



# SOUNDINGS



**PATRON H.R.H. THE PRINCE PHILIP  
DUKE OF EDINBURGH  
OTTAWA BRANCH  
THE NAVAL OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA  
Box 505, Station B, Ottawa, ON K1P 5P6**

*"To make all levels of Government and the general public clearly aware of the vital need for, and value of adequate and effective Maritime security forces to protect and further the interests of Canada." (Branch Constitution, Article III.)*

43.02

"Trying the depth of the water and the quality of the bottom line...."

November, 2007

## **The Canadian Navy Moves Towards Acquiring Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships**



*The primary task of the eight A/OPs ships will be to assert Canadian sovereignty and security in Canada's approaches in all three oceans. Delivery of the first ship is expected in 2013. See the cover story starting on page 7.*

## From the President

By Richard Gimblett

It was a busy summer, not least because of the several great developments for the Navy, including capital procurement items and Arctic, African and Caribbean deployments for the fleet. Neither was it slack and idle for our Branch, and I would like to use this space to bring you up to date on a couple of significant changes on issues first brought before you at the Annual General Meeting in May. These have to do specifically with the **Centennial Committee** and the investigation into **Membership Renewal**.

You may recall that at the AGM you confirmed the appointment of **Brett Johnson** as Director for the Centennial -- he had effectively been doing the task for most of the previous year, and had kick-started some really important events, including plans for the National Naval Ball on 04 May 2010. Well, hardly had the ink dried on his ratification when Brett regrettably had to tender his withdrawal, due to his being assigned a leading role on his company's bidding teams for the new Navy construction projects I alluded to in the opening paragraph. With the demands on his time, especially travel, he felt he could not serve us with the diligence needed, and it would be best to do a watch turnover before entering a

special sea duty situation. Appreciating the logic of his position, I had no option other than to thank Brett on your behalf for a great job so far, and to wish him all the best in his future endeavours. The process of finding a replacement actually resulted in a rather smooth transition, as **Ian Parker** quickly stepped up to the challenge. Many of you know Ian as a great student of history, and when he retired from the Navy two years ago he was serving here in Ottawa as chief of staff to the Chief of the Maritime Staff. As such, he brings to the position of Centennial Director great personal interest and organizing abilities. With **Richard Archer**, our Soundings editor, continuing in an assistant capacity on the committee, we remain on course for great things in 2010. Fair winds Brett, and welcome aboard Ian!

Turning to the other big change, those of you who were at the AGM will recall the wide-ranging discussion on the whole question of membership renewal - indeed, this is an issue that has been of increasing concern to your Board for some time. But recognizing it is an issue not unique to us at this Branch, we had sought your endorsement to go to the National Executive with an initiative to engage a consultant firm to undertake a proper investigation, paid if necessary. Well once again, the minutes of that

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AGM discussion barely had time to be posted before an exciting new development transpired. Our Vice-President **Bob Bush** is a recent graduate of the Masters of Business Administration program at Royal Roads University (the civilian successor to the former Royal Roads Military College), and he discovered that a local serving naval officer who is presently engaged in the MBA program was looking for a subject for the major final term assignment known as an "organizational consulting project (OCP)". The person in question is another busy chap, Commander **Russ Fowler**, whose day-job position on the naval staff is project director for the Halifax Class Modernization (HCM -- funding for which was one of the major government announcements this summer). Because of his student status, we cannot pay Russ for his efforts, but we have assured him of our gratitude for his efforts, and I encourage you to extend your full cooperation if and when he comes around with his questionnaire early in the new year. I should note that National President **Ray Zuliani** is delighted with this development, and concurs with the arrangement that Russ

will be doing this project for NOAC National as the "client", with Ottawa Branch acting as the "agent" to National, and **Bob Bush** taking the lead as point of contact.

Finally, I mentioned in opening my piece that there had been many great developments for the Navy over the summer. I make every attempt to pass along any news as I get it by means of e-mail (carefully trying to strike a balance between what I perceive as your desire to learn against fear of clogging your inbox). However, with every send I get a number of "address unknown" returns. With the busy-ness of my own summer, I have not had the chance to rationalize these against the membership list, to discover who we have lost, mostly as folks change their provider.

Can I close with a pitch, please -- if you were not plagued with a series of emails from me over the summer, drop me a note ([richard.gimblett@rogers.com](mailto:richard.gimblett@rogers.com)), so I can add you to the fun! Yours aye, Rich.

## NOAC National Awards

Ottawa Branch Annual General Meeting  
7 May 2007



**Andy Geddes** was awarded the NOAC Bronze Medallion in recognition of his ongoing and highly valued work in support of the Ottawa Branch's Salty Dips publications.



**Richard Archer** was awarded the NOAC Bronze Medallion in recognition of his editorship of Soundings and his work on revising the Ottawa Branch constitution.



## Guest Editorial

### Why Does Canada Still Need a Navy?

By Peter T. Haydon

*This is a shortened version of a more comprehensive analysis (under the same title) which is available as a Maritime Security Working Paper on the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies website <http://centreforforeignpolicystudies.dal.ca/index.php>. Peter T. Haydon is Editor-in-Chief of the Canadian Naval Review and a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies at Dalhousie University. This guest editorial sets the scene for the article on the Canadian Navy re-capitalization program that follows.*

A person could be forgiven for thinking that the Canadian Navy appears rudderless today. Major programs to modernize the fleet and to replace proven naval capabilities seem stalled, and basic naval policy has to run the gauntlet of public opinion any time the navy makes the headlines. The Canadian Navy has never been well-entrenched in the national fabric, but until recently there has always been a politically-approved 'core' naval policy that provided the rationale for maintaining the fleet as the first response to crisis and for helping to ensure sovereignty at sea. Why have things changed? To answer this, we need to go back to first principles.

#### Why do States Maintain Navies?

Navies have always been, and will doubtless remain, political instruments – to a far greater extent than either armies or air forces. This has more to do with the inherent operational flexibility of naval forces and the fact that international law regards a warship as an extension of the sovereign state than with the view that sea power is merely “continuation of policy by other means.”

Over the years, as the oceans became increasingly and necessarily subject to political control, navies (and in some cases coast guards) have become instruments of state policy at sea in four ways: to enforce national and international laws governing the use of the oceans:

- for self-defence in home and adjacent waters and thereby assert sovereignty in waters under or claimed to be under national jurisdiction;

- as instruments of foreign policy; and
- to wage war.

The extent to which states maintain and use navies in these tasks is determined by a range of variables that include geography, dependence on sea-borne trade, overseas interests, national security and, of course, domestic politics.

A state that decides to maintain a navy for some or all of those tasks must not only develop the necessary operational capabilities but also maintain those forces in a way that ensures they are available when needed. There is absolutely no point in having naval forces if they are not readily available to do the bidding of their government. To maintain the necessary operational capability, the naval force structure is best managed as a single entity under a concept whereby replacement ships and support systems are routinely funded in a way that always retains operational integrity of the fleet. Ideally, the replacement of warships and auxiliaries should be done under a steady building program that allows necessary industries and technical skills to be maintained. The entire process requires a pre-existing and politically-endorsed naval policy that serves as the rationale for modernization and for the acquisition of new ships, aircraft, and other equipment. Unfortunately, that policy does not exist today.

#### Canada's Maritime Strategic Setting

With ocean responsibilities for an area almost as big as the landmass, albeit only





partly useable, and with extensive ocean-related international interests and concerns, especially shipping which is the lifeblood of the economy, Canada has maintained a navy for almost 100 years. Over that period the rationale for the navy has changed to reflect its strategic imperatives and the varying balance between domestic and international priorities. For instance, after the Cold War, the Canadian Navy was heavily committed to international security operations in places like the Persian Gulf, Somalia, the Adriatic, the Caribbean and Southeast Asia. Only limited attention was paid to domestic security concerns because, until the terrorist attacks of September 2001, Canada's oceans were seen as generally benign save for a few fishing violations and some instances of smuggling which were handled by the RCMP and the Canadian Coast Guard. This is no longer the case, the domestic requirements have risen in priority again.

With greater concern today for national security in its widest sense, including environmental issues as well as the physical safety of shipping using Canadian waters, and the need to counter international crime at sea, the international role of the navy is no longer dominant. Spurred on by concerns over the impact of global warming on the Arctic, the government has adopted a 'Canada First' security policy. Although still poorly defined, the new policy has the potential to change the course of naval policy in Canada. Faced with new challenges and possibly new responsibilities, the Canadian Navy needs to re-develop its force structure in a way that provides the greatest amount of flexibility to operate both in support of national maritime security and as an instrument of foreign policy. In this, some basic capability requirements exist including: warships for use in self-contained naval task groups and individually at home and overseas; sea lift to support joint operations at home and overseas; and ships and aircraft to patrol all waters under Canadian jurisdiction including Arctic and northern waters.

Although national laws can be enforced in waters under Canadian jurisdiction by the RCMP and the coast guard, there are times

when their operations need to be supported by the superior force and authority implicit in the navy. Just as respect for Canadian sovereignty is a function of the respect for Canada's ability to use force as the means of last resort, law enforcement requires that there be sufficient force available to compel compliance with the law. On its own, a non-military coast guard cannot provide the necessary guarantee of compliance, and certainly would not be able to manage violence should the need arise – this is a naval task. Moreover, the navy is the only organization capable of coordinating complex joint and multi-agency security operations at sea. But without a coherent and overarching national naval policy, it is increasingly difficult to develop the programs to transform the navy to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **What Should the Future Naval Policy Be?**

A sound Canadian naval policy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century must address both domestic and international requirements, creating a new balance between the two missions. Domestic requirements are a combination of deterrence and response supported by a comprehensive information management system. These capabilities are needed to ensure that national and international laws and conventions are respected in Canadian waters and that those waters are not used for illegal purposes. This requires that the government must be able to control whatever takes place in the waters under its jurisdiction. Not doing that is tacit acceptance that others can use those waters as they please without regard or respect for Canadian laws, essentially an abrogation of sovereignty.

