway. The current plan is to be ready in time to return to the waterfront for our normal summer program after hull repair and other necessary work is completed: the ship will look amazing and we will know the hull is sound!

On the Waterfront: I have submitted a request for funding from the Canada Summer Jobs Program, with the aim of getting two students to help interpret the ship again during the summer. There will still be a demand for Duty Trustees to oversee the summer staff, help with interpretation, and ensure that appropriate standards are maintained. There will be training for new Duty Trustees, and existing volunteers are very welcome to come along.

Calendars: in 2014 we started a Naval Heritage Calendar, and it was produced annually through 2017. We were greatly aided with the project by Peter Mielzynski Agencies Ltd. (PMA), which sponsored most of the cost of printing the calendars and also supports Wounded Warriors Canada. The calendars were of a very high quality, and the team really enjoyed producing them. However, in each year after 2014 we saw a reduction in sales and we decided not to continue them going forward. I am told that calendar sales are down everywhere, as those with smart

phones would prefer to consult their devices. Thank you to those who supported this activity in the past few years: it was a good vehicle to help with awareness of our naval heritage.

DEFSEC: For the last several years we have provided a historical backdrop and meeting venue to the annual Defence Security and Aerospace Exhibition Canada (DEFSEC- Atlantic) trade show in Halifax. We anticipate being part of this year's event 2-4 October.

Canadian Naval Review (CNR) Essay Contest - For the past few years we have sponsored the \$1000 first-prize for the annual CNR essay competition on the topic of Canadian maritime affairs, and we will do that again this year. It is good publicity for the Trust, and we are credited as a sponsor in each issue of this magazine, and in the write-up advertising the contest.

Action Stations: Our magazine has grown in size and sophistication, becoming a much-praised publication thanks to the diligence of the editor Pat Jessup and the editorial team. After several years and over 40 issues Pat is taking a break. Following in the footsteps of the NAC's *Starshell* and the Crow's Nest *Scuttlebut* the dissemination of Trust information will be done through social media and our wonderful new website until layout and design support can be found.

In the interim and while waiting for someone to step forward please check out: www.hmcssackville.ca for the latest news, historical articles, obituaries and events. We are open to suggestions and submissions. If you have something to contribute please contact me. We are always looking for new material and photographs to add to our digital collection.

Yours aye,

LCdr ret'd Doug Thomas
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Crossed the Bar



Hugh George Andrew passed away January 2, 2018 in his 94th year. He is survived by his wife Velda and son J. David and his partner David Warren. Predeceased by his parents James and Daisy, brothers William and Walter and sisters Daisy and Marge. Hugh will be sadly missed by many nieces, nephews, family and friends. Friends who wish to make a memorial donation are asked to consider the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust.

Commander Bill Atkinson DSC (ret'd), a young



Canadian naval air ace flying for the Royal Navy during operations in the Pacific 1944-45 and awarded the Distinguished Service Cross "for determination and address in air attacks" passed away in White Rocks, BC July 18, 2017 at age 92. He joined the RCNVR at 19, trained at HMS St Vincent, Gosport, UK and in

Canada and received his wings in the spring of 1944. He served in several RN aircraft carriers in the Pacific, flying from HM Ships *Ravager*, *Indomitable* and *Formidable*. His first air victory (a bomber) occurred during a raid on Japanese-held oil refineries in Sumatra; this was followed by downing two fighters and two bombers during the US-led assault on Okinawa, and while flying from *Formidable* in July 1945 he downed two Japanese torpedo-bombers and damaged a third. (Also serving in *Formidable* at the time was another Canadian naval air ace, Lieutenant Robert Hampton Gray who would be posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for action against Japanese forces). Following the end of hostilities Bill Atkinson served as commanding officer of HMCS *Haida* (1962-63) and HMCS *Venture* (1963-66), in naval intelligence, retiring in 1973. Survivors include his wife Val, a son and two daughters.

Lieutenant Colonel John Michael Black CD OMM (ret'd), a graduate of the Royal Military



College (1961) and a career air force officer passed away in Halifax in December 2017 at age 79. After pilot training he served at bases in Canada, United Kingdom and the USA and was commanding officer of 404 Training Squadron, Greenwood, NS. In civilian life he was employed with the City

of Fredericton and was co-owner of Connell Beverages, Middleton, NS. He co-authored a number of articles on the RCAF and the Battle of the Atlantic for *Action Stations*. Survivors include his wife Joan, daughters Catherine, Margo and Mary Beth, a number of grandchildren; step-daughters Kristen and Melissa; siblings, Marjorielee; brother Garth and sisters Nanci and Deborah.

Daniel Patrick (Pat) Brownlow, whose career



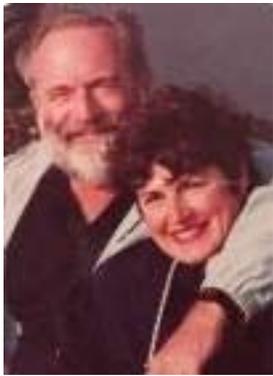
spanned journalism, government communications and public relations consulting passed away in Halifax Nov 20 at age 72. Following graduation from Saint Mary's University he worked as a reporter with *The Halifax Herald* and later joined the federal public service serving as a communi-

cations officer and manager serving with several departments including Citizenship and Immigration and Health. During this period he also served as a reserve public affairs officer with HMCS *Scotian*. He was a Life Member of the Canadian Public Relations Society-NS and an active church and community volunteer including the former Dartmouth District School Board and the Charitable Irish Society. He was predeceased by his parents Captain (N) Dan Brownlow and Genevieve (O'Hara) Brownlow and his wife Elizabeth; survivors include children Bridget and Daniel, brothers Michael, Sean and Timothy and grandchildren Darcy and Lola.

Lieutenant Commander Gordon F. Clarke (ret'd), who served in a number of ships and shore establishments during his career passed away in Victoria, BC Oct 19, 2017 at age 84. He joined the Navy after graduating from Sir George Williams College, Montreal and served in HMC Ships *Bonaventure*, *Swansea* and *Nipigon* and in Halifax, Ottawa, London, England; Toronto, Esquimalt



and with Defence Research Establishment Pacific. While serving as supply officer in *Nipigon* in October 1965 he played a key role in the care of crew members involved in a fire and explosion aboard the destroyer. He was predeceased by his wife Joyce; survivors include sons Robert, Bruce and David; brother Ainslie and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Jean Ann Davies, Halifax, a teacher and artist who specialized in painting, machine embroidery and silver jewelry passed away Jan 31 at age 82. She was predeceased by her husband Captain(N) Hal Davies, a former chair of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust. Born in Lowestoft, England Jean taught for several years in London and Bermuda before marrying and settling in Halifax and later, the Head of St Margaret's Bay. She is survived by her children Stephen, Halifax and Joanna, Ottawa and sisters Margaret, Edinburgh, Scotland and Barbara, Bexhill, UK.

Captain Robert James Deluca OMM SSM CD, who commenced his career as a seaman electrician in 1954 and would go on to command several ships hold a number of senior staff appointments passed away in Halifax Jan 27 at age 81. He graduated from the Venture Officer Training Plan in 1957, served in HMC Ships *Quinte*, *Iroquois*, *Athabaskan*, *Inch Arran* and *Restigouche* followed by command of HMC Ships *Mackenzie*,



Restigouche and *Huron*. He held staff appointments at National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, NATO HQ, Brussels and in personnel and plans at Maritime Command HQ, Halifax. Following retirement from the Regular Force in 1991 he continued to serve as convoy commodore (primary reserve) until 2001 at which time he was awarded the Maritime Commander's Commendation for 47 continuous years of service to Queen and Canada. He was predeceased by his wife Marion; survivors include daughters Catherine, Cheryl and Diane, several grandchildren, sister Marjorie and brother George. Donations made be made to the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville*, the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia or charity of choice.

Francis Russell (Frank) Gorman, Halifax, a naval veteran of the Second World War and retired member of the Halifax Police Department (HPD) passed away February 1 at age 94. He enlisted in the RCN at 16 and served the duration as a naval gunner onboard Royal Canadian



Navy Corvettes *Arvida*, *Napanee*, *Brandon* and the River Class Frigate *Penetang*. Following the end of hostilities he joined and served in the HPD for 37 years. He was a Life Member of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville* as are his daughter Anne, grandson Sandy and great-grandchildren Rhy, Teaghan and Arianna. He was also a member of the Royal Canadian Legion, Knights of Columbus and the Retired Police Association of Nova Scotia. He was predeceased by his wife Mary and daughter Gerri; survivors include daughters Fran and Anne and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Peter Harold Grady, a naval veteran of the Second World War and the Korean War passed away in Fredericton, NB Oct 25 2017 at age 95. During the Second World War he was on loan to the Royal Navy as a Swordfish bi-plane navigator flying off HMS *Vindex* protecting Allied convoys to Murmansk,



Russia. He served at naval headquarters in Halifax during the Cuban missile crisis (1962) and was commanding officer of the frigate HMCS *LaHul-loise*. He was active in the Royal Canadian Legion and a life member of the Wallace (NS) Area Development Association. He was predeceased by his wife; survivors include children Peter, Chris, Jane and Rosina Louise and several grandchildren.

Lieutenant Commander William Albert (Bill)



Greenlaw (ret'd) OMM CD, a 28 year veteran who continued his professional association with the Navy following retirement from the service passed away in Halifax Jan 17 at age 74. He joined the RCN at 17 as an engine room artificer and quickly progressed through the ranks to chief petty officer 1st class in

1975 while serving in HMCS *Athabaskan*. Shortly after he was commissioned a marine engineering officer serving in HMCS *Saguenay* and Sea Training Atlantic. He is survived by his wife Sharon, children Jeff, Todd, Bryan and Krista, a number of grandchildren, his mother Elizabeth and siblings Janet, Barbara, Ruth, John and Eva.

Charles Harry Hawkyard, who joined the RCNVR at 17 during the Second World War and served in



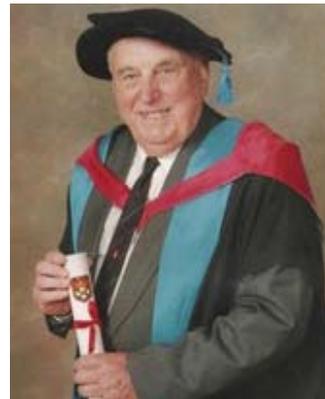
HMCS *Rockcliffe* passed away in Owen Sound, Ontario, Nov 1 at age 91. He was a trustee of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust and active in the Royal Canadian Legion. Survivors include his wife Mary, sons Drew and Paul, brother Bill and a number of nieces and nephews.

Commander Robert Humble, RCN (ret'd) who served 28 years in the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch passed away in Merrickville, Ontario July 14, 2017 at age 63. Born in London, England Robert was ordained in the United Church ministry and after joining the Canadian Armed Forces served as chaplain on both the Pacific and Atlantic coasts including HMC Ships *Saskatchewan*, *Qu'Appelle*, *Yukon*, *Mackenzie*, *Gatineau*, *Restigouche*, *Terra Nova* and *Provider*, and deployed



with USS *George Washington* and served as the first Canadian exchange officer at the US Naval Air Station Oceania, Norfolk, VA. After retiring from the CAF he returned to the civilian ministry and served the Warren and Meadow Lea Churches in Manitoba and the Merrickville United Church. Survivors include his wife Heather, children Arwen, Linnet, Elspeth, Meade and Rowan and several grandchildren.

Commander Maurice Richard (Dick) Morgan



RN, RCN, a native of Cornwall, England and formerly of Ottawa and Halifax passed away in Belleville, Ontario, Dec 14, 2017 at age 100. A meteorologist and oceanographer he received a PhD from Exeter University (at age 83) and was a member of the Naval Association of Canada and

the Royal Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society. He was predeceased by his wife Pamela; survivors include children Liz, Sheila and Veronica, sister Barbara and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Chief Petty Officer 1st Class John Douglas Newton (ret'd), a 25 year naval veteran during the Cold War era and father of Rear Admiral John Newton, former Commander Maritime Forces Atlantic passed away in Halifax Dec 8 at age 88. During

his naval career (1950-1975) he was a deep sea diver and served in HMC Ships *Ontario, Micmac, Quebec, Athabaskan, Swansea, Algonquin, Skeena, Annapolis, Cormorant* and was the last chief boat-swain's mate of the aircraft carrier *Bonaventure*. During a port visit to Norway he was introduced to downhill skiing that he pursued until several years ago, serving for several decades as a volunteer ski patroller and professional ski instructor in the Wentworth Valley. During a full and active life he was also a merchant marine, RV technician, lumberyard foreman and trucker. In addition to his son John, survivors include his wife Esvelda, son Paul, daughters Lynette, Julie and Sarah; adopted daughter Beth, brother Peter and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

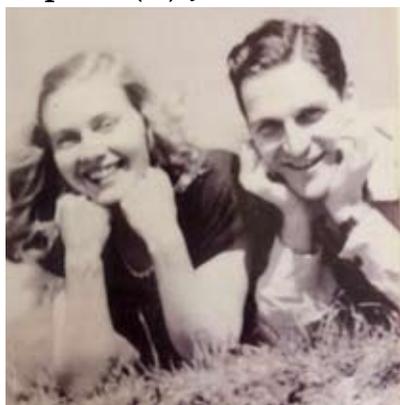
Lieutenant Commander John David Newton



(ret'd) of Beaconsfield, QC, a veteran of the Second World War and the Korean War passed away Feb 11 at age 94. He commenced his career at 17 in 1941 and trained in England as a mechanical and aeronautical engineer; during his 25 year naval career he served in Halifax, Ottawa, Victoria and

Quebec City. Following retirement from the Navy he was employed in management with Avon Canada in Pointe Claire, QC. Survivors include his wife Joan, sons John, Robert, Michael and Mark; step-daughter Emily Howard, and a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren; he was predeceased by his first wife Joan.

