

LEAD AND LINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA - VANCOUVER ISLAND

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HMCS Iroquois and Algonquin to be paid off May 1

The ceremony held at HMC Dockyard will consist of speeches from high level dignitaries, a final salute to the ship by its crew members, the hauling down of the ship's colours for the last time, and a parade by the ship's company through Halifax Dockyard. It will be executed with the utmost care, and be a fitting send off to ships with an almost unrivaled history of achievements.



The Peruvian navy frigate BAP Villaviscencio (FM-52) positions with HMCS Iroquois (DDG 280) for a live fire exercise during the 2013 UNITAS multinational maritime exercise hosted in 2013 by the Colombian navy.



NAC-VI 25 May Luncheon

Guests - spouses, friends, family are most welcome

*Lunch at the Fireside Grill at 1130 for 1215
4509 West Saanich Road, Royal Oak, Saanich.*

*Speaker: Captain Brian Costello - OIC of the Frigate
Modernization Program*

*Topic: What is being done and new capabilities in combat
systems*

Cost will be \$25 per person.

*Please contact Bud Rocheleau bnhrocheleau@shaw.ca or
250-386-3209 prior to noon on Thursday 21 Apr.
Please advise of any allergies or food sensitivities*

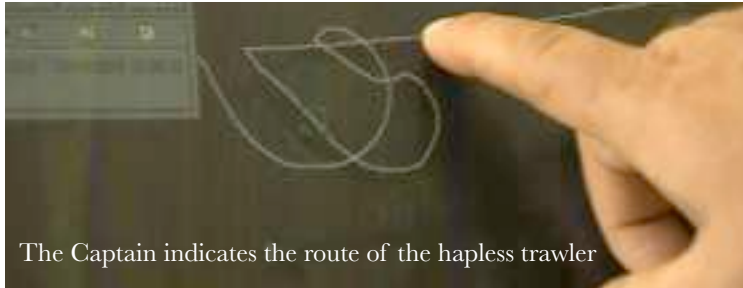
NAC-VI LEAD AND LINE

Russian submarine tows Irish trawler backwards

The *Karen* a fishing trawler from Ardglass, Ireland was snagged last week, presumably by a Russian submarine, nearly 30km from Ardglass on the southeast shore of Co Down, and dragged at speed backwards. The vessel was badly damaged but the crew escaped unharmed.

NATO exercises were held this week in northern Scotland and Ardglass fishing representative Dick James speculated that the alliance's drills may have attracted Russian interest.

The vessel limped back to Ardglass. Part of the deck had to be lifted because it was so badly damaged, and another section was ripped off.



The Captain indicates the route of the hapless trawler



The Calf of Man

The skipper said his crew was fishing for prawns at a point known as the Calf of Man, close to the Isle of Man, when the incident took place.

Mr Murphy said they thought they were going to capsize and were lucky to escape unharmed. They waited but no submarine surfaced to see if they were all right.

A Greenpeace study in 1989 detailed 1,276 similar accidents involving major navies of the world happening since the end of the second World War.

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LEAD AND LINE

Dutch submarine Bruinvis visits Halifax



Halifax was visited by Dutch navy submarine *HNLMS Bruinvis* (translation Harbour porpoise) (S810).

Bruinvis is a diesel boat, and was welcomed at the dockyard. (Nuclear subs tie up at Shearwater). Visiting submarines are rare, and non-nuclear subs are even rarer.

The Last member of the Walrus Class, *Bruinvis* is 222' long, and was commissioned in July 1994. She can achieve 21 knots submerged and 13 knots surfaced, and the main weaponry is torpe-



does. Ferries *Christopher Stannix* (alongside) and *Halifax III* (arriving) in the foreground are visible, and the sub's "backwards ball cap" extension on the sail makes it readily distinguishable from one of ours.

The sub was met by an RCN *Ville* class pup tug, with **Glenside** hovering in the vicinity, until needed for docking.