Internationally, Canada has been well served by the naval task group concept, and there is every indication that the types of situation in which Canadian task groups have been deployed in the past will continue to exist. It is also reasonably certain that Canadian governments will find it necessary to remain involved in international crisis management; national interests are too compelling to do otherwise. Thus, the timely





replacement of the core elements of the naval task group (the command ships, escorts, fleet support ships, submarines, and helicopters) serves Canada's best interests now and in the longer term. To abandon the proven, naval task force capability makes absolutely no strategic sense. It is the nucleus around which any future multi-ship or multi-capability formation, whether joint or interdepartmental, will be formed. Why would any sensible government willingly give up a capability that has served it well for 15 years under a wide range of international and domestic situations and will certainly be called upon to do so in the future?

### **Why does Establishing a Canadian Naval Policy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seem so Difficult?**

Systematically over that last decade the concept of a politically-approved core naval policy has eroded, and now there is no overarching political guidance for the development of a coherent force structure. This needs to be corrected urgently by re-introducing a core naval policy. The essence of that policy is that the navy needs to be able to function efficiently in home waters as well as globally in protecting Canada's extensive maritime interests. Basic capabilities to make this happen include:

- collecting and analysing information on the use of all Canadian waters and coordinating operations of all government departments and agencies in those waters;
- patrolling all waters under Canadian jurisdiction and making timely responses to incidents that have the potential to threaten Canadian security;
- deploying warships (as both self-contained naval task groups and individually) for use at home and overseas with the ability to integrate into US and multinational naval formations;

- providing sea lift to support joint operations at home and overseas under a range of situations that include supporting Canadian embassies and evacuating people from threatening situations; and
- maintaining the necessary support infrastructure (e.g., command, communications, logistics, engineering, training support systems) to support those operations.

Determining the precise force structure needed to meet those capabilities is a subordinate process in which compromises between naval recommendations and political expectations are struck. However, in the end it is what the government is willing to buy rather than what the navy wants that establishes the nature of the fleet. Yet, without a politically approved core naval policy every program is subjected to departmental review within a very broad menu of force requirements, long and short term. A politically-approved core naval policy not only establishes the broad capability requirements, it also determines the respective priorities.

Overall, not maintaining an effective naval force is tantamount to surrendering one's sovereignty at sea. An effective navy is a prerequisite of statehood; a country with an ocean but without a navy cannot claim to be truly sovereign. Thus, defining an appropriate broadly-based naval policy that provides continuing guidance for the development and maintenance of the necessary force structure is fundamental to establishing a sound national maritime security policy. That policy does not exist at the moment and its absence is an obstacle to the necessary replacement and modernization of the Canadian fleet and thus hampering its ability to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.







## Building the Navy Canada Needs

By Commander Hugues Canuel, Canadian Navy  
Director of Strategic Communications, NDHQ

The Canadian Navy has reached an unprecedented level of operational effectiveness as a result of the fundamental re-capitalization process that occurred as the Cold War gave way to a new world disorder in the early 1990s. The Navy is firmly positioned at the leading edge of the Canadian Forces transformation process through the implementation of the regional Joint Task Forces under Canada Command. Sailors are fully involved in the whole approach to Canadian sovereignty and the security of our maritime approaches through the development of the integrated Marine Security Operations Centres (MSOCs). Ships and submarines are patrolling throughout the extent of Canada's vast maritime estate, including summer operations in the Arctic. Ships are currently deployed in three different but key areas of the world in support of Canadian interests – Central America, Africa and Southwest Asia – shaping international operations and supporting the country's foreign policy objectives abroad.

Nevertheless, operational effectiveness and readiness cannot prevent the inevitable aging of the fleet and the growing costs of maintaining state-of-the-art technologies. The Canadian Navy is entering a crucial decade that will witness the procurement of the bulk of those platforms that will fashion the fleet well into the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. A number of key government announcements have outlined a way ahead for re-capitalizing the majority of the surface fleet through new procurements and modernization programs in such a manner that should alleviate some of the strategic risk that arose as a result of past deferments to naval acquisition and modernization programs.

### Joint Support Ship (JSS)

HMC Ships *Protecteur* and *Preserver* (the third AOR, *Provider*, was decommissioned in 1998) will be replaced with three new ships that will not only expand

traditional replenishment at sea capabilities, but bring new capabilities to the Canadian Navy, such as sealift and organic operational facilities to support a sea-based Joint Headquarters for forces operating ashore or at sea in the littorals. The JSS project is currently in the Definition Phase after the initial approval for the project was gained in 2004. Implementation and in-service support contracts will be awarded to the winning consortium in late 2008, while delivery of the ships will take place sequentially between 2012 and 2016.

In metric terms, the JSS will be a vessel with a notional displacement of 24,000 - 28,000 tonnes (a majority of this tonnage being liquid fuel cargo), up to 210 meters in length and a maximum draft of 9.5 meters. The ship will conform to Panama Canal restrictions regarding beam dimensions. Capable of 20-knots, JSS will have an operating range of 10,500 kilometers at 15 knots, and it is expected that automation will allow a significant reduction in crew size as compared to the *Protecteur* class of today. Lastly, these ships will be fitted with a self-defence suite and the hulls will be capable of operating in first-year ice.





### **Halifax-Class Modernization (HCM)**

The 12 *Halifax*-class frigates are often referred to, appropriately, as the Canadian Navy's workhorses and the backbone of the fleet. These ships have proven versatile and flexible in conducting sovereignty and security operations at home, as well as in implementing UN-mandated maritime interdiction regimes overseas and contributing to coalition operations in the Campaign Against Terrorism. Nevertheless, current and evolving maritime threats are faster, stealthier, more manoeuvrable, and are moving from the open-ocean areas to the littoral environment.

The Government approved the *Halifax*-Class Modernization (HCM) in July 2007. The project includes the Frigate Life Extension (FELEX) program, of which some components are already underway, to manage the modernization of the combat systems and planned mid-life ship refit requirements. The end product will thus be a combination of upgrades to existing weapons and sensors (57mm gun, Harpoon missiles, electronic warfare system, internal communications), and the replacement or installation of other equipment: Command and Control System (CCS), radars, Integrated Machinery Control System (IMCS), Interrogator Friend or Foe (IFF), Evolved Sea Sparrow Missile (ESSM), SIRIUS long-range infrared search and track system and the new Military Satellite Communication System. Modifications will also be made to accommodate the Cyclone helicopter. Planning, preparation and coordination of the program began in 2005. Modernization and refit of the frigates will begin in 2010, with the final ship being completed in 2017.

### **Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ships (A/OPS)**

In July the Government also announced its intent to acquire up to eight A/OPS (see cover photo). These ice-capable offshore patrol ships will enhance Canada's ability to assert sovereignty over its maritime domain. The primary task of the A/OPS will be to conduct armed surveillance in the maritime approaches to Canada, out to the edge of our Economic Exclusion Zones, in all three oceans. A/OPS will also be tasked to

support other federal government departments in asserting and enforcing Canada's security, when and where necessary.

A/OPS will be fitted with gun armament, will be able to conduct boarding operations, have a limited ability to support CF operations ashore, have a sufficiently robust command and control system to provide and receive information from the CF Common Operating Picture, and may be designed to embark and operate a helicopter. The ship will be able to sustain operations for up to four months, and have an effective range of at least 6,000 nautical miles with an economical speed of 14 knots and a maximum speed of at least 20 knots. Delivery of the first ship is expected in 2013 and the class will remain operational for 25 years.

### **Destroyer Replacement**

While the HCM project will provide the frigates with the needed improvements and upgrades required to operate effectively for 15 years beyond refit, the *Iroquois*-class destroyers require a replacement project now. Because of their extensive communications suite and dedicated staff accommodations the older but extensively refitted destroyers provide the Canadian Navy with unique capabilities as Command and Control platforms. And with their Standard Missile Block II (SM II) weapons they provide Area Air Defence. They are fast approaching the end of their operational life and plans are advancing to define a platform that will support both of these roles, allowing Canada to continue to effectively lead operations at sea, whether as a national task group operating independently or integrated within a larger coalition. Canada intends to maintain its ability to operate through the full spectrum of operations and also to advance its demonstrated leadership ability at the task group level and that of Warfare Commander in any assigned area of warfare at sea and in the littorals.

### **Frigate Replacement**

Once the new destroyers have been introduced into service by 2020, the *Halifax*-







class frigates will be very near the end of their effective lives. It is therefore desirable that the frigate replacement share as many common systems as possible with the new destroyers, especially in terms of hulls, main machinery, auxiliary systems, flight deck arrangements, etc. Commonality of systems will result in noticeable economies in terms of the procurement and shipbuilding process and, as importantly, in terms of ship manning and crew training once the ships are launched. Training variances will be eliminated for many trades, and these sailors could transfer much more easily from one class of ship to the other. Managing spares and maintenance in the coastal facilities would also greatly benefit from such shared characteristics. The best interests of Canada rely on a shipbuilding strategy that will leverage a commonality of systems and deliver hulls over a manageable period of time.



