



Volume VII, No. 77, Winter 2016-17

# Starshell

**'A little light on what's going on!'**



Naval Association of Canada

## OUR COVER ~ 'THE JAUNTY'

My good friend Peter Chance of NAC Victoria informs me this immaculate but formidably dressed chap was known as the gangway 'Jaunty' a lessor Master-at-Arms, usually a CPO though in this case our man is a Leading Seaman or 'killick' in naval jargon. He kept the peace for those going ashore and returning usually more than somewhat under the weather. When acting as a member of the shore patrol he would have his handy weapons to deal with the unruly ones! Can anyone identify this gent or his ship?

Royal Canadian Navy Photograph

## In this edition...

Battle of the Atlantic Dinner Ottawa	9
NAC Conference and AGM St. John's, Nfld.	4
The Front Desk	5
The Mail Bag	6
NAC Endowment Fund Donation Form	1
The Briefing Room (News)	9
Schober's Quiz #74	19
This Will Have to Do – RAdm Welland's Memoirs, Episode 14	20
Bill's Corner – Sir Galahad	27
Answer to Schober's Quiz #74	29
Book Reviews	30
NAC Regalia Sales	35
Royal Canadian Air Branch 1945 to 1968	36
Jack Thornton's Obscure & Offbeat Naval Oddities	41
Obituaries & In Memoriam	42
Our Navy "A Hunting We Will Go	44

# Join us...



Become a member of the Naval Association of Canada  
Simply contact the NAC Executive Director at:  
[executivedirector-nac@outlook.com](mailto:executivedirector-nac@outlook.com)

Starshell is printed in Canada by Postlink Corporation, Ottawa



Editorial services, layout and design are provided by

### Cascade Creek Publishing®

LCdr (Ret'd) George A. Moore, President

1871 Primrose Crescent, Kamloops, BC V1S 0A5

Telephone 250-314-1284

Cellular 778-220-2868 • Mobile (Satellite) 778-538-6831

[cascadecreek@shaw.ca](mailto:cascadecreek@shaw.ca)

[starshell@shaw.ca](mailto:starshell@shaw.ca)



NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA  
ASSOCIATION NAVALE DU CANADA

# Starshell

ISSN-1191-1166

National magazine of the Naval Association of Canada  
Magazine nationale de L'Association Navale du Canada

[www.navalassoc.ca](http://www.navalassoc.ca)

**PATRON • HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh**

**HONORARY PRESIDENT • H. R. (Harry) Steele**

**PRESIDENT • Jim Carruthers, [jimc@rruthers.com](mailto:jimc@rruthers.com)**

**PAST PRESIDENT • Ken Summers, [kensummers@telus.net](mailto:kensummers@telus.net)**

**TREASURER • King Wan, [king.r.wan1@gmail.com](mailto:king.r.wan1@gmail.com)**

**NAVAL AFFAIRS • Daniel Sing, [ddcc4@sympatico.ca](mailto:ddcc4@sympatico.ca)**

**HISTORY & HERITAGE • Dr. Alec Douglas, [adouglas22@rogers.com](mailto:adouglas22@rogers.com)**

**HONORARY COUNSEL • Donald Grant, [grant@lexfix.ca](mailto:grant@lexfix.ca)**

**ARCHIVIST • Fred Herrndorf, [frederik.herrndorf@sympatico.ca](mailto:frederik.herrndorf@sympatico.ca)**

**AUSN LIAISON • Fred F. Abbott, [abbottff@shaw.ca](mailto:abbottff@shaw.ca)**

**CHAIR ENDOWMENT FUND • Michael Morres, [mfmorres@shaw.ca](mailto:mfmorres@shaw.ca)**

**OBITS EDITOR • Pat Barnhouse, [pat.barnhouse@sympatico.ca](mailto:pat.barnhouse@sympatico.ca)**

**WEBMASTER • Robert (Bob) Bush, [robertbusharl@aol.com](mailto:robertbusharl@aol.com)**

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SEC'Y / COMMUNICATIONS

**Kenneth B. Lait**  
308 Kennedy Lane E  
Orleans ON K1E 3M4  
Telephone 613-841-4358  
[executivedirector-nac@outlook.com](mailto:executivedirector-nac@outlook.com)

### STARSHELL EDITOR

**George A. Moore**  
1871 Primrose Crescent  
Kamloops BC V1S 0A5  
Telephone 250-314-1284  
[starshell@shaw.ca](mailto:starshell@shaw.ca)

**STARSHELL magazine** is published quarterly by the Naval Association of Canada (NAC) in February, May, August and November. The editor is solely responsible for the selection of material. Contributions are encouraged and should be sent direct to the editor. **PLEASE NOTE: ALL MATERIAL MUST REACH THE EDITOR NO LATER THAN THE 15TH DAY OF THE MONTH PRIOR TO THE MONTH OF PUBLICATION.** All photographs submitted for publication must be accompanied by suitable captions and accreditation. **CHANGES OF ADDRESS ARE TO BE SENT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NOT THE EDITOR.**

The opinions expressed in this publication are deemed to be exclusively those of the author(s) and are not necessarily shared by the Naval Association of Canada, the Royal Canadian Navy or the Department of National Defence. If copyright is specified for any item, permission to copy must first be obtained through the editor, otherwise material may be copied without permission provided appropriate attribution is given to both the author(s) and **STARSHELL**.

**DISTRIBUTION and SUBSCRIPTIONS – STARSHELL** circulation exceeds 2,000 copies and is distributed to members of NAC, HMC Ships and shore establishments, NDHQ and other interested individuals. Except for copyright material, copying and internal circulation to interested individuals is encouraged. Non-members may subscribe by sending \$20.00 in Canada, \$25.00 elsewhere for each subscription to the Executive Director.



# BAE Systems proud supporter of the Royal Canadian Submarine Service

Original designers and builders of the Victoria Class,  
supporting the Royal Canadian Navy since 1998.

[www.baesystems.com](http://www.baesystems.com)

**BAE SYSTEMS**

INSPIRED WORK





# Battle of the Atlantic Gala Dinner



The Ottawa Branch of the Naval Association of Canada and the Royal Canadian Navy will again mount the annual Battle of the Atlantic Gala Dinner to recognize the men and women who served in the RCN, the Royal Canadian Air Force, and the Canadian Merchant Navy during the Second World War. The 2017 BoA dinner will be held on Thursday, 4 May, 2017, commencing with pre-dinner drinks at 1800, at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. Online registration through the Naval Association of Canada website will commence on 1 March 2017. This year's event coincides with Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations and is destined to be a rapid sell-out.

**The Naval Association of Canada, Newfoundland & Labrador Branch  
In cooperation with the Crow's Nest Club  
Is pleased to announce that the 2017 NAC National Conference and  
Annual General Meeting will take place 19-22 October in St. John's, NL**

## **National Conference and AGM**

The National Conference will be a one-day event hosted by the Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University on Friday, October 20th. The Conference theme is: *"The North Atlantic, Past and Present."* Further details will be posted on the NAC website. The AGM will be held on Saturday, 21 October at HMCS Cabot.

## **75th Anniversary of the Crow's Nest Officers' Club**

The year 2017 marks the 75th Anniversary of the establishment in 1942 of the Sea-Going Officers' Club near the St. John's waterfront. It is now a National Historic Site. As part of the anniversary celebrations, there will be several special events including a naval mess dinner at CFS St. John's on Saturday, 21 October.

## **Accommodations**

Rooms have been reserved at the Murray Premises Hotel/St. John's Executive Suites, 5 Beck Cove, St. John's, NL A1C 6H1, telephone 709-738-7773 or 866-738-7773, [www.murraypremiseshotel.com](http://www.murraypremiseshotel.com). The group block is under the name of the Naval Association of Canada and delegates should ask for this block when calling. Complimentary continental deluxe breakfast is offered along with complimentary parking and Wi-Fi.

## **Further Information**

Further details on timings, registration, conference program will be provided when registration opens in May. Please follow the NAC website <http://www.navalassoc.ca> for further details on these events. For additional information, please email Conference Chair, Ed Williams at [edgarwilliams@nl.rogers.com](mailto:edgarwilliams@nl.rogers.com)



# The front desk

Ken Lait, Executive Director, [executivedirector-nac@outlook.com](mailto:executivedirector-nac@outlook.com)



Welcome to 2017 and Happy New Year if I have not already said it to you. It is a pleasure to start the year on a very positive note by thanking the NLNAC team in St. John's for stepping up to the plate to host the upcoming Conference and AGM in October. Details will be found on the preceding page. I know that the organizations are working hard to make sure that your visit to the 'Rock' will be a memorable one.

I would like to thank the growing number of our members who are opting out of the paper copy of *Starshell* and joining the ranks of those now reading it in colour on our website. The hard work of our Editor, George Moore, is highlighted even more in colour and I would encourage all who are internet connected to have a look at the back issues that can be found at <http://navalassoc.ca/naval-affairs/starshell/> and which are available back to the Spring 2011 issue.

I would also like to recognize the stellar effort being made by our President, Jim Carruthers, in making his weekly *NAC News* during the last year. Jim spends many hours compiling for us, the membership of NAC, articles of interest from around the world in order that we can more effectively understand and promote our own efforts to ensure Canada continues to have a capable and effective navy of its own in the future.

Speaking of connectivity on the web, we have been working very hard to ensure our email database is maintained up

to date, but each week we get returns that NAC News was not able to be delivered or was not accepted for delivery. If you are not getting the email, please check your Junk Mail/Spam filter to ensure Jim's efforts are not being sent there. If you do not wish to receive the NAC News, I can remove your address from the mailing list so that we are not put in a position where we believe we indeed have a wrong email address for you.

In October there will be five (5) Directors whose terms in office will come to an end. A call for nominations will be made near the beginning of May and it is not too early to start thinking about possible replacements or indeed having the incumbents run for another three (3) year term.

Likewise, a call for Endowment Fund Grants will also be forthcoming once the Endowment Fund Committee determines the anticipated level that can be achieved in 2017. Guidance for submission of grant applications can be found at any time in the Administrative Manual at <http://navalasoc.ca/national/nac> and I encourage you to review them if you are considering sponsoring an application through your Branch.

Looking forward to seeing many of you in St. John's in October.

*Yours aye, Ken*

## GET ON THE 'NAC NEWS' LIST and GET IN THE KNOW!



NAC is now sending out naval news of interest on a weekly or better basis but doesn't reach a large part of our membership simply because we don't have your email addresses. Should anyone have an email address and not be receiving these news items from me, Jim Carruthers, please drop me an email and I'll add you to the list. Don't delay ...

**Get Wise ... get on the 'NAC NEWS' email distribution list today!**

**CONTACT JIM CARRUTHERS**  
**[jimc@rruthers.com](mailto:jimc@rruthers.com)**



# From the bridge

Jim Carruthers, National President, [jimc@rruthers.com](mailto:jimc@rruthers.com)



Jim is taking a well-earned but brief sabbatical from his column this issue but will be back at 'maximum revs' for our Spring 2017 edition. Ed.



## The mail bag

Letters to the editor...



**Front cover photograph, HMCS Ontario, Summer 2016, No. 75 issue of Starshell -- MIDSHIPMEN'S HI-JINKS: Response to letter p.20, Autumn 2016 letters.**

I enjoyed Rod Hutcheson's letter on "Midshipmen's Hi-Jinks" which brought back memories of my own time as a Midshipman. One good yarn always deserves another.

In 1955, after two years in Royal Roads (RMC), six of us aspiring engineers chose to complete our engineering with the Royal Navy.

At the outset we were promoted to midshipmen and appointed to sea-going billets in various RN ships. Denny Boyle and I, the two RMC grads, were sent to the gunroom in the aircraft carrier HMS *Bulwark*, home ported in Portsmouth. The gunroom was a cross between a mess deck and a junior wardroom ruled over by a Sub-Lieutenant. There were about twenty of us all told. We were expected, unwritten and unspoken, to engage in some skylarks—the more unique the better. We raided HMS *Vanguard*, the last and then-decommissioned battleship, but few if anyone noticed.

During an extended stay we had in Portsmouth, an incident occurred in London that excited the infamous Fleet Street tabloid papers to near hysteria. A variety troupe was performing at a London theatre with a couple of weeks' run. These shows were very popular in the UK at that time and as the name suggests, included various acts, comedians, magicians, dancers and singers, etc. Also included in this show was a young lady named 'Peaches Page' who stripped and

posed nude just before intermission. The law in England at that time was that it was okay to strip but absolutely no movement was allowed after the final unveiling. Hence the final act, then the curtain. Well, it seems that on the night in question, a mouse had run across the stage. 'Peaches' left. Pandemonium ensued. Most of our group escaped, but a couple of us were hauled off to the local police station ... the constables explaining the situation to the desk sergeant all ended up howling with laughter. The ship was called and we were released to the care and custody of *Bulwark's* Officer-of-the-Day (OOD).

The 'jig' was up however, and the next morning we were paraded in front of Captain Villers RN, the Commanding Officer of the ship. To us it was like appearing before 'God.' Punishment was quickly determined and twelve strokes of the cane for the Brit. Mids. to be administered by the Sub Lieutenant of the Gunroom; and as we 'colonials' were not permitted to be caned, we were given thirty days stoppage of leave. Villers stood us at ease and withdrew a naval message from his jacket pocket and said he had been instructed to read it to us. From their Lordships of the Admiralty to Villers, *Bulwark*:

"Understand young gentlemen under your command are responsible for the headlines in this morning's national newspapers. They are to be given an official WELL DONE!"

**Ed Healy, RCN (Ret'd)**



# Canada's Shipbuilding Centre of Excellence

- Built over 80% of Canada's current fleet
- Most modern shipyard in North America
- Facilities custom designed for the efficient building and support of Canada's naval ships
- Experienced and knowledgeable workforce

- Canada-wide supply chain benefiting Canadians from coast to coast to coast
- Builder of Canada's next generation of Combat Ships under the National Shipbuilding Strategy

To view our progress building Canada's future naval fleet and how we are creating a sustainable shipbuilding and marine industry, visit [www.ShipsforCanada.ca](http://www.ShipsforCanada.ca)

 @IrvingShipbuild  IrvingShipbuilding



**PLEASE COMPLETE, CLIP AND MAIL YOUR DONATION TO:**

NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA ENDOWMENT FUND  
PO Box 42025 Oak Bay  
2200 Oak Bay Avenue  
VICTORIA BC V8R 6T4

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ BRANCH \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_



# OUR CANADIAN NAVAL CAPABILITY RUNS DEEP.

AT LOCKHEED MARTIN,  
WE'RE ENGINEERING A BETTER TOMORROW

For more than three decades, Lockheed Martin Canada has been a proud partner to the Royal Canadian Navy, demonstrating our capability and commitment as the Combat System Integrator for the HALIFAX Class frigates. The skill and depth of our Canadian workforce continues to drive results and deliver enduring economic benefits to Canada.