Navy Vet receives Arctic Star

Naval war veteran Gerry Butler received an unexpected gift on his 90th birthday. Nearly 70 years after ending his wartime service he has been awarded the Arctic Star. Mr. Butler is one of a few Canadian naval veterans entitled to wear both the Arctic and Pacific

Stars as he also served in *HMCS Uganda*. Employed as a Captain's plotter, Gerry recalls the ship taking part in operations as part of the Battle of Okinawa.

All eligible veterans and next-of-kin can apply for the Arctic Star. Applications can be found online by visiting www.veterans.gc.ca.

LEAD AND LINE

Memoirs of a Navigator - Part One

By Peter Chance

In October 1938, I was taken on strength of the Ottawa Division RCNVR as a Midshipman to be followed in the following June with Summer Training in Halifax.

On the 14th September 1939 I joined *HMCS St Laurent* (see below) a post war Fleet Destroyer totally inadequate for convoy protection. As an escort, at best we were there, when with HX1, we sailed on the 16th September.

In December, while escorting liners carrying the initial contingent of the Canadian Army bound for England, in dense fog, steaming at ten knots in calm seas, looking aft I saw what I thought was a huge fountain which soon became the bow wave of a very large ship.

Somehow, we had drifted into the centre of the convoy. It wasn't long before we increased speed to get clear. With continuous sounding of our siren and increasing to 15 knots, in two 90 degree course alterations we were on a reciprocal course to that of the convoy and heading back to Halifax at 25 knots.

Despite the fog and no detection equipment, we hoped to stay clear of any stray fishing vessels. When our Captain showed me how he would use fathom lines to determine

our position and time of arrival off Halifax, I was astounded and vowed that one day I too would be a Navigator.

In 1940, I transferred to the Permanent Force and began again as a Cadet RCN Special Entry at the RN College Dartmouth. Following two and half years of training, I joined *HMCS Skeena* (see next page) in April 1943.

By this time the tide of the Battle of the Atlantic had turned in our favour. Our many ships were fitted with much improved equipment and of course radar. Our efficiency and hence effectiveness was crippling the enemy.

Our ship was a remarkable sea boat. One night, in a fierce storm with 60 foot waves, stationed in position S in the rear of the convoy and with speed only sufficient to maintain steerage way, we kept closing the rear columns.

We had to turn away to open the distance and then resume our station. At one point when beam-on to the sea, we heeled heavily toward the oncoming wave which, if it had broken over us, would have also broken us and lost all hands. However, we were spared. The return to the convoy course was less threatening.

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HMCS Skeena was a River-class destroyer which served in the Royal Canadian Navy from 1931-1944. Wrecked 25 October 1944 during a storm off Reykjavik, Iceland.

As a Unit of EG12 (3), on D-Day 6th June 1944, we were part of the westerly barrier not far from Brest. Two days later we frustrated a submarine attack when his homing torpedoes exploded harmlessly in our CAT gear (CAT gear, was a simple invention credited to a retired RCN Cdr Peers.)

It comprised two lengths of pipe, rebar size, about 30 inches long, held together with clamps over rubber blocks. Towed well astern in a yoke, the movement through the water caused the pipes to 'chatter' at a frequency higher than that of our propellers and hence attract the homing torpedo. Other Allied navies called it 'Foxyer').

We learned much later that we had damaged but not destroyed *U-953* and that the Captain had been awarded the Ritterkreuz for sinking three Canadian destroyers that morning.

Our Group conducted successful night actions off the French coast in August. We marveled at the knowledge of the enemy movements gleaned from what we assumed were HF/DF intercepts.

I should observe that on our open bridge, we fought the ship or conducted the action as did Nelson, admittedly at greater speeds than ships-of-the-line. All of the critical players were on the bridge, the Captain, Gunnery officer, Communications and the Navigating officer, who kept sta-

tion by filling his binoculars with the stern of the ship ahead.