*Destroyer/Frigate Replacement*

### **Submarines**

The *Upholder*-class diesel submarines were acquired from Great Britain in 1998 and introduced into Canadian service between 2000 and 2004. Good progress has since been made towards achieving full operational capability for the class as a whole. Extensive “Canadianization” of these

vessels occurred once they reached this side of the Atlantic, primarily aimed at upgrading their communications and sensor suites as well as installing the Mark 48 heavy weight torpedo system and additional damage control equipment. The only submarine that has not commenced this process is *Chicoutimi*.

*Victoria* (in Esquimalt) and *Windsor* (in Halifax) are both undergoing Extended Docking Work Periods, scheduled for completion in mid-2009. Subsequently, it is anticipated that *Chicoutimi* will commence a similar docking work activity as part of the soon to be approved long-term *Victoria*-class In-Service Support Contract with Canadian industry. Operating out of Halifax, *Corner Brook* will continue to perform at sea until she takes her turn in dock under the auspices of that same contract. This plan will result in Canada maintaining a minimum capability of two submarines available for operations at all time (ie, one on each coast) after 2009.

### **Conclusion**

The Canadian Navy is engaged in a very challenging cycle of renewal, with near simultaneous modernization and acquisition projects being conducted concurrently to ensure that the fleet continues to achieve the objectives desired by our government at home and abroad. The navy has the key projects in place: JSS, HCM, A/OPS, MHP, and the *Victoria*-class Canadianization. The next priority in seeking government approval will be for the Destroyer Replacement Program, a central element in building the future fleet.

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### **Code's Nautical Notes - K is for...**

*By Dave Code*

**KEEL** -The backbone of the boat or ship; also on sailing craft the projecting structure extending below the bottom, for ballast and directional control. This term goes back to the Old Norse word *kjolr*, ridge. It is one of many that is recognizable in other modern languages, in this case all the Teutonic.

**KETCH** - Now a two-masted sailboat, the after mast (called the mizzen or jigger) being shorter, and generally stepped forward of the rudder post. An earlier definition was of a vessel with two masts, the relative sizes usually as in a modern craft, but square-rigged. This craft was heavy, wide and slow (15<sup>th</sup> C. or earlier). The term probably came from the Old French *quaiche*.

*(Continued on Page 30.)*





## America's Future Combatants Take the Fight to the Littorals

By Captain Steve Luce, USN  
US Naval Attaché, Ottawa

*Ed. Note: At the October NOAC Ottawa branch meeting, retired CSE Steve Rudnicki gave an interesting talk on the USN's Littoral Combat Ship program from his point of view as Program Manager for the LCS External Sensors Integrated Product Team for General Dynamics Canada. The following article is the USN's point of view on both LCS and the new DDG 1000. It is also a counterpoint to Hugues Canuel's article on the Canadian Navy's program starting on page 7.*

As a global power, the United States has vested interest in promoting peace and stability around the world, and it relies on its Navy to safeguard freedom of movement on the world's waterways and to promote global economic stability. The collapse of the Soviet empire and the neglect of its once mighty armada have reduced the threat on the open ocean. But since the end of the Cold War, regional adversaries have sought to acquire systems, many supplied by former Soviet republics or Russia herself, to implement asymmetric anti-access strategies that would deny U.S. and Allied Forces access to critical strategic chokepoints and vital economic sea lanes.

To combat this threat, the U.S. Navy has developed two next-generation surface combatants, the ZUMWALT Class (DDG 1000) Destroyer and the FREEDOM Class (LCS 1) Littoral Combat Ship (LCS). Both are tailored to operate in the littorals and provide capabilities needed to defeat anti-access weapons, and ZUMWALT is equipped to bring the fight ashore with long-range, precision fire support. These ships, along with the U.S. Navy's current in-service cruisers, destroyers, and frigates, will create a balanced force to meet current and projected threats well into the 21st century.

### DDG 1000

The DDG 1000 ZUMWALT-class destroyer is a next-generation, multi-mission surface combatant tailored for land attack and littoral dominance. The ZUMWALT class will provide forward presence and deterrence, and operate as an integral part of joint and combined expeditionary forces. For today's warfighter, DDG 1000 fills an immediate and critical precision strike capability gap.

DDG 1000 has many substantial improvements over current destroyers, including a three-fold better capability against anti-ship cruise missiles, a minimal radar

cross section, a 10-fold increased operating area in shallow water regions against mines, and a three-fold improvement in naval surface fires coverage.



To improve strike warfare capability, the ZUMWALT-class delivers deep strike with up to 80 Tactical Tomahawk cruise missiles launched from a new Advanced Vertical Launch System. The new Advanced Gun System has two 155mm guns with a 600-round magazine capacity for precise Long-Range Land-Attack Projections (LRLAP) that go farther and cover three times more area than current five-inch ammunition. DDG 1000 is able to support "24/7" all-weather, long-range naval surface fire in support of amphibious operations from the sea.

DDG 1000 has been designed with a 50-fold improvement in stealth over current destroyers. The ship will have a radar cross-section of a small fishing boat, a submarine-like acoustic signature level, and reduced infrared signature. These features will allow





DDG 1000 to get much closer to shore without detection and to stay and fight in the littorals.

The ZUMWALT Class will also bring increased survivability compared to existing ships. The DDG 1000's hull is designed to withstand a mine detonation, giving it the ability to operate in shallow water regions with mine threats. Should ZUMWALT be hit, an Automatic Fire Suppression System detects fire, smoke and heat conditions, isolates damage to the firemain, and suppresses fire using a variety of systems including water mist and sprinklers throughout the ship. The ship is also equipped with Integrated Fight-Through Power that allows for automatic reconfiguration of the power distribution system to ensure uninterrupted service in a damage event.

To detect challenging air threats, the ship is outfitted with a new Dual-Band Radar that is currently undergoing tests at the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Port Hueneme, Calif. The DBR integrates S-band and X-band radar capabilities in a single system, simultaneously supporting self-defense/anti-air warfare, situational awareness, land attack, naval gunfire support, surface search, navigation and air traffic control. The DBR's design allows automatic operation with minimal crew repairs and maintenance needed.

In addition to meeting the current and projected needs of the U.S. Navy through the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the DDG 1000-class is also designed to accommodate future capabilities. The ship utilizes open architecture, designed to incorporate emerging information technology improvements in an economically efficient manner, and the Integrated Power System has enough energy capacity to support future directed energy weapons or electromagnetic rail guns.

The Navy awarded detail design contracts for dual lead ships to Northrop Grumman Ship Systems (NGSS) and General Dynamics Bath Iron Works (BIW) in August 2006 and expects to award lead ship construction contracts to those shipyards by the end of 2007. Delivery of the first DDG 1000, USS ZUMWALT, is scheduled for 2012. The Navy plans to procure seven DDG 1000-class ships.

## **Littoral Combat Ship (LCS)**

The Littoral Combat Ship is a fast, agile, focused-mission ship designed to operate in near-shore environments yet be capable of traditional open-ocean operations. LCS is designed to defeat asymmetric anti-access threats including mines, quiet diesel submarines and fast surface craft. The LCS class will also perform self-defense, high-speed transit, maritime interdiction operations, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, antiterrorism/force protection missions as well as support special operations forces and homeland defense.



The LCS-class focused-mission design will offer combatant commanders both the capability and flexibility to ensure maritime dominance and facilitating unencumbered joint expeditionary force operations. In addition to complementing the primary missions of larger U.S. Navy combatants, LCS will feature advanced networking capability to share tactical information with Navy aircraft, ships, submarines and joint units.

LCS consists of a sea frame paired with reconfigurable payloads, called Mission Packages that can be changed out quickly to address changing threat environments. Mission Packages will contain smaller Mission Modules, which are sensors, weapons, and manned and/or unmanned vehicles. Mission Packages will be supported by special crew detachments that will deploy and operate manned and/or unmanned vehicles and sensors to counter mine, undersea, and surface threats.

Three focused Mission Packages provide potent capabilities in Anti-Submarine Warfare, Mine Warfare and Surface Warfare. While the ship will operate one package load at a time, it







can swap to a new package in just a matter of days at an austere port.

The Anti-Submarine Warfare Mission Package capabilities include an integrated multiple off-board sensor system, automatic on-board processing, and a helicopter. The Mine Warfare Package provides organic punch with the ability to search, map, and avoid mines; support remote and autonomous unmanned vehicles; and operate helicopters. The Surface Warfare Package enables LCS to engage from close aboard to "over-the-horizon." The SUW package also includes a stabilized gun and missile system, non-lethal capabilities, helicopters and off-board systems.

LCS will be manned by a 40-person crew of highly skilled, cross-trained "Hybrid Sailors," who have individual skill sets and competencies for a certain billet. While in operation, LCS will have a total crew of 75, with 40 sailors as the core crew capable of operating the ship and an Air Detachment of 20 sailors and a mission package crew of 15 sailors.

Lockheed Martin and General Dynamics are each building a variant of the class. The Lockheed Martin design is a high-speed semi-planing steel and aluminum monohull. The General Dynamics design is an all aluminum trimaran with a slender stabilized monohull.

Both are powered by two gas turbines and two diesel engines driving four waterjets. Although the two seaframe designs are quite different, they both are designed to satisfy the same top-level performance and technical requirements, such as high sprint speeds and long-range transits. The Navy will perform independent testing to evaluate the designs.