Learn more at [lockheedmartin.ca](http://lockheedmartin.ca)

© 2016 LOCKHEED MARTIN CORPORATION

LOCKHEED MARTIN 

**'The Mailbag' continued from page 6...**

**"This Will Have to do!" RAdm Robert Welland's memoirs, Autumn 2016 edition of *Starshell*, pp. 30-31 and Gordon Forbes' book review on p. 36.**

**On page 31:** RAdm Welland described that HMS *Warspite* fired broadsides of all eight 15-inch guns. On 16 September 1943, while off the coast of Italy, *Warspite* received a glider bomb hit that penetrated No. 4 boiler room and burst the bottom out of the room and then sustained two near-misses by glider bombs. The ship had to be towed to Malta and then to Gibraltar where some repairs

were done. She was then sent to Rosyth for more repairs. The boiler room was never repaired—a caisson being put over the hole, thus limiting her speed to a maximum of 21 knots. Y-turret was unjammed and made operational, but X-turret was not repairable. [S. W. Roskill, "HMS *Warspite*," William Collins & Sons, 1957]. That is why in the photo on page 30, *Warspite* has X-turret trained fore and aft while the other three turrets are trained to port.

**On page 38** in Gordon Forbes review of "The French Navy in World War II," I would like to correct the statement that *Dunkerque* escorted the first troop convoy of the Canadian Army to Britain. From my internet search, *Dunkerque*



brought the Banque de France gold and securities to Canada and then, on December 17, 1939, escorted a troop convoy to Britain. The FIRST troop convoy (TC-1), left Halifax on December 10, 1939 and involved five liners—*Aquitania*, *Empress of Britain*, *Duchess of Bedford* and the *Monarch of Bermuda*—escorted by HM SHIPS *Repulse* and *Resolution*, HMC

*Ships Restigouche* and *St. Laurent*. My father was a Lieutenant in the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals on the *Aquitania*. Later the convoy was strengthened by HM Ships *Warspite*, *Barham*, *Furious* and *Emerald* (a cruiser).

Don't get me wrong, I love reading *Starshell* and find the articles very interesting.

David H. Gray, Ottawa



## The briefing room

All that's news and then some...



### New ships prepare RCN for expanded Arctic Operations

Wikipedia



An artist's rendition of the new Arctic Offshore Patrol Vessel.

The commanding officer of the RCN's first Arctic Offshore Patrol Vessel has already been chosen, and work has begun to ensure everything is ready when HMCS *Harry DeWolf* is delivered in 2018.

LCdr. Corey Gleason, along with a small preliminary crew, are preparing for the new vessel, one of six ice-capable offshore patrol ships that will conduct sovereignty and surveil-

lance operations in Canada's ocean areas of interest, including in the Arctic.

"It's truly exciting to have this role as first commanding officer," says LCdr Gleason. The first ship in its class is always a lot of work and there's a long road ahead—about five years between shore office work and the first operational cruise for the lead ship. We get the opportunity to pave the way for

everyone else.”

This is essential work as the navy prepares for a busy future in Canada’s North, according to RAdm John Newton, Commanding Officer Maritime Forces Atlantic.

“We take note of the significant changes being felt in the environment, industry, commerce, tourism, society and culture. It is a timely development that the RCN will soon take delivery of the first Arctic Offshore Patrol Vessel.” He adds that the pending arrival of these vessels inspires the RCN to undertake bolder activities in all of Canada’s ocean areas. This past summer, maritime coastal defence vessel *Moncton* was patrolling in Hudson’s Bay, while its sister ship *Shawinigan* was far west along the Northwest Passage, creating new learning experiences for sailors in the fleet.

“For several years now, our crews have been increasingly busy familiarizing themselves with Arctic waterways and the communities that struggle with shifting economics, climate and human activities,” says RAdm Newton. “We have engaged in new partnerships with government agencies that

are keen to benefit from the support of the RCN.”

As things continue to change at a fast pace in an increasingly accessible Arctic—whether its the historic passage of the cruise ship *Crystal Serenity* through the Northwest Passage this summer, a refueling port for the navy at Nanisivik, Nunavut, scientific research or increased external interests in the Arctic—the RCN’s role in the North is expanding rapidly and the new Arctic Offshore Patrol Vessels will bring new responsibilities.

Construction of *Harry DeWolf* began in September 2015 and Irving Shipbuilding in Halifax is building the Arctic Offshore Patrol Vessel using a progressive build approach. Over the course of time, 65 smaller units become 21 larger blocks, which then become three mega-blocks.

LCdr Gleason says the engines have now been installed, the middle section is upright, and the entire ship will soon be sitting in the water.

Trident News, Halifax

## Warship Modernization Completed

Photo by OS Paul Green, Formation Imaging Services, Halifax



HMCS *Toronto* pushes off from Irving Shipyard after the ship’s ceremonial return to the fleet on November 29 in Halifax, NS.

It’s not often government officials get to tout large procurement projects as being completed on time and under budget. But those were the words of the day on November 29th when HMCS *Toronto* returned to the RCN marking the com-

pletion of the Halifax-class Modernization (HNC)/Frigate Life Extension Project.

A ceremony was held at Irving Shipbuilding Halifax shipyards, where leaders involved with the project including



# On Track by Leadmark



Federal Fleet Services Inc. and Chantier Davie Canada Inc. are pleased to report that the Resolve Class AOR will be ready on time. MV ASTERIX will be able to resupply the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), its Task Groups, and its Allies at sea starting in the fall of 2017. The Resolve Class was conceived and is being executed by a dedicated team that includes RCN veterans who are committed to delivering the ability to resupply RCN ships at sea, a capability currently lacking in the Canadian Armed Forces.

VAdm Ron Lloyd, Commander RCN, gathered to mark the occasion and spread the good news.

The HCM Project had a budget of about \$4.3 billion, and while final total costs aren't available, ADM(Materiel) Pat Finn said a portion of that budget is already being returned.

A number of speakers focused on this point in their remarks at the ceremony, including VAdm Ron Lloyd and Halifax MP Andy Fillmore.

VAdm Lloyd said trust and communication with stakeholders and the public is important and communicating this project is a way to show that government and industry can cooperate to deliver high quality equipment with cost efficiency.

*"When Canadians take a look at their shipbuilding industry now, they can be proud of another success story,"* he said.

The goal of the HCM/FELEX project, which began more than a decade ago, was to see all Halifax-class frigates undergo refit and installation of modern equipment to allow sailors to continue to work in defence of Canada at home and abroad. The project involved Irving Shipbuilding on the east coast, Seaspan Shipyards on the west coast, Lockheed Martin Canada and more than thirty other firms working with the Government of Canada.

The result is a fleet of ships more prepared to bridge the RCN to the eventual delivery of the Canadian Surface Combatants. The modernized frigates have been fitted with enhanced radar and electronic warfare systems, upgraded communications and missiles that integrate with a new combat management system.



"We basically changed out two brains of the ship," VAdm Lloyd explained. "The Combat Management System, the manner in which you fight with the ship, is completely new, and then the Integrated Platform Management System, which looks after the propulsion and other maritime engineering aspects, is also brand new and state of the art."

Irving Shipbuilding President, Kevin McCoy highlighted the economic benefits of the work being done in Halifax, including an estimated \$205 million in employment income in Nova Scotia through HCM, while Seaspan President, Brian Carter and Lockheed Martin Canada President, Rosemary Chapdelaine also spoke about their own involvement in the project.

Finn delivered a big thank you on behalf of government, both to the many industry partners who took good care of the ships and returned them in top shape, and to the crew themselves, who will be in charge of taking the newly equipped ship to sea.

"We're inspired by your work and appreciate your enthusi-

asm, dedication and professionalism, and we thank you for all the things you do in service to Canadians every day," Finn said. VAdm Lloyd also pointed out the significance of HMCS Halifax currently undergoing its docking work period at the shipyard, years after being the first to undergo HCM.

"As the last comes out, the first goes back in, just like it should. It's an excellent bookend for what the project represents and it's indicative of success," he said, noting that other successfully modernized frigates, HMC Ships Vancouver, Fredericton and Charlottetown, are currently deployed around the world doing the business of the navy.

Earlier in the day, Cdr Steve Archer, Toronto's commanding officer, officially signed for care and custody of the ship from Irving Shipbuilding and following the ceremony at the shipyard, he and his crew marched on board and officially put the last of the Halifax-class back in the hands of the Atlantic Fleet.

**Ryan Melanson, Trident Staff; Lookout, CFB Esquimalt**

**BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC**  
**Legacy Gala Dinner**

**29 April 2017**  
**DoubleTree by Hilton**  
 300 King St, London

**Reception:**  
 1830-1930

**Dinner:**  
 1930-2230  
 (Naval Mess Dinner Format)

**Dress:**  
 Formal  
 Men - Black tie (Mess Kit)  
 Women - Evening gown

**Tickets\*:**  
 \$120.00 each until 28 Feb  
 \$150.00 after.  
\*service charge applies if purchased online

**Information:**  
 For additional inquires please call  
 ship's office or e-mail:  
 boam2017@gmail.com

**Tickets available at:**  
 hmcsprevost.com/gala

**or from ship's office at**  
 19 Becher Street, London  
 519 660-5296

**Brought to you by the Naval Association of Canada (London branch) and HMCS Prevost**

## Why a Battle of the Atlantic Memorial?

The Ukrainian immigration to Canada was largely agrarian and waves of settlers had concentrated in the prairie provinces. Philemon and Christina Leskiw, both of Ukrainian extraction, had made a home in Saskatoon. The great depression hit the area hard and the population of Saskatoon and other urban areas surged as people searched for jobs.

Young Anthony (Tony) Leskiw had seen the struggles and was determined to rise above them. With a strong work ethic inherited from his parents he was already employed as a printer's apprentice by the age of 17. When the dark shadow of the war crept across Canada he began to see other young men in uniform. Like all young men he dreamed of seeing the world. He had never been out of Saskatchewan, never far from Saskatoon. The poster in the shopkeepers' window for the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve immediately caught his eye.

It was a rainy day at the Canadian Pacific Railway station when Philemon and Christina said goodbye to their son. A teary-eyed embrace from mom, a firm handshake from dad, and Tony boarded the train. For days the train rumbled across new and exciting scenery. The sadness of homesickness was displayed by the anticipation of adventures to come.

HMCS Cornwallis was hard, but it was supposed to be. Tony knew that. It was the new bonds of friendship which helped him through. Now it was over, Halifax was an exciting town, much different from Saskatoon. Tony was proud to be a sailor, a man, not a boy in Saskatoon. Daily

he would see the Royal Canadian Navy's warships and the dozens of merchant ships in Bedford Basin, as convoys were assembled. He couldn't wait to find out what his assignment would be.

When his orders came, Tony was excited to learn that he had been assigned as an RCN anti-aircraft gunner on the merchant ship *SS Whitford Point*. The RCN escorted the convoys as well as posted navy gunners to man the temporary guns on some of the larger merchant ships.

The day came. From the deck of *SS Whitford Point* Tony could see the ships begin to move, whistles blew. Ships of every size and many flags exited the basin and found their station moving out into the open ocean. Tony watched as the small RCN corvettes moved in like shepherds guarding their flocks. Tony dreamed that one day he would be stationed on a corvette. For now he was proud as punch to be manning his gun. His first convoy. His first duty.

What would his friends back in Saskatoon think when, in just over a week's time, he would send them a postcard from England? He would buy his mom a silk scarf and for his dad, maybe some pipe tobacco. He imagined them receiving his package all the way from England.

The merchant men treated Tony and the other young Navy man well. He messed with them and the food was good. He kept most of it down as seasickness didn't seem to bother him much.

The flash of the explosion was blinding. The sound deafening. The torpedo from *U 47* had skimmed through the convoy and made a direct hit on *SS Whitford Point*. The cargo she was carrying, almost 8,000 tons of steel, had no mercy. She plunged to the bottom of the North Atlantic.

### Tony Leskiw

With wartime security and communications, it would be almost a week before the telegram boy would lean his bike against the fence at the home in Saskatoon and walk to the door.

This is just one of over 2,000 individual stories.

We will never know most of them, but the lives and families of those who were lost will never forget.

Together we can help remember their service and sacrifice. No gift is too small. Please visit us at:

<http://www.gofundme.com/battleatlanticmem>

It was their sacrifice which turned the tide and saved the world from tyranny and darkness. We remember them, but we also celebrate their ultimate victory. Please join us in London, Ontario, on April 29th, 2017 to celebrate their ultimate victory.

<http://www.hmcsprevost.com/gala.html>



The Battle of the Atlantic Memorial at HMCS *Prevost* in London, Ontario.



**NAC London Branch, London, Ontario**



## Endowment Fund Donation, Ottawa



L to R: Ottawa Branch President, Howie Smith is seen presenting cheque to Stephen Quick, Director General Canadian War Museum and Vice-President, Canadian Museum of History, accompanied by Paul Baiden the Ottawa Branch, HMCS *Bonaventure* Restoration Project Officer.

On January 10th, 2017, the President of the Ottawa Branch, of the Naval Association of Canada, Howie Smith, was pleased to present a cheque to the Canadian War Museum from the NAC Endowment Fund. This contribution will support the refurbishment of the original ship's builder's scale model of HMCS *Bonaventure*. Once the 'Bonnie' model is refurbished, complete with model aircraft, it will provide a much needed naval presence at the War Museum.

**Howard Smith, President NAC Ottawa Branch**

## CPSEN Presentation to VAdm Norman

The Joint CPSEN-Excellence Canada Public Sector Excellence Achievement Award for 2016 was presented to Vice-Admiral Mark Norman, until recently the 34th Commander of the Royal Canadian Navy.

The award was presented by CPSEN's Don Wilson, a retired Navy Captain, and Paul Crookall, Excellence Canada. The 2016 Award, the 8th Annual Award, was presented during a CPSEN quarterly networking meeting held October 12th, 2016. During the presentation, a video was presented entitled "*Charlie Three Four*", a video in which VAdm Norman described Excellence at Sea and spoke of the value of sound leadership practices. He offered some comments and



L to R: Paul Crookall, VAdm Norman and Captain (Ret'd) Don Wilson.

took questions from the audience. It was clear from the questions and his responses that he and the audience interacted very well.

Candidates for this award are living role models in their fields during their performance of service in the public interest. Two of the key criteria for this award are leadership in the advancement and implementation of excellence principles and outstanding commitment to excellence for all stakeholders.

The vision of the Canadian Public Sector Excellence Network (CPSEN) based in Ottawa is to be recognized as the leader in supporting a dynamic community of practice implementing organizational excellence within the public sector. Further information can be found at [www.cpsen.ca](http://www.cpsen.ca)

## Winnipeg Branch Awards

The following images reflect presentations made recently by our Winnipeg Branch members. Congratulations are extended to one and all!





Winnipeg Branch President Ron Skelton (right) presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to Col Andy Cook, Base Commander 17 Wing Winnipeg.



During his visit to Winnipeg, Commodore Craig Bain presents a NAC Long Service Award to George Atwell at the Deer Lodge Hospital prior to the November 11th, 2016 service. George was accompanied by his family.



Winnipeg Br. President Ron Skelton (right) presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to LCdr Ian Gillis, Commanding Officer of HMCS Chippawa.



Branch President Ron Skelton (right) presents a Bronze Medallion to Branch Treasurer, Chris Read.



Winnipeg Br. President Ron Skelton (right) presenting a Long Service Award to member Al Sharrow on November 9th, 2016.