Captain (N) J. Kevin Power (ret'd), a veteran of



the Battle of the Atlantic and one of the original trustees of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville* passed away in Halifax Dec 27, 2017 at age 95. He was a graduate of McGill University (B.Com) and enrolled in the

RCNVR in December 1942. He commissioned the frigate HMCS *Victoriaville* as ship's supply officer in 1944 and served in the Atlantic until the war's end. Following hostilities he served for 32 years in a number of appointments at sea and ashore, including supply officer in HMCS *Bonaventure*, officer-in-command Naval Supply Depot, Halifax; director pay services, co-chair of the Treasury Board-DND Task Force on Military Compensation and his final appointment as chief of staff (administration and resources), Maritime Command Headquarters, Halifax. Following retirement from the Navy in 1974 he joined the federal public service as Atlantic regional director for Statistics Canada retiring from that position in 1987. During the 1980s he served as secretary of the board of directors of the volunteer Canadian Naval Memorial Trust (CNMT) during the period to acquire and restore Sackville (designated Canada's Naval Memorial in 1985). He was also active in a number of other naval and military support organizations including the Naval Officers Association of Canada (now Naval Association of Canada) and the Royal United Services Institute of NS. He was predeceased by his wife Madeline (pictured); survivors include his children John, Nicholas, Brian, Sarah, Jeffrey, Robert, Jane and Jennifer and a number of grandchildren and great grandchildren. Donations may be made to the CNMT or charity of choice.

William (Bill) Ritch, a veteran of the Second World



War who served as an able seaman in the corvette HMCS *Collingwood* passed away in Shelburne, ON Jan 1 at age 92. Following hostilities he joined the RCAF and served as a photographer for 25 years. In civilian

life he was employed as an audio visual technician with the Etobicoke Board of Education. He was predeceased by his wife Jean Catherine; survivors include children Murray, Barry and Wendy and several grandchildren. Donations may be made to the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville* or the Westminster United Church, Orangeville, ON (music fund).

Boris (Bud) James Syko passed away in Toronto



January 6 at age 80. After a short career in the Navy he became owner of MTT Office Furniture in Toronto. Survivors include his wife Joan, son Michael (Linda) of Halifax, NS, daughter Anne (Anthony) of London, Ontario and children Patricia (Don), Donna (Sean) and Bobby of Toronto, Ontario.

Guy Maurice Theriault, a veteran of the Second



World War who survived the sinking of HMCS *Athabaskan* passed away in Tucson, Arizona Nov 6, 2017 at age 95. He was born in Montreal and after training as a machinist joined the Royal Canadian Navy. He was serving as a stoker in *Athabaskan* when the destroyer was torpedoed while engaged with Ger-

man ships off the French coast in late April 1944; he sustained serious injuries during the sinking and was one of the survivors rescued by sister ship HMCS *Haida*. Following the war he moved to the US, became a naturalized US citizen and founded Industrial Tool, Die and Engineering Inc. He was a Life Member of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS *Sackville* and had a life-long interest in boating and aviation. He was predeceased by his first wife Lucille, second wife Diane and children Guy Paul and Lisette; survivors include his partner Barbara, sister Marie-Paule, children Michelle, Donald and Jacqueline, a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren and members of Barbara's family.

HMCS *Athabaskan*



Rear Admiral Robert D. (Bob) Yanow (ret'd), who



joined sea cadets in his native Saskatoon, SK at 13 and would go on to hold a number of senior appointments including Commander Maritime Forces Pacific (MARPAF) passed away in Victoria, BC Nov 19 at age 84. He attended Royal Military College and following graduation from the

University of Saskatoon in 1956 served in a number of RCN frigates and destroyers and on exchange with the Royal Navy. In 1969 he commanded HMCS *Saguenay*, followed by HMCS *Athabaskan* (1972) and the First Canadian Destroyer Squadron (1974). In 1977 he was appointed naval attache in Washington, DC and later, on promotion to rear-admiral, served at National Defence Headquarters followed by Commander MARPAF and Commander Pacific Region (1984-87). Following retirement from the Navy he served as vice president for BC Transit, managing director for the 1994 Commonwealth Games and as a member of the Veterans Review and Appeal Board. He was active in a number of community, charitable and other organizations including BC Press Council, chair of the Corps of Commissionaires (Victoria), chair of St John Ambulance (Victoria Branch) and a strong supporters of sea cadets and boy scouts. For his public service he was appointed a Knight of the Order of St John. Survivors include his wife Valda, son Robert (daughter-in-law Lynn), daughter Deborah (son-in-law Nigel) and granddaughters Jennifer and Sarah.



IN MEMORY OF PAST VICE CHAIR, CNMT, SONJA BATA



Vice Admiral Hugh McNeil, past Chair, CNMT bidding farewell to Sonja Bata on her retirement for her long standing participation as Vice Chair of the Board of Directors, CNMT at the July 2012 AGM.

Sonja Ingrid Bata, a Canadian and international business executive, supporter of numerous community and volunteer organizations and a former Vice Chair of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust/HMCS Sackville passed away in Toronto February 20 at age 92.

She was born in Zurich, Switzerland and at 19 interrupted her architectural studies to marry Thomas Bata, son of a Czechoslovak shoe manufacturer. Along with her husband she played a significant role in building the global Bata organization and following her husband's death continued to promote their joint ideal of responsible capitalism. It was during her business travels that she became intrigued with rare and traditional footwear which led to the opening of the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto in the 1980s.

Sonja Bata was widely recognized for her public service, including the recipient of eight honorary doctorates and her service as an honorary captain in the Royal Canadian Navy for twenty-four years. Her community and volunteer service included the National Design Council, World Wildlife Fund Canada, Junior Achievement of Canada, Council for the Business and the

Arts in Canada, Council for Canadian Unity and the Royal Military College of Canada. She also served as a director of Alcan Aluminum Limited, CT Financial, the Canadian Commercial Corporation and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

Her honors and awards included an Officer of the Order of Canada, Retail Council of Canada Lifetime Achievement Award, Canadian Business Hall of Fame, B'Nai Brith Humanitarian Award and the silver medal of the United Nations environmental program.

In the early 1990s Commodore Charles Westropp, Chair and the Board of Directors of the CNMT invited Sonja Bata to join the Board as Vice Chair and she actively served in that capacity.

At the AGM in July, 2012, the Trust sadly said, 'au revoir on her retirement' to our distinguished Vice Chair who for 21 years was a tower of wise counsel, sage advice, and great assistance to five consecutive Chairs of the CNMT. We gratefully acknowledged her participation and knew that despite retiring, that she would maintain an interested, helpful and wise 'weather eye' on all our activities.

Sonja Bata was predeceased by her husband in 2008; survivors include her children Thomas, Christine, Monica and Rosemarie; nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.



Honourary Naval Captain Sonja Bata enjoying a day at sea in HMCS Athabaskan.

FORMER COMMANDING OFFICER JIM BOND 1927-2018



Just prior to friends and trustees of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust gathering in Dartmouth Jan 26 to remember the late Lieutenant Commander James Bond the federal government had announced a significant contribution to support the repair and long term preservation of HMCS *Sackville*. The financial support would have been most welcome by the Second World War veteran who had made a significant contribution to the restoration and operation of *Sackville* over the years.

Jim Bond passed away in Camp Hill Veterans Memorial Building, Halifax Jan 19 at age 91. At the gathering *Sackville's* Padre Charlie Black recalled Jim's career, offered condolences to the family and all joined for the Naval Prayer. LCdr Jim Reddy, commanding officer invited friends and shipmates to speak of their remembrance of Jim including his contribution to *Sackville* and the Trust.

A number of trustees recalled Jim as one of the "hands on" trustees involved in the restoration of *Sackville* in the 1980s when the last of the RCN's 123 wartime corvettes was acquired by the CNMT after being paid off in 1982. He served as commanding officer of *Sackville* (1991-1994), undertook various special projects and was a member of the CNMT Board of Directors.

During his time as commanding officer Jim took particular pride in showing visitors and special guests around *Sackville*, including government

officials and business executives, senior Canadian and foreign naval officers and royalty. In 1993, along with Commodore Charles Westropp, Chair of the CNMT at the time he briefed Prince Andrew who was on a port visit to Halifax while serving in the Royal Navy. In 2010 during the visit by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip (pictured) to *Sackville* Jim was introduced and had a brief chat with His Royal Highness during the Royal Couple's walkabout at *Sackville* Landing prior to the unveiling of a plaque to commemorate the Royal visit and the significance of Canada's Naval Memorial.

He grew up in Alberta and Saskatchewan, joined the RCNVR in June 1944 and served in HMCS *Prince Rupert* during the relief of Hong Kong in 1945. After the war he attended the University of Alberta, served in the University Naval Training Division and after graduating joined the RCN in 1950. He served in HMC Ships *Magnificent* and as executive officer of *Cowichan*, *Cayuga* and *Gatineau* respectively as well as Administration Officer - HMCS *Cornwallis* in 1963. In 1965 he established the first full-time service conditions and welfare office in HMCS *Stadacona* and in 1968 was appointed commanding officer of the Canadian Forces Selection Unit (Atlantic). In the same year he was the Guard Commander for the Consecration of the Queen's Colour.

Following retirement from the Navy Jim joined the Nova Scotia Department of Education (adult vocational education) in 1973, received his MA (education) and was awarded the Nova Scotia Teachers Union gold medal. He retired from his second career in 1986 at which time he became actively involved with the CNMT working group involved in the restoration of *Sackville*. He had a life-long interest in flying and was a life member of the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation, and the Atlantic Canada Aviation Museum and the last president of the Halifax Flying Club. He was also a member of the NS Naval Officers Association and the Navy League of Canada.

Jim was predeceased by his wife Evelyn; survivors include sons Richard and Ian, a number of grandchildren and several great-grandchildren. In later life he greatly appreciated the company and kindness of Sherry Richardson and her friends.

HMS BELFAST HONOURING CANADIAN SAILORS *by Pat Jessup with comments from DND Press Release*



A Canadian flag flies from the yardarm of HMS Belfast, with British flag flying from the bow and backdropped by Tower Bridge moored on the Thames in London, Monday, Dec. 18, 2017.

Over seventy years ago, the now iconic HMS *Belfast*, distinguished herself in the Battle of the Atlantic. Some 80 RCN sailors served aboard the Second World War Light Cruiser which now operates as a museum ship moored alongside in the river Thames in London.

In honour of the RCN sailors, Tim Lewin, whose late father Admiral of the Fleet Lord Lewin was a junior officer in HMS *Belfast*, proposed that the Canadian flag fly at the mast of the museum ship to recognize their role in the battle of North Cape for which *Belfast* was awarded a Battle Honour.

“My late father served in a Tribal-class destroyer from 1943 through 1944,” said Mr. Lewin. “His ship, HMS *Ashanti*, was in constant company with the RCN Tribals [HMC Ships *Athabaskan*, *Haida*, *Huron* and *Iroquois*] and many personal friendships developed. The ship to which *Ashanti* was particularly linked was *Huron*, with which they covered the Arctic convoys to Russia and later the dramatic battles between the 10th Destroyer Flotilla and Nazi forces trying to hinder D-Day. When *Huron* went home to Halifax for a refit, its wardroom presented their prized piano to *Ashanti*, whose wardroom compensated their Canadian friends with enough beer to see them back across the Atlantic!”

Attending the December 18, 2017 flag-hoist was 94-year-old Rolfe Monteith a Trustee of the CNMT who served in HMS *Hardy* on the Murmansk Run, Captain (Navy) Maurice Aucoin, RCN, Naval Advisor with the Canadian Defence

Liaison Staff in London and Sarah Fountain Smith, The Canadian Deputy High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

In all, 18 Canadian warships were awarded an Arctic Battle Honour for service in northern European waters during the Second World War.

“Without the Canadian contribution to the Battle of the Atlantic, particularly, and the battles in the Arctic, we would not have had the ships or the manpower to have endured in those battles,” remarked Tim Lewin.

For more on the ceremony: <http://www.navy-marine.forces.gc.ca/en/news-operations/news-view.page?doc=canadian-flag-set-to-fly-over-hms-belfast-in-london/ja8pycoq>

<https://www.facebook.com/CanadaintheUK/videos/2109314249289787/>

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/canadian-sailors-honoured-with-flag-over-british-ww2-warship-1.3735667>



Royal Navy warships operating in the Arctic. Imperial War Museum IWM photo.