In early October, now a Unit of EG 11(1), we patrolled the UK/Iceland Gap with the purpose of blocking U-Boats transiting to the open Atlantic.

Having refueled in Reykjavik and dragged our anchor on the volcanic ash bottom, we resumed our patrol in a deepening depression.

On the afternoon of the 24th, in near hurricane winds and steep seas, my captain (Harry deWolfe a specialist N) and I believed that our ship could take anything the storm could throw at us.

When the Shore Authority offered a safe haven in the harbour, our Senior Officer accepted and ordered the Group to cease the patrol and enter harbour.

I worried strongly about dragging, especially as we had only the centre line capstan and thus the use of one anchor. Thus I asked to be relieved of my duties as navigator.

He respected my request and asked me to take the ship in to what I thought was the safest anchorage, which I did. Despite all precautions, during the approximately six to eight minute blinding snow squalls and inability to radar range, because of an



U-953 type VIIC (OL Herbert Werner) on the left and *U-851* Type IXD2 (KK Jurgen Oesten) docked at the Trondheim bunker, September 1944.

NAC-VI LEAD AND LINE

800 yard ground clutter, we dragged and foundered on Videy island. With the loss of our ship and fifteen members of our crew, it was a tragic end for our ship, one that could have been averted had we remained at sea. (*Editor's note: Skeena's hulk was written off and sold to Iceland interests in June 1945; she was then raised and broken up. Her propeller was salvaged and used in a memorial near the Videy Island ferry terminal*)

Following two shore appointments when I came ashore in November 1945, I was appointed to undergo the Specialist Course in Navigation and Air Control, ND3.

The N course which lasted from May 1947 to March 1948, began at *HMS Dryad* in Southwick House, just north of Portsmouth. The comprehensive course embraced all aspects of current marine navigation, including theoretical and practical problem solving.

Visits were made to Taunton, where Admiralty Charts were made and Slough for a demonstration at the Magnetic Compass Depot. Practical sea exercises in the School's Tender were live tests of what we had learned.

At *HMS Kete* at St David's Head in SW Wales our D course exposed us to the language of the aircraft controller, to be able to talk to pilots; elocution classes were mandatory. Ground School consisted of students on bicycles wearing headsets, on a parade ground being given directions by Wren controllers.

We also flew as passengers in Mosquito aircraft to gain an appreciation of our new trade. To round the ND course I learned to fly and qualified as an "A" license pilot.

In June 1951, appointed as the Navigator and Operations officer in the modernized Tribal class destroyer *HMCS Cayuga*, I would now be required to use my ND training skills.

For the best part of a year, we operated in the Yellow Sea as a Unit of the Commonwealth Forces during the Korean War. We had the best radar in the area and an excellent ops room. Tides and tidal streams much similar to those of the Bay of Fundy, made for highly en-

De Havilland Mosquito



gaging pilotage, using, sometimes, less than current charts.

One night operation, we entered the Yalu River estuary with only our radar outlining the bending channel. We lay alongside our barge targets to eliminate them with controlled fire and escaped without enemy interference although we were only five minutes from the Antung Airbase.

Operation Sitting Duck was a challenge, this time in daylight, at anchor on a falling tide. The purpose was to draw enemy long range 120 mm radar controlled gunfire. When we were straddled with the first salvo it was time to get out and call on our aircraft to attack with napalm and for long range gunfire from our supporting cruiser.

It was a very exciting exit with our only losses being an anchor and our motor cutter which sank in a whirlpool when the port engine went from full astern to full ahead.

Our return to Esquimalt required us to refuel at Adak in the Aleutians as the additional weight of our anti aircraft weapons, to ensure stability, demanded that we did not go below 40% fuel remaining.