The Pedro Correia Twice Citizen Award PIM was presented to Wpg. Branch member Bill Shead by Barry Burns (right), President of the Royal Military Institute of Manitoba. The presentation was made at the Manitoba Legislature. (*Apologies for photo quality.*)



L to R: Major Jason Mawdsley, Staff Officer NORAD 1 Canadian Air Division, Winnipeg; Ron Skelton, Dennis Smith and Winston Smith.

Major Mawdsley spoke at our September luncheon on the current role of NORAD and some of its challenges. After the Major's presentation, Certificates of Appreciation were handed out to our legal team Dennis and Winston Smith, for their work on behalf of the Branch. Both are former RCN.

**Ron Skelton, President, Winnipeg Branch**

## NAC Ottawa Branch Museum Project

### SOME BACKGROUND:

When serving as the heritage director of HMCS Bytown (2008-2015), I gained an appreciation for the value and history of the heritage items that we were custodians of. One specific example is the Second World War painting "Canadian Destroyer *Haida* stops to pick up survivors from HMCS *Athabaskan*," by William McDowell (1888-1950). Many people who viewed it over the years thought it was just a black and white print, but it is in fact, the original painted by McDowell in May 1944, shortly after *Athabaskan* was sunk in the English Channel.

In April 1944, Force 26 of the 10th Destroyer Flotilla comprised five Tribal-class destroyers: HM Ships *Tartar* (Cdr Basil Jones, senior officer), *Ashanti* (LCdr C. R. Purse), HMC Ships *Haida* (Cdr Harry DeWolf), *Athabaskan* (LCdr John Stubbs) and *Huron* (LCdr H. S. Rayner).

There were two very significant destroyer-on-destroyer sea battles which occurred in late April 1944 off the French coast. (The reader is referred to Alec Douglas' 2007 "The Blue Water Navy"<sup>1</sup> for details.)

On 26 April 1944, with *Tartar* in refit, the four Tribal-class destroyers *Haida* (DeWolf senior officer), *Athabaskan*, *Huron* and *Ashanti* engaged three enemy Elbing-class destroyers T24, T27 and T29 of the German 4th Torpedobootsflotille. During this coordinated gunnery and torpedo action, the T-29 was sunk and both T24 and T27 escaped.

With *Huron* and *Ashanti* in dry dock for post-action repairs and *Tartar* still in refit, *Haida* (DeWolf senior officer) and *Athabaskan* were required to assume the Force 26 responsibilities. During the early morning hours of 29 April 1944, the two remaining German destroyers T24 and T27 were engaged in a deadly sea battle. *Athabaskan* suffered a torpedo hit from T24. *Haida* engaged T27 in gunnery action and drove her on to the rocks and T24 escaped.

After driving T27 onto the rocks, *Haida* returned to rescue *Athabaskan* survivors. In the painting we can clearly see Commander Harry DeWolf on *Haida*'s port wing in charge of the rescue efforts. This Battle of the Atlantic painting is very special to the history of the Royal Canadian Navy.



Canadian destroyer *Haida* stops to pick up survivors from the *Athabaskan* by William McDowell.

To mark the 70th Anniversaries of the wartime commissioning of HMCS *Haida* (G63) and HMCS *Athabaskan* (G07), and also the subsequent loss of *Athabaskan*, HMCS Bytown Incorporated arranged for digital restoration of an image of the original painting and 300 limited edition prints to be produced. Print #1/300 was formally presented by Commodore Darren Hawco, Commander Atlantic Fleet, on behalf of HMCS Bytown, to HMCS *Athabaskan* in Halifax on February 3rd, 2013. Print #2/300 was presented by LCdr (Ret'd) Bill Dziadyk, Heritage Officer, HMCS Bytown, to HMCS *Haida* in Hamilton on 30 August 2013.

These limited edition prints, with certificates of authenticity, are available for sale. Contact Barry Tate for details and to order prints.

[barrytate.com/Other-Pages/athabaskan-haida.html](http://barrytate.com/Other-Pages/athabaskan-haida.html)

250-655-4535 (8 am to 8 pm PST)

Haida-Athabaskan@barrytate.com

<sup>1</sup> A Blue Water Navy – The Official Operational History of the Royal Canadian Navy in the Second World War: 1939-1945, Vol. II, Part 2, W. A. B. Douglas et al, 2007 (pp 224-230).



# Help celebrate Canada turning 150, with 150 wishes.

Submit a wish to help an individual, event or charity that's making a difference for Canadian youth.



Submit your wish at [shaw.ca/Canada150](http://shaw.ca/Canada150)

Shaw)



NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA  
ASSOCIATION NAVALE DU CANADA

## Why not join us?

- *We support the Royal Canadian Navy.*
- *We educate, we do not lobby. Other like-minded organizations may, but we do not.*
- *We produce position papers not opinion papers. Members are encouraged to state opinions but NAC does not.*
- *With naval ships being a 50 year endeavour we educate all politicians of all parties for they will certainly change.*
- *We welcome all who are interested in ensuring Canada has an effective, capable Navy for all three oceans.*
- *Local Branches in many major cities across Canada with local activities, social and otherwise.*

**All memberships include a subscription to our quarterly journal 'Starshell.'**

**Join now ... simply go to [www.navalassoc.ca](http://www.navalassoc.ca) and follow the "Join NAC" link!**



## Donation to the Crow's Nest Club



NLNAC President Bob Jenkins presents a NAC Endowment Fund Grant of \$1,500.00 to Margaret Morris, President of The Crow's Nest Club in St. John's, Nfld. The Crow's Nest is compiling an updated history of the club as it celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2017 and the Endowment Fund grant will be used to assist with this initiative. NLNAC and the Crow's Nest offer sincere thanks to NAC and the Endowment Fund for this support.

Ed Williams, NLNAC



\* \* \*





# Schober's Quiz #74

By George S. Schober | NAC-Victoria

Question:

Despite first appearances, the officers seen in this 1914 photograph attired in diverse uniforms all belonged to the same branch of the British Armed Forces. Name the Branch in which they served.

Answer on page 29.



Starshell | Winter 2016-17

Copyright © 2017 George S. Schober • All rights reserved.

## GENERAL DYNAMICS

Mission Systems–Canada



**DELIVERING DECISIVE ADVANTAGES FOR THE TOUGHEST PEOPLE,  
DOING THE HARDEST WORK, UNDER THE MOST DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES.**

AIR | LAND | SEA | SPACE | CYBER

[www.gd-ms.ca](http://www.gd-ms.ca)





## This will have to do!

The serialized naval memoirs of the late RAdm Robert Philip 'Bob' Welland DSC & Bar, MiD, psc, Officer of the Legion of Merit (USA), RCN.

### Part 14 ~ Command of HMCS *Haida*'

**Part 14** — As Part 13 came to an end, Welland had just received orders to report to London where he received instructions to fly to Canada to assume command of the Tribal-class destroyer, HMCS *Haida*.

**H**aida was then our most notable warship; Harry De-Wolf (my captain in the *St. Laurent*) had commissioned this new Tribal-class destroyer and made her famous. She was the most successful destroyer at beating up German destroyers in the Channel. I was mightily flattered to be taking her over. But I had strong feelings for my good ship *Asiniboine* and for her crew. I had almost blown it, more than once, but enough rivets held and the engines sped us out of danger. And her beautiful propellers were soft enough to be hammered straight.

My relief was waiting in Londonderry, Ralph Hennessy. I had relieved him a year and a half earlier as the Executive

Officer and served fifteen months as her captain. There were only a few who had been in the ship as long as had I.

The crew had got together and sent an emissary to Belfast to get me a going-away present. He found a silver tea service, Queen Anne period, and had the ship's badge engraved on all five pieces. I am very proud to have it—and doubly so after I had it appraised in later years!

When I reached London, Mr. McLeod had instructions. He had been giving me instructions for eight years. He treated me now just as he had done in 1936. He said things once, he knew I was listening, and he knew I would pay my bill at Gieves tailors.

This time he said that he would see me again, shortly, "*When you bring Haida back to the war.*" Mr. Massey was still our High Commissioner, but was visiting Canada. McLeod said that Mr. Massey asked to be remembered. I was surprised these older men took any interest in me.

---

HMCS *Haida* displays the classic lines of the Tribal-class in February 1944.

National Archives of Canada PA-115055





## HMCS *Haida*

Mr. McLeod took me to a pub near Canada House; we sat on bar stools and had the standard London 'bite-to-eat,' warm, flat, beer and a pork pie, served by a hearty barmaid who said, "ere you are loves."

He had photos of a girl getting married. It was Audrey Sillitoe. She was just as pleased with herself as when I took her to Buckingham Palace and had stayed with Mr. McLeod for three days. "I thought you two might get together," he said, "but the war interfered, I guess." I guess it had, although Audrey and I had never discussed any plans of longer term than it took to fix a broken window. I was pleased she had married someone with a future, a doctor. McLeod had been to the wedding and told me Commissioner Sillitoe and his wife asked about me. "They want me to thank you for your help with their boys." I was flattered. Sillitoe went on to become the head of the British intelligence organization MI 6, which 'James Bond' would soon make famous; he was Knighted and became "Sir Percy." I said earlier he looked like the actor Gary Cooper—I meant Sean Connery!

McLeod had arranged I fly to Montréal in a Lancaster bomber and that I was to report to Captain De Wolf in Ottawa to take the turn-over of *Haida*. I had a day to spare before boarding the plane; I tried to get in touch with my aunt, Wynn Sawday. I knew the house had been bombed and burned and they had gone into the country, but I was unable to find them. I managed to send a telegram to Stephanie who was now living in Halifax with our baby, Michael. The Lancaster flew from Prestwick to Montréal; a long ride sitting on a duffel-bag, but a huge improvement over a week in a battleship.

When I reported to Captain De-Wolf, he raised an eyebrow, "The ship's in Halifax!" He was surprised to see me; it was obvious that he hadn't arranged I report to him in Ottawa. I had

Hennessy and I joined as cadets in 1936. Here I turn over command of *Assiniboine* in 1944. I moved on to command the new destroyer *Haida*. Ralph spent almost all of the war at sea, a good part in command of destroyers.

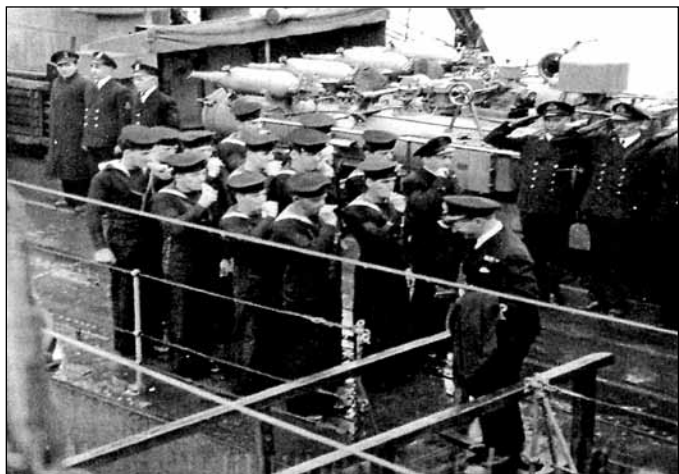
All photos Author's collection unless otherwise stated.



Amidst the anchors and cables I say farewell to my *Assiniboine* ship mates. Chris Smith, the XO, is on my right (not paying attention). Bill Burkhard, the signal officer is on Smith's right (he was an ex Argo football star). Ian Morrow, gunnery officer, is on Bill's right.



I am piped over the side in Londonberry.





Stephanie and Michael, December 1944 in Halifax.

wondered why I was told to go there. The people who moved the men and women around the country and the world were moved too often themselves, I think. Some of the amusing errors were caused by our ships having the names of places; for example, all the corvettes had place-names. So it wasn't entirely stupid for a sailor to be sent to Halifax, Nova Scotia, when his ship, *Halifax*, was in Esquimalt, BC. But it was a long train ride to get it right! The British had the same problem; a story went around that a 20-year old Sub-Lieutenant was appointed to the cruiser *Calcutta*. The travel people put him on board a P&O liner and shipped him off to Calcutta. On arrival in India the error came to light and he was put on board another P&O for the return trip to England. His cruiser, HMS *Calcutta*, had been only 30 miles away in Devonport from his original start-point, Portsmouth. On his return to England he was chagrined to learn that his ship had been sent to the East Indies and again he was shipped out on a P&O liner to India. His travels took a year! I never had such a rewarding experience. Anyway, Captain DeWolf said he was 'happy' I was taking *Haida* over. That was a major compliment from "Hard-over-Harry." He took me to the naval mess on Lisgar Street for a drink. That was the turn-over. I was now 'owner' of the mighty *Haida*. It was December 1944 and I was 26.

Before leaving the headquarters on Elgin Street, I dropped in on the department that made officers appointments. On the premise that if you don't ask, you don't get, I asked the captain in charge if he would transfer the *Assiniboine's* navigator, Gordon Welch and the engineer officer, William Patterson to *Haida*. I told him I could pick them up when I got the ship to England. He told me to come back in half an hour for the answer. When I returned he said if I was willing to take *Haida* to the UK without these key officers, he'd do it. There was no way I could advise Gordie and Pat I had hijacked them from the *Assiniboine*. Maybe they wouldn't mind.

In Halifax, Stephanie met the train. She was just beautiful! And the little guy with her took one look at me and burst out crying, "He'd like you if you ever stayed home," she said. "Besides, he's now seven months old and I've taught him how to scare men."

Six months absence makes strangers of lovers. If you have ever been through that you will know it takes an hour or two to feel comfortable with each other. Stephanie and I were to experience this 'separation' feeling many times in the years ahead. Her little flat on the second floor of a small house overlooking the Northwest Arm was heaven for the three weeks I was 'home.'

The ship had been in refit; now she was ready to rejoin the war. This goodbye was another wrench that I remember. "Be sure and come back to us," Stephanie said. There was no way of knowing when that might be.

We sailed alone for England. *Haida* had greater range than *Assiniboine*; she carried 600 tons of fuel and could do 2,000 miles at 24 knots. I chose a route via the Azores for good weather so we could train hard all the way. She was primarily a 'gun' ship; three mountings of twin 4.7-inch that could range out to nine miles, and one mounting of twin 4-inch for anti-aircraft use. She bristled with short-range anti-aircraft guns; Pom-Pom, the 'Chicago Piano' and 12 Oerlikon 20mm. *Haida* had double the fire power of *Assiniboine*. Down below were steam turbines producing 44,000 horsepower, that gave her 36.5 knots. This class of destroyer, the Tribals designed in Britain, raised the bar for destroyer performance. There were 32 of them built; they were in the frontline of every action and suffered accordingly. At the end of the war only 10 remained afloat.

There were 225 of us on board. We got to Portsmouth in four days. It was early in January 1945. At this stage of the fighting we were winning; the Germans had been kicked out of North Africa, forced out of Italy, and were showing signs of being defeated in their invasion of Russia. Our armies that had landed in France the previous June were approaching Germany itself. The North Atlantic convoys were sailing in relative safety with plenty of Asdic equipped ships to protect



them. We had come a long way since the losing times of 1940 and '41, with the UK in constant danger of invasion and and the possibility we would lose the war. Why did the British treasury send all their gold bullion to Canada if we were bound to win? 'Go figure!' as my grandchildren say!