Visit by HM King George VI, Scapa Flow: HM King George VI inspecting the ship's company of HMS Belfast at Scapa Flow. IWM Photo

THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY AND THE RUSSIAN CONVOYS, 1943-1945

by Michael Whitby, Senior Navy Historian, Department of National Defence, Ottawa



Admiralty Official Collection, A 8953

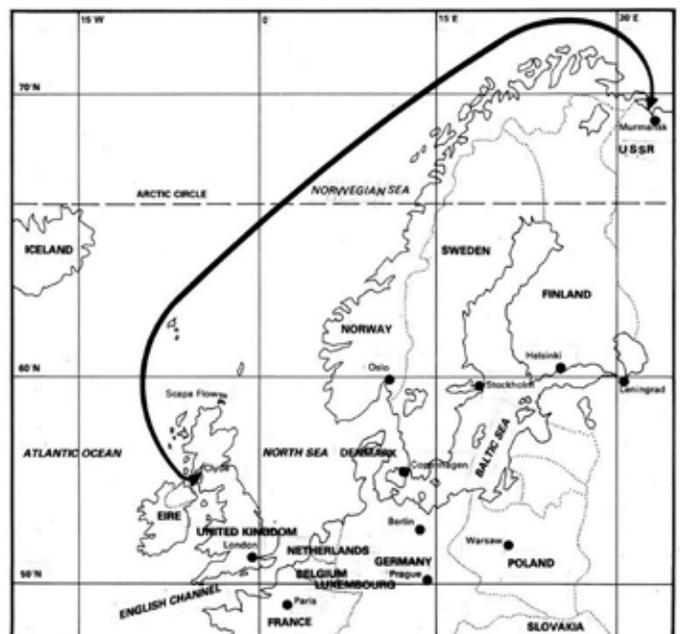
Escorts and merchant ships at Hvalfjord, Iceland before the sailing of Convoy PQ 17. Behind the destroyer *Icarus* is the Russian tanker *Azerbaijan*. The sea voyage to the north Russian ports of Murmansk and Archangel was the shortest route for sending Allied supplies to Russia. But it was also the most dangerous owing to the large concentration of German forces in northern Norway. The convoy PQ 17 was decimated by U-boats and the Luftwaffe after a communication from the Admiralty on 4 July 1942 ordered the escort to 'scatter'. Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum.

Canadian warships began escort duties on the Russian convoys in the autumn of 1943, but our sailors were involved before then. In fact, hundreds of Canadians sailors served in British ships operating in the north throughout the war. The radar officers in most Royal Navy capital ships were Canadian RCNVR officers. A Canadian officer received a medal from Russia as a result of his performance in a British destroyer during the Battle of the Barents Sea. Eighty Canadian sailors – about ten per cent of each ship's company – fought in the cruisers *HMS Belfast* and *Sheffield* at the Battle of North Cape. A Canadian served as torpedo officer and navigator in the submarine *HMS Scepter* off Norway, and the Captain's Secretary in *HMS Jamaica* at North Cape was a young RCN officer. Dozens more served in the squadrons of the Fleet Air Arm, including in attacks on the battleship *Tirpitz*. There were many others. From aviators to gunners; from pursers to stokers, everywhere the Royal Navy fought in the north Canadians were there.

The reasons why Canadian warships worked the Russian convoys had everything to do with the youth and obscurity of the RCN. The service had only been established in 1910, and 26 of its first 30 years had been during peacetime struggling against limited government and public support; indeed, it would be an exaggeration to describe the navy's profile amongst the Canadian public and government as much beyond inconsequential.

As a result, at the beginning of the Second World War, RCN leaders saw the need to build up "a

Canadian Naval tradition." And when it came time to make decisions about the deployment of Canadian warships in wartime they pushed to have their major warships serve in what one officer dubbed the "fighting theatres of war". This would not only be on the North Atlantic – the navy's main focus – but also as part of the 'fighting' fleets of the Royal Navy. Thus in 1942 when the RCN commissioned its newest and most powerful warships – four Improved Tribal class destroyers – naval leaders went to considerable lengths to ensure they would be employed in European waters where they thought they would see more traditional – and they thought more attractive – fighting than in the Battle of the North Atlantic.



Thus, the late summer of 1943 found Canada's four Tribals at Scapa Flow as members of the British Home Fleet, the organization responsible for northern operations including the Russian convoys. Early in 1944 they were joined by two newly commissioned V-class fleet destroyers, Algonquin and Sioux; except for operations in support of the invasion of northwest Europe, these destroyers, less HMCS *Athabaskan* which was lost in action in the Channel in April 1944, operated with the Home Fleet for the remainder of the war.



'Southampton' class cruiser HMS Sheffield sailors scan the horizon from the exposed signal bridge, December 1941. IWM photo.

It is important to understand that when these ships joined British forces, the RCN had no say in their movements. They were under British command and control. Thus there was no conscious Canadian decision to deploy our ships on the Russian convoys; that was a British decision, but one the Canadian government readily supported.

Canadian destroyers carried out the entire gamut of naval operations alongside their RN counterparts. These included reinforcement missions to Spitzbergen, supply missions to Murmansk in advance of the renewal of the convoys in the autumn of 1943; screening Home Fleet units on strike and mine-laying missions, carrying out anti-shipping sweeps against enemy shipping off Norway, conducting anti-submarine sweeps, and, of course, escorting Russian convoys. In particular, three Canadian Tribal class destroyers were part of the defence of convoy JW-55B which the battle cruiser *Scharnhorst* was attempting to attack before she was sunk in the Battle of North Cape.

As jacks-of-all-trade, destroyers, especially modern, well-equipped fleet destroyers like the RCN supplied, were a precious commodity. The Home Fleet, in particular, never seemed to have enough. That often proved a limiting factor in carrying out the wide variety of operations for which the Home Fleet was responsible, including the Russian convoys. Thus, the Canadian destroyers constituted a more significant reinforcement than their small numbers implied.

The invasion of northwest Europe in 1944 saw another influx of Canadian naval forces to Europe and the frigates of the RCN anti-submarine groups EG-6 and EG-9 later joined the escort of two Russian convoys.

In the final eighteen months of the war, Canadian warships participated in more than half of the Russian convoys. Even when it was clear that victory was at hand, the threat from the enemy never lifted. Escorting the convoy RA-66 out of Murmansk on 30 April 1945 – just nine days be-



HMS Lulworth oiling from the tanker, San Tirsan, J. S. Dalison, IWM collection.

fore VE Day – the destroyers *Iroquois* and *Haida* were both narrowly missed by enemy torpedoes.

In all, 18 Canadian warships were awarded an Arctic Battle Honour for service in northern European waters during the Second World War. There is no question that most of the worst fighting around the Russian convoys had occurred before Canadian ships joined the Murmansk Run. Nonetheless, although the RCN may not have been indispensable to success of those convoys, as it was in the Battle of the Atlantic, there is no question that they made an important contribution to success in the final stages of victory.

Perhaps the final word can be given to Rear-Admiral Patrick Budge, RCN, who made four return runs to Murmansk as First Lieutenant of the destroyer HMCS *Huron*. At a post-war reunion he reminded his shipmates:

It seemed that gales were forever sweeping over the dark, clouded sea. The dim red ball of the sun barely reaching the horizon as the ship pitched and tossed, the musty smell of damp clothes in which we lived, the bitter cold, the long frequent watches that seemed to last forever. This on a diet of stale bread, powdered eggs and red lead [stewed tomatoes] and bacon. The relief to get below for some sleep into that blessed haven - the comforting embrace of a well-slung hammock. There was no respite on watch for gun, torpedo or depth charge crews as every fifteen minutes would come the cry "For exercise all guns train and elevate through the full limits" - this to keep them free of ice The watch below would be called on deck to clear the ship of ice - the only time the engine room staff were envied. Each trip out and back seemed to last an eternity with nothing to look forward to at either end except that perhaps mail would be awaiting us at Scapa Flow. (Address by P.D. Budge, 19 Sept. 1981, 6, DHH 82/92.)

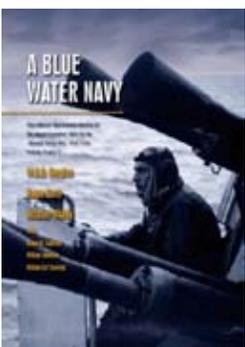
He might have added, 'But through struggle comes Victory'.



ARMS FOR RUSSIA . . . A great convoy of British ships escorted by Soviet fighter planes sails into Murmansk harbour with vital supplies for the Red Army.

RCN WARSHIPS WITH ARCTIC BATTLE HONOURS

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Algonquin 1944-45 | Monnow 1944 |
| Athabaskan 1943-44 | Nene 1944-45 |
| Cape Breton 1944 | Outremont 1944 |
| Grou 1944 | Port Colborne 1944 |
| Haida 1943-45 | Saint John 1944 |
| Huron 1943-45 | St Pierre 1945 |
| Iroquois 1943-45 | Sioux 1944-45 |
| Loch Alvie 1944-45 | Stormont 1944 |
| Matane 1945 | Waskesiu 1944 |



Michael Whitby is the Chief of the Naval History Team at the Directorate of History and Heritage, DND, and co-author of *The Official History of the Royal Canadian Navy in the Second World War* and *A Blue Water Navy: The Official Operational History of the Royal Canadian Navy in the Second World War, 1943-1945*.



Convoy to Russia by War Artist Charles Pears, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, UK. Pears, a commissioned officer in the Royal Marines during the First World War, also worked as an official War Artist during both the First and Second World Wars as part of the British war art program.

THE ARCTIC STAR



The Arctic Star, a Second World War medal commemorating the Arctic convoys, is granted for operational service of any length, from September, 3, 1939, to May 8, 1945 inclusive, north of the Arctic

Circle (66 degrees, 32'N) on the Greenland Sea, Norwegian Sea and Barents Sea.

Contact Veterans Affairs or download, print and complete the appropriate form below and mail it to the Honours and Awards directorate at the address indicated on the form.

Veteran of the Second World War

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/forms/document/522>

Family member of a deceased Veteran of the Second World War can also apply.

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/forms/document/521>

For both application categories the following information will be required:

- applicant's service number
- branch of service (air, navy, merchant navy or army)
- theatre of service (Arctic)
- full name
- date of birth
- your current name and address

For further information contact Veterans Affairs at: 1-866-522-2122

RCN SHIPS WHICH CONDUCTED ARCTIC OPERATIONS IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR *by Doug Thomas*



HMS Leamington returning to Halifax in January 1943, with a heavy ice build-up and the crew struggling to remove it. Leamington had only just left port, and was forced to return due to the icing problem and the list that developed as a result. With the anti-submarine boom closed that night, Leamington had to wait until morning to enter the safety of Halifax Harbour. Photo and caption courtesy of Phil Marley, Gofd Condie, Bill Croshaw and Ken Buckley, Haze Gray and Underway and Sandy McClearn.

A number of RCN ships conducted Arctic Ops in WWII: 6 modern destroyers, all built in British Shipyards and conducted operations under British control in the Eastern and Northern Atlantic; 10 frigates during the last year of the war, and one RN destroyer which was seconded to the RCN for 14 months and had a very eventful life from 1940 until well after the end of the war, to 1952. This was HMS *Leamington*, the ex-USN "four stacker" or "flush decker" destroyer USS *Twiggs* (DD 127).

The appearance of these ships was quite different from British-designed destroyers: no raised foc'sle and the four slender upright funnels looked particularly antiquated compared to the British one or two raked funnels. This ship had the unique experience of serving in four different Navies, and her final role was in a film where her appearance was altered to that of a ship in a fifth navy: the German Kriegsmarine. The RCN commissioned 7 out of 50 of these destroyers, which were transferred from the US to the UK in 1940: the "US-UK Destroyers for Bases" deal. The

seven RCN units did not distinguish themselves as they were frequently unserviceable, with the exception of the ill-fated HMCS *St. Croix* which sank two U-boats prior to becoming one of the first casualties of the German "Gnat" acoustic homing torpedo.

Turned over to the Royal Navy at Halifax on 23 October 1940, *Twiggs* became HMS *Leamington* (G19), with Cdr. W. E. Banks, DSO RN in command. (These ships were named for towns which had a common name in both the US and the recipient country). *Leamington* shifted to St. John's, Newfoundland, which she departed 04 November as part of the 4th "Town" Flotilla, bound for the British Isles.

Enroute to Belfast, Northern Ireland, she and her sister ships passed through the scene of the action fought on the 5th by the armed merchant cruiser HMS *Jervis Bay*, in defence of the home-ward-bound Convoy HX-84, against the German "pocket battleship" *Admiral Scheer*. *Jervis Bay's* gallant delaying action enabled 32 of the 37 ships

in the convoy to escape, although she herself was sunk in the action. *Leamington* searched for survivors but could find no signs of life.

Proceeding via Belfast, Northern Ireland, *Leamington* arrived at Plymouth, England, on 15 November and was then allocated to the 2nd Escort Group, Western Approaches Command, based at Londonderry. She conducted convoy escort missions across the Atlantic into 1941. While in the screen of Convoy SC-48 as it was being attacked by German U-boats for more than a week *Leamington* teamed with the destroyer HMS *Veteran* in sinking U-207 off the east coast of Greenland on 11 September.

On 27 March 1942, *Leamington* added another "kill" to her record when she and three other destroyers sent U-587 to the bottom as the U-boat threatened Middle East-bound troop convoy WS-27. That summer, as the flush-decker steamed toward North Russia in the screen of the ill-fated convoy, PQ-17, the powerful German battleship *Tirpitz* was reported on the prowl. Since the massed convoy would present too easy pickings for such a powerful adversary, the ships were scattered. However, such tactics exposed the Allied ships to the attacks of German U-boats and aircraft. As a result, 23 of the 34 ships in PQ-17 were sunk. No other Russian convoy during the entire war suffered so severely.

Leamington was refitted at Hartlepool, England, between August and November 1942 and then resumed convoy escort missions in the Atlantic. On 12 November, the Panamanian registry merchantman SS *Buchanan* was torpedoed by U-224. Thirteen days later, *Leamington*, assisted by aircraft, located the last of the freighter's four lifeboats and took aboard its 17 uninjured sailors.