Part Two will appear in the next edition of the Lead and Line

LEAD AND LINE



Admiral's Mountains of Southern BC

by Larry Dawe

Few people realize just how entrenched our naval history is in local place names. I am specifically thinking of the south coast of BC which is rife with mountains named after famous Admirals. At the editor's discretion I would like to run a monthly column which will examine the history of one mountain at a time. The first is Mt Gardner. Next month will be Mt Hallowell.

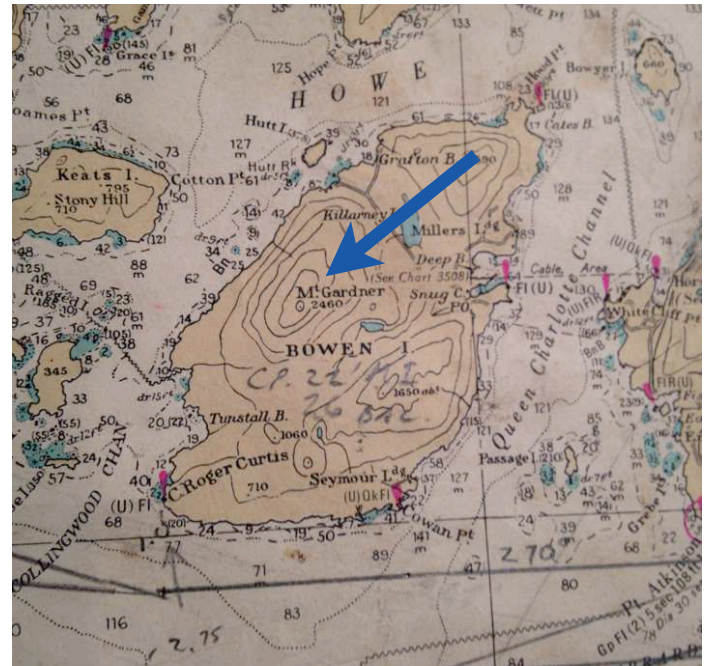
Mt Gardner

2460 ft; Main topographical feature of Bowen Isl, Howe Sd, near West Vancouver.

Named by BC Coast surveyor Captain Richards, *HMS Plumper*, 1860; for RAdm Alan Gardner

Russia's Oblique Icebreaker *Baltika* Tested in Arctic Ice

Baltika, the first ship ever built with an asymmetric hull form, demonstrated what she was designed to do while conducting full scale ice trials recently. The vessel broke 1.2-metre level ice in continuous motion when proceeding bow first and achieved a speed exceeding 3 knots in astern direction. The oblique mode, which had never been tested before worked extremely well and the vessel fulfilled all the design requirements.



(subsequently Lord Gardner), *HMS Courageux* (74 guns) and *HMS Europa* (50 guns) both in which Captain George Vancouver served with him as a Lieutenant.

While wintering (1792-3) between survey seasons in Hawaii, Captain Vancouver summarily dismissed, (*left him ashore there*), Midshipman Thomas Pitt (*nephew of the famous and serving Prime Minister*) for unruly conduct. (*Definitely not politically correct on Vancouver's part.*)

Upon returning to the North coast, he surveyed and named the Gardner Canal after his former Captain.

This 56 miles (90Km) long fjord, halfway along which is now the huge underground Kemano power station, forms a major part of the Douglas Channel fjord system, one of the largest such geographic features in the world 200 miles (320 km) long. At the North Eastern end of the other main tentacle is Kitimat.

The mountain itself was named by Capt Richardson (*HMS Plumper*) 80 years later, in honour of Vancouver's naming Gardner Canal for HIS former captain.

LEAD AND LINE

HMCS Margaret Brooke to start construction this fall

You may remember that in our last issue of the Lead and Line we ran an article about the 100th birthday of a Saskatchewan nurse who was something of a hero in the sinking of *SS Caribou* after it was

torpedoed off the coast of Newfoundland.

The federal government has since announced that one of the new Arctic Patrol Vessels will be named in her honour. Margaret Brooke is currently living in Victoria.