The important fighting had now shifted from the Atlantic Ocean to the plains of Europe. It was the Army's turn. The soldiers had a more personal job than we sailors; eyeball-to-eyeball combat, not a 'whispy' musical note on a bridge instrument. The soldiers had to boot the Germans from the countries overrun in 1940: France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway and Poland. The only useful thing we could do now was to make sure no supplies got to Germany; no oil in particular.

Lieutenant Ray Phillips was my Executive Officer, the First Lieutenant, 'Number One,' the 'Jimmy.' He was 23 years old. He had joined the Navy at 18 as a cadet and served continuously at sea since then. He had been in *Haida* all the time DeWolf was the captain and taken part in the furious Channel actions. When Ray was on watch I got proper sleep.

Welch and Patterson from *Assiniboine* joined the ship in Portsmouth. I was relieved they were grinning. Even so, I apologized for not asking their permission to hijack them.

We were alongside in Portsmouth for a few days, during which time the dockyard fitted new 'voice' radios so we could talk between ships (it was called TBS). Up until this time, the Royal Navy did not equip their ships with 'voice radio,' all inter-ship communication was done in morse. However, they did fit 'voice radio' so we could talk to the RAF aircraft. The illogical policy was corrected when the Americans insisted on using 'voice' between ships. I am sure there was no sensible reason for keeping the ships on morse, just plain bias in the upper ranks of the 'Communications' department. "We've won wars using morse!" In Portsmouth we also got new ammunition, shells fitted with an electronic fuse that caused them to explode if they came near an aircraft. This fuse and it's rapid introduction was a major war-winning British invention, the VT fuse. Our heavy anti-aircraft guns became six times more effective because of it.

During the three days in Portsmouth, the Navy's Minister of Defence, Angus L. McDonald visited the ship. He was highly regarded within the Navy. I got the crew onto the foc's'cle and introduced him. He gave a half-hour impromptu talk which raised a cheer. He was a principled person. Less than a year later he resigned from the government when McKenzie King, the PM, indulged in dishonest politics concerning the ongoing war with Japan. I expand on this subject a bit later. We, the Allies, were now forcing the Germans out of Norway. This meant blockading that country and cutting off supplies by sinking their shipping. Large naval forces gathered in Scapa Flow, the nearest port from which to mount



Raymond Phillips, 23 year old Executive Officer of *Haida*. He had been in warships since age 18 and in *Haida* during the earlier fighting in the Channel. A leader by example.



I salute The Hon. Angus L. MacDonald as he is piped aboard *Haida* in Portsmouth.







GraphicMaps.com

the assault,

On arrival in Scapa I attended a briefing. We captains gathered in the Admiral's cabin in the battleship *Rodney* to get instructions. We learned the Germans planned to use their heavy ships to beat us off; battleships with 11-inch guns; fast cruisers with 8-inch guns and some 6-inch cruisers as well as their destroyers which were almost as fast as our Tribals, like *Haida*. Four Canadian ships would be in the force: *Huron* with Harold Groos in command; *Iroquois* with the redoubtable Ken Adams in command, (he had managed to escape from the training base in Bermuda); a new aircraft carrier, *Puncher*, with Roger Bidwell in command, and *Haida*. These were all fine new ships with the best equipment. It was January 1945. The war was in its sixth year.

Our force sailed before dawn, destroyers leading to sweep the entrance clear of U-boats; the aircraft carriers followed. Rear Admiral McGrigor was in command aboard a British aircraft carrier. In addition to the Canadians there were two British destroyers and two Polish destroyers. An hour before daylight, and approaching the Norwegian coast, one carrier flew off three aircraft to search ahead for German shipping. The attack-aircraft were ranged on the flight decks. The destroyers surrounded the carriers, staying three miles clear. Our job was to see they weren't attacked by U-boats, aircraft or surface ships. We were weaving, pinging, listening on

the radio-direction finders for any sign from the Germans to show that we had been discovered. All hands were at 'Action Stations' eating sandwich-meals, ready for a long session. All boilers were on line for full speed manoeuvring; we expected sea-skimming attacks from the Ju 88s. We were 120 miles from the Norwegian coast, west of Trondheim. It was a good day for it: clear sky, gentle breeze.

As the sky brightened the carriers prepared to launch; aircraft engines tuning-up rumbled the ocean. The deck crews catapulted the first six aircraft then let the others, further back on the flight decks, run free to lift off. They were a mix of torpedo-bombers and fighters. Forty-two aircraft hurried away into the coming light; they flew low, just above the wave tops. Their course was straight for Trondheim; their targets, German shipping inside the harbour.

One of the essentials of carrier-warfare is to get the planes off the decks before being attacked. So far so good. Another lifesaver is to have enough serviceable decks ready for the returning planes. Our planes would be back in three hours; by then we would be 50 miles closer to the coast to make their return trip shorter. The also made the trip shorter for the Germans.

What is a destroyer captain's job on such occasions? I shall tell you. I am standing on the open bridge and giving orders down a voice pipe to the coxswain. He is a Chief Petty Officer located one deck below me in the armoured wheel house. He steers the courses I give and transmits my engine orders to the engine room to control speed. The coxswain and I know each other well, we have handled the ship many times, for docking, fuelling at sea and for torpedo attacks. Should the bridge (me) and the steering position (coxswain) be damaged, the ship will be controlled from another position near the stern. The XO is at that position and has his own helmsman. (Aircraft usually fire at the bridge, so it is advisable to have back-up.) We have practiced imagined violent events many times. We have changed the scenarios to accommodate fresh ideas. Discussing 'what if's' was normal and frequent.

I gave the basic orders to use the weapons, after that it was up to the gunnery department. Jim Lucas is the gunnery officer (a lawyer from Toronto in his previous occupation). This is how the day went as best I can recall:

"Aircraft approaching, 080, low." This was the radar operator's loud-speaker report, *Range 16,500 yards, speed 230 knots.* I order, "Port 30, 300 revs." This new course will open the maximum gun-arcs and the increase to 30 knots will make steering faster. I order the gunnery officer, "Open fire when ready." I hear the gunnery loud speakers announce:

"Main, Ready, barrage-starboard. Free fire secondary" (Oerlikons and the Pom-Pom). The Chief Yeoman pulled the siren-lever giving four sharp hoots, this alerted everyone to an imminent attack. The Chief Yeoman's men are on the radios and signalling lights warning other ships, "Aircraft approaching 080."

The petty officer radar-operator continues to report the attackers' position, "Two groups, range 10,600, speed 240, closing." A bridge lookout equipped with powerful stabilized binoculars yells, "Aircraft, bearing starboard 050, low on the water."

We have not been jumped. We are loaded and ready and waiting. I have the 'A' arcs open (all on guns on that side will be able to fire). Radar reports the shrinking range: "7,200."

"Open Fire" orders the Gunnery Officer. Six 4.7-inch guns and two 4-inch begin firing salvos, all guns fire together. The salvos are five seconds apart. The noise is unearthly, the cordite smoke stings eyes and stains clothing yellow. The shells burst between the approaching aircraft and the ship. Hopefully the shrapnel hits the aircraft.

When the aircraft range closes to 3,000 yards (1.5 miles) the Oerlikons (6 barrels x 900 rounds-per-minute) open fire. So does the 'Chicago Piano' (4 barrels x 600 rounds-per-minute). These guns add to the incredible noise. Once fire is opened all orders are given by instruments, voice is useless.

In this encounter there were four Junkers 88's, probably armed with torpedoes, attempting to attack the carriers. First they had to get past the screening destroyers; two other destroyers were also firing at them. None of the German aircraft got close enough to the carriers to release torpedoes. They pulled up and turned away. Quiet settled over the fleet for a bit. Two more attempts were made by the JU 88s. We beat them off without taking any hits.

Soon a stream of our aircraft began returning, they jinxed about getting into their circuits to land. The Admiral moved us away from the coast then passed out the score: six large merchant ships had been sunk, two others were on fire, two may have escaped attack. We lost eight aircraft, but recovered two crews. This meant twelve of our aircrew were either killed or had been taken prisoner.

We counted the operation as a success. As I write this I remember thinking how lucky we were that only twelve aircrew were lost. I didn't think much about death then, including my own. I do remember believing that if I wrapped myself completely in the operation of the ship and insist everyone else did the same, we would be okay. We had a marvellous ship and fine weapons and the key to survival was to be always ready and never, ever surprised. I recall once telling a young lookout, who I found drowsing off and should have been punished, that he was a hundred times more important than me when I had to sleep. "I never thought of that," he



*Loading a 4 inch gun. Every 5 seconds it needed another round.*

BELOW: A German Luftwaffe Junkers 88.

Wikipedia





said, "It won't happen again." I hoped not.

On returning from this operation and approaching Scapa Flow, I sent for Ray Phillips and reminded him to warn the crew against transgressing the Admiral's orders regarding his battleship, HMS *Rodney*. This great ship had been relegated (rightly) to the role of depot ship for the destroyers; she provided us with food, the mail and an evening at the movies. The Admiral had sent a message to every ship in the fleet stating that: *"Commanding officers will be held personally responsible for any untoward or disrespectful conduct when in the vicinity of my Flagship."* This unusual statement was to be taken seriously because it was rumored he was going to court-martial any captain whose sailors broke his rule. Phillips assured me none of our men wanted me court-martialed and he went away chuckling.

About a month earlier, a disciplinary court had been held in this battleship *Rodney*. It was on one of her own stokers. He had been sentenced 90 days detention (jail) for, *"An act to the prejudice of good order and discipline in that he did engage in sexual activity with an animal."*

It was the practice for the Flagship to distribute informa-

tion on all courts-martial to the entire fleet, presumably to scare us into behaving as we ought. So all the fleet knew about *Rodney's* stoker and the sheep. And that was why the destroyer crews, on approaching *Rodney* to secure alongside, had been giving the sailors in the battleship a chorus of sheep-like noises as the lines were passed: *Baaa, Baaa, Bleet, Bleet*. Many jokes were floating around, e.g., *"What was the stoker's defence when accused of this dastardly conduct?"* Answer: *"Sir, I thought she was a Wren with a fur coat on."* Apparently our foc's'le petty officer came close to getting me in trouble when he said to a petty officer in *Rodney*, *"We are not going to say Baaa."*

We took part in three carrier attacks along the Norwegian coast. We were attacked, but only in a minor way by half a dozen aircraft. When the war ended, the reasons for the Germans not attacking us became known; they had no fuel for their ships or their planes. Our side had plenty ... that was what the Atlantic convoying was all about!

**TO BE CONTINUED**



## Delivering round-the-clock, mission critical support everywhere in the world

SNC-Lavalin is Canada's leading provider of engineering services, mission critical logistics and operations & maintenance support. Through our vast experience, know-how and specialty in relational contracting, we meet our clients supply chain needs in some of the world's most remote and challenging location.

As a trusted partner of Canada's Navy, Air Force and Army, we have been delivering comprehensive logistics and in-service support, domestically and abroad, for nearly 25 years.



# Bill's Corner

By Bill Clearihue | NAC Toronto



## Sir Galahad and the Royal Canadian Navy - Some Ironies

**S**ir Galahad was a latter-day Arthurian Knight of the Round Table. A mythical person of very long standing, his bronze effigy has for the last 109 years held pride-of-place amongst the statuary of Ottawa. He stands on his granite pedestal on the north side of Wellington Street just to the east of the Queen's Gate—the main entrance to Parliament Hill.

In early July of 1534, Jacques Cartier and his intrepid band of St. Malo Mariners, were working their way of the east coast of New Brunswick, most probably the first Europeans to do so. As they rounded the tip of what is now called Miscou Island, a large body of water opened up to their west. He hoped this would lead to the Orient and fittingly called that tip of land Cap de L'Esperance. They spent some time exploring what was a large bay and on July 9th, the day apparently being very hot, he named it Baye de Chaleur, and that name has stuck during the intervening 483 years. That trip was pivotal to the events that subsequently led to Canada being the sovereign country that it is and having the name that it has.

On August 16th, 1906, another significant event took place in Baie Des Chaleurs that turned out to be pivotal to the events that led up to the formation of the Royal Canadian Navy. On that day, the battleship HMS *Dominion*, named for Canada, ran aground near Pointe Bonaventure on the north shore of the Bay. The skipper was Captain Charles Edmund Kingsmill, RN, a native of Guelph, Ontario. Kingsmill was court-martialed for this event, found guilty and severely reprimanded. This short-circuiting of his Royal Navy career was likely a key element in his availability to return to Canada to head up the nascent Canadian Naval Service.

Andrew George Blair was first elected to the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick in 1878. He was Premier of NB from 1883-1896. At that time he took up the position of Minister of Railways and Canals in the Laurier government and won a seat in the Commons in a by-election that same year. He held that post until 1903. While in charge of the railways he was responsible for pushing a line through the

Crowsnest Pass and one of the villages there on the Alberta side, was renamed Blairmore in his honour.

William Lyon Mackenzie King (WLMK) was the tenth person to hold the office of Prime Minister. He was in office three times over the period 1921-1948, as the 12th, 14th and 16th Prime Minister. It is ironic that our World War Two Prime Minister was born in Berlin, Ontario, and even more ironic that he was able to relay that fact to Adolph Hitler during their face-to-face meeting in Berlin on June 29th, 1937. It is also ironic that his maternal grandfather was William Lyon MacKenzie who led the 1837 Upper Canada Rebellion, briefly declaring himself the first President of the Republic of Canada. This declaration took place on Navy Island in the Niagara River. During the formation of the United Nations postwar, Navy Island was a contender for the site of the UN headquarters.

It was WLMK who was the moving force behind the construction and placement of the Sir Galahad statue in 1905. It was erected and inscribed to honour the chivalry of his University of Toronto friend and Ottawa roommate, Henry Albert Harper who in 1901 had drowned while unsuccessfully trying to save the life of Rosie Blair, Andrew George Blair's daughter. This King-Hitler cordiality was short lived and with WWII in full flight, HMCS *Blairmore*, a minesweeper, was built and commissioned at Port Arthur, Ontario in 1942. The ship was named for and sponsored by the Town of Blairmore, Alberta, in turn named for Andrew George Blair. The ship saw service in the Atlantic and at Normandy. The first CO of *Blairmore* was LCdr Walter Juchereau Kingsmill, eldest son of VAdm Charles Kingsmill. Young Walter was a naval cadet in Halifax and was slightly injured during the famous explosion there on December 6th, 1917. It was also on a December 6th in 1901 that Henry Albert Harper died trying to save the life of young Bessie Blair.

VAdm Kingsmill's grandfather was LCol William Kingsmill of the British Army. He fought in the Peninsular Wars and was also assigned to St. Helena to guard Napoleon. He was married there in 1817 and subsequently served in the



Canadas. They had nine children, at least one born at St. Helena and the others born in Canada. He was in the Militia of Upper Canada and the Sheriff of Niagara, and in 1837 organized the resistance at Niagara against WLMK's grandfather.

The Sir Galahad statue is unique in Ottawa as it does not represent a regal, political or military figure. Our last Prime Minister, ironically also a Harper, when looking out his Langevin office window, could see Parliament Hill and undoubtedly too, the Sir Galahad statue.

Although Sir Galahad is universally recognized, the King Arthur legends are culturally British. There have been a number of Royal Navy vessels named for the Knights of the Round Table. They have served in World War Two, The Falklands War and the Iraq War of 2003. Ironically, HMS *Sir Galahad*, also a minesweeper, was present at Normandy with

HMCS *Blairmore*.