In October 1942, the Royal Navy seconded *Leamington* to the Royal Canadian Navy, who employed her in the defense of shipping in the western Atlantic over the next 14 months. She experienced extremely bad weather, with extensive icing conditions, while operating in the North Atlantic in late 1942 and early 1943. At one point, the ship returned to Halifax after a severe gale on 22 January 1943, coated from bridge to foc'sle deck with ice varying from 2 to 10 feet thick. These ex-American flush-decked destroyers were not very seaworthy at the best of times, and ice build-up on the upper deck and superstructure of all North Atlantic escort ships was a very real concern - especially in heavy weather.

Departing Halifax on 22 December 1943, *Leamington* returned to the British Isles and reverted to Royal Navy control. After a period of service based at Rosyth, Scotland, she was placed in reserve at the Tyne. However, on 16 June 1944, the British loaned the ship to the Russians, who renamed her *Zguchij*. A number of British and American ships were transferred to the Russian Navy under Lend-Lease, most of them quite elderly and obsolescent such as the battleship HMS *Royal Sovereign* and the light cruiser USS *Milwaukee*. *Zguchij* served under the Russian flag through 1949 and was returned to Great Britain in 1950. She was placed on the disposal list, but before she arrived at the breaker's yard she was restored from the scrap heap to play the part of HMS *Ballantrae* in the 1952 film "Gift Horse" starring Trevor Howard and Richard Attenborough. This was a film in the tradition of "In which we serve" and broadly based on the WW2 St Nazaire raid which involved the similar vessel HMS *Campbelltown*.



HMS Leamington's ice removal team picking away at the forward gun. Photo: George A. Lawrence, Library and Archives Canada PA-106810

A BELL FOR ST. JOHN'S *by Pat Jessup*

In May 2005, Canadian veterans of the Battle of the Atlantic and the "Newfy-Derry Run" attended commemorative ceremonies in Londonderry, Northern Ireland sparking the idea of regular visits over the past 13 years between Halifax and Londonderry.

During the 2005 event the first bell in a series of three, connecting the wartime port cities of Londonderry - Northern Ireland, Halifax - Nova Scotia and St. John's - Newfoundland, was consecrated. Named to commemorate the "North Atlantic Convoys," the blessing ceremony took place in Londonderry's historic St. Columb's Anglican Cathedral on Battle of the Atlantic Sunday in May.¹ Shortly after, the bell was transported across the Atlantic most fittingly in a Norwegian passenger ship, to its final destination in St. Brendan's Church at CFB Halifax.²



All Saints Clooney³, Waterside, Londonderry, Battle of the Atlantic 2016.

The NEF bell has already been cast in Londonderry and will be blessed at St. Columb's on Sunday, 20 May, 2018. In attendance will be Commander Corey Bursey, a Newfoundlander, representing the Canadian High Commission in London and Life Member Sir George Bain, past President and Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University, Belfast, Northern Ireland as well as 34 Canadian Naval Memorial Trustees. The casting of the bell was undertaken by the Royal Naval Association (RNA) - Londonderry, and assisted by the generosity of several Canadian Trustees who's names will be engraved on it's interior. Following the consecration, Westjet has most kindly arranged the transport of the bell to St. John's. Around the timings of the UNTD's 75th Anniversary reunion in September the Newfoundland Escort Force bell will be gifted to people of Newfoundland by members of the RNA - Londonderry.

The bells commemorate the Canadian naval and merchant sailors, and airmen who lost their lives between September, 1939 and May, 1945 while maintaining the vital supply lines from North America to Europe during the Second World War.

¹The bell concept was the brainchild of Chris Justice a member of the Naval Officers Association of Vancouver Island which produced the first two bells.

²After the invasion of Norway in 1940, over 2000 sailors, soldiers and merchant seaman took refuge in Canada.

³All Saints Clooney was the Garrison Church that served Commonwealth sailors during the war.



St. Brendan's Church, Halifax.

In February of 2007, in a similar ceremony, the second bell named after the famed "Newfie-Derry Run" bell was consecrated in the Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in St. John's, Newfoundland and transported to Northern Ireland in HMCS *Toronto* later that year. This bell is a prominent feature in Londonderry's Tower Museum during the year until Battle of the Atlantic Sunday when it relocated for use at services in either the Cathedral or All Saints Clooney Anglican Church.

The third and final bell will honour the Newfoundland Escort Force (NEF) established in St. John's in 1941 when the RCN was designated responsible for protecting convoys in the western zone of the North Atlantic.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE 2017 - 2018 by *Commander ret'd Patrick Charlton*

Welcome Aboard to our 2017 and 2018 members. Last year was on par for new memberships. Overall membership numbers remain at a plateau with new input being balanced against our older members who have sadly passed away during the year or those members who have not renewed. Although membership number 4824 was recently issued, the actual number of active members hovers below the 1000 mark. So once again, the challenge is issued for existing members to get out there and recruit one new member each. Imagine if we could double our numbers in the next few years. An annual membership works out to less than the price of a weekly cup of coffee (\$1.44).

Funds raised from memberships and donations are used in the preservation and ongoing operation of the ship. The bonus is a charitable tax receipt each year. Halifax area members and those visiting the region have the additional benefit of access to the ship, including Friday lunches. We have hundreds of members across Canada and beyond. While they may not have direct access to the ship, they continue to support the ship because they believe in the CNMT mission and want to see HMCS *Sackville* and her story live on, as an integral part of the history and heritage of the RCN and Canada."

Life Members 2017

David Bathurst, Halifax, NS
Stephen & Dianne Beaufoy, Halifax, NS
John Bell, Ottawa, ON
Frances Busby, Trenton, NS
Craig Cook, Halifax, NS
Gerald Doutre, Lantz, NS
Col. (Ret'd) Marc Grondin, Quebec, QC
Scott Harrison, East Preston, NS
Fred Leafloor, Dartmouth, NS
Lesley Hodgins, Orleans, ON
Brian Jones, Beaverbank, NS
Gary Kuhrt, Mississauga, ON
Lisa Matte, Dartmouth, NS
Darren May, Ajax, ON
Maurice (Moe) Muise, Dartmouth, NS
Laura Nicholls, Petrolia, ON
Warren Noble, Saskatoon, SK
Robert Rounds, East Lawrencetown, NS
Robert Stoddard, Halifax, NS
John T. Stuart, Halifax, NS
Patrick Vanier, Saint Agapit, QC
Kevin Waterman, Fall River, NS
PO1 Darcy Webb, Gatineau, QC

Life Members 2018

Stephen Bloom, Halifax, NS
Millie Gregory, Rothesay, NB
Peter Mitham, Vancouver, BC

Annual Members 2017

Dr. Garnet Colwell, Halifax, NS
Eric Durnford, Q.C., Halifax, NS
Bill Dziadyk, Ottawa, ON
Maxine Elson, Dartmouth, NS
Warren Estabrooks, Toronto, ON

Annual Members 2017 cont'd

Kyle K.R. Fenner, Lower Sackville, NS
Lars Goodman, Halifax, NS
Greg Gosine, Halifax, NS
Clarence Hemeon, Dartmouth, NS
Jeff Hines, Halifax, NS
Terry Humphries, Pleasantville, NS
Joyce Jessen, Oakbrook, IL, USA
Conrad Johnson, Upper Hammonds Plains, NS
Lyndon Kirby, Halifax, NS
Bruce Lilly, Porters Lake, NS
John M. Littlefair, Clementsport, NS
Keria R. M. Lynch, Truro, NS
Anne M. Mackay, Halifax, NS
Nancy Margeson, Halifax, NS
Gordon Miller, Halifax, NS
John Montague, Dartmouth, NS
Barbara Morris, Ottawa, ON
David Nelis, Aurora, ON
David Pratt, Ottawa, ON
Nicole Robichaud, Halifax, NS
Bill Smallman, Kanata, ON
Don Smith, Hunts Point, NS
Jane M. Templeton, Dartmouth, NS
Bill Thompson, Lawrencetown, NS
David S. Towler, Halifax, NS
Gordon Weston, Napean, ON
Bill Woodburn, Hammonds Plains, NS

Annual Members 2018

Allen Boden, Halifax, NS
Mike Bonin, Halifax, NS
Steven Clark, Upper Sackville, NS
Ben Gibbons, Shearwater, NS
Lt(N) Vincent Masse, Saint Eustache, QC
Earl Weir, Dartmouth, NS

SUPPORTING HMCS SACKVILLE - 2017

The Canadian Naval Memorial Trust sincerely thanks all of our donors for 2017. Small or large, each and every contribution helps in furthering the Trust's mission. The preservation and operation of HMCS *Sackville* could not be possible without the ongoing support of hundreds of individuals, groups, companies, the Royal Canadian Navy/Department of National Defence and municipal/provincial agencies. Bravo Zulu !

Donor Honour Board 2017

Convoy Class Supporter (\$500 - \$2499)

Anonymous (3)

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Patricia Bonneau, Merrickville, ON

Harry W. Brown, Sherbrooke, QC

Roy Busby, Red Deer, AB

CN Railroaders in the Community

John Dugan, Red Deer, AB

FMF Cape Scott, Halifax, NS

Ronald Harrison, Vancouver, BC

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Bradley Wilkins, Chester, NS

Howard Wilson, Halifax, NS

Corvette Class Supporter (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

The Two Philippe

June Wilton Smith, Halifax, NS

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Naval Association of Canada

Destroyer Class Supporter (\$10,000 – \$24,999)

COLOUR, Halifax, NS

Elva Ruth McEwan (Estate)

Ian McKee, Halifax, NS

SACKVILLE MEETS LEADING SIGNALMAN JOHN LYNCH JR. RCNVR

by Stephen Knowles



Being a duty Trustee aboard HMCS *Sackville* brings some delightful moments. One of them occurred in the late morning of 3 August 2017 when gift shop staff sent word that a naval veteran was at the brow and wanted to come aboard. With some assistance, 97 year old John Lynch Jr. of Toronto, accompanied by his son John III, slowly mounted the brow and stepped carefully aboard a corvette for the first time since 1945 to the welcome of ships' company, student guides, assigned naval personnel and Trustee volunteers. The nattily dressed veteran was in fact ex-Leading Signalman John Lynch Jr., RCNVR who, with son John had arrived in Halifax that morning aboard the Holland-America Line ship *Veendam*.

With all available hands gathered around him abaft of the funnel John told us his story and answered questions from his fascinated and admiring audience. Born in Scotland in May 1920, John and his family came to Toronto in 1923. He had always wanted to join the Navy. As an expensive trip across the Atlantic to join the Royal Navy was beyond the means of a depression era lad, he opted for the Toronto Division of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve in 1938. Mobilized and immediately drafted to Halifax at the outbreak of war in September 1939, he joined

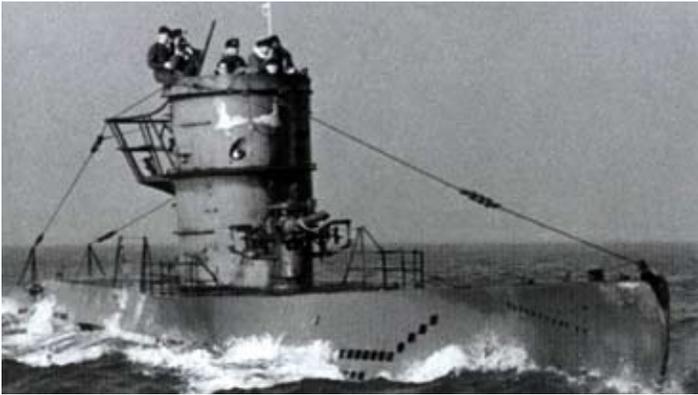
the 1918 built Battle Class trawler HMCS *Arras* which had just been transferred from the Department of Marine and Fisheries where she had served in the inter-war years. *Arras* went to sea before radar, a nearly inconceivable situation to the modern sailors listening intently.

His next ship was HMCS *Wetaskiwin* which, as John reminded us, was the first west coast built corvette to enter service. He joined her on her arrival from the Pacific coast in the spring of 1941 just as she was being assigned to the Newfoundland Escort Force of 7 corvettes led by the redoubtable Commander "Chummy" Prentice in HMCS *Chambly* which with the other members of the group began operating from St. John's in May.



HMCS *Wetaskiwin*, circa 1943-1944 Photo: Ken Macpherson / Naval Museum of Alberta MC-3103

John, modestly did not dwell on the engagements he was in during the years he served in *Wetaskiwin*. We know that she was in the thick of the convoy battles of 1941-1942. On 31 July 1942 with the C-3 Escort Group escorting westbound Convoy ON 115, *Wetaskiwin* with HMCS *Skeena* attacked and sank U-588, each ship taking turns directing the other over the target. Unfortunately *Wetaskiwin* was unable to find the convoy after the action so continued on to St. John's alone. Part of a reduced escort, HMCS *Sackville*, also in C-3 Group, had her most exciting times, fighting off attackers over the following days.