HMCS Fredericton with NATO

HMCS Fredericton joined Exercise Joint Warrior recently as part of its deployment under Operation Reassurance in support of NATO assurance measures in the North Atlantic Ocean. Two CP-140 Auroras from the RCAF are also taking part in the exercise.

Under the command of SNMG2, *HMCS Fredericton* will exercise with more than 50 warships in support of 15 countries making it the biggest in the history of the multinational exercise. *HMCS Fredericton* has a crew of approximately 250 personnel of all ranks, including a CH-124 Sea King helicopter and air detachment.



HMCS Fredericton and ITS Aliseo visited Istanbul 21-23 March 2015.

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HMCS Annapolis sinks off Gambier Island

After years of legal arguments with Environmental Groups, the Artificial Reef Society of BC was successful in its bid to sink *Annapolis* as a diving reef in April. The sinking, which took place off Gambier Island, Northwest of Vancouver, took all of two minutes from the time the 12 charges were set to sinking. The ship will be used for underwater habitat renewal and as a destination for recreational divers. Holes were cut into the sides to allow access.

The sinking attracted an audience from Saudi Arabia, Italy, Puerto Rico and across Canada. The Society acquired the ship in 2008. *Annapolis* served for thirty years (1964 to 1996).



Virtual Tour of HMS Erebus

After more than 160 years of searching to understand the fate of English explorer Sir John Franklin's fabled arctic voyage, the 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition team located one of Franklin's historic ships and solved one of the world's greatest archaeological mysteries. See photos and video taken by the Fleet Diving Unit Atlantic at <http://www.pc.gc.ca/culture/franklin/index.aspx>



NAC-VI LEAD AND LINE

Replica of *Hermione*, the ship French General Marquis de Lafayette took to the US, sets sail.

Some 80 crew members will sail the three-masted 65-metre ship along the route to Boston made by the French general Lafayette - to bolster revolutionaries fighting for an independent United States.

*Back in 1778 the original *Hermione* took a mere six months to build. The new replica took 17 years to construct, mobilising hundreds of craftspeople*



from around the world. The crew plans to make landfall on June 5 in Yorktown in Virginia, where US troops led by George Washington and French soldiers accompanied by General Lafayette scored a decisive victory over the British in 1781.

Annual General Meeting

In preparation for the Annual General Meeting the President has issued the Annual Call for volunteers to serve on the Executive Committee and for proposed resolutions to be tabled at the next NOAVI AGM. Please forward any nominations and/or resolutions to the Secretary - Larry Dawe at larrydawe2@gmail.com.

Notice of NAC-VI Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 66th Annual General Meeting will take place at the Fireside Grill 4509 West Saanich Road, Royal Oak, Saanich, BC on Monday, 22 June, 2015 on completion of the Luncheon.

1. To consider, and subject to any necessary amendments, approve the minutes of the
2. To receive the report of the President;
3. To consider and approve the financial statements for the year ending 31 March, 2015;
4. To approve the budget for the year ending 2016;
5. To appoint a reviewer for the year ending 2016
6. To ratify and confirm the actions of the Executive Committee and Officers for the year 2014/2015
7. To authorize the Executive Committee to take action on behalf of the Organization for the year 2015/2016; and
8. To transact such business as may be properly brought before this meeting.

65th Annual General Meeting held on Mon 25 June 2012;

HERE THERE BE MONSTERS....



Mysteries of the Sea

This month I hope to introduce you to the marvels of the Bobbit Worm. It is not as splashy as some of my other choices, but remarkably deadly. Ed

The Bobbit worm CAN grow to 10 feet although a more average length is a mere three. It buries itself in gravel mud, or coral (see right) leaving only its five antennae (see below) to sense the arrival of prey. Its teeth are incredibly sharp and it attacks with lightening speed, frequently cutting its prey in half. Although it is an omnivore, it is a mighty hunter and relies on that skill for most of its nourishment. The Cardinal fish caught above, got away. Most don't.