Andrew Blair died in 1907 of a heart attack and is buried in Ottawa.

VAdm Kingsmill died in 1935 at age 80 and is buried near Portland, Ontario.

LCdr Walter Kingsmill died in 1949 at the age of 47 from tuberculosis contracted at sea and is buried in Ottawa.

WLMK died in 1950 at age 75 from pneumonia and is buried in Toronto.

VAdm Kingsmill's image was everywhere during the 2010 RCN Centennial and is perpetuated by his namesake Navy League Cadet Corps in Ottawa.

Indeed the principals of the story are all gone, but you can still see Sir Galahad in front of Parliament Hill and might reflect on his ironic connections to the Royal Canadian Navy.



One of Canada's leading full-service public affairs firms, specialized in providing business strategy, government relations, communications and public relations to defence and security organizations.

[www.prospectus.ca](http://www.prospectus.ca)

**TEAM TRITON**

**Made in Canada, Next-Generation Underwater Defence**

Canada's leading underwater defence technology companies have joined forces to provide the next-generation, integrated solution for advanced underwater defence.

Together, we're delivering a sonar suite upgrade solution that will be designed, built, and supported in Canada by Canadians. A solution engineered with market-leading, field proven technologies trusted worldwide.

**GENERAL DYNAMICS**  
Mission Systems-Canada  
gd-ms.ca

**Ultra**  
ELECTRONICS  
ultra-ms.com

**Maritime Systems**  
ultra-ms.com

**Raytheon**  
raytheon.com



## Answer to Schober's Quiz #74 on page 19

### ANSWER: The Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS)

**O**n 25th April 1911 three Royal Navy (RN) officers and an officer of the Royal Marines received their pilot's wings. Thus was born the air arm of the RN.

The Royal Flying Corps (RFC) was formed on 13 April 1912. It comprised a Military Wing under Army control and a Naval Wing administered by the Admiralty, commanded by Acting-Commander C. R. Samson, RN, who had achieved two 'firsts' in naval aviation history: on 12 January 1912 he took off in a seaplane from the battleship HMS *Africa* at anchor. And on 9 May of the same year, he flew off in a seaplane from the battleship HMS *Hibernia* under way at 12 knots.

With war imminent, the Naval Wing, renamed RNAS was placed under the operational control of the Navy on 1st July 1914—although nominally still remaining the naval wing of the RFC. At the outbreak of WWI Samson took his Squadron, now designated No. 3 Squadron RNAS, to France, with orders to hinder the rapid German advance through Belgium.

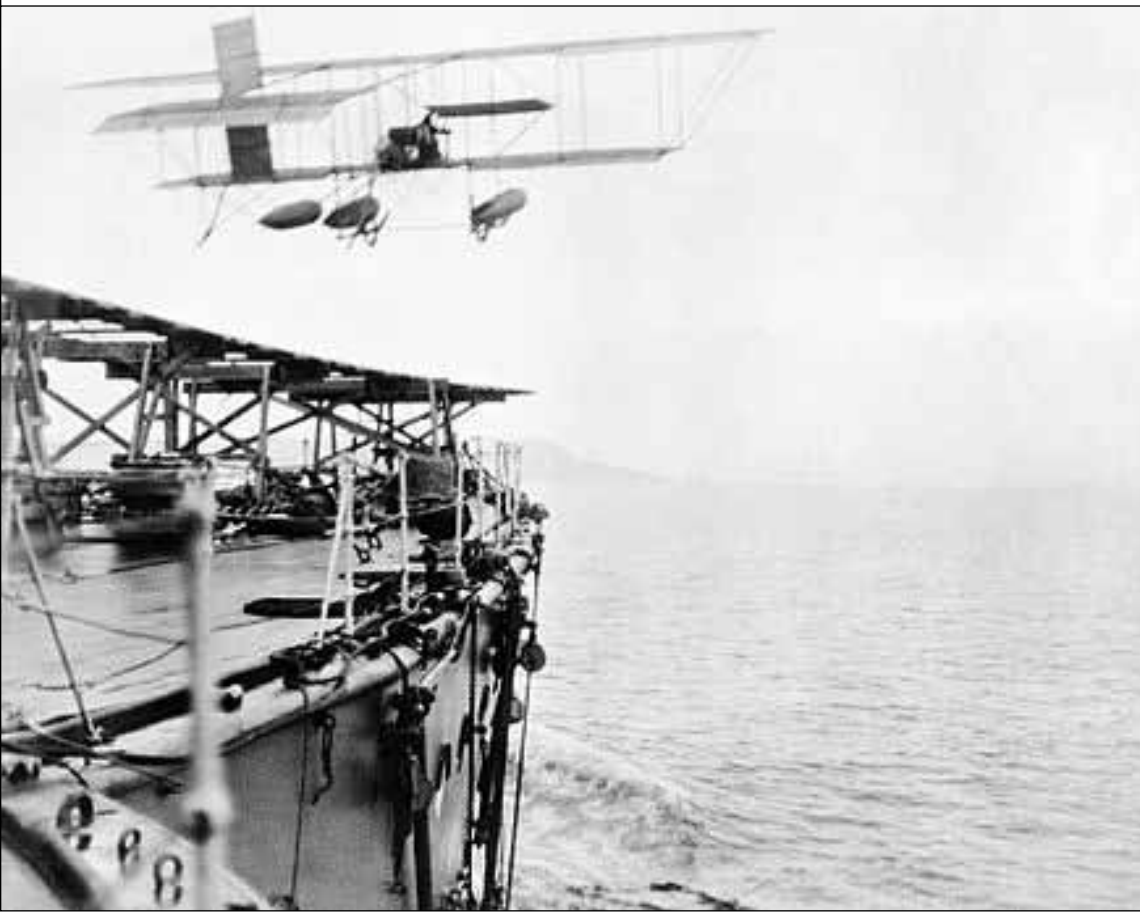
Finally, on August 1st, 1915, the RNAS was detached from the RFC and fully integrated into the Royal Navy. At the outbreak of WWI the RNAS possessed 39 aeroplanes, 52 seaplanes, a few small airships and about 120 pilots. From this

small nucleus it soon grew exponentially in size and capability. During the war naval aircraft operated in the Dardanelles, the Mediterranean and East Africa; squadrons were lent to the British Expeditionary Force in France, where they flew side by side with the pilots of the RFC, and naval airships proved their value on coastal reconnaissance and anti-submarine patrol. Notably, an RNAS aircraft from the seaplane-tender HMS *Engadine* participated in the Battle of Jutland (See Quiz #51).

But in spite of all the good work accomplished by the RNAS during the war, many senior RN officers retained an indifferent attitude toward their air arm, opening the way for the highly persuasive Lord Trenchard of the RFC to effect the amalgamation of the RNAS and RFC into the Royal Air Force (RAF) on April 1st, 1918, the former now designated as the "Fleet Air Arm of the RAF." Ironically, at the time of the merger the RNAS exceeded the RFC in all categories, boasting 3,000 aircraft, 100 airships, 5,000 officers, 50,000 men and 126 air stations.

During the interwar years leading up to 1937, operational control of shipborne aircraft was shared between the RN and RAF—an awkward arrangement severely testing inter-service cooperation. But in 1937, consequent to the Inskip Report, control of carrier-borne aircraft was transferred to the RN under the aegis of the Navy's so-called Fleet Air Arm.

And finally: why the diverse uniforms worn by the RNAS officers in the photograph on page 19? Probably because it was taken during the 'transitional period' between July 1st, 1914 and August 1st, 1915—after the RFC's Naval Wing had become the RNAS, but before its full integration into the RN. Apparently some of the officers are sporting Army type RFC uniform, some their new, RN-pattern RNAS uniform—and some are attired 'in a mixture of the two.'



The first ever fly-off from a moving ship. A/Cdr C. R. Samson RN taking off in a Short S.38 seaplane from HMS *Hibernia* underway at 12 knots. 9 May 1912.





## Canada's Admirals & Commodores (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Revised and Updated)

By: Norman H. Jolin and John M. MacFarlane

The Maritime Museum of British Columbia, 2016. xxxviii + 191 pp., illustrations, glossary. \$30.00, paper, ISBN 978-0-9693001-6-8.

### Reviewed by Mike Young

Like many readers of *Starshell* I suspect, I have a well-thumbed copy of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of this remarkable reference work. It was, and is, a unique record of achievement to the highest ranks of the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) and its antecedents. The document lists, in some detail, the career progress of those officers who attained the rank of Commodore or Admiral. The entries are not mini-biographies; they simply show where each officer was appointed and served during his or her career together with the promotion steps to reach Flag rank and with any decorations awarded.

The list in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition is compiled alphabetically and comprised some 404 entries and is not limited to Canadians serving in the Naval Forces of Canada. It includes, in separate appendices, Canadian born officers of the Royal and French Navies, Commodores and Admirals who served as such in North America as well as those Canadians who were officers of Flag rank in other navies.

This 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition is a major update of the earlier work. It focuses solely on the career details of those who served in the RCN, the unified Canadian Forces and the restored RCN, and excludes the additional information. Like the earlier edition it recognizes that some who began their careers as naval officers later migrated to unified or so-called "green" positions (particularly the Logistics Branch) and became General officers instead of the naval equivalents. Equally, all naval aviation passed to the Air Force upon unification in 1968 and thus those former naval aviators who reached General officer rank in the Air Force are included.

In the comprehensive introduction, the authors note that in the 1994 edition a total of 218 Canadian Flag officers were

listed. As of the date of printing of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, that number stood at 298. This represents a 27% increase over the intervening 22 years (during which period, it might be observed, the RCN itself did not increase by such an amount). The authors then caveat that percentage with an interesting historical analysis in some detail to put the increase into a proper perspective. It makes for interesting reading.

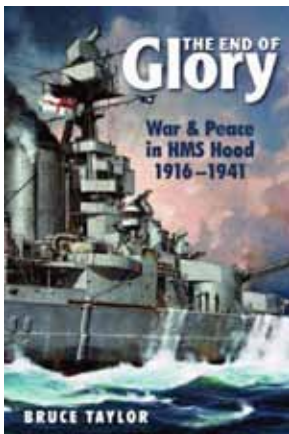
The new edition has an extremely detailed introduction which covers a considerable amount of useful historical detail. There is a complete listing of the various naval shore establishments and headquarters with their terms of being in commission. One of the most interesting items is the Brief History of the evolution of the position of what is currently known as Commander of the Navy. This is a really useful work and the editors are to be congratulated for their efforts to produce such an interesting contribution.

The main body of the book differs little from its predecessor in content, except for the greater level of historical detail in the introductory pages. There is a delightful addition in the form of a pictorial table showing the evolution of the naval badges and rank insignia from 1910 to post-2010. This is done in exquisite detail and is the work of the superb graphic artist Karl Gagnon.

As noted above, there are more entries for Canadian officers, simply because there are more of them than before. The entries follow the same style as before so there are no surprises there. As before, from a content point of view, this edition is a gem and a virtual treasure trove of valuable information and is worth purchasing from that perspective alone.

While the content of the book is excellent, the format and layout, at least for this reviewer (*and your editor*), is not. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition was spiral bound in landscape format using 8-1/2 x 14 inch paper. This made it a little awkward to stow but it opened flat and can be folded. This edition uses standard US letter-size paper with regular binding but in landscape format inside. This makes it extremely awkward to use. With a slightly smaller typeface, portrait orientation could have been used making the book much more 'user-friendly.' Also, the photos no longer accompany the entries. Despite the quality of the earlier ones, they should have been left in. As a final note, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition seems unable to decide whether or not it is a bilingual publication. Highly recommended!

*Mike Young is a retired naval officer, member NAC Ottawa and former editor Starshell residing in Nepean, Ontario.*



## The End of Glory: War & Peace in HMS Hood 1916-1941

By: Bruce Taylor

US Naval Institute Press (2012), 256 pp, hardcover, US\$37.95, US Naval Institute Members US\$9.48 (a discount well worth the cost of a USNI membership!). ISBN 1591142350.

### Reviewed by Gordon Forbes

My father said she was the most beautiful ship in the Royal Navy. He would have seen her in the Clyde in the 1920s or early 1930s at the height of her fame. *Hood* was the pride and glory of the Royal Navy and indeed Britain, from the time of her commissioning to her 'death.'

HMS *Hood* was a battlecruiser not a battleship, but she was a very large ship. When finally launched, she was 860 feet long with a deep-load displacement of 46,680 tons. She carried eight 15-inch guns in four double mounts. Battlecruisers were one of the concepts introduced by Admiral Jackie Fisher of HMS *Dreadnought* fame. They were more lightly armoured than battleships and hence designed to be faster. They were supposed to be the advanced scouts of the battle fleet. Their main vulnerability arose because the armor on the main decks which was much lighter than in battleships. The designers may have assumed that enemy shells would arrive at a fairly flat trajectory, as in the days of sail and shorter-range guns. But by the 20<sup>th</sup> century, gunnery had progressed to a much longer range with the result that shells arrived at a much higher trajectory. Several of *Hood's*

predecessors came to grief at the Battle of Jutland because of this weakness. The fact that *Hood's* keel was laid just three months after Jutland did not allow time for the major redesign that the results of Jutland would have required. But she was fast. During builder's trials she achieved a speed of just over 32 knots at a fuel consumption of 70 tons per hour (compared to 7 tons at economical speed). Twenty years later, at the Battle of the Denmark Strait, despite age and inadequate maintenance of her boilers, she still managed 29 knots.

Right from the beginning *Hood* was the showpiece of the Royal Navy. From the time of her commissioning until the advent of war in 1939, she was renowned for her cruises and show-the-flag excursions. She led a squadron in an around-the-world cruise in 1923-24. But she was also part of the fleet and as such, participated in gunnery practices, fleet exercises and sporting events that all ships were subjected to. On several occasions she won the "Cock-of-the-Fleet" honours for her ship's company's sporting endeavours. And in 1931, she was one of the principal ships involved in the Invergordon Mutiny.

*Hood* also underwent refits and upgrades throughout her life. By the 1930s, many of the upgrades were to improve her anti-aircraft armament, including the addition of a number of 4-inch dual-purpose guns, of which more later. By the late 1930s as war neared, the tempo of her operations increased often at the cost of necessary maintenance, particularly on her evaporators and boilers.

When war finally came, she was called upon for a constant stream of operations including North Atlantic patrols and forays into the Mediterranean including the tragedy at Mers-el-Kabir where she is credited with crippling the French battleship *Dunkerque*. 1941 found her carrying out frequent patrols of the gaps between Scotland, Iceland and Greenland. It was here that she met her fate in the battle with the

The 'Mighty' Hood, March 17th, 1924.

[Wikipedia](#)



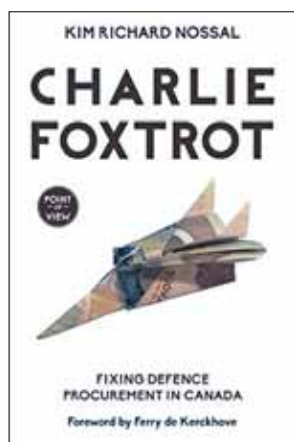


German battleship *Bismarck* in the Denmark Strait on 24 May 1941. The fatal hit is believed to have occurred in one of the 4-inch magazines that had been added in the 1930s. The explosion of this magazine in turn caused the adjacent 15-inch magazine to also explode. Only three survivors were rescued from the resulting sinking.