LCS 1 (FREEDOM), the first Lockheed Martin ship, was launched in September 2006 and is currently undergoing post-launch equipment installation, outfitting and testing at the shipbuilder's facility in Marinette, Wisc. The Navy projects LCS 1 will deliver in the summer of 2008.

Fabrication of LCS 2 (INDEPENDENCE), the first General Dynamics ship, began in November 2005. It is scheduled to launch in early 2008 and deliver in late summer 2008.

### Conclusion

DDG 1000 and LCS 1 are the U.S. Navy's first new surface combatant classes designed and built since the end of the Cold War. By combining their unique near-shore and open-ocean capabilities with the existing fleet of AEGIS cruisers and destroyers, the U.S. Navy will maintain safe, secure access to the world's littoral regions and help promote peace and stability across the globe.

## HMCS *Ottawa* Presented with Key to the City



At Ottawa city hall on May 29th, 2007, **Mayor Larry O'Brien** hosted a ceremony and dinner at which he presented HMCS *Ottawa* with the Key to the City. Accepting the honour on behalf of the ship was the Commanding Officer, **Cdr Darren Hawco**. The Mayor also presented the ship with a street sign saying "Sens City – Swaggerville", acknowledging the Ottawa Senators and the Stanley Cup playoffs then underway. Mayor O'Brien had met the ship on its return to Canadian waters from its extensive Middle East deployment, and had sailed with the ship into Esquimalt Harbour. See also the Ottawa report that follows.





## HMCS *Ottawa* Report

By Lt(N) Matthew Mitchell, Bridge Watch Keeper

The miles of empty, undulating seas claimed their first victim within the first hour, as seasickness can overcome even the saltiest of sailors given the right circumstances. For the eight members of HMCS *Ottawa*'s Naval Boarding Party, rising and falling with the never-ending crests and troughs off the Horn of Africa, these seas were perfect to hide in, if not a bit on the rough side. Their small Rigid-Hulled Inflatable Boat (RHIB) may have been the perfect tool for insertion onto vessels, but was not perfectly suited to floating alone out on the open ocean.

This RHIB ride was part of an operational boarding that *Ottawa* conducted while deployed to the Middle East. These boardings were a large contributor to Canada's maritime commitment to the Global War on Terror and would become a daily occurrence for the men and women who served during this six-month tour that spanned the regions from Somalia to the Persian Gulf and finally the Red Sea.



*Searching a vessel*

While deployed to the region, *Ottawa* joined an international coalition force committed to regional maritime security, improving relations between Canada, the coalition and the nations of the Middle East, and preventing the use of the seas to International Terrorist Organizations. Her



presence in the region alongside the UK, French, German, Pakistani, Japanese and US ships accomplished the first goal. Her work with the Department of Foreign Affairs and the international community accomplished the second. The final goal was achieved through the continuing patrols and boarding operations that *Ottawa* undertook everyday she was at sea.

A typical day on *Ottawa* began before sunrise with the Operations Team working to identify the vessels that could be boarded, sorting out the best candidates and developing the plan of execution. When the first vessel could be seen, the Boarding Party would embark into the RHIB and speed off enroute to intercept their target.

Most of these boardings were intended for the gathering of human intelligence and to gain a more complete understanding of regional traffic movements and possible undesirable activity. During her deployment, *Ottawa* also took part in multiple operational boardings to intercept, investigate and if necessary divert vessels engaged in smuggling or criminal activity.

On the occasion mentioned above, *Ottawa* disembarked her team and sped away over the horizon but within radio contact, allowing them to covertly track and intercept a vessel. While *Ottawa* makes a large and imposing silhouette on a horizon, the small RHIB can barely be seen amongst the waves. For the first hour the only thing that the team saw was a 6 foot Hammerhead shark that came alongside the RHIB to remind the team to stay in the boat. After the second hour, the vessel that they had been waiting for came into view without noticing







the team. Floating stationary with the crew on the deck, out of sight, the small, grey RHIB is very difficult to pick out in the choppy waves. At the right moment, the RHIB was brought to life and steered at high speed to enable the Boarding Team to approach, board and secure the vessel before the crew even knew that they were being boarded.

While this type of intercept operation was unique, it demonstrated the imagination and adaptability of a Canadian Patrol Frigate and her special parties. These operations interrupt the smuggling of illicit goods throughout the region. These goods transfers frequently supply funds to the organizations that sponsor terrorism. By forcing the groups to jettison cargo rather than be caught or to take increasingly greater risks, the coalition deprives them of easy financing. This in turn reduces the money flowing to support the terrorist wars in places such as Afghanistan and hopefully helps relieve some of the pressure on Canadian Forces in that area.

Intelligence and perseverance led to many of *Ottawa's* successes but the Human Intelligence (HUMINT) gathering conducted by the team while on board these vessels provided many insights. By simple observation, the boarding team learned to distinguish between the hierarchies of the crewmembers. With anywhere from eight to twenty crewmembers on board a given boat, the vessels could hide criminals or gang leaders amongst themselves. *Ottawa's* team learned to pick these men out and discover who was really in charge. By noticing physical characteristics such as the state of people's clothes, hands, fingernails, or grooming the team could pick out the real fisherman or cargo worker from the passengers pretending to be one of the crew. A lie could be detected by watching who received the fruit or water that *Ottawa* provided as they treated some "guests" differently from the crew. Often it was a simple, innocuous question that provided the clues to who was really who. Asking a crewmember where certain individuals slept gave hints as to who was really in charge also. As most members slept outdoors, a crewman innocently told the team that one

member of the crew slept indoors with the Captain. This contradicted the normal custom and the team knew they were on to something.

*Ottawa* would conduct as many as sixteen boardings in a day, with the team working until just after sunset, however, not everyday saw the team floating in the open ocean. This adaptability proved necessary to accomplish other roles that *Ottawa* played while deployed.



*Keeping an eye on a suspect passenger*

For the 18 members of *MV Shahe al Hoor*, the sight of HMCS *Ottawa's* brilliant searchlight as she sped towards them on the horizon, was not a curse but a blessing from above. One night in December 2006, *Ottawa* received the distress call from a vessel approximately 15 nm away. The call was simple and concise, " Help me, Help me, please come and save me". At full speed, *Ottawa* proceeded to the rescue of the *Al Hoor*.

The *Shahe al Hoor* was a cargo dhow, a now familiar sight to the crew, and was sinking rapidly. *Ottawa* launched her small boat with a six-person flood repair team embarked and raced to the dhow's assistance. Using her portable pumps and engineering expertise, the repair team commenced repairs and pumping out the rapidly rising water. For over 30 minutes the team attempted to save the vessel, but with rising water, toxic fumes from the engines, heavy seas and an unstable platform, the







situation was deteriorating quickly. The water had risen to seven feet in a few minutes and the vessel was in danger of capsizing.

The decision was made by *Ottawa's* Commanding Officer, Cdr **Darren Hawco**, to get the crew off the sinking dhow and onto *Ottawa*. Once in her final throes and less than an hour from the final evacuation, the *Shahe al Hoor* sank rapidly into hundreds of feet of water. All that was left were some pieces of wood and an oil slick.

Without *Ottawa's* help the crew of the dhow would have gone down with their ship. They had little or no life-saving equipment, rafts or ability to swim. Finding them

bobbing in the heavy seas on a moonless night would have been all but impossible. They were transferred to *Ottawa* and given a place to sleep, a hot meal and warm clothes before being transported to the United Arab Emirates for repatriation to India.

*Ottawa's* deployment to the gulf has now ended and the experiences and successes that she enjoyed will be incorporated into the lessons learned within the military. The War on Terrorism has not finished and Canada is again deploying a ship and crew to the Gulf, HMCS *Charlottetown*, to support Canada's allies and her troops in Afghanistan, using *Ottawa's* experiences to guide them.

## HMCS Carleton in Brief

*By Sub-Lieutenant Bettina Morden, Unit Public Affairs Officer*

*Ed. Note: In my view, the Ottawa Branch NOAC should be seeking greater interaction and cooperation with HMCS Carleton, particularly as the naval centennial approaches. These reports from Carleton are considered a start.*

### Successful Summer Sees Sailors Overseas and Up North.

There is no "home for a rest" for the busy sailor. Most of our sailors spent long hours on board maritime coastal defence vessels, at fleet schools where they completed critical courses, and at CFB Borden for recruit training. Two of our sailors also had the unique opportunity to participate in OP NIJMEGEN from 17th to 20th July 2007. LS Brad Cartier and LS Peter Sands trained hard to successfully complete the four-day, 160-kilometer march that commemorates the Canadian liberation of Nijmegen during the Second World War.

Divers and other select members of HMCS *Carleton* also took part in Operation NANOOK from August 7 to 17. Op NANOOK, which took place around in the areas around of Iqaluit, Baffin Island and the Hudson Strait, enabled members of the Canadian Forces, Canadian Coast Guard and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to put into practice the knowledge and skills necessary to provide assistance to civil authorities in the North.

### New Commanding Officer for Carleton

Lieutenant-Commander **Randolph Roberts** bid a heartfelt farewell on Saturday, 22nd September when he transferred command of HMCS *Carleton* to Commander **Douglas Bancroft**. "It is with some sadness that I relinquish command of such a fine ship, but I do so appreciating what a rare and special experience I have been given and knowing that I am leaving the ship in good hands."