To add to its charm, it then injects a narcotizing or killing toxin into the prey which helps it actually get the



Photo by Jason Isley

creature into its mouth safely.

The Bobbit worm lives in warmer environments in the Indo-Pacific and Atlantic although it has been accidentally introduced into other environments. In March 2009 workers at the Blue Reef Aquarium in Cornwall found a worm in one of its tanks. They nicknamed it "Barry" - no word on whether or not Barry was allowed to survive.



The name Bobbit Worm was coined in a book called Coral Reef Animals in the Indo-Pacific in reference to Lorena Bobbit who cut off her husband's penis with a knife after he raped her. The worm named for her was suspected of doing the same to its mate with its scissors-like jaws.

As in so many urban myths it is not true. The males do not have penises and reproduction is accomplished by broadcast spawn.

NAC-VI LEAD AND LINE

Washington State to build a bridge out of old Air Craft Carriers?

Washington State has just received federal funds to study a totally unique toll bridge concept, one made out of decommissioned US Navy Super Carriers. The bridge would consist of two or three carriers and would link Bremerton and Port Orchard, Washington, spanning the Sinclair Inlet.

Three carriers connected end to end would complete the span, but two carriers would work well with ramps emanating from each shore and sloping up to the carrier's decks.

The two main ships eyed for the project are the USS *Independence* and the USS *Kitty Hawk*. The *Independence* is set to be towed to Texas for recycling this year and the *Kitty Hawk* is slated to remain in reserve until the Navy's newest carrier, the USS *Gerald R Ford*, is fully operational.

Navy policy for the big ships final fate states that they can only be used as museum ships or for disposal/recycling, so a policy change will be required

The \$90k federally funded feasibility study will have to be submitted by December of this year and from there it will be a fight to keep the idea in the state transportation budget and evolve its funding from there.



The Arion Male Voice Choir sings

Canadian Gems

Friday 7.30 pm - May 8, 2015

Centennial United Church

612 David St at Gorge Rd

Tickets \$15 in advance - \$20 at the door

Accompanied children under 12 free

Tickets available from Choir Members or at the door

For further information call 250-475-0072

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Retirees Dental Plan, Country Grocer, Fairway Market,
Thrifty Foods and Stone Funds



NAC-VI LEAD AND LINE

The day HMS Penelope plowed into Preserver

The year was 1988. *HMCS Preserver* was above the Arctic circle off the Norwegian Coast near Vestfjorden on a NATO deployment. On 11 Sept *Preserver* was in the middle of a replenishment with *HNoMS Trondheim* on the port side while *HMS Penelope* approached from starboard.

Something went very wrong. Later reports blamed a steering gear failure on the part of *Penelope*. (The collision has been posted to You-Tube for those who would like to see the whole catastrophe.)



Penelope ran up the side of *Preserver*, catching the starboard anchor and cutting open her side. The CO of *Preserver* reacted quickly- breaking off the liquid RAS already underway and taking the way off his vessel.

The repair bill for MoD RN was very steep, more than a million pounds sterling. It had to cover the USN bill for 20 divers from *USS Puget Sound* who spent 23 hours underwater in shifts to weld patches onto *Penelope* to keep her afloat. The collision was on 11 Sept 1988 and she did not get back to Southampton until 28 Oct that year.

Service Officer's report

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Nursing Sister Catherine Walker
3225 Exeter Victoria
Ph 250-592-0769

CIC Victoria lunch speaker on 20 May at the Union Club from 1130 for 1200.

The former VCDS, Vice Admiral Bruce Donaldson will speak on: *Capability vs Affordability in the Canadian Armed Forces: Can a Welterweight Afford to Use 12 oz. Gloves?*

Reservations should be notified to Maureen Bennett at cic.secretary@yahoo.com

If you would like to join the Service Officer's Report and Visitation Committee, phone Irvine Hare 250-853-5493 or Peter or Elizabeth Campbell at 250-478-7351