The book under review is a very full disclosure of the life of HMS *Hood*. There were a couple of chapters where I found the story bogged down a bit and these both had to do with shipboard life during the peacetime years. What slows things down in these two chapters is, to me, an overreliance on reminiscences by officers and men, as quoted by the author. These quotes don't seem to follow much of a sequence and many are too long. However, once we get to the chapter about the Invergordon Mutiny (more strike than mutiny), the story picks up and becomes both interesting and captivating. By the time we get to the chapter on her wartime service, the book offers many details that would not normally be found in history books. The minute-by-minute account of her last battle and destruction are the most complete I have seen about this event.

I recommend this book for anyone who has an interest in life aboard a large ship of the Royal Navy between the wars and to anyone interested in the story of this once great ship.

*Gordon Forbes served 28 years in the RCN and worked in the defence industry for another 20 years. He is the author of "We Are as One" based on his experience during the explosion and fire aboard HMCS Kootenay in October 1969. He is a member of Ottawa Branch.*



## Charlie Foxtrot: Fixing Defence Procurement in Canada

By: Kim Richard Nossal

Dundurn Press (December 2016), 200 pages, paperback, 5 x 8 in., CDN \$19.99, ISBN 978-1-45973-675-7. Also available by digital download (PDF), \$19.99, ISBN-978-1-45973-676-4.

### Reviewed by Gordon Forbes

The title apparently does not stand for the Canadian Forces (it is always referred to in the book as the Canadian Armed Forces – CAF), but for an expletive expression for a major foul up. I might have preferred to use a

better known expression such as SNAFU or FUBAR, but that was the author's choice.

It is hard to decide how to approach my present task. Is it: to review the book; to review the ideas expressed; or to rebut? I will settle on a review of the book as the simplest and least contentious approach.

The book is supposed to be a review of defence procurement in Canada and the steps that must be taken to fix the problems. It starts with the premise that defence procurement in Canada is a "mess" which is not altogether wrong. But by starting with that premise, it would seem to me to be hard to carry out the rest of the analysis objectively. Nonetheless, the author sets out to prove his point with examples and analyses of what went wrong.

The author uses six examples of bad projects stretching back to the First World War and the Ross rifle problems. The other examples that he uses are the CF-105 Arrow. The Ilitis jeep, the Victoria-class submarines, the Sea King helicopter replacement and the F-35 fighter aircraft. There is no doubt that all of these projects had problems; some foreseeable, some not. To be fair, he does mention three projects that he sees as successful: the New Fighter Aircraft project that led to the CF-18, the C-17 and the Chinook helicopter. One should point out however, that the latter two projects were sole-sourced off-the-shelf, with no competition or development.

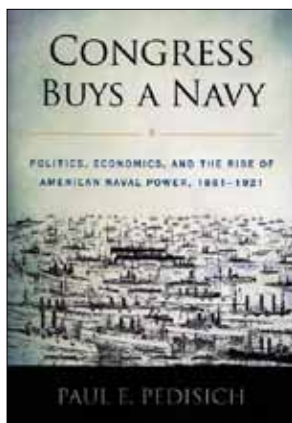
The author focusses his primary criticism on Canadian governments. He contends that governments of all stripes have used defence policy and its resulting procurement as a 'game' of political 'one-upmanship.' And he shows plenty of examples to support this. But he also criticizes the military planners and bureaucrats who advise the government and implement the policy decisions.

The author then proposes in two chapters, the way to fix the procurement dilemma. The first of these chapters addresses the way the government's approach to defence policy and direction should change in order to improve the whole environment around defence procurement. There are some interesting suggestions in this discussion that would undoubtedly make things more logical and clear. He then proposes that regular defence white papers are the vehicle for better articulating the government's defence policy and direction. This despite the fact he dismisses all of the previous seven such papers. In this he suggests a bilateral approach to white paper development. The question, of course, is any of this achievable?

I can find faults in the book. The author tends to simplify the reasons for the failure of some projects. His examples of just three "successful" projects tends to undermine the many way hundreds of other successful projects have occurred over the years including two world wars. And finally, he does

not examine the many reasons for cost overruns, putting the blame solely on government delays.

This book is certainly an interesting read, addressing as it does in a mere 173 pages the problem, the reasons and the solution to the issue. It should probably be read by federal politicians, defence bureaucrats and senior military officers (the defence establishment in the author's language), and everyone else interested in defence procurement and the future of the Canadian Armed Forces.



## **Congress Buys a Navy: Politics, Economics & the Rise of American Naval Power 1881-1921**

By: Paul E. Pedisich

Naval Institute Press (2016), 286 pp, photos, notes, index, hardcover, US\$53.48, ISBN 978-1-68247-077-0

### **Reviewed by Col (Ret'd) P. J. Williams**

“Strange women lying in ponds is no basis for a system of government.” So said a peasant in “Monty Python and the Holy Grail” this in response to King Arthur’s description of how the Lady of the Lake when handing him the sword ‘Excalibur’ entitled him to become the King of the Britons.

Frankly, after getting into this account of the development and growth of the United States Navy (USN, created on 13 October 1775) in the last two decades of the 19th Century and the first two decades of the 20th, I wondered if the US Congressional system was much better. It seemed to take ages to get anything done, constantly coming up against what appeared to this reviewer as a system entrenched with patronage, a fair degree of pork barrel politics and one which very much seemed to have the President at its mercy. Congress being responsible for budgetary allocations or in US lexicon, “appropriations.”

In the end, however, this turned out to be a highly readable account of the rise of a naval service that at the outset of the story was very much a third-rate force (indeed rated as 12th in the world behind the navies of Chile, China and Denmark), and which by the early 1920’s was, in the author’s words, “second to none,” the Naval Appropriations Act of 1916 having authorized a three-year program to build an additional 156 warships. The author is a former holder of the Admiral Stephen B. Luce Chair of Naval Strategy at the US Naval War College.

Pedisich’s aim in writing this book is to demonstrate the (much higher) degree of influence which the Congress, the legislative branch of the government, held over naval expansion as compared to that of the Executive. The book is organized into periods of about two to four years each and in so doing, covers the mandate of each successive president (two of whom were assassinated during this period), as well as the changes brought about by what are known as mid-term elections, the process whereby the US electorate chooses its Congressional leaders every two years. As each new government takes office the President’s priorities are laid out. Invariably, naval issues were not at the top of his list, and so the choice of a Secretary of the Navy, a Presidential appointee, was normally made of a party loyalist who had little background in or interest in naval affairs. The book then describes the types of naval initiatives successive governments tried to put in place and what subsequent resource allocations the Congress made.

There were some exceptions to most Secretaries of the Navy, Teddy Roosevelt who later became President, being among them. Indeed, it was on his watch as President following the Spanish American War that the USN’s so-called “Great White Fleet,” which included 16 battleships that circumnavigated the globe during 1907-09 in a demonstration of growing American naval power.

Congressional control over the sea service was further strengthened in terms of how the USN was organized. Since 1842, the USN’s management was organized into eight bureaus: (Yards and Docks; Provisions and Clothing; Ordnance; Equipment and Recruiting; Construction and Repair; Steam Engineering; Navigation and Medicine and Surgery). Each bureau had direct access to Congress and thus there was no single voice for the Navy. Indeed, a Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) was not appointed until 1915. Congress was quite happy to perpetuate this, as it also suited the needs of their constituencies, particularly those that had naval dockyards, or produced armour plate. Congress’ view was that come the day, the nation would mobilize, as it had in the Civil War, and the appropriate resources and a suitable navy would be produced.

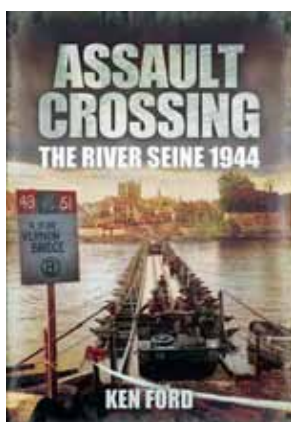
I found that not only did I learn much about the subject matter this book covers, but also about how the US system of government works. Canada is mentioned only once in the book, this in the context of—you guessed it—free trade, or “reciprocity” as it was then known. Plus ça change ... in terms of sources, in addition to a broad range of secondary material, the author makes use of the personal papers of several former Naval Secretaries, one of whom, Charles Joseph Bonaparte, was a relative of the Emperor himself.

Monty Python’s peasant went on to say that “...supreme executive power derives from a mandate from the masses,



not from some facial aquatic ceremony.” Given that in US politics it is the members of Congress who are referred to as the “elected officials,” and that the President and his Cabinet are referred to as “the Administration,” it makes one wonder where the real power lies for our neighbours to the south. These citizens now have a new administration to deal with and one has to wonder what Congress will let President Trump “buy,” and what the cost might mean for our country. And from that perspective, this book should have a readership much wider than those who go down to the sea in ships. Recommended.

*Colonel (Ret'd) William's last appointment prior to retirement was as Director Arms Control Verification on the Strategic Joint Staff in Ottawa.*



## Assault Crossing: The River Seine 1944

By Ken Ford

Pen & Sword Military, Barnsley, So, Yorkshire, UK (reprint 2011/1988; [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk) ix + 192 pp, illustrated, charts, appendices, bibliography, index. ISBN 978-1-8-84884-576-3 (From [Naval&MilitaryPress@nmpbooks.com](mailto:Naval&MilitaryPress@nmpbooks.com) for £5.00 plus Postage)

### Reviewed by Fraser McKee

Although not directly a naval history, this book does involve water (an assault across the River Seine) and various ‘boats’ of one sort or another (Army DUKWS and RE’s storm boats). But its review is still worth the space as this reviewer found it to be one of the best written descriptive histories of a military action I have read.

Ford tells in detail the three or four days’ action by the British Army’s 43<sup>rd</sup> Wessex Division to force a crossing north across the Seine after breaking out of the Normandy bridgehead in late August 1944. Not only is this complicated operation clearly described almost hour-by-hour, but the charts and photographs included are sufficient, clear and valuable in following the action and illustrative. The appendices give a clear idea of the size of the forces involved and their pre-battle orders. Throughout is an excellent example of how such mini-battle histories *should* be written, and well worth searching for a copy.

While the concept of an assault crossing of the 400m Seine at Vernon seems simple enough, it was vastly complicated by four factors. The Germans, although with a depleted

defence division, had dominant high ground overlooking the proposed crossing site and manned defensive positions in the local village—the river was rather swift-flowing to the northeast and with sporadic shallows, these complicating boat use—information provided by the Free French (FFI) Maquis often proved wrong and the two local bridges had been partially blown to prevent reinforcement of German forces in Normandy. This plus the fact the Americans were moving a large division including tanks and a thousand vehicles, at right angles and on the near side to the British planned assault, although the latter complication was handled by excellent coordination between the two Forces’ generals, the others created an almost murderous series of assault actions.

After a commendable brief ‘prologue’ to set the scene of events following the two month Normandy lodgement battles and how the Wessex Division arrived on the scene and the senior personnel to be involved, by page twelve, Ford is describing the Wessex’s arrival in Vernon and its detailed plans to attack.

His ‘O Group’ decisions are clear, the plans are reasonable with post-action assessments of them helping us follow events as they unfolded.

The two main crossing attack regiments, Wessex and the Somerset Light Infantry, had major unanticipated problems in getting sufficient cross-river transport in DKWs and assault ‘storm boats’ to land sufficient and equipped troops on the enemy side, even with adequate artillery fire support, use of smoke (frequently dissipated in brisk breezes). Often, especially at night, there was the difficulty of the troop commanders to determine what was happening in the two assaults, separated by about 1,000 meters and complicated by steep, muddy banks on both sides.

The whole picture lasts but about four days from arrival in Vernon to finally obtaining a secure lodgement on the other shore and driving the Germans out.

Included are occasional quotes from soldiers, FFI, platoon and company commanders, to lend “artistic verisimilitude” and a clear picture of unfolding events facing the small separated fighting units. As one later reviewer says, the whole operation can be, and is used in training today’s units “how to do it,” how to avoid problems that arise, what might have been done better—had anyone known. Right down to platoon section levels and ancillary arms’ requirements for such an enterprise. It was, in its way, ‘a near run thing.’ Apart from occasional educational value, the way Ford covers the story is a great example of such writing for others to follow.

*Commander Fraser McKee (Ret'd) is not only a former editor of "Starshell," but the author and/or co-author of several notable books on Canadian naval history.*

# NAC Regalia Sales

Blazer Badge (NAC or RCN)		\$23.00 each
Blazer Buttons (NAC)	Large	\$29.00 each
	Small	\$27.00 each
Cuff Links (NOAC)		\$37.00 pair
Medallion Lapel Pins	Gold, Silver, Bronze	\$5.00 each
Medallion Neck Decorations		\$95.00 each
NOAC Plaque	Ready for engraving	\$25.00 each
Necktie	NOAC/NAC/RCN	\$36.00 each

All prices include taxes and shipping. Send orders to the Executive Director. Cheques payable to "NAC National"



# BUILDING SHIPS FOR THE COAST GUARD AND NAVY



## CREATING BILLIONS IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY FOR CANADA

Over the first 10 years of the National Shipbuilding Strategy, over \$3 billion will be added to Canada's GDP through Seaspan's role.





## Royal Canadian Naval Air Branch 1945-1968

RCN Photo MAG-2133



HMCS *Magnificent* sails in company with the destroyers HMCS *Huron* (top) and HMCS *Micmac* (bottom) on a three month 1950 training cruise and goodwill mission to Europe.

The intent of this document is to provide the reader with some insight into the extremely profound impact the "Royal Canadian Naval Air Branch" or "Fleet Air Arm" (FAA) as it became more colloquially known, has had on both Canadian naval aviation and our aerospace industry. History states that Canada emerged from World War II with one of the largest and most professional navies in the world. It also informs us that based upon rapidly advancing submarine technology it would be essential to have naval air superiority to be successful in any future maritime conflict, in particular the very real threat of the Cold War looming clearly on the horizon. And so as a means to combat this threat, Canada's Naval Aviation was born in 1943.

Historical archives depict that not only did the Naval Air Branch contribute to the maritime security of our nation through the difficult and uncertain years of the Cold War, it also recruited and trained thousands of Canadians in the art of aircraft carrier operations while establishing a high level of interoperability with sister navies, principally the Royal

Navy (RN) and the United States Navy (USN). It developed a cadre of strong and dedicated leaders, pioneered world class technologies to achieve its operational missions and it championed whole segments of Canada's aerospace industry. Personnel from the Naval Air Branch have served in numerous important command and staff positions throughout the Canadian Forces as well as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and in the post integration period, when the Royal Canadian Naval Air Branch ceased to exist as a distinct entity, the spirit and professionalism of its personnel at all levels continued to permeate not only the Canadian Forces but also Canada's aerospace, scientific and business communities.