Shortly after accepting command of *Carleton*, Commander Bancroft, whose previous experiences include command of six HMC ships and Port Security Four, shared his vision with the ship's company. "I am committed to our sailors participating in Canadian Forces Operations overseas and domestically, conducting collective sea training in ORCAs, and being front-and-centre in the naval centennial. But a vision is merely a shared destination. To get there, we will focus on three key themes: Mission, Teamwork and Safety."





## An Incident on the High Seas

By Gord Forbes



On the evening of 27<sup>th</sup> of November 1969, HMCS *Kootenay* was towed into Halifax by the Dutch salvage tug, *Elbe*. I was met by my wife and 9 month old daughter. We were photographed in the wardroom with the picture showing up the next day on the front page of the Halifax papers. A picture I have showing the *Kootenay* being towed out of Plymouth, England said that trip was liable to take “several weeks.” In fact, it took only 11 days, according to the tug’s Master one of the fastest trans-Atlantic tows ever.

The incident that caused this notoriety started 6 weeks earlier off the coast of England. On the morning of Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, *Kootenay* had been detached from the task group to carry out full power trials. The trial started at 0800. At 0820, the starboard gearbox exploded, sending burning oil across the engine room, killing eight men including the Chief ERA, CPO1 V.O. “Ski” Partanen, and seriously burning three others, including the Engineer Officer, Lt Al Kennedy. Within minutes, the entire ship was filled with thick, oily smoke. There was some initial confusion when the badly burned Engineer Officer staggered to the bridge to say that the fire was in the engine room. We had a hard time believing that the fire was there rather than the boiler room where we had had a lagging fire just a couple of weeks earlier, or some other compartment

which were considered more of a fire hazard. In any event it took the fire fighting crew 3 hours to beat back the smoke and quell the fire in the engine room.

As the ship’s Weapons Officer, I was in the Operations Room when the explosion happened. I immediately went to the bridge where, within no more that a couple of minutes, I was called from the Ops Room requesting permission to evacuate the compartment because of the thick smoke. The next few hours are, at this distance, somewhat of a blur. The major event I remember is the necessity of spraying and subsequently flooding the main magazine when the heat from the engine room, which was immediately forward of the magazine, became excessive near the ammunition. The saga of that ammunition is probably worth a another story in itself.

What most impressed me at the time, and still does, is the story of the men of *Kootenay* that day and in the weeks following. To quote Commodore Noel Cogden, the Senior Officer Afloat at the time, “The ship’s company of the *Kootenay* were magnificent.” It wasn’t just the way the men reacted to the actual explosion and fire. Their performance during that 3- or 4-hour period was a tribute to the training they had received over their careers, both ashore and afloat. And even more gratifying was the way they adapted to conditions after the fire, particularly in the immediate aftermath and later when we were alongside in Plymouth.

In the afternoon of that first day, after the fire was put out, there was the immediate task of getting the ship seaworthy and taken in tow by HMCS *Saguenay*. However, the first let-down occurred about dinner time, the first meal we had been able to have since the explosion. After dinner, in one of the first and best examples of leadership, the Executive Officer (XO), LCDR Mo Tremblay, got on the ship’s broadcast and announced that he and the Coxswain were going to start scrubbing down the ship to get rid of the soot that coated the inside of the ship. Others were invited to help if they wanted. Almost all of the off-watch ship’s company, officers and men, turned out. By the time the





evening was over, the interior of the ship looked almost normal, or at least liveable.

When we arrived in Plymouth about midnight Friday, the British authorities met us and did magnificent work on our behalf. One of the most welcome gestures was from the British telephone company who came aboard and installed telephones in each of the cafeterias and the wardroom which were directed straight to overseas operators (this was the days before direct dial overseas calling) who expedited many calls to Canada so that we could all assure our families that we were okay. I finally got time to call my wife about 0600, which for her was 0200. She sounded both weary and very relieved.

I was Officer-of-the-Day on Saturday, our first full day alongside. That evening, I saw another very human act when one of my Petty Officers made a supreme sacrifice for his mess mates. He resided in a mess that was primarily home to Petty Officers of the Engineering branch, a department that had suffered all of the casualties in the fire. About 1900, my PO marched up onto the quarterdeck with a slightly under the weather group of his mess mates. In the finest Weapons branch fashion, he paraded them before me, and asked permission to "escort this sorry lot ashore, Sir." I looked dubiously at their condition, but he assured me that he was only taking them to the nearest pub for a couple of "wets", so I told him to carry on. Sure enough, at about 2200, this "sorry lot" were marched back aboard by my PO who duly reported their arrival to me. Here was this group of men grieving the loss of several of their mess mates, and here was this shepherd leading them to a few hours of release.

During the next few days and weeks, there were many other stories with a very human touch. For days after the fire, it was not unusual to find men at the top of the engine room hatch weeping. Perhaps today, it would be called Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. We just called it shock and

a very natural reaction. Men were prepared to volunteer for anything that they thought would help their ship or shipmates, including the privilege of being part of the towing crew, since it was decided to man the ship with a skeleton crew during the tow. I was one of that tow crew, hence my arrival in Halifax and picture in the paper.

The *Kootenay* fire was caused by a technical problem, but it had a very human side. It was not just the eight men killed right away in the engine room, but includes the ninth victim, Petty Officer Lew Stringer, who died onboard *Bonaventure* from a heart attack caused by excessive smoke inhalation, the three men, including the Engineer Officer, who got out of the engine room with severe burns who spent weeks in burn centres in England, and the 59 other men who were hospitalized in Plymouth for smoke inhalation. Every year, there is a memorial service held in Halifax by and for the officers and men of the *Kootenay* crew. Living and working here in Ottawa I have not yet made it to that service, but it is definitely my intent to do so soon.



*The flag-draped remains of PO2 Lewis Stringer are piped ashore enroute air evacuation from Bonaventure.*







## Kootenay Citations for Bravery



### Cross of Valour

**PO2 Lewis John Stringer** of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and Hamilton, Ontario, died from the effects of smoke inhaled while he organized the evacuation of men from the ship's cafeteria following an explosion aboard HMCS *Kootenay*. PO2 Stringer, a supply technician, was off-duty in the cafeteria. He understood the danger immediately and stepped into the exit to use his body to block the way to the smoke-filled passageway. He instructed others in the cafeteria to get down on the deck, breathe through their sleeves and crawl out by way of the galley. PO Stringer waited until the last man had made good his escape before attempting to leave himself. He collapsed in the galley and although rescued, he succumbed later.

**CPO1 Vaino Olavi Partanen** was Chief Engine Room Artificer (CERA) aboard HMCS *Kootenay*. He remained at his post to inform the bridge when an explosion and fire devastated the engine room. There were immediate orders to clear the engine room but CPO Partanen, in full knowledge that he was in mortal danger, remained behind in order to report the situation by telephone to the officer of watch on the bridge. He died moments after attempting to make his effort.



### Star of Courage

**OCdt Clément Léo Bussière**, aged 25 at that time, of St. Paul, Alberta, at the time Petty Officer in charge of the boiler room, remained at his post during the explosion and fire on HMCS *Kootenay*. As the boiler room became filled with smoke, OCdt

Bussière ordered his men to lie flat on the deck plates and breathe through damp clothing or rags. He saw to it that there was steam pressure for firefighting, and when this requirement was met, put on diver's breathing equipment in order to stay at his post long enough to shut down the boilers properly. Then he joined the damage-control team which was trying to cope with the situation in the engine room.

The late **SLt Clark Edward Reiffenstein**, of Montreal, Navigation Officer on HMCS *Kootenay* made repeated efforts to rescue crew members following the explosion and fire. SLt Reiffenstein put on "aqua-lung" equipment, underwater gear not designed for use in fire-fighting, to enable him to breathe and function in the smoke and heat-filled deck immediately above the scene of the explosion and fire in the engine room. He saw that those in the area of the ship's cafeteria got clear to safer parts of the ship, dragging one man to safety who had been overcome by smoke. Then SLt Reiffenstein made his way into the boiler room to see that it was cleared and eventually turned his breathing apparatus over to the Petty Officer who stayed behind in the boiler room to maintain steam pressure necessary for operating the firefighting equipment. SLt Reiffenstein survived the disaster aboard HMCS *Kootenay* but died several months later.



### Medal of Bravery

**WO Gerald John Gillingham**, 38, organized firefighting activities and by example in dangerous situations, provided morale leadership in coping with fire and damage that resulted from an engine room explosion aboard HMCS *Kootenay*. WO Gillingham was off-duty at the time of the explosion but rushed from his mess to the mortar well where a party was being organized to fight the fire and rescue men. He put on a





breathing apparatus and made his way into a devastated area immediately above the engine room to shut off the "main stops" at the emergency position. Later, he exposed himself to heat and flame to operate one of the fire hoses being used near the engine room.

**CPO2 Robert G. George**, 33, of Tupperville, Ontario, the senior hull technician aboard HMCS *Kootenay*, organized and directed damage control and firefighting parties after an explosion in the engine room. MWO George took charge of organizing the damage control parties, sprayed one of the ammunition magazine areas and then flooded it to prevent possible explosion. He led the attempt to fight the fire in the engine room through the forward hatch, at one point getting as far as the foot of the ladder into the engine room before being forced back. He remained in an area of the ship which could have received further damage in order to direct firefighting activities.