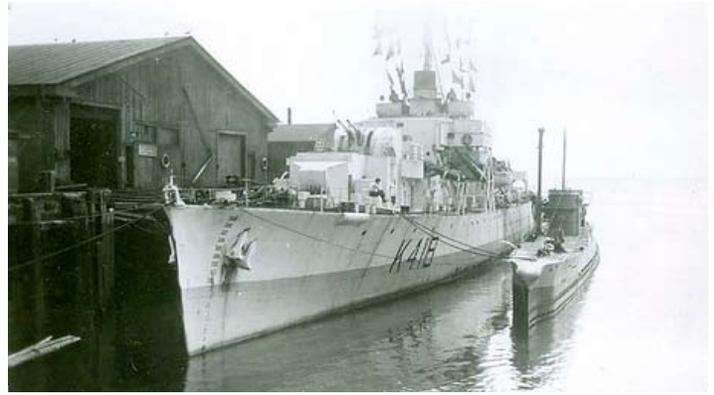
U-588 on patrol

South of Iceland the Newfoundland Escort Force turned over its ships to Royal Navy escort groups and then put into the grim anchorage of Hvalfjordur before returning to St. John's to pick up another convoy. The Icelandic girls would dance with the Allied sailors but would immediately walk away after each dance. Hospitality was warmer in Londonderry, Northern Ireland. Seeing the green fields and trees extending to the water's edge as your ship sailed up the River Foyle was a welcome respite after exhausting weeks at sea. The Wrens ashore waved you in by flying assorted lingerie from the "Wrennery" windows.



WRENS from Boom Hall, Londonderry, welcoming passing warships.

In 1943 John was drafted ashore to the Port War Signal Station Camperdown. Overlooking Chebucto Head, the station was manned by naval signalmen during the war. By 1944 he was back at sea as Yeoman of Signals in the new frigate HMCS *Joliette* in which he served until she paid off in late 1945.



HMCS Joliette and U-889 alongside, May 13, 1945

John enjoyed his life at sea. Sleeping in a hammock was the only way to go. On hearing "Wakey Wakey" you got out of your "mick" smartly because your messmates would not be very happy to have your dirty feet land on the mess table while they were already eating breakfast. Even if you couldn't count on refrigeration the food was "pretty good." However seeing rum left over from the daily issue being poured over the side brought tears to his eyes. The pay was \$1.75 a day with a "Hard Lyers" supplement of \$.25 a day to compensate for the hardship of corvette life. Sailors were proud of their uniforms. A real matelot, tied his cap tally bow close to the "HMCS." Perhaps not quite as spry as in his naval days, John nevertheless showed that 72 years later he had not lost his touch on the signal lamp.

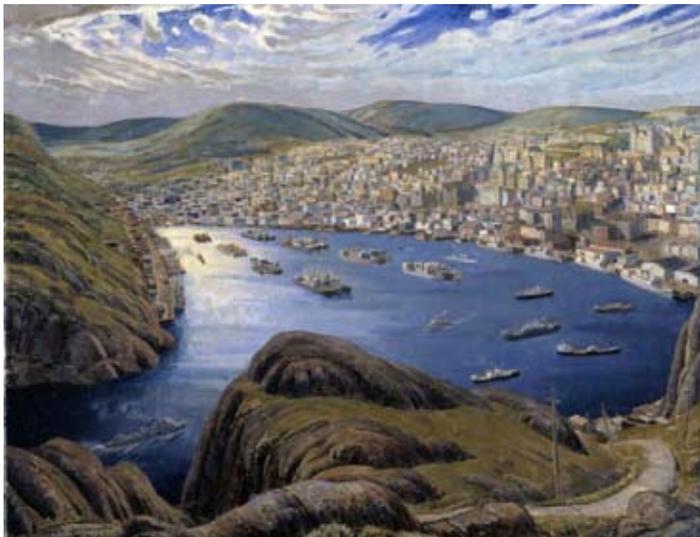
Demobilized in 1945, John returned to Toronto where he took up his pre-war employment with the firm of Pyrene Fire Extinguishers. In September 1950 John married Eleanor Jeannette Gunn. They had 2 children, Susan and John III, a well known Toronto artist. A year before Eleanor passed away they received the official congratulations from Her Majesty the Queen on their 60th wedding anniversary.

Thank you, John, for honouring us with your visit. It was a pleasure to meet you and have you on board Sackville.

Stephen Knowles is a "D- Day Baby" having been born on the 6th of June 1944 when his father, Murray, was off the beaches at Normandy in HMCS *Louisburg*. He was a member of UNTD, and spent most of his working life with Parks Canada and as a Parliamentary Clerk. He is a Life Member of CNMT.

NEWFYJOHN AND THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC *by Dr. Paul W. Collins*

Reprinted courtesy of Heritage Newfoundland and Labrador



St. John's Harbour, Newfoundland from Signal Hill during the Second World War. Painting by Thomas Beament, Beaverbrook Collection of War Art, Canadian War Museum, artifact number 19710261-1048

During the Second World War, Newfoundland played a pivotal role in Allied naval strategy for the North Atlantic. Three of the island's military installations were of particular importance: the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) base at St. John's, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) station at Torbay, and the United States naval/air station at Argentia.

In addition to the defence of the Western Hemisphere, the safeguarding of Allied trans-Atlantic convoys from German attack was a priority. Protected by Canadian, British, and American navies and air forces, the convoys carried much-needed war supplies from North America to Britain. Without this link, Britain would not have had the means to survive the Nazi onslaught.

Based in St. John's, the Newfoundland Escort Force (NEF) was established in 1941 to escort convoys through the dangerous mid-ocean gap between where Canadian escorts left a convoy and Royal Navy escorts picked it up. The force consisted of six Royal Canadian Navy destroyers and 17 corvettes; and seven Royal Navy destroyers and four corvettes.

When the formation of the NEF was approved in May 1941, St. John's was already becoming a defended harbour and the base for the New-

foundland Defence Force. An anti-torpedo baffle was installed at the entrance to the harbour, and an Examination Service was created using two former Newfoundland Customs Cutters. A 4000-tonne Admiralty fuel tank was constructed, and a Port War Signal Station, a High Frequency Direction Finding Station and a radio beacon were erected at Cape Spear. In addition, Cabot Tower was manned as a Port War Signal Station, and Fort Amherst was employed as an Examination Battery. This battery was completed by the Canadian Army by the fall of 1941, but in the interim four mobile 155-millimetre guns and two eight-inch railway guns, manned by American troops, were installed in and around St. John's.

All the same, St. John's had "the leanest of facilities." Its harbour was small, just 700-metres wide and roughly two-kilometres long, and a tangle of fishing stages, ships' storehouses and finger piers, most of which were in decay. The Royal Canadian Navy developed a plan that provided more than 7,000 linear feet of jetty space and included fuel tanks and an underground magazine on the Southside, a 1,000-man barracks, a 250-bed hospital, and a radio station in Mt. Pearl.

This was expanded in 1943 after an Admiralty delegation travelled to St. John's and met with senior NSHQ officials to plan improvements to the base. To continue the build-up of forces in Britain for an invasion of Europe, St. John's needed to maintain a minimum of 50 escorts. The delegation recommended that a new machine shop complex and naval stores building be constructed on the Southside, and the Dockyard storehouse be converted to a light engineering/electronic shop. The delegation also called for a new 1000-square metre harbour craft/boat repair shop with haul-out, plus an 80-vehicle garage for the existing barracks complex. In addition, a new 250-bed hospital would be built in the city's West End.

Training facilities were also part of the plan, and included classroom and signal training space provided by an annex to the Southside barracks. Elaborate simulator trainers, including an anti-aircraft dome teacher and tactical anti-submarine



St. John's Narrows and anti-submarine chain nets. Credit: A.E. Hill, LAC/PA-070821

attack teacher, would also be installed on an adjacent site. Furthermore, a Defensively Equipped Merchant Ship training range would be erected on the cliffs at Cape Spear, and when completed in 1944, mounted both anti-aircraft and larger calibre practice artillery pieces. Harbour defences would be improved, with the controlled mine-field in the Narrows upgraded and enlarged, and a fully-equipped boom defence depot built at the Admiralty's wharfage on the Southside. These new facilities necessitated an additional 2,350 personnel.

Over the course of the Battle of the Atlantic, there were in excess of 500 RCN ship-visits to *Newfyjohn* and hundreds of American, British, and Halifax- and Sydney-based naval vessels (of the famous *Triangle Run*) used St. John's as a turnaround port. During the same period, the number of naval personnel serving at St. John's rose from less than 1,000 people to upwards of 7,000 men and women by Germany's surrender in May 1945, and thousands of ships' crew were accommodated at the Buckmasters' Field naval barracks. Even more so, *Newfyjohn* facilitated the "safe and timely arrival" of over 25,000 RCN-escorted merchant ships in the United Kingdom over the course of the war. What had originally been planned as only a defended harbour ended the war as a naval base of considerable importance.



Survivors of a torpedoed merchant ship landed in St. John's, Newfoundland, 15 September 1942. Photo credit: Lt. Gerald M. Moses, LAC/PA-116455

As a port of refuge, upwards of 6,000 survivors, including U-boat POWs, were landed and cared for in St. John's, and thousands of merchant seamen and visiting forces personnel found respite at the various hostels established throughout the city.

*About the author: Paul W. Collins is a born and bred Newfoundlander, with a doctoral degree in History from Memorial University of Newfoundland. He is a recognized author on Newfoundland during the Second World War and an expert on "Newfyjohn's" role in the Battle of the Atlantic. His most recent book *The Newfyjohn Solution* is available on amazon.ca*

See: <https://drpaulwcollins.com/> a treasure trove for anyone interested in Royal Canadian Navy/Battle of the Atlantic/Newfoundland history.

THE NEWFOUNDLAND ESCORT FORCE *By Dr. Marc Milner*

Reprinted courtesy of Legion Magazine



The first corvettes of the NEF head to St. John's, Nfld., May 1941. Photo: LAC – PA037447

Until the spring of 1941, the Royal Canadian Navy had no clear indication that it would find its calling in the broad reaches of the North Atlantic. The process of defining that role culminated in May, when the British Admiralty called upon the RCN to form the Newfoundland Escort Force (NEF), and concentrate its resources there in the defence of transatlantic convoys.

The establishment of the NEF not only brought together the main elements of the fleet that would fight – and win – the battle against the U-boats, it also brought together several key players who would lead the RCN's escort and anti-submarine campaign for the balance of the war.

By early 1941, the United Kingdom-based escorts were taking convoys to roughly 22 degrees west longitude, where outbound convoys were dispersed and inbound convoys were met for the trip back to British ports. The Germans simply pushed westward, too, trying to find the convoys just outside the limits of their anti-submarine escort. The mid-ocean escorts for these convoys, usually an old battleship, a cruiser or even a submarine to guard against surface raiders were no match for the nimble U-boats. To extend anti-submarine protection, naval as well as air force, the British developed bases in Iceland, and by April had extended coverage for convoys out to 35 degrees west. The 10 Canadian built corvettes sent to the U.K. over the winter of 1940-41 helped make that convoy extension possible. And by the winter of 1940-41, the British were building modified corvette designs and rebuilding their first corvettes to make them better ocean escorts.

This was not the kind of war Canada's first 54 corvettes had been conceived and built for. Their original function as auxiliary vessels as-

signed to defended ports included a myriad of tasks, among them anti-submarine patrols and minesweeping. The officer charged with getting the first corvette building program in shape for these tasks was Commander James Douglas "Chummy" Prentice of the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve.



Commander James Douglas "Chummy" Prentice/LAC – PA204284

Prentice had been born in British Columbia and joined the Royal Navy before the First World War, when his father refused him permission to join the fledgling RCN. As historian Alec Douglas observed in the RCN official history, Prentice was "noted for his zeal and intellect" and only abandoned his British naval career "in 1934 because cutbacks during the Great Depression ended his possibility of promotion." By 1939, when the RCN called him to active service, Prentice was ranching in B.C. Unhappy with his appointment to the port staff in Sydney, N.S., he lobbied hard for a sea command. In the fall of 1940, Prentice was selected as a captain of one of the new – as yet uncompleted – corvettes, and for the job of Senior Officer, Canadian Corvettes. His ranching background and his aggressive style would later be credited, rather uncharitably, with shaping what some senior British officers called the Can-

adian cowboy form of convoy defence – wild and (by British standards) confused, designed to “keep ‘em well stirred up.”

But Prentice’s job in early 1941 had little to do with escorting convoys. His task was to whip the new ships into shape, and oversee the creation of anti-submarine “striking groups” for Canada’s defended ports. What the British did with surplus Canadian corvettes assigned to the eastern Atlantic – their training, operational tasks, tactics, and doctrine – was an RN matter entirely.



Personnel of HMCS Chambly, May 1941/LAC – PA115351

Prentice put his stamp on the Canadian corvette fleet from the outset. Having just passed the short anti-submarine course in Halifax at the top of his class, he was keen to turn the burgeoning fleet into skilled sub killers. While many saw the corvette as a poor warship – slow and weakly armed – Prentice thought of it as an ideal sub hunter. Although its maximum speed was barely 16 knots, the large reserve of steam in the vast cylindrical Scotch boilers gave the first batch of corvettes quick bursts of speed, and the vessel had a huge rudder and fine underwater lines which made it nimble.

The ships were also comparatively cheap and could be risked in combat: a good trade-off, if it came to that, for a complex and expensive submarine. So Prentice trained Canada’s corvettes to be sub killers, and this focus remained a key component of his training philosophy to the end of the war. As he informed the RCN’s official historian in a 1947 letter, corvettes were “the handi-

est anti-submarine ship that was ever built.” One of his favourite tactics was the ‘quick attack.’

In British practice an attack on a submerged U-boat began at 1,200 yards, about the maximum effective range of early sonar. The hunter approached the sub at its optimum sonar search speed, typically around 12 knots, to a ‘throw-off’ point about 800 yards from the target. At that point the attacking ship was supposed to commence a final, high-speed attack run that would intercept the submarine’s course at a point where the depth charges had time to descend to the target. The final sprint from the throw-off point allowed the attacking ship to stay well clear of its own exploding charges, and in theory to get ahead of the sub before it had time to alter course.