### THE BEGINNINGS

WWI witnessed the first major use of submarine warfare. By the spring of 1917, the tremendous loss of allied shipping to German U Boats reached such devastating levels that on 05 September 1918 a Canadian Government Order-

in-Council was issued establishing the Royal Canadian Naval Air Service (RCNAS) to combat this critical threat in the Atlantic. However, the existence of the RCNAS was cut short by the Armistice with an Order-in-Council 5 December 1918 officially disbanding the RCNAS. In 1942, the British and Canadian Governments became painfully aware of the urgent requirement for adequate naval air forces to provide critical air coverage in the mid-Atlantic to combat a German U Boat threat even greater than that of WWI. Consequently, in October 1943, the Canadian Cabinet War Committee approved the establishment of the "Royal Canadian Naval Air Branch".

By February 1944, Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) personnel were manning and commanding two RN aircraft carriers, HMS *Nabob* and HMS *Puncher*, with many Canadians serving in RN air squadrons as aircrew and aircraft technicians. The continuing requirement for a Canadian Naval Air Branch was underscored by the fact that experienced RCN personnel had adapted well to the special requirements of carrier operations and were ready to operate as Canadian units against future threats.

On 19 December 1945, the Canadian Cabinet approved the post-war permanent RCN Air Branch of 1100 personnel. Although small, this aviation component of the RCN developed into a force among the most formidable in the "Western World". During its 25 year existence it contributed significantly to the defence of North America and to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) force in the Atlantic, thereby helping to deter Soviet aggression and the outbreak of global nuclear war.

HMCS *Shearwater*, the home of Canada's Naval Air Branch, had its beginning with the establishment of the US Naval Air Station Halifax (1918-1919) on the Dartmouth side of Halifax harbour; followed by the Canadian Air Board (1920-1923). In 1924, the facility became Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Station Dartmouth. To accommodate the newly formed Canadian Naval Air Branch, an RCAF-RCN landlord-tenant agreement was struck. By the summer of 1948, the Naval Air Branch had grown to 900 personnel and 56 aircraft operating from 11 hangars thus stretching the infrastructure and resources of RCAF Station Dartmouth and inhibiting the Air Branch operations. A unilateral Cabinet Defence Committee decision in September 1948 transferred RCAF Station Dartmouth to the RCN. On 01 December 1948, the air station became officially known as the "Royal Canadian Naval Air Station Dartmouth" and simultaneously commissioned as "HMCS *Shearwater*". The Canadian Naval Air Branch now had a place to truly call their own.

#### **DISTINCT CANADIAN NAVAL AIR BRANCH OPERATIONS**

The first RCN carrier, "HMCS *Warrior*", was commissioned 24 January 1946 and 803 (Seafire) and 825 (Firefly), both orig-

inally RN Fleet Air Arm, became the first official Canadian Naval Air Squadrons. Flight records set by the Canadian squadrons in *Warrior* clearly surpassed those accomplished by similar RN carriers. *Warrior*, lacking adequate heating and cooling systems, was returned to the RN in exchange for "HMCS *Magnificent*", commissioned April 7th, 1948. "*Maggie*" would serve with the RCN until June 1957, during which time she would become the focal point for further advancements in aircraft maintenance and operating procedures to ensure personnel safety and aircraft reliability in a predominately hostile sea environment.

Disciplined aircrew operational training and proficiency programs, combined with sound leadership of dedicated personnel at all rank levels produced a rapid advancement of aircrew experience levels, innovative aircraft maintenance procedures and greatly improved aircraft availability, especially during carrier flying operations. Aircraft flight operations moved from the Sea Fire and Firefly to the more advanced Hawker Sea Fury fighter and the more reliable Grumman Avenger which, through Canadian innovation, became one of the most advanced carrier borne Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) platforms of the western world. On 01 September 1951 the Air Branch entered the realm of rotary wing aircraft with the purchase of three Bell helicopters followed on 29 April 1952, by the first Sikorsky built helicopter which would enter service for operations aboard "*Maggie*" in both a Search and Rescue and an ASW dipping sonar role.

The heyday of Canada's RCN Air Branch commenced with the commissioning of the carrier "HMCS *Bonaventure*", 17 January 1957. This new carrier, fitted with an angled flight deck, mirror landing sight, the latest steam catapult technology and a carrier approach radar, provided Canada with its first all-weather, day-night capability to operate Banshee jet fighters and the modern ASW Tracker aircraft from its deck. The Banshees with their Sidewinder Missile capabilities were not only capable of providing Combat Air Patrol (CAP) protection to the fleet, but also direct support to the North American Air Defence System (NORAD). On the retirement of the Banshee fighter in 1962 and the introduction of the new Sikorsky Sea King ASW helicopter, "*Bonnie*" became a dedicated ASW carrier. New Canadian destroyer escorts, which were built and/or converted to enable the large Sea King helicopters to operate from their decks, added a third dimension to the team which became renowned in the world of ASW.

The RCN's decision to marry the relatively large Sea King ASW helicopter with relatively small *St. Laurent* and *Annapolis* class destroyers broke new ground and entailed more than a few technical and operational risks. The initial trials confirmed the basic feasibility of such a marriage but also revealed the need to develop a system that could rapidly





The CH-124 Sea King helicopter.

Canadian Forces Photo

secure the helicopter and reposition it on deck in rough seas.

In addition to Canada's commitment to NATO and NORAD, naval aviation resources on both the East and West coast played a substantial role in Search and Rescue (SAR); in Aid to the Civil Power operations; in joint Canadian/United States (CANUS) projects, and in support of other Government Departments.

The flexibility of naval helicopters providing SAR from shore based facilities and ships at sea, proved invaluable in numerous rescue operations, i.e., transferring firefighting equipment and ferrying injured to medical care; the transfer of survivors and recovered bodies from Flying Tiger Flight 923 that ditched in the Atlantic off the coast of Ireland in September 1962; providing support during the 1956 mine explosion in Springhill, Nova Scotia and again during the 1958 coal mine disaster; and providing key assistance during major forest fires in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

Naval helicopters also provided the lift capability to supply materials to remote Arctic sites during the construction of the NORAD Distant Early Warning System (DEW Line). Aboard the icebreaker HMCS *Labrador*, Bell and Piasecki naval helicopters were not only employed in ice reconnaissance, but were also directly involved in the monumental task of mapping and charting the Canadian Arctic. Naval Aviation resources were also assigned the significant responsibility of Arctic water surveillance during the strongly contested transit of the USS *Manhattan* through the Northwest Passage. Other secondary roles were drug enforcement and Fisheries Patrols to protect Canada's resources while enforcing the laws established by the International Commission for the North West Atlantic Fisheries. (ICNAF).

The unification of Canada's Armed Forces was the beginning of the end of the Royal Canadian Naval Air Branch. In 1968, the Naval Air Branch became part of Maritime Air Group, a sub-unit of Maritime Command. The aircraft carrier HMCS *Bonaventure* was decommissioned in 1970 but the

helicopters continued to fly from destroyer decks, the end of Canadian Naval Aviation came in 1975 when Air Command assumed control of Maritime Air Group and the Canadian Naval Air Branch was history.

## CANADA'S NAVAL AIR BRANCH AND THE AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

The contribution of Canadian naval aviation to the Canadian aerospace domain has been particularly significant. With the advent of naval aviation in Canada, a contract was let in 1946 to the Canadian Car and Foundry Limited, a Montreal company, to effect the repair and overhaul of the British built Firefly and Seafire aircraft. Engine repair and overhaul was sub-contracted to Canadian Wright Limited also located in Montreal. The jigs, tools, aircraft technical data, and technical staff were provided by the Fairey Aviation Company of England to transfer the knowledge and skills to the Canadian employees. Thus began the first of numerous post-war aerospace technology transfers related to naval aircraft and aircraft systems that became a leading element in the expansion of Canada's aerospace industry.

In early 1948, as the Canadian Car and Foundry Limited began to phase out of the aircraft industry, the Fairey Aviation Company of England established a branch plant in Eastern Passage, Nova Scotia. This facility, Fairey Aviation Company of Canada Limited (FAC), provided aircraft repair, overhaul, modifications and the manufacture of spare parts for the Fairey Firefly and Supermarine Seafire, and Hawker Sea Fury aircraft. Over the subsequent years FAC increased their technology base, including specialists in design engineering; aeronautical, structural, electrical and electronic engineering. As such, it was responsible for the design and prototyping of major conversion and reconfiguration programs for the Grumman Avenger and Tracker ASW aircraft, McDonnell Banshee jet fighter and the Sikorsky Sea King helicopter.

Other offshore aerospace companies set up in Canada to support the repair and overhaul of military and commercial aircraft and aircraft systems, while other international aircraft manufacturers and licensed companies relied heavily on the ability to hire the expertise of retiring Canadian Naval Air personnel.

Historically, the naval air squadron that provided the greatest contribution to the aerospace industry was VX10. Squadron projects ranged from routine evaluation of small items to aircraft acceptance, a continual series of armament and weapons trials, evaluation of ASW sensors and aircraft electronic and navigation systems all of which were predominately RCN Air Branch initiatives. Other tasks included the complex and hazardous Carrier Suitability Trials aboard the carriers HMCS *Magnificent* and HMCS *Bonaventure*, and the development of the Bendix PB20 Automated Flight Control

System, a system which was a precursor to today's automated flight control and landing system utilized worldwide in both military and commercial aircraft.

VX10 made many contributions to the art and science of naval aviation that were far beyond that expected of such a comparatively small unit. This role included the development of the ASW Tactical Navigation System (ASWTNS); the Explosive Echo Ranging System (JULIE); the Magnetic Anomaly Detection System (MAD) improvements; Automated Permanent Magnetic Compensation (APMC) for most ASW aircraft MAD systems; the development of the Mark III Tracker aircraft; the Sea King helicopter Doppler Navigation Radar System; and the most ambitious and successful development project, the Helicopter Haul Down and Rapid Securing Device (HHRSD).

The main development and evaluation effort of the ASWTNS and related ASW detection systems focused on the integration of navigational and sensor inputs and their accuracy; the operation and reliability of the system as a whole; human engineering factors; and the development of effective operational techniques for using the system both as a navigation aid and to assist in the detection, tracking, localization and attack of submarines. This was likely the first major turn-key ASW systems integration to be conducted in Canada that involved several aerospace suppliers throughout the evaluation.

On 27 July 1959, a VX10 Tracker crew flying from the USN carrier *Valley Forge* effectively demonstrated the capability of the fully integrated ASWTNS by continuously tracking the submerged, unrestricted, high speed, nuclear attack submarine USS *Skipjack* for over 52 minutes. This was 47 minutes longer than had ever been accomplished by anyone before! The USN Commander of the Hunter Killer Force, Admiral Thach, sent the following personal message to the VX10 team. "From: COMHUKFOR To: CO VX10 DET VALLEY FORGE RADM THACH SENDS X A PLEASURE SEEING A VISITING PROFESSIONAL IN ACTION X WELL DONE"

Admiral Thach made an immediate and forceful recommendation for the urgent procurement of the ASWTNS for introduction in the USN. The Secretary of the Navy, Mr. W. B. Franke, aboard *Valley Forge*, was given a special briefing and demonstration of the ASWTNS by the VX 10 team. The result was a high level endorsement of this Canadian development for immediate USN procurement. This historic achievement was a dramatic milestone which significantly advanced the ASW capabilities of both the Canadian and US Navies and provided marked technological advancement opportunities for Canadian aerospace suppliers which became the mainstay for the Canadian Mark III Tracker aircraft update during the mid-1960s.

In the 1950s, the landing of a large helicopter on a roll-

ing, pitching flight deck of a destroyer escort-sized ship was proposed by Fairey Aviation Company of Canada; they developed the world's first "Helicopter Haul-Down and Rapid Securing Device (HHRSD)" or "Beartrap". This device, coupled with a number of safety related ship/helicopter modifications specific to helicopter operations including an helicopter tail probe, flight deck tail probe grid, a dedicated hangar and flight deck fire fighting system, flight deck lighting, helicopter fueling system, hangar top horizon bars and a ship/helicopter communications system, were all major Canadian Naval Air Branch innovations which eventually generated significant influence over international understanding/capability to operate large helicopters from small ships.

As the world demand for this concept grew, the Canadian aerospace company DAF Indal Technologies of Toronto, acquired the design and manufacturing rights to the HHRSD and related sub systems and became the world leader in the design, manufacture and installation of variations of the original "Beartrap".

Today, DAF Indal Technologies, now a subsidiary of Curtiss-Wright, Flow Control Company, continues to manufacture variations of the original HHRSD and sub systems to meet the needs of navies around the world including the United States, Canada, Japan to name a few, capturing 75% of the world market.

## CANADA'S NAVAL AIR BRANCH AND CANADIAN SOCIETY

Canada's Naval Air Branch also provided an enormous overall benefit to Canadian society. Many of these highly talented naval aviation personnel eventually sought employment in the rapidly expanding Canadian aviation industry.

They were able to apply their well honed skills in all fields including Naval Air Reserve Squadrons established at Naval Reserve Divisions; as aircrew; maintenance and support for world airlines; the aerospace industry; research and development; legal, medical and educational institutes; private business; and government including air traffic control, aviation standards and flight safety.

Their many individual contributions resulted in the remarkable advances in Canadian aviation technology and weapon systems.

They tested and certified new aircraft types, engineered simulators for Canada's space arm design ['Canadarm'], developed and produced a Canadian family of gas turbine engines; were instrumental in the development of aircraft sensors and navigation systems, assisted in startup and operation of successful helicopter companies and feeder airlines, authored books on naval aviation and other historic topics, became noted authorities in the legal profession and took lead positions in government and industry.





RCN Firefly aircraft of the 18th Carrier Air Group are ranged on the flight deck of the USS Saipan in preparation for the day's exercises.

RCN Photo JC-84

## SUMMATION

In its various guises in the past century of Canadian naval service, Canada's Naval Air Branch made a huge impact on Canada. Not only did it contribute substantially to the security of our country during troubled years, but did so with pride and dedication. Its innovative spirit, collective wisdom and talented leadership translated into advances in world recognized aerospace and ship technologies, air operations at sea and commercial helicopter operations across our country. Naval Air personnel have carried this proud legacy into Canadian society and its impact will be felt for many years to come. Air operations at sea with Canada's navy continue to be exercised today by the personnel of Maritime Helicopter Squadrons of the Royal Canadian Air Force with the same degree of professional diligence, competence and innovation that were the accepted hallmark of the Canadian Naval Air Branch through the history of Canada's navy.

## NOBODY TOLD US IT COULDN'T BE DONE



Royal Canadian Navy Photos

# Jack Thornton's Obscure and Offbeat Naval Oddities

## "Third Largest Navy" ... By What Measure?

**Where on earth did the claim that Canada possessed the third largest navy in the world at the end of World War Two come from?**

**T**his extravagant and totally spurious statement has been seized upon over the years with almost jingoistic fervour by a host of Canadian military and naval pundits without resource to basic research.

It would appear that when one is exposed to any fanciful assumption long enough, it comes to be believed—as any propagandist or advertising executive will readily confirm. Indeed, this preposterous assertion appears to be so deeply entrenched in some circles that to dispute it engenders howls of outrage, scorn—and even accusations of treason!

Allowing that just about any argument can be 'proven' by the manipulation of statistics, let us examine this extraordinary pronouncement. One can only assume that it was based upon the number of vessels (or bottoms, i.e., 'bean counting') a very questionable rationale if 'numbers' and not 'types' were the criteria—(where a 79-ton ML is the equivalent of a 35,000 ton battleship)—keeping in mind that Canada had a 'small ship' navy.