## REMEMBER

By GG Armstrong

### Active Members:

**Harry Romeyn Beck**, CD\*, Commander RCN (Ret'd). In Ottawa on 13 May 07 at 89.

**Ross Campbell**, OC DSC, Lieutenant Commander RCNVR (Ret'd). In Ottawa 15 Aug 07 at 88.

**Barbara Frances Munro (Kerrigan)**, Lieutenant WRCNS (Ret'd). In Ottawa 21 May 07 at 86.

**Robert John Watson**, CD\*, Lieutenant Commander(P) RCN (Ret'd). In Ottawa 7 Apr 07 at 85.

**Oleh Simon Chorneyko**, CD\*, Lieutenant Commander(Wpns) RCN (Ret'd). In Victoria on 30 Sep 07 at 78.

### Others Known to Members:

**George Blackstone Cooke**, Lieutenant RCNVR (Ret'd). In Renfrew 8 May 07.

**George Edwin Ritchie**, CD\*, Lieutenant(S) RCN (Ret'd). In Ottawa 4 May 07.

## Rear-Admiral Desmond Piers DSC, CM, CD, DscMil, Klj, RCN, (Ret'd) 1913-2005 Memorial in Chester, NS



## Manfield Plate 2007

By Peter Mace

For the second year in a row, Neptune has conspired against the running of the Manfield Plate, the annual whaler sailing competition between the serving Navy at NDHQ and the Ottawa Branch, NOAC. Last year there was no wind. This year, while there was lots of wind (15+ kts), the serving naval officers crew managed to shed their centreboard just before the start of the race and were forced to withdraw.

Without any competition, the NOAC crew could only sail around for a while and then retire to the Nepean Sailing Club bar.

The NOAC crew of **Merv Cameron**, **Bob Bush**, **Debbie Patterson**, **myself** and Lt Cdr **Dave Evans**, trying out the retired state, were ready and able.

In fact, our whaler planed off wave tops when going downwind. Great fun if you've never done it! Hopefully Neptune will smile on us next year. Thanks to all for turning out.

*Regrettably, "Remember", opposite, will be GG's last contribution of this important information. Our warm appreciation goes to GG for his exceptional service to Soundings over the years.*





## Stranraer - Canada's First Wartime Sortie

By Ernie Cable  
Associate Air Force Historian  
Shearwater Aviation Museum



Canada's first air operational sortie of the Second World War was flown by a Supermarine Stranraer from RCAF station Dartmouth on the very day that Canada declared war, early morning on 10 September 1939.

The Stranraer, a follow-on development of the Supermarine Southampton and Scapa series of biplane flying boats, was the last biplane flying boat designed by R.J. Mitchell who was better known as the designer of the famous Spitfire. In 1935, Supermarine built a total of 17 Stranraers for the Royal Air Force; 15 of which saw service with Coastal Command at the outbreak of the war, but were withdrawn from front line service in 1940.

As early as 1931 the RCAF had completed a review of its needs to meet the requirements of National Defence. The primary mandate was coastal defence, which included reconnaissance, anti-submarine warfare, cooperation with army coastal artillery and the defence of shipping moving up and down the east and west coasts. Unfortunately, the depression in the economy put all new acquisitions on hold. It wasn't until 1936 that the RCAF was allowed to place an order with Canadian Vickers of Montreal for five Stranraers to be built under license from

Supermarine<sup>1</sup>. The RCAF selected the Stranraer because of the custom of flying British aircraft; it met the Air Force's requirements for coastal defence; and being built in Canada provided a boost for our nation's fledgling aircraft industry. Following the successful test flight of the Canadian prototype, RCAF # 907, on 21 October 1938, a total of forty Stranraers were ordered from Canadian Vickers.

The first Stranraers were assigned to the RCAF's No. 5 Squadron stationed at Dartmouth. Sergeant Art Robinson<sup>2</sup>, a wireless operator on No. 5 Squadron, was periodically sent to Montreal to install the high frequency radios; the 1082 receiver and the 1083 transmitter were supplied by the British to the RCAF for the Stranraers coming off the Vickers production line. After ground testing the radios were first used operationally on the delivery flight from Montreal to Dartmouth. Sergeant Robinson accumulated many hours in various aircraft, but in his view there was nothing like the Stranraer. "The wires bracing the wing struts would sing in the slipstream and the aircraft yaw side to side was particularly pronounced in the tail of the aircraft. You could hear the bilge water sloshing in the hull while in the air.

"On the water the Stranraer's high freeboard and tall twin tails made it especially prone to being carried by the wind. As the wireless operator, one of my jobs was to throw drogues, shaped like wind socks, over the side of the aircraft to help the pilot steer the aircraft on the water. I would open the mid-upper Lewis-gun hatch just behind the wing and throw out a drogue on the left or right side on the pilot's signal. The drogue, tethered to the aircraft by a line, caused the aircraft to turn. Pulling them out of the water was a real struggle and near impossible if the aircraft was taxiing at any speed. As the pilot neared the mooring buoy the flight engineer would open

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Vickers had a proven history of manufacturing aircraft for the RCAF, including flying boats.

<sup>2</sup> Art Robinson (author's Father-in-law) was a commercial radio operator before he joined the RCAF in 1938 as a telecommunications technician. His first duty was to establish the joint RCAF/RCN HF/DF station in Gaspé in 1939. Later, as a wireless operator and served on No 5 and 11 Sqns at Dartmouth and 113 Sqn at Yarmouth. Art retired from the RCAF as Squadron Leader in 1966.







the nose Lewis-gun hatch and secure the bow of the aircraft to the buoy just like a boat.

"The highlight of my Stranraer flying was when we were one of three crews selected to escort King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on their visit to Canada in May 1939. Our task was to escort their ship the *Empress of Britain* on its trip from Halifax to Charlottetown. [A painting of the three Stranraers over the *Empress of Britain* departing Halifax harbour is in the Shearwater Aviation Museum.] Our flight to Charlottetown was uneventful and we landed in Charlottetown harbour. The tide was out and we had to use the drogues to steer the aircraft. With one drogue out the wind whipped the aircraft around on top of the drogue line and the drogue wound up on the opposite side of the aircraft and we got stuck in the mud. After much manoeuvring and cursing we managed to free ourselves and found a safe anchorage. I was left on board to look after the aircraft while the rest of the crew went ashore to attend the ceremonies in Charlottetown. On our last day in Charlottetown the King and Queen requested to see the crew of one of the flying boats; we had been living in our uniforms for four days and our buttons and shoes needed polishing. Minutes later they were on the dock. The King was gallant and the Queen was radiant; but the lack of spit and polish didn't seem to bother them."

Throughout 1939 the political situation in Europe was deteriorating and war with Germany proved inevitable. Despite the RCAF's concerted preparations, only the Dartmouth seaplane base was considered to be ready for war in September 1939 and its long-time resident, No.5 Squadron, was the only RCAF squadron deemed fully operational.

Squadron Leader (S/L) Len "Birch" Birchall<sup>3</sup> had only recently arrived at RCAF Station Dartmouth as a pilot on No. 5 Squadron and remembers the first day of the war.

"I was Captain of Stranraer # 907 and had been out on patrol on 9 September 1939. We returned (to the Dartmouth seaplane station at Eastern Passage), refuelled and turned over to another crew who did some night flying. Early morning 10 September, we were out again to our aircraft. All seemed well

<sup>3</sup> Birchall, after the war, was dubbed the "Savior of Ceylon" by Winston Churchill for sighting the Japanese fleet and preventing the island from falling into Japanese hands.

so we started up, did our taxi and engine tests, came back to our mooring (in Eastern Passage), topped our tanks and signalled we were on standby. We had food on board and so prepared a meal. A dingy came out with the appropriate cards for our coding machine (for encrypting radio messages) and also sealed Top Secret orders, which we locked up in our dispatch case. Everything seemed to be back to normal.

"Suddenly all hell broke loose! People started running to the dock and the masthead

### **Stranraer Resurrected** by Ernie Cable

The Shearwater Aviation Museum received a welcome phone call this past summer from Captain Bill Thompson from Pender Harbour, B.C. For a number of years Captain Thompson had been in possession of the wreckage of former RCAF Stranraer 915, and was looking to donate the Stranraer to a museum that would be willing to restore the biplane flying boat to "exhibit condition".

Stranraer 915 was one of the first RCAF Stranraers to be ferried from the Canadian Vickers factory in Montreal to the west coast, where it served in coastal reconnaissance squadrons.

Shortly after the Second World War Stranraer 915 was struck off RCAF strength after having accumulated a total flying time of 1821 hours 20 minutes. War Assets eventually sold 915 to the Siple Aviation Company in Montreal, which in turn obtained civil registration CF-BYJ for the aircraft. In 1946 Siple sold CF-BYJ to Queen Charlotte Airlines of Vancouver to pioneer scheduled air service on the B.C. coast. But in 1949 the aircraft crashed on landing. Thirty-four years later Captain Thompson salvaged the wreckage.

The Shearwater Aviation Museum has agreed to accept Captain Thompson's offer and to restore Stranraer 915 to exhibit condition. When it is restored at the Shearwater museum it will be only the second Stranraer in the world to be preserved.





light on the pier was blinking like crazy. All aircraft acknowledged by aldis lamp and then came the message "War Declared". We started engines, cast off from the mooring and taxied to warm the engines. A message detailed us to go to a specific lighthouse up the northeast coast, open our sealed orders and carry them out."

Flight Lieutenant (F/L) Price and crew of five in Stranraer # 908 was the first aircraft to take off from Eastern Passage. RCAF Station Dartmouth and No.5 Squadron had the distinction of launching Canada's first operational wartime mission on 10 September 1939. Because of the strategic importance of Halifax's harbour, F/L Price in Stranraer #908 was tasked to conduct a parallel track search off the Halifax approaches. Birchall and crew took off minutes later and went up the coast as directed.