Prentice saw many problems with this method. He knew that submariners could easily detect the change in propeller noise of the attacking vessel once it went to maximum speed at the throw-off point. That gave a submariner warning of an impending attack, and time to turn or do a radical change in depth. It also meant that sonar contact was lost on the target during the final approach, since increased speed drowns out the sonar. He thought corvettes could eliminate the opportunity for last-minute evasion, and attack more precisely. He taught his corvette captains to maintain their best sonar speed throughout the whole



Depth charge attack from HMS Starling. Photo: IWM

attack process. This allowed them to maintain contact as long as possible, and eliminated the

sudden change in propeller noise at the throw-off point that could alert a submariner to the commencement of the attack.

The downside of this method, which Prentice acknowledged and the British found unacceptable, was that the corvette would remain fairly close to its own depth charges as they began to explode. Just how close depended on the depth setting. The potential for damage to the attacking ship was very real, and it was not unusual for Canadian corvettes to have their sterns lifted and suffer blown fuses, shattered crockery and machinery stress from the shock of their own charges. Prentice thought this was a fair trade for a better chance of sinking a sub, and maybe he was right: Canadian corvettes – despite their notably inferior weapons and equipment – proved to be highly successful U-boat killers between 1941 and 1943.



HMCS Matane sailor braving the elements to check stowage of depth charges in heavy seas off Bermuda. LAC - PA-134326

While Prentice was busy in the spring of 1941 getting the RCN's first corvettes ready to hunt U-boats, staff talks between the RCN and the RN were underway which would profoundly alter the nature of Canada's Atlantic war. These talks were prompted by the spreading of the war into the centre of the North Atlantic. Over the winter of 1940-41, Germany's U-boats enjoyed their first Happy Time, attacking transatlantic convoys with impunity. In the late winter, many of these attacks occurred south of Iceland, either just after anti-submarine escorts dispersed their westbound convoys or just before the escort joined those en route for Britain. Moreover, even when escorts were present, they were typically at the end of their range and limited by fuel in the responses they could make. It was increasingly obvious that transatlantic anti-submarine escort

of convoys was essential, and that this required bases in Iceland and Newfoundland.

The British had occupied Iceland in the spring of 1940, primarily to deny it as a refuge or future base for the Germans. Troops of the 2nd Canadian Division had shared garrison duties



From left: Rear-Admiral L.W. Murray, Newfoundland Governor Humphrey Walwyn, Cmdr. "Chummy" Prentice and his wife in 1942. LAC – PA134538

briefly from July until October 1940, leaving the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa there over the following winter. But nothing was done to establish naval and air bases on the island until the westward spread of the U-boat war forced Britain's hand. By April 1941, Coastal Command Squadrons of the Royal Air Force were being dispatched, as were the rudimentary elements of an advanced naval base for Havfjörður Harbour north of Reykjavik, Iceland. The latter provided a relay point for anti-submarine escorts, allowing the RN to push its coverage to roughly 35 degrees west. That left a gap westward to the limits of local Canadian escort from Halifax and Sydney, which reached to the Grand Banks. An escort force based at St. John's, Nfld., was needed to fill that gap.

The possibility of the RCN basing its fleet in Newfoundland began in earnest in May 1941. The RCN representative in these talks was Commodore Leonard Warren Murray. Murray had joined the RCN in 1912 as a member of the first class of the Royal Naval College of Canada. By 1939, he was, along with Commodore G.C. Jones, one of two survivors from that class still in service, and therefore one of the two most senior officers in the RCN. Murray went overseas in 1940 as Captain of His Majesty's Canadian Ship

Assiniboine, the RCN's new destroyer flotilla leader, and assumed the role of Commodore Commanding Canadian Ships in the U.K. It was a good posting for Murray, and in many ways a familiar one. He had spent most of his active career in RN ships and establishments and was, from the viewpoint of the RCN's Chief of the Naval Staff, Rear-Admiral Percy Nelles, rather pro-British, which says a great deal in a service that was, itself, inclined that way.

The essential point was that Murray had many intimate contacts among senior RN officers, including the newly appointed Commander in Chief, Western Approaches Command, Admiral Sir Percy Noble. Western Approaches Command was established in Liverpool in April 1941 to take effective control over all aspects of anti-submarine warfare and trade escort in the North Atlantic, including elements of Coastal Command. This was part of the overall solution to problems which the U-boat offensive had revealed. It was Noble's task to provide effective command and control, oversee training and developing tactics and doctrine to fight the anti-submarine war.



Admiral Sir Percy Noble chatting with HMS Stork sailors after probable sinking of U--252 Photo: IWM.

With the establishment of Western Approaches Command, Canadian warships in the U.K. fell under his control. But Murray also knew Noble well. Noble had commanded the new cruiser *Calcutta* (notorious in Canadian naval history for slicing His Majesty's Ship *Fraser* in half in June 1940) which Murray served in as a junior lieutenant in 1919-20.

And so Murray had the support of the new C in C, WAC when he went to the Admiralty in late May 1941 to argue that the new escort base proposed for Newfoundland should be Canadian. "I

had just come from St. John's about a month and a half before," Murray recalled in a 1970 interview, "and was able to give them the lowdown about the situation there, about the anchorage and so forth." The RCN and the Canadian government were also anxious to support the idea of a major Canadian naval base in Newfoundland, not least because it gave them clout on the island in the face of the growing American presence there. After confirming the RCN's willingness to undertake the task, Murray visited Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound, First Sea Lord in London.

Murray found Pound engaged in the early stages of the Bismarck chase. Nonetheless, the First Sea Lord found time to discuss Murray's proposal and accepted the idea that the RCN should run the St. John's base. Pound also recommended that Murray command it. "This is what comes," Murray recalled, "of being in the right place at the right time." Murray asserted later that had he not pressed the issue, and had he not "gained the confidence of the Admiralty in 1941," the British would have sent out an RN officer to command in Newfoundland. "This is not surmise," he added. "I know. I was there!"

On May 20, Canada was formally requested to base its burgeoning fleet of corvettes at St. John's. The RCN responded with enthusiasm and the Newfoundland Escort Force was borne. It was a milestone in Canadian history: Canada's first major operational task in a major naval campaign.

While Murray hastened off to Liverpool to spend a week with Admiral Noble at Western Approaches Command, Prentice got the corvette fleet ready for war. Until news came that every available corvette was to be hustled off to Newfoundland to start oceanic convoy operations, there was no particular urgency in this task. In fact, the RCN had already received assurances from the Admiralty that the escorts should reach an acceptable level of both individual and group training prior to their commitment to operations. Nothing in the arrangements for the establishment of the NEF suggested otherwise. But this situation would soon change.

On May 23, 1941, Prentice led the first seven corvettes of the NEF through the cleft-like entrance into St. John's. They secured to a rotting wooden wharf at the southern end of the harbour. Apart from fuel, shelter, food, water and encouragement, St. John's offered little in 1941. The eastern

terminus for NEF operations offered even less: an open and windswept Icelandic fiord 2,000 miles to the northeast. Fortunately, Prentice and his band of eager warriors were undaunted.

Four days later the British hunt for the Bismarck ended with the destruction of that great raider, and the nature of the Atlantic war changed. The symbolism of that change was probably lost on both British and Canadian sailors when NEF undertook its first operation: screening the battle cruiser Repulse, as she lay in Conception Bay, Nfld., following the hunt for the Bismarck. Photos of Prentice's corvette Chambly lying alongside Repulse show the battle cruiser towering over the tiny escort. It does not take much to imagine the epithets that rained down on the corvette's duty watch by the grinning British tars (sailors) lining the battle cruiser's rails. But Chambly and her sisters proved more than a match for the Atlantic. Indeed, the Atlantic was

now a small ship's war, and the humble, but nimble corvette was a better match for the U-boats than Repulse.

The RCN's River- and Town-class destroyers began to arrive in St. John's in June, as did Commodore L.W. Murray who assumed his duties as Commodore Commanding, Newfoundland Force on the 15th. It is not clear how well Murray and Prentice knew each other before that day. But for better or worse, the dynamic duo which would shape RCN operations in the North Atlantic during the dark days of the war – and the formative days of its development – had been joined. By the fall of 1941, virtually all of the operational strength of the navy would be in their hands. As Murray observed in October 1941, "the reputation of the RCN in this war depends on the success or failure of the NEF."

He was right in so many ways.

THE INTERNATIONAL MEMORIAL FOR THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC



Submitted by BOAM chairman Vice-Admiral Mike Gretton, whose father Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Gretton served during the battle as an Atlantic Escort Group commander during the battle.

The name "Battle of the Atlantic" was coined by Winston Churchill in February 1941. It has been called the "longest, largest, and most complex" naval battle in history. The campaign started immediately after the European war began, during the so-called "Phoney War", and lasted six years, until the German Surrender in May 1945. It involved thousands of ships in more than 100 convoy battles and perhaps 1,000 single-ship encounters, in a theatre covering thousands of square miles of ocean. The situation changed constantly, with one side or the other gaining advantage, as participating countries surrendered, joined, and even changed sides in the war, and as new weapons, tactics, counter-measures, and equipment were developed by both sides. The Allies gradually gained the upper hand, overcoming German surface raiders by the end of 1942 and defeating the U-boats by mid-1943, though losses due to U-boats continued until war's end. Despite the importance of the Battle the campaign does not have an overall memorial in the UK.

It is planned that the bravery and dedication of all participants will be commemorated in the city which was at the heart of the effort in the United Kingdom – Liverpool. The command headquarters of the campaign was in Liverpool, and many of the warships and merchant vessels were based there.

A site for the memorial has been selected close to the Pier Head and Canada Boulevard, the Merseyside Maritime Museum, and the Albert Dock and sculptor Paul Day has been commissioned to develop the design to reflect a Liberty ship, and friezes to tell the story of the campaign.

The initial costing estimate for this project is in the order of £2.5M. The long term plan is of an unveiling date in 2019.

For further information: www.battleoftheatlantic.org

HMCS SACKVILLE BACK IN 'ACTION' by Cdr ret'd Len Canfield

If all goes according to plan and with the aid of LIDAR scanning, the iconic corvette HMCS *Sackville* will have a cameo role in the US naval drama "Greyhound" scripted by and starring Academy Award winner Tom Hanks.

Hanks has based the script on the C.S. Forester novel "The Good Shepherd." It portrays a troubled US destroyer captain escorting an Allied convoy across the perilous North Atlantic in 1942 when German U-boats were sinking a significant number of merchant and naval ships with heavy loss of life.

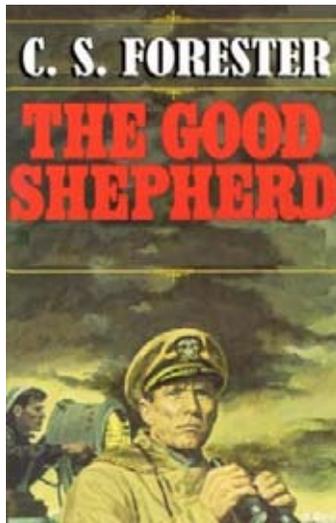
The film, being produced by Film Nation Entertainment in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, required footage of other convoy escorts and this is where HMCS *Sackville* entered the picture. *Sackville* is the last of the Allies 269 wartime corvettes that played a major role in winning the pivotal Battle of the Atlantic.

Lieutenant Commander Doug Thomas ret'd, Executive Director of the volunteer Canadian Naval Memorial Trust that owns and operates *Sackville*, was contacted in December by one of the film's VFX (visual effects) crews requesting footage of the corvette. With no available footage of *Sackville* in action during the war arrangements were worked out for VFX specialist Alex Shvartzman to carry out LIDAR scanning of the ship at her winter berth in HMC Dockyard.

The scanning included dimensional exterior scans of *Sackville* from the upper deck of the ship as well as from a boat outboard of the ship to be fed into a computer to depict a wartime corvette. Much of the current film action sequences employ computer graphic imagery to produce realistic effects. (LIDAR or light detection and ranging is used to scan buildings, etc to produce a high resolution 3-D model).

Shvartzman scanned both the exterior and upper deck of the 205-foot *Sackville*, one of Canada's 123 wartime corvettes. The ship's most memorable action occurred in early August 1942 (the same year as the *Greyhound* story) when she engaged three U-boats in a 24 hour period off the Grand Banks, putting two of the subs out of action. Commissioned in December 1941 and

named after the Town of Sackville, NB, *Sackville* was designated Canada's Naval Memorial by the Government of Canada in 1985.



Filming of *Greyhound* is expected to ramp up in the next several months using the Fletcher-class destroyer USS *Kidd* and other locations in Baton Rouge. *Kidd*, launched in 1943 and veteran of Pacific and Korean operations was designated a memorial for Louisiana Second World War veterans in 1982. The museum ship is berthed in Baton Rouge (on the Mississippi River) and maintained by the Louisiana War Memorial Commission.

LCdr Thomas has requested that the corvette depicted in *Greyhound* be identified as HMCS *Sackville* and/or use her K181 pennant number as well as providing a credit for the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust.



Alex Shvartzman scanning exterior of HMCS *Sackville* in HMC Dockyard and below with hand held device.