Perhaps the assumption was based upon the number of personnel manning the fleet—slightly over 90,000 (including WRCNS) at its peak. Let us consider the other Allied navies at the cessation of hostilities. First and second places are obviously assigned to the United States Navy and Royal Navy. Then comes the Soviet Navy, which far eclipsed the RCN. In 1945 it could muster three battleships (albeit ancient), a half dozen cruisers, over 80 destroyers and over 100 submarines (the RCN had none), plus a vast horde of small coastal and riverine attack craft and auxiliaries plus Naval Auxiliary Infantry.

Next, let us look at the vanquished Axis fleets.

Certainly those of Germany and Japan no longer existed as potent, cohesive organized forces—the Japanese Navy at the end of the war could still muster 2,524 vessels in every category from battleship to MTB.

Likewise the French Navy had been emasculated with many of its units scuttled or laid up in North African and West Indian ports. The remainder were divided between loyalties—though a 35,000 ton 'Free French' battleship was serving with the British Eastern Fleet. But what of the erstwhile Italian Navy? Italy capitulated on September 8th, 1943 and moved to the Allied side. Though not given the status of 'Ally' Italy was proclaimed a 'co-belligerent' and thence turned her forces against her former Axis partner. At that time the Italian Navy was still a formidable force. Even though the Germans seized a number of its ships, the Italian fleet still included six battleships, six cruisers, over sixty destroyers and torpedo boats, over fifty submarines and over fifty corvettes. Perhaps being a 'Co-Belligerent' didn't count!

Canadian pride in its wartime naval accomplishments is well justified and can only be diminished by spurious and un-researched (and un-Canadian) claims no matter how well intentioned.

Let us put our pride in proper perspective and, if we must make comparisons, claim for Canada her proper station.

The Royal Canadian Navy was indeed, the third largest western allied navy at the end of the war, but by no means the third largest in the world.

In 1945 Canada deserved its 'third place ranking,' as she was the third largest *western* ally in terms of contribution and participation (despite her small population and discounting such late comers as Brazil).

We 'punched' well above our body weight and need no false claims to prove that fact. Let us leave the *bragadocio* to others and dispel this myth once and for all!





# Obituaries

Compiled by Pat D. C. Barnhouse

'Starshell' Obituaries Editor  
pat.barnhouse@sympatico.ca

"All these were honoured in their generations,  
and were the glory of their times.  
There be of them, that have left a name behind them,  
that their praises might be reported."

Apocrypha, Ecclesiasticus 44

## ♦ Cdr Colin Ralph BROWN, CD\*, RCN (Ret'd)

NAC Ottawa, 89 in Ottawa 02/10/16. Jn'd. RN as Artificer in HMS *Caledonia* with Benbow Div. in '42. Commissioned as A/SLt(E) 09/50, prom. SLt(E) same date and Lt(E) 11/52. Tsf'd. to RCN 01/56 as Lt(E) (sen. 11/53), thence *Niobe* (standby *Bonaventure*) 04/56, *Bonaventure* 01/57, *Bytown* 12/58 and *Gatineau* 11/61. Prom. LCdr 11/61, thence *Bytown* 04/63. Prom. Cdr 07/71. Ret'd. 02/75. [DMcC, Citizen]

## ♦ Muriel "Max" BROWN

NAC-O, 91 in Ottawa 04/05/16. Widow Cdr W. G. Brown. [SK, Citizen]

## ♦ Capt John William MASON, CD\*\*, RCN (Ret'd)

NAC-VI, 92 in Victoria 07/09/16. Jn'd. RCNVR as Stoker II/C 12/42 and rls'd. in '45. Jn'd. RCN as A/SLt(E) 09/49, prom. SLt(E) 09/49 and Lt(E) (sen. 12/48), thence RN for trg., including HMS *Kenya* ('50-'51 Korea), *Niobe* 08/52, *Quebec* 10/52, *Buckingham* 06/54 and *Bytown*. Prom. LCdr(E) 12/56, fl'l'd. by *Ottawa* 11/56, *Stadacona* and *Chaudière* 11/59 (Completed Command qual.). Prom. Cdr 01/62, seconded 08/62, thence *Algonquin* (i/c) 07/64 and *Stadacona* (XO) 06/65. Prom. Capt 01/67, thence CFHQ (VCDS Br.) 10/67. CDLS(L) 07/72 and CFA Oslo 06/76. Ret'd. 11/78. Bronze Medallion 1982. [JC, Times Colonist].

## ♦ Cdr(S) Thomas Claude TREHERNE, CD\*, RCN (Ret'd)

NAC-O, 93 in Ottawa 25/10/16. Jn'd. RCN as Pay Mid 05/42m thence to RN for trg., fl'l'd. by HMS *King George V*. Prom. Pay SLt 05/43, fl'l'd. by *Ontario* in '44. Prom. Lt(S) 09/45, thence *Naden* 01/46, *Crescent* 04/47, *Bytown* 07/48, *Niagara* 10/51 and *Donnacona* (NSD) 05/52. Prom. LCdr(S) 09/53, fl'l'd. by *St. Laurent* 10/55 and *Bytown* 05/58. Prom. Cdr(S) 07/59, thence *Prevost* 09/61, NSD Hfx 06/62, *Bonaventure* [Commander(S)] and CFHQ 07/66. Ret'd. in '72. [RD]

## ♦ LCdr Richard Tinning WILSON, CD, RCN (Ret'd)

Toronto Br., in Toronto 10/10/16. Entered Royal Roads 09/51 and designated RCN(R) Cdt 04/52. Tsf'd. to RCN AS Cdt 09/52 (ROTP), prom Mid 09/53, fl'l'd. by *Ontario* 09/53 and *Toronto* 08/54. Prom. A/SLt 01/55 (and later SLt with same seniority), thence RN for Trg. fl'l'd. by *Naden* 11/56. Prom. Lt 02/57, fl'l'd. by *Skeena* 03/57, *Naden* 05/59, *Stadacona* 05/60, *Chignecto* (XO) 06/61, *Stadacona* 04/63 and *Niagara*

02/65. Prom. LCdr 07/66, thence NDHQ. Ret'd. in '68. Bronze Medallion 2000. [FMcK]

## In Memoriam (non-members)

### ♦ Lt\* William Leonard AMOS, CD\*, RCN (Ret'd)

92 in Ottawa 13/12/16. Jn'd. RCN in WWII as 'sparker' and srv'd. in *Haida*. Postwar srv'd. in Sup Rad, CFR'd as CMD O(SB) 08/57 and prom. Lt\* 01/64. Srv'd. *Aklavik*, *Coverdale*, Washington, DC and *Gloucester*. Ret'd. in '65. [Citizen]

### ♦ Lt Robert Swain BIGELOW, RCN(R) (Ret'd)

86 in Hamilton, ON, 26/04/16. Jn'd. *Royal Roads* as RCN(R) Cdt 09/49, thence RMC 09/51. Graduated 06/53 as SLt RCN(R) (sen. 09/52), fl'l'd. by *York* 09/53 and prom. Lt 09/54. To Ret'd. List in '60. [Veritas, WC]

### ♦ Lt John David CHALMERS, RCN(R) (Ret'd)

85 in Vancouver 16/04/15. Jn'd. *Royal Roads* as RCN(R) Cdt 09/49, thence RMC 09/51. Graduated 06/53 as SLt RCN(R) (sen. 05/52) fl'l'd. by *Star* and prom. Lt 05/54. To Ret'd List in '58. [Veritas, WC, Vancouver Sun]

### ♦ LCdr Frederick Gordon CLARK, CD\*\*, RCN (Ret'd)

84 in Victoria 19/10/16. Jn'd. UNTD as Cdt(S) at *Donnacona* in '53, tsf'd. to RCN as Cdt(S) 10/54. Prom. A/SLt(S) 06/55, SLt(S) 09/56, Lt(S) 04/57 and LCdr 01/65. Srv'd. in *Naden*, *Stadacona*, *Shearwater*, *Nipigon*, *Bonaventure*, *Swansea*, CDLS(L), CFB Toronto, PNO Sorel, CFB Esquimalt and NDHQ. Ret'd. 11/83. [WC, Times Colonist]

### ♦ LCdr(S) James John ELLIOT, RCN(R) (Ret'd)

96 in Yakima, WA 12/09/16. Jn'd. RCNVR as Pay SLt 06/41, prom. Pay Lt 10/42 and redesignated Lt(S) in '45. Srv'd. in *Chatham* and *Uganda*. Rls'd. in '45. Jn'd. RCN(R) as Lt(S) (sen. 10/47) at *Nonsuch* 09/55. Ret'd. in '60. [Queens Alumni Review]

### ♦ A/Lt Frederick Horatio Cochrane EDGECOMBE, RCN(R) (Ret'd)

82 in Guelph, ON 17/12/16. Jn'd. *Prevost* as UNTD Cdt 01/53, prom.

SLt 05/55, tsf'd. *Cataraqui* 05/56 and prom. A/Lt 05/57. Ret'd. in '61. [WC]

♦ **Lt Alfred William EVERETT, MiD, RCNVR (Ret'd)**

95 in Vancouver 08/11/16. Jn'd. RMC as Cdt in '39, thence RCNVR as Mid 01/42 and prom. Lt 02/44. Srv'd. RNC (Dartmouth), HM Ships *King George V* and *Illustrious*, *Saskatchewan* and *Kootenay*. Rls'd. in '45. [e-Veritas, Vancouver Province]

♦ **LCdr William Muir HAWES, CD\*, RCN (Ret'd)**

70 in Ottawa 28/10/16. Jn'd. RCN as ROTP Cdt at *Donnacona* 09/63, prom. SLt 05/68, Lt 05/71 and LCdr 01/83. Srv'd. *Stadacona*, CDLS(W), *Okanagan*, *Onondaga*, S/M Exchange UK, CANSUBRON ONE, *Algonquin*, CFFS Hfx. and *Ojibwa*. Ret'd 02/86. [Citizen]

♦ **LCdr Joseph Stephen HECIMOVICH, CD\*\*, RCN (Ret'd)**

Former NSNAC, 83 in Dartmouth, NS 05/10/16. Jn'd. RCN 02/52, CFR'd as CMD-O 04/66, prom. Lt 04/69 and LCdr 01/74. Srv'd. NRS Newport Corners, CFFS Hfx., FMG(A), MARCOM HQ and NEU(A). Ret'd. 11/87. [SR, *Chronicle Herald*]

♦ **LCdr John Samuel HILTZ, CD\*, RCN (Ret'd)**

87 in Truro, NS, 05/12/16. Jn'd. RCN(R) as UNTD Cdt 02/49 at Scotian. Tst'd. to RCN as A/SLt 09/51, prom. SLt 09/53, Lt 10/54 and LCdr 10/62. Srv'd. *Ontario*, RN for Trg., *Iroquois*, *New Liskeard*, *Stadacona* (1st Wpns Cse.), *Gatineau*, CDLS(L), CFHQ and MARCOM HQ. Ret'd. 01/75. [SR, *Chronicle Herald*]

♦ **Cdr John David JELLETT, CD\*\*, RCN (Ret'd)**

90 in Ottawa 10/12/16. Jn'd. RCN as a Cdt at *Royal Roads* in '42, prom. Mid. 08/44, SLt 04/46, Lt 07/47, LCdr 07/55 and Cdr 01/72. Qual. "ND", srv'd. HMS *Devonshire*, *Niobe*, *Ontario*, *Stadacona*,

*Magnificent*, *Naden*, *Algonquin*, *Bytown*, *Haida*, *York*, *Niagara* (US Def Intell. Agency) and NDHQ. [Citizen]

♦ **Lt(MN) Mary Elizabeth Patricia (nee SIGOUIN) KING, RCN(R)**

In Ottawa 10/10/16. Jn'd. *Carleton* as A/SLt(MN) 12/56 and prom. Lt(MN) 12/58. Rls'd. in '59. [Citizen]

♦ **LCdr John Patrick MORTON, CD\*, RCN (Ret'd)**

87 in Ottawa. Jn'd. RCN as Cdt at *Royal Roads* in '46, prom. Mid. 07/48, A/SLt 11/49, SLt same day, Lt 03/52 and LCdr 03/60. Qual. TAS. Srv'd RN for Trg., *Haida* (Korea), *Micmac*, RNC *Greenwich*, *Stadacona*, *St. Croix*, *Bytown* and *Terra Nova*. Ret'd. in '73. [Citizen]

♦ **SLt(S) James Armstrong MUNRO, CM, RCN(R) (Ret'd)**

87 in Victoria 10/10/16. Jn'd. UNTD at *Prevost* as Cdt(S) 01/50 and prom. SLt(S) 09/52. To Ret'd List in '56. [WC, *Times Colonist*]

♦ **A/SLt Arnold C. PROPP, RCN(R)**

72 in Saskatoon 06/11/16. Jn'd. *Unicorn* as UNTD Cdt 01/64 and prom. A/SLt 09/65. [WC]

♦ **LCdr [Maj(Plt)] Charles Robert Hunter THOMS, CD\*, RCN (Ret'd)**

80 in Victoria 23/11/16. Jn'd. RCN as Cdt at *Venture* 09/56, prom. A/SLt 05/59, SLt 05/60, Lt 07/62 and Maj(Plt) 01/74. Qual. "P". Srv'd. inter alia, *Niagara* (USN for Plt. Trg.), *Shearwater*, VS 880 and UN (Lebanon). Ret'd. in '85. [JC, *Times Colonist*]

♦ **A/Lt(S) Adam Hartley ZIMMERMAN, OC, RCN(R) (Ret'd)**

Former Toronto Br., 89 in Toronto 19/10/16. Jn'd. RCN as Cdt at *Royal Roads* in '44, thence *York* 07/46 as RCN(R) Mid (sen. 07/46), prom. A/SLt(S) 07/49. Ret'd. in '53. [Veritas]

"Sleep after toil,  
Port after stormy seas,  
Ease after war,  
Death after life does greatly, please."

Bartlett's - 1b,9, st.40

Kindly forward all obituaries to Pat D. C. Barnhouse,  
Starshell Obituaries Editor,  
555 Kenwood Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1A 0L7 or  
by email to [pat.barnhouse@sympatico.ca](mailto:pat.barnhouse@sympatico.ca)

# 'Our Navy'

By F. R. (Hamish) Berchem CSMA



“A hunting we will go!”

The 1st Corvette Flotilla of the Newfoundland Escort Force at St. John's was trained and 'Worked Up' in anti-submarine warfare by Commander J. D. (Chummy) Prentice RCN in the Flower-class corvette HMCS CHAMBLY as 'Senior Officer, Canadian Corvettes'. Described as having "the fighting instincts of a terrier," he was one of the wartime RCN's 'characters' with his monocle, top jacket button undone in 'destroyer' style and cap at a 'Beatty' angle.

Copyright © 2017 F. R. (Hamish) Berchem CSMA - All Rights Reserved



Please return undeliverable address blocks to  
Retournez les blocs-adresses à l'adresse suivante

Naval Association of Canada  
308 Kennedy Lane E  
Ottawa ON K1E 3M4

**Canadian Publications Mail  
Sales Agreement No. 40025187  
Ottawa ON**