"Our orders were to do a long-range patrol out over a shipping lane into Halifax, identify all shipping, record time, position, course and speed. We were to remain on patrol as long as fuel permitted. We mounted our Lewis guns fore and aft, checked all our depth charge circuits and set out from the lighthouse as ordered.

"Our patrols were supposed to be flown about 2,000 to 3,000 feet (300 to 700 meters) above the water but usually we were down much lower due to fog, low cloud and in the winter because of snow squalls. The Stranraer had no de-icing equipment whatsoever and so we had to be extremely careful to avoid icing conditions at all costs. We carried out our patrol and returned to Dartmouth with a bare minimum of fuel. After we picked up a mooring, a fresh crew came aboard to refuel etc. and go on standby. We were taken ashore at once, debriefed, fed, watered and off to bed for rest. Our post flight reports were sent by secure landline to Eastern Air Command Headquarters in Halifax where they were coordinated with the Navy. (In F/L Price's post flight report the crew reported sighting five friendly vessels but no enemy activity.) Based on all the Navy plots etc. we would be briefed on friendly shipping prior to take-off on our next patrol.

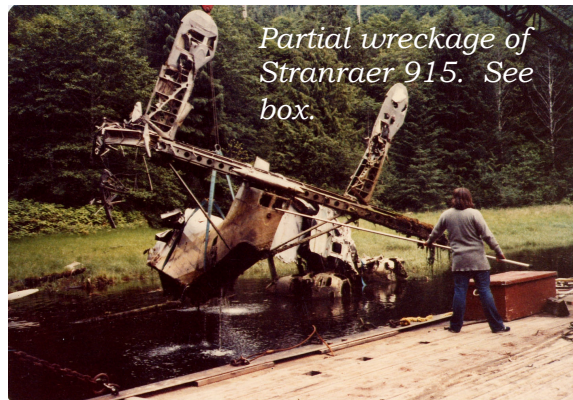
"So started the war for us at No. 5 Squadron, the first RCAF squadron to fly a wartime mission in the Second World War's Battle of the Atlantic".

When the first HX (Halifax - United

Kingdom) convoy put to sea on 16 September 1939, a pattern for the future was established. No. 5 Squadron provided flying boats to search for submarines off Halifax harbour prior to the convoy's departure, and anti-submarine escort by day up to the limit of the Stranraer's operational radius, approximately 250 miles (415 km) seaward.

Flying patrols of five hours and thirty minutes each between dawn and dusk, the Stranraers accompanied all departing and incoming convoys. No. 5 Squadron Stranraers would typically take-off from Dartmouth at 0530 hours, rendezvous with a convoy approaching or departing Halifax to provide anti-submarine protection, then land on Sable Island's Wallace Lake at noon to refuel. By late afternoon the Stranraers would take-off from Sable Island, rejoin the convoy or conduct independent anti-Sub-marine operations and occasionally land back at RCAF Station Dartmouth as late as midnight. Towards the end of October No. 5 Squadron also began daily harbour-entrance patrols. In these early operations the Stranraers proved to be sturdy and dependable, if somewhat out of date.

The Stranraers on No. 5 Squadron were replaced by the longer range, more capable Consolidated PBV-1 Catalina flying boats in 1941. The Dartmouth Stranraers were subsequently transferred to the west coast<sup>4</sup> where they provided yeoman service until gradually relieved by PBV-1 and PBV-1A Canso patrol aircraft. The Stranraers were retired from the RCAF in 1945. Until Stranraer 915 came along (see box), the only surviving example of a Stranraer was RCAF # 920, which is now on display at the Royal Air Force Museum at Hendon in southwest London.



<sup>4</sup> Stranraers served at RCAF Stations Ucluelet, Alliford Bay, Prince Rupert, Coal Harbour and Bella Bella in British Columbia.





## Report: Naval Aviation Rendezvous

By Ted White

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2007  
HMCS BYTOWN "CROWSNEST"  
(ie, the Flight Deck)

### Shanghaied Participants:

Bill Christie/ Bob Brown/ Bruce Cormack/  
John Dumbrille/ Guy Beaudette/ Sandy  
Dewar/ Robbie and Di Hughes/ John  
Searle/ Seth Grossmith/ Fred Jones/ Bob  
and Elizabeth Murray/ Bob Ferguson/ Bruce  
Baker/ A.J. Field/ Bob Bayne/ Cal Smith/  
Glenn Cook/ Bob Falls/ Ed L'Heureux/ Dave  
Tate/ Bud MacLean/ Gene Weber/ FAW  
(Ted) White/ Bill Cody/ Gerry Lanigan/  
'Wags' Wagland/ John Frank/ Gord Smith/  
Vic Wilgress/ 'JJ' Lehmann/ Jack Beeman/  
Mac Smith/ John McDermott/ Chip Milsom/  
Len Forrest/ Douglass Cooke/ Patrick  
Dawson (son of Shamus)/ Bruce Wilson/  
Rod Hutcheson/ Stan Hopkins/ Gord  
Moyer/ Paul Thiel/ Don Jones/ and last but  
not least, Ron Mace (plumber of catapult  
fame).

Of particular note was the early return  
of 'Wags' Wagland from a plumbers  
convention in SW England, timely to join his  
former mates.

The Ships Bell was rung to honour the  
toast rendered in memory of the late W.D.  
'Chiefy' Munro.

A significant request was made to  
those assembled "To cover all bets, Ted, get  
some to gaze upward and others to look  
down. The request was honoured.



*Many of the 'shanghaied participants' in the  
Naval Aviation Rendezvous. I'll let you put  
names to faces.*

### Canadian Naval Air Group (CNAG)

By Gord Moyer

The Hampton Gray VC (Ottawa)  
Chapter continued it's active program with a  
visit to Vintage Wings of Canada (Gatineau).  
This collection by Michael Potter of vintage  
aircraft has been set up in a trust. He has  
recently acquired a Swordfish and a Corsair,  
which adds a Naval component to the fine  
collection. All the aircraft are flyable and it is  
hoped that perhaps we will see the Swordfish  
over the Battle of Atlantic Ceremony in the  
future. Michael was a Naval Cadet who  
graduated from RMC, but chose not to make  
the Navy a career. A visit to the website,  
<http://www.vintagewings.ca/> is well worth  
while.

In May the Chapter received a very  
candid briefing on the DND Capital Program.

The annual CNAG Reunion was held  
in Halifax on Thanksgiving Weekend, 5, 6 &  
7 October. Information can be found on [www  
//cnag.ncf.ca](http://www.cnag.ncf.ca).

Anyone wishing information about  
CNAG and Hampton Gray VC Chapter  
activities can contact:

[Gordon.moyer@sympatico.ca](mailto:Gordon.moyer@sympatico.ca) 613-824-0555.







## **Onondaga and the Canadian War Museum**

### **...or how she almost came to Ottawa**

By Michael Young



In 1998 the retirement of Canada's *Oberon* class sub-marines had begun. At one of the regular meetings of the Sub-mariners Association of Canada (Central Branch) (SAOC), Sherm Embree raised the point that it would be a good idea to preserve one of the class as a permanent exhibit. While no location was specified, there were indications that a site in or near HMC Dockyard in Halifax might be available. The problem with the idea was that the potential costs involved, not only in setting the submarine up as a museum exhibit but also the annual operating cost, likely would be well beyond what a relatively small organization such as SAOC could possibly afford. So it remained just a dream - for a while!

Then fortune smiled for a moment. The then Director of the Canadian War Museum, Dr. Jack Granatstein, expressed publicly his interest in obtaining one of the retiring submarines as part of the new War Museum. This was to be built on the site of the former CFB Rockliffe near the Aviation Museum with the opening planned for 2003. A small delegation from the SAOC (Jay Plante and myself) met with Dr. Granatstein to see if we could help in achieving the aim by offering the volunteer support and specialized technical knowledge of the SAOC. The offer was warmly and enthusiastically received and SAOC set about doing a small pre-feasibility study that would look at the technical issues and develop rough order of magnitude costs.

A small team undertook the study. It comprised Sherm Embree, Jay Plante and me from SAOC and we persuaded a friendly, albeit a non-submariner, naval architect to aid in some of the more esoteric technical aspects. Other players were roped in from

time to time to cover all the bases. Charles Gruchy, the Project Manager at the CWM was our contact and liaison point.

The submarine selected was *Onondaga*. This was fitting because she was the first to be built as a Canadian submarine from the outset although she was not the first to commission. She was also the first to incorporate specific Canadian equipment and design changes. She also commissioned in the Centennial Year of 1967. I had a personal interest as I was a "plank owner" as her first Weapons Officer.

We gathered a huge amount of information. We spoke with other submarine museums around the world and gained valuable insight into costs and the potential pitfalls. One message was loud and clear - the submarine must be out of the water. Recent experience with the hull of both *Sackville* and *Haida* validates this advice.

There was no question that the submarine could come up to Ottawa under her own power. She is simply too big to pass through the locks at Ste Anne de Bellevue and Carillon on the Ottawa River above Montreal. Also, even at the lightest load her draft exceeds the eight foot maximum allowed. So she would have to be cut into several pieces and placed on barges if she was to get through the locks. Although it was considered briefly, the option of bringing the submarine to Montreal under her own power and then making the preparations for the final passage to Ottawa was essentially a non-starter. The complexities of removing all the materials and batteries and then cutting the submarine were just too much to be undertaken outside of the naval dockyard.