A NOVA SCOTIA ARTIST'S DEPICTION OF THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

by Carl Anderson

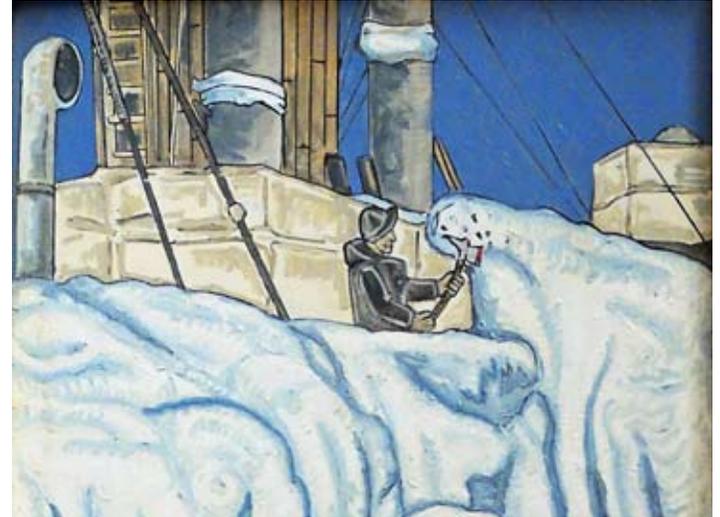
In the Canadian Navy's centennial year 2010 the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia mounted an exhibition *The Navy and Halifax: 100 Years Together*. The exhibition brought together fifty-one paintings by thirty-one artists, five of whom were official Canadian War Artists, and more than a dozen were Nova Scotians. Canadian naval ships, aircraft, and personnel were illustrated in a broad range of artistic styles, both at sea and in their historical home, the port city of Halifax.

On permanent view at the same time was a collection of twenty-one paintings by Nova Scotia artist Bruce Pellegrin depicting the Battle of the Atlantic (1939-1945). The Pellegrin paintings, known as *The Battle of the Atlantic Collage*, hang in the south transept of Halifax's Cathedral Church of All Saints where, since their dedication in 2003, they serve as "a tribute to the courage and dedication of all who served Canada during The Battle of the Atlantic".

There are two thematic works: *Battle of the Atlantic (1939-1945)*, and *Convoys - Lifeline to Victory*. The painting *HMCS Sackville Canada's National Naval Memorial* recognizes the last surviving Second World War corvette, one of the Royal Canadian Navy's anti-submarine convoy escort ships.

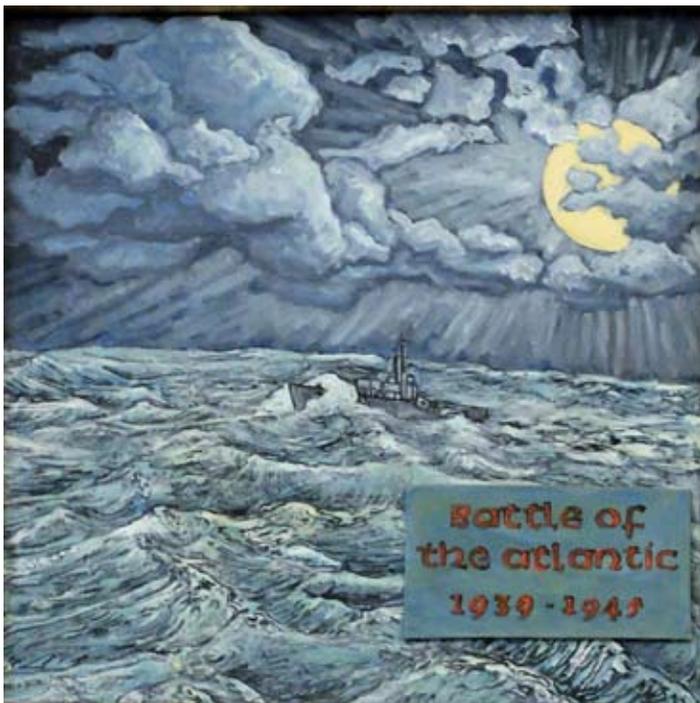


Other paintings portray the life of sailors at sea: chipping ice, Sunday worship, a burial at sea, a ship's galley and messdeck, gunners manning a ship's defensive "pom-pom" gun, and sailors relaxing off watch.



Scenes of the home front include King George VI and Queen Elizabeth's 1939 visit to Halifax, Wrens at work, a ship being repaired by women welders, a departing convoy passing the Bedford Basin community of Africville, civilians on a pier hopefully awaiting the return of loved ones, the arrival in Halifax of war brides and children, and the celebration of VE Day in Halifax.

Engagements with enemy submarines are also depicted: the rescue of survivors from a sinking ship, a burning oil tanker, a depth charge attack, the loss of an RCN warship, and an enemy submarine under attack.



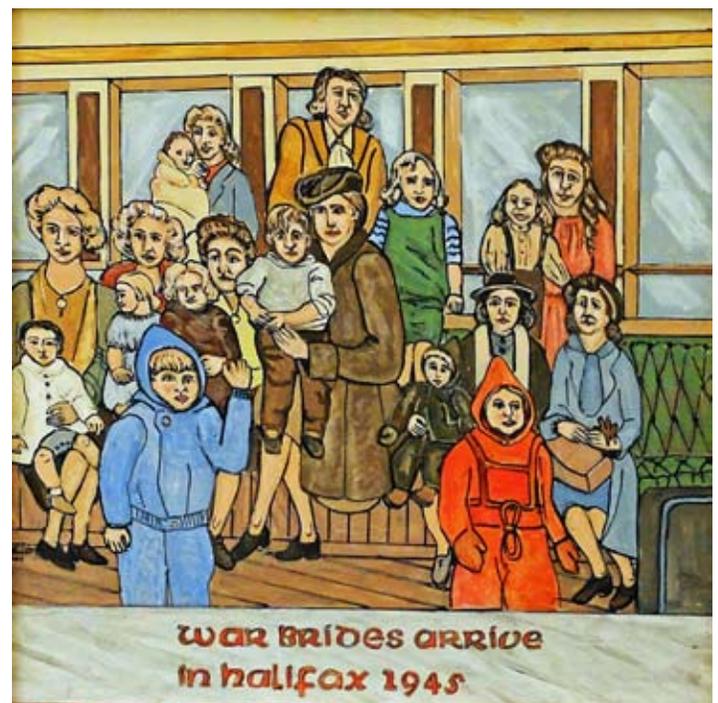
Church and the Cathedral Church of All Saints. The Battle of the Atlantic paintings are dedicated to the memory of RCN Lieutenant-Commander Robert Auburn Stewart MacNeil (1906-1959) and his wife Margaret Virginia Oxner MacNeil (1907-1989). Robert MacNeil joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Marine Division as a Master Mariner in 1939.

At the start of the Second World War his RCMP ship *Laurier* was transferred to the RCN. In the six years of the Battle of the Atlantic, he commanded the RCN ships HMCS *Dauphin*, *Sorel*, *Columbia*, *Acadia*, and *Wallaceburg*. He was awarded the Royal Norwegian War Medal for gallantry and the named as Officer of the Military Division for the Order of the British Empire by King George VI (2 June 1943).



Robert MacNeil returned to the RCMP after the war. In 1958 he joined the Department of External Affairs which he served in Europe until his death in 1959. Margaret Virginia Oxner was raised in Halifax. She married Robert MacNeil in 1929, and through the depression and war years in Halifax she raised three sons: Robert (b. 1931), Hugh (b. 1934), and Michael (b. 1941).

The artist is Rev. Dr. Victor Bruce Holker Pellegrin PhD, a retired minister of the Anglican Church of Canada. He began painting as a boy in British Columbia, where he studied under the artist and sculptor Peggy Walton Packard. His art is inspired by that of Emily Carr and the Group of Seven. Pellegrin's work often depicts the landscapes of Canada, particularly that of the Maritimes. His art and iconography are also found in the Atlantic School of Theology, St. Croix and Saint James Churches (Hants County NS), Christ Church (Dartmouth NS), and Halifax's St. John's Anglican



WEIGH, HEIGH, UP SHE RISES by Sandy McClearn, P.Eng., PMP, LEED AP BD+C

Pat Jessup



In the days following the federal announcement of the \$3.5 million grant, onboard staff, CNMT volunteers and Dockyard personnel - energized by the good news - turned to in preparation of docking HMCS *Sackville* on the Navy's Syncrolift and into the submarine shed for much needed hull repairs. With important archival displays boxed and stored ashore, her mast was removed (to allow

her to move into the submarine shed). *Sackville* was pre-trimmed fore and aft to lower the bow and raise the stern (to level out the keel line so she would sit on the Syncrolift's support blocking).

Much planning went into the physical shift from *Sackville's* comfortable berth to the repair facility and winter weather was a concern. With an

Sandy McClearn



CFAV *Merrickville* arriving before dawn to assist in *Sackville's* move.



Navy divers, critical to the move, ensure that *Sackville* is properly positioned over the lifting point blocks.



QHM tugs easing *Sackville* onto Syncrolift.



early morning low tide and light winds forecast for Sunday, 11 February, a large component of Maritime Forces Atlantic personnel (including Fleet Maintenance Facility docking staff and riggers, Queen's Harbour Master tugs and pilots, line handlers from HMCS *Fredericton*, divers from the Fleet Diving Unit, and a time lapse photographer from the Forces Imaging Section) gathered with CNMT members before dawn in cold pouring rain to start the process. The move was slow and delicate given the fragility of Canada's seventy-seven year old Naval Memorial.

The much needed repair work is currently underway in the Naval Dockyard, primarily by civilian contractors and mostly within the Captain Bernard Leitch Johnson submarine building, which

leaves the Syncrolift available to conduct urgent repairs on operational ships if required.

The Syncrolift consists of a platform slung by winches between two fixed piers. The winches are synchronized to lift, or lower, the platform on an even keel. *Sackville* was positioned over the support blocking on the lift, and with the assistance of Navy divers, slowly raised out of the water.

Once on the platform *Sackville's* hull was cleaned of marine growth through power-washing. On February 15th the tow motor was connected to the system of rail bogeys under the ship, and *Sackville* was moved into the maintenance building.

Despite regular hull scraping by divers to combat marine growth, it is difficult to win this battle against sea life, especially for a stationary museum ship alongside.

Sandy McClearn



Flower-class corvettes were reputed to "roll on wet grass," and they were the only escort that could turn inside of a U-boat. Sackville's poise in the above photo speaks to both attributes.

Sandy McClearn



Doug Struthers



Photo from aft illustrating the level of marine growth in less than a year.

Doug Struthers



Marine growth up close and slippery.



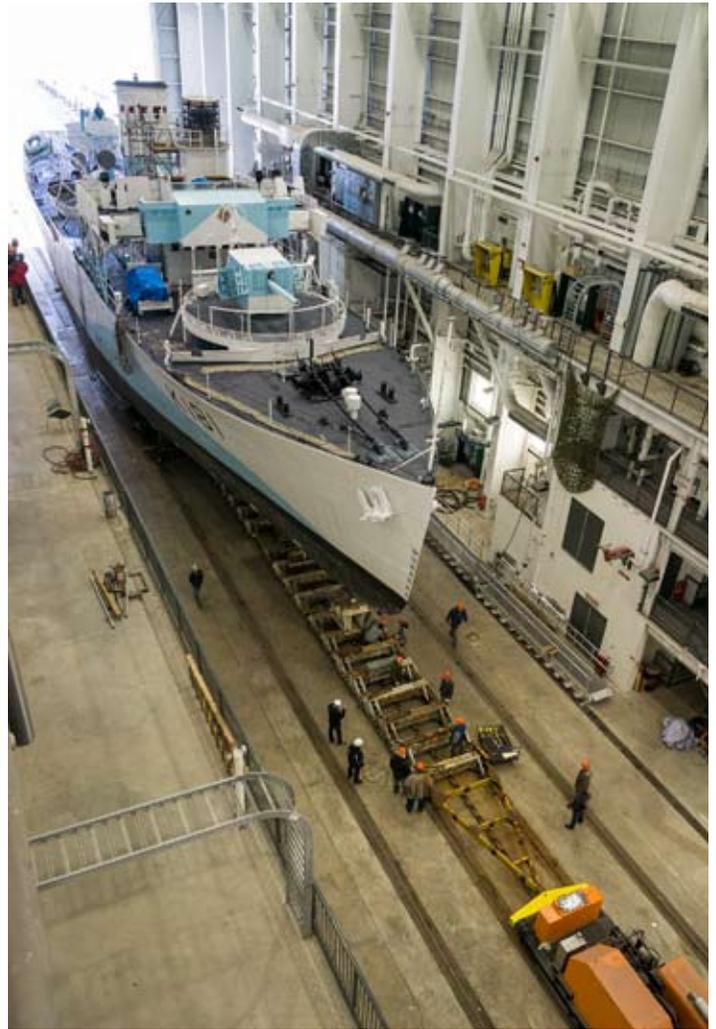
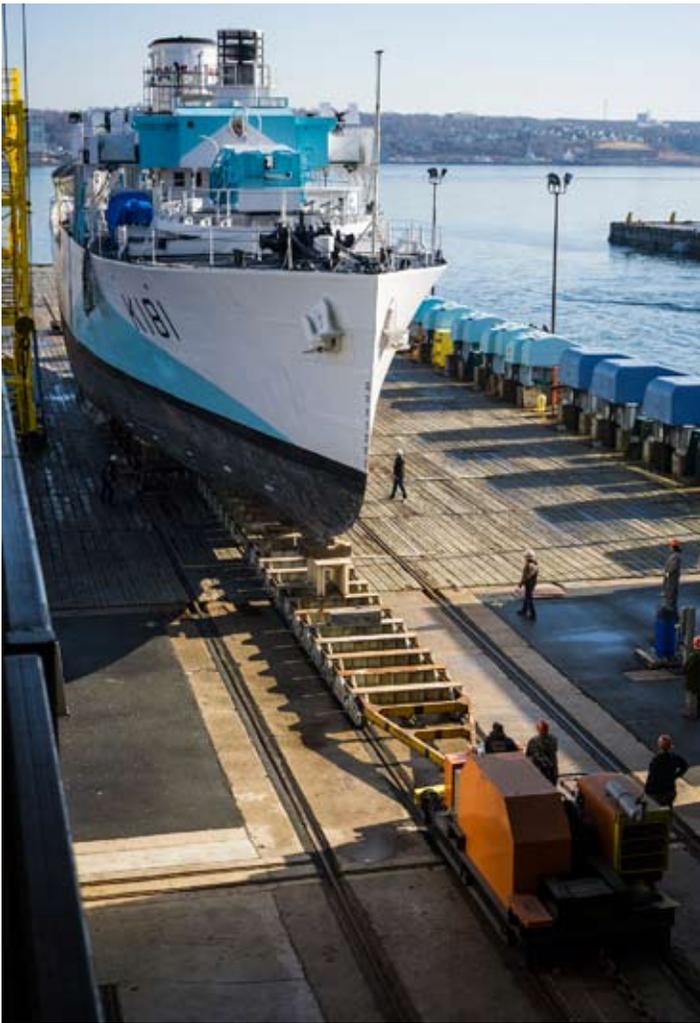
Sackville on the lift and ready to shift into the repair facility in the morning. Remaining pictures illustrate the slow progression of the 5-hour move.

The ship's condition will be surveyed more thoroughly than was possible when she was afloat, and the refit is expected to last about three to four months. Of particular concern is the condition of the hull's framing and plates.

While the ship is undergoing refit a shore office has been established in the maintenance facility where our shipkeepers can be reached during the day at 902-222-4621. Access to the facility is restricted to the contractors and security is in place during working hours.

The last time HMCS *Sackville* was on the Syncro-lift was in 2008 so she is well due for the royal treatment that is being provided.



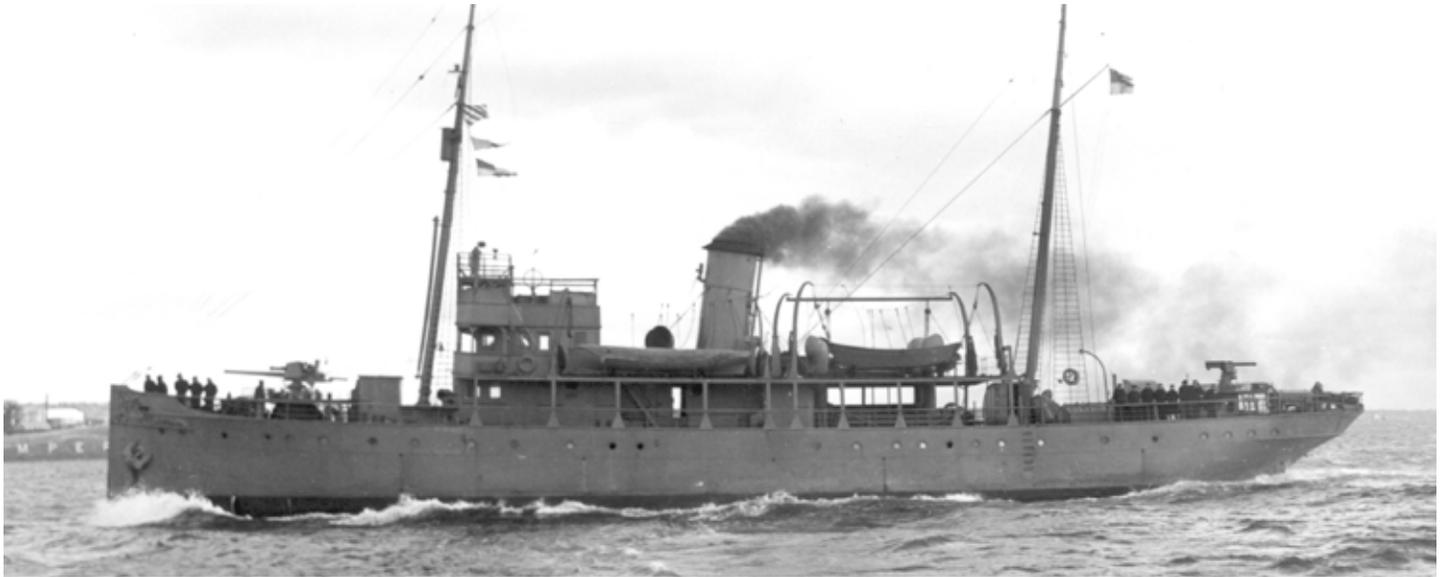


Pulling itself along a heavy chain, the orange tow motor transfers Sackville into the modern Captain Bernard Leitch Johnson submarine maintenance facility.



Sandy McClearn

HMCS SACKVILLE AND CSS ACADIA CONTINUE TO SERVE *by Len Canfield*



HMCS Acadia circa 1917, pre Halifax Explosion.

HMCS *Sackville* and CSS *Acadia*, berthed near one another on Halifax's historic waterfront, are the Grandes Dames of Canada's naval, hydrographic and oceanographic research service and heritage.

Sackville and *Acadia* –both National Historic Sites–represent scores of years of active service during war and peace. While they are recognized as two of our country's most venerated ships the question raised is how long they will be available to Canadians and international visitors given their age and respective repair and restoration requirements.

The histories of the two ships cover much of the 20th century, from Canada coming of age during the First World War through to the country's unprecedented contribution to the Allied cause in the Second World War to peacetime service in support of ocean surveying and research.

During the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion in December, 2017, David Flemming, a former director of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic (which owns and operates *Acadia*) provided an informative overview of the 105 year-old ship's contribution to "Canada's rich marine history" and the need to preserve *Acadia*.

The 181-foot, 846 ton *Acadia* was built in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England in 1913 displaying "...splendid lines from a straight bow to a graceful counter stern" with two masts and a funnel. She was specifically designed for and conducted pioneering hydrographic research in Canada's eastern and northern waters with a crew of 51

and a hydrographic staff of 15. During the First World War her role changed when she was commissioned into the fledgling Royal Canadian Navy as HMCS *Acadia* and assigned patrol, escort and guard ship duties at the entrance to Bedford Basin and harbor.

On Dec 6, 1917 the ship was rocked but avoided major damage when the French munitions ship *Mont Blanc* and the Belgian relief ship *Imo* collided in the Narrows, devastating much of Halifax and Dartmouth with thousands of casualties. *Acadia* continued her naval duties until 1919 when she was returned to the Canadian Hydrographic Service. At the outbreak of the Second World War she again served in the RCN as a training, patrol and gunnery training vessel before returning to the hydrographic service.

Acadia was finally retired from active service in 1969 and remained alongside at the Bedford Institute of Oceanography. In 1982 ownership of the ship was transferred to the Province of Nova Scotia for preservation and interpretation at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic (close to HMCS *Sackville* at her Sackville Landing berth). For 35 years *Acadia* has hosted thousands of visitors but as Flemming notes, "...in the last few years public access below deck has been discontinued and the vessel is in need of extensive repairs and restoration... it is hoped that she can soon return to her full status as a museum ship..."

Sackville, a 205-foot Flower Class corvette was named after the Town of Sackville, NB and commissioned in Saint John, NB in December 1941.



HMCS Sackville painting commissioned for the 75th anniversary of the navy and painted by Robert Banks.

She was one of 123 corvettes that served in the RCN during the Second World War and has the distinction of being the last of the 269 Allied escorts that played a critical role in ensuring victory in the longest battle of the war, the Battle of the Atlantic (1939-1945).

Britain's wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill labelled the quickly constructed round-bottomed corvettes the "cheap but nasties." *Sackville* and her sister ships formed the core of ocean escort ships defending convoys of merchant ships departing Halifax, St John's and other North American ports carrying vital supplies and war materiel to the United Kingdom. The early years of the war witnessed a high loss of merchant and naval ships to German U-boats in the stormy North Atlantic. *Sackville's* most memorable action occurred in early August 1942 when she engaged three U-boats in a 24 hour period near the Grand Banks, putting two of the U-boats out of action.

In September 1943 *Sackville* was part of another convoy which encountered a U-boat wolf pack. She chased and drove down one submarine with depth charges; several merchant ships and four escorts were torpedoed and sunk with heavy loss of life. Later in the war she was deployed as a loop layer in the Halifax area and as a training ship for HMCS *Kings* (officer training establishment).

Following the end of hostilities *Sackville* was one of few corvettes not sold to other navies or commercial interests. In the early 1950s she was con-

verted to an oceanographic research vessel and continued to serve until paid off in 1982. At that time and with the support of the Naval Officers Association of Canada the volunteer Canadian Naval Corvette Trust was formed (later renamed the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust) to acquire and restore *Sackville* to her wartime configuration. In 1985 the Government of Canada designated *Sackville* as Canada's Naval Memorial to honor the 2,000 members of the RCN who lost their lives during the hostilities and to honor all those who served and continue to serve at sea. .

In 2017 Trip Advisor recognized *Sackville* as one of Halifax's top tourist attractions and the ship welcomes thousands of visitors to her summer berth next to the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. Throughout the year the *Sackville* supports different naval, youth, community and corporate events and activities. On January 26 the CNMT received some welcome news when Treasury Board President Scott Brison, on behalf of the Minister of National Defence, announced the federal government will contribute up to \$3.5 million for extensive repairs to *Sackville* and will work with the Trust to develop a long-term plan for preservation of the ship.

HMCS *Sackville* and CSS *Acadia* have earned their place in Nova Scotia and Canada's rich naval and marine history and need to be preserved for future generations. Fair winds and following seas for these deserving Grandes Dames.



COLOUR HALIFAX - OUR LATEST CORPORATE CHAMPION AND SUPPORTER

Bravo Zulu and a hearty Well Done to **COLOUR** Halifax, a full-service integrated and marketing agency with expertise in digital and social media, for the creation of a new website for the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust and HMCS *Sackville*. Led by Sarah Flynn, Senior Vice President, the **Colour** team spent months working with a CNMT sub-committee, under the guidance of Capt(N) (Ret'd) John Pickford. The aim: Revive HMCS *Sackville's* story by modernizing its website to maximize awareness of the ship and the Battle of the Atlantic and to generate more support by recruiting new members and educating target audiences (especially younger) of both the ship's and the battle's significance.

Interactive, Appealing, Informative. The new website was designed to serve the CNMT membership, serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces and other forces, retired veterans and their families, naval historians, students from across the education spectrum, and tourists visiting the Halifax area. Branding and design content was also important and it is felt that the new look is crisp, appealing, and colourful. From a content perspective, many of the same navigation bar subjects are back but are now more robust and reformatted for easier use. The website allows for much more digital imagery including an interactive tour of the ship. As well, maintaining currency in the ship's program and news about the ship and members will be a paramount objective of the new site. There is even a new section for those planning a visit.

COLOUR Halifax truly went well above and beyond the call of duty in their commitment to the

Canadian Naval Memorial Trust. Sarah and her team of Leonard Roberts (Left), Shaquille Smith (Right), , and other members of the Colour group, both in Halifax and Toronto, spent hundreds of additional hours to refine the new website, above that agreed to by contract, to ensure that *Sackville* received the best creative digital experience for our website visitors. In doing so, **COLOUR** Halifax has become a corporate champion of the ship and a "Destroyer Class Supporter" of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, recognition that is absolutely well deserved !



COLOUR's contribution to the project was recognized during an informal presentation in their Halifax office. Commander Wendall Brown (ret'd), left, Chair of the CNMT presents the plaque to Sarah Flynn, senior vice president of Colour; Captain(N) (ret'd) John Pickford, a CNMT director and chair of the Trust's website working committee is at right.

www.hmcSSackville.ca



2018 CANADIAN NAVAL MEMORIAL TRUST Essay Competition

Canadian Naval Review will be holding its annual essay competition again in 2018. There will be a prize of \$1,000 for the best essay, provided by the **Canadian Naval Memorial Trust**. The winning essay will be published in *CNR*. (Other non-winning essays will also be considered for publication, subject to editorial review.)

Essays submitted to the contest should relate to the following topics:

- Canadian maritime security;
- Canadian naval policy;
- Canadian naval issues;
- Canadian naval operations;
- History/historical operations of the Canadian Navy;
- Global maritime issues (such as piracy, smuggling, fishing, environment);
- Canadian oceans policy and issues;
- Arctic maritime issues;
- Maritime transport and shipping.

If you have any questions about a particular topic, contact naval.review@dal.ca.

Contest Guidelines and Judging

- Submissions for the 2018 *CNR* essay competition must be received at naval.review@dal.ca by Monday, **30 September 2018**.
- Submissions are not to exceed 3,000 words. Longer submissions will be penalized in the adjudication process.
- Submissions cannot have been published elsewhere.
- All submissions must be in electronic format and any accompanying photographs, images, or other graphics and tables must also be included as a separate file.

The essays will be assessed by a panel of judges on the basis of a number of criteria including readability, breadth, importance, accessibility and relevance. The decision of the judges is final. All authors will be notified of the judges' decision within two months of the submission deadline.

HMCS Matapedia sailors alongside in Halifax following accidental ramming by the merchant freighter SS Scotian in the harbour approaches, Sept 1943. Photo collection of Herb Roberts



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