The preferred option, and the one that nearly made it, was to do all the work to prepare *Onondaga* in the Dockyard in Halifax. Then the submarine would be cut into four sections placed onto two barges and towed from Halifax. When the barges arrived at Rockliffe the sections would be slid off onto the shore and then moved to a prepared site at the CWM. We had a preliminary plan from a company that specializes in this kind of work (they also move houses!) so we knew this was relatively easy. Rejoining the hull sections was not considered an onerous task





since the welds would only need to keep out the wind and rain.

All of this was costed out in fairly comprehensive detail as a Rough Order of Magnitude. We were looking at something in the order of \$1.5 to \$2 million. This was a number that it was understood could be accommodated within the overall budget of the CWM. We presented the study to the museum in April 1999 and got a very positive response. For the next 18 months or so everyone believed it would happen. The Navy had essentially quarantined the submarine to prevent 'souvenir hunting' and all seemed on track.

Then in May of 2001 the whole thing was torpedoed when the location of the new museum was shifted from Rockliffe to its present site on LeBreton Flats. There is an 80 foot difference in height between the water level at Rockliffe and the new location of the museum. While not technically impossible, the prospect of having to move large chunks of submarine across parts of downtown Ottawa was a nightmare. Besides, the costs involved would be enormous and beyond any realistic budget. Thus the dream died.

However, there is a happier ending after all. The *Musée de la Mer* at Pointe-au-Père just east of Rimouski, Québec has purchased *Onondaga* for the odd sum of \$4.00 and will take delivery in 2008. Longer term plans include installing the submarine high and dry on a permanent base on the shoreline. Further details can be found on the museum's website at:

[www.shmp.qc.ca/en/onondaga/](http://www.shmp.qc.ca/en/onondaga/).

## Ottawa Branch NOAC Bursary Award

By Fred Herrndorf

The Ottawa Branch NOAC Bursary for 2007 has been awarded to CPO **Cam-Tu Tomkins** of the Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps FALKLAND. CPO Tompkins is currently attending the University of Ottawa in a Bachelor of Arts Programme, majoring in History and English. She intends to take History courses with a Maritime application. She is very dedicated the Sea Cadet

Programme and is currently pursuing the requirements towards becoming a Sea Cadet Officer. Our President, Dr. **Richard Gimblett**, presented the \$1,000 Bursary and a copy of "Salty Dips" to CPO Tomkins on May 1, 2007 at RCSCC FALKLAND's Tuesday night Divisions.

## Salty Dips – Breaking News

By Merv Cameron

After doing substantial work directed at finding suitable extracts of stories extending over 100 years, it was realized that there were huge obstacles hindering the achievement of the aim. It was decided to reassess the project to determine whether a possible new approach should be taken.

We worked up the pros and cons of three options: 1. to go ahead with the original plan for 100 years-worth of extracts of stories; 2. to produce a volume 9 in the series which would contain unpublished stories from the years after volume 8 and call it the Centennial Edition (similar to Volume 2 which acknowledged the 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of the RCN); or 3. to produce a Volume 9 (option 2) and a CD of all 9 volumes.

After considerable discussion, it was decided, unanimously, to adopt option 3; that is, to produce a CD of all 9 volumes, which would be called **The Centennial Collection** plus a hard copy volume 9 containing all new material. This new material would include two Gulf Wars, Vietnam peace treaty monitoring, unification, a posting as naval attaché in Moscow, etc.

Volumes 1 to 4 have been converted to digital text and enhanced with pictures and footnotes. Eight volumes have already been put on a CD, and the 9<sup>th</sup> will be included in due course.

*Dr Alec  
Douglas  
addresses the  
Branch AGM  
May 7th 2007*





## From Sub-Lieutenant Down, Part Nine

By Ted White

*Fond memories of our formative years as young officers can be characterized in the great numbers of minor, mostly humorous incidents, that we all lived through, by merely going the 'nothing ventured--nothing gained' route. Herein are selected vignettes from the 'fifties, reflecting our life and times.*

**"Who so neglects learning in his youth,  
loses the past and is dead for the future"—  
Euripides**

With a little nudge from Alec Douglas I would like to digress from the 50's era and move back into the 1940's with a personal family story that was subsequently connected to a nationally publicized spy incident.

To set the scenario...

My father, a marine engineer, had come ashore in the pre-war years and entered the pulp and paper industry (Bowaters at Cornerbrook being his first plant).

In early 1943, he, serving as a General Superintendent of the St. Lawrence Corporation of paper mills, abruptly uprooted our family to Sherbrooke, Quebec, ostensibly to manage Sherbrooke Machineries in general war-work support.

We were moved to a vacant home on Senator Howard's estate and I, just shy of entering my teens, was plunked into Mitchell school, to continue my year. This would be the first of three provinces which I would be schooled that year.

Strangely, my father was absent for a few weeks at a time. It was not a 9 to 5 employment schedule. I remember seeing his packed bags in the main hall.

I found out, after the war, that he spent most of his time with two engineers from Boston and under commission from C.D. Howe, were designing and constructing huge portable outboard engines as a back-up for the MULBERRY dock of Normandy Invasion fame.

A lesson learned from both Dunkirk and Dieppe was that many sea-worthy

barges were left stranded because of inboard engine break-downs. An additional point is that ancillary war-work programs were relegated to North American industrial complexes, leaving the UK industrial base working on front line requirements; i.e. aircraft and guns.

Entering the summer months, without any advance notice, our family up-rooted again and moved to New Carlisle, Quebec (Gaspé Coast). My father had worked himself into a fatigue condition and was taking a few month's rest.

We temporarily moved into Annett's Hotel (really called the Carlisle but called locally 'Annett's from the owner's name). My mother had a great-uncle, William Cool who owned a farm a mile or two west of the town.

I remember the blacked out narrow slit headlights on all motor vehicles. I remember the muzzles of the wooden guns sticking out of bush areas all the way down the coast to Gaspé village itself. The large oil storage tanks built to support the British Home Fleet, in the dark days of 1940, in case England went under. The ever-present militia units strung out like the Home Guard, along the coast.

German subs surfaced offshore nightly, without any Canadian defence surveillance, to charge batteries. Fishermen were given flares for each outing, in case they witnessed a surfacing.

For those who may remember, movie theatres were off limits to children under 16 in Quebec, because of a disastrous fire and loss of life in Montreal in the 30's. However at New Carlisle, and I am sure, many other small towns bent the rules for Saturday morning's when we youngsters sneaked in to watch Red Ryder, Tom Mix, and Hopalong Cassidy, etc.

I was attending one show, when suddenly the lights went on, the film stopped, the Militias entered and ordered everyone out, whilst knocking down all the row seating. Within minutes, trucks rolled up and emptied oil soaked survivors of a sinking.

These were exciting times for our age group.

Now, to the heart of the story...







I had been invited to the Cool's farm for a few days 'to do the farm bit' which became mostly chores. I joyously rode a horse for the first time, albeit a massive farm plodder.

The real joy was to cross the property and go down into a sandy cove for a fun swim in La Baie Chaleur, accompanied by young members of the host family. That day my mother's uncle, while driving into town, picked up a man with a box briefcase, who was walking on the shore road towards New Carlisle. He claimed to be a radio repair technician from Northern Electric and asked to be dropped off at Annett's Hotel.

There he informed Earle Annett, young son of the owner, that he had bussed into town, which was strange, considering the bus would not arrive for a few hours, and that he wanted only a bath and breakfast before catching the train out to Montreal. Since he was smelling of a strange oily concentrate, paying his bill with outdated Canadian \$1 notes and, unbelievably, discarding an empty match box marked "fabrique en Belgique", it didn't take long for the police and military to be called, culminating with his arrest.

Before proceeding, he demanded to be taken to a canister, buried in the sand, where he tried to don his naval uniform, to be taken away as a prisoner of war.

You guessed it. The canister was a mere 25 yards from my swimming patch.

A few post-war years later, I sat down one evening to watch "Front Page Challenge" – a CBC TV panel show, hosted by Fred Davis and panelled by the barely sufferable Gordon Sinclair plus Pierre Berton and the charming Betty Kennedy and others.

The Mystery Guest was Earle Annett. Another Canadian story.



*Branch President Richard Gimblett lays a wreath at the National War Memorial on Battle of Atlantic Sunday*

## Seen in Passing

By Cliff Chaulk

Summer is still with us and thank God for Global Warming, but it's deadline time for our Fall issue of Soundings so I must turn -- to indoors.

**SEEN** since last issue: **Hal Pottle** piping "Up Spirits" in our annual celebration of Victory in the Atlantic and the Navy's 97<sup>th</sup> Birthday; **Paul Roquet** doing the issue with **Dan Harris** (91) first at the tub; **Jake Freill** chatting up **Senator Kinney**; **Bill Christie**, **Bob Falls** and **Charles Knight** on parade.; **Gord Smith** returning from his "around the world cruise"; **Alec Douglas** busy signing copies of "Blue Water Navy" whilst **Ray Phillips** is anxious to read it and see how he did in the last action noted in "No Higher Purpose"; **Bruce Hayes** getting in some quality time with the boys before going off-shore for the summer; **Ted White** hosting the annual aviation group reunion which brought out **John Dumbrille**, **Bruce Cormack**, **Bruce Baker**, **Ed L'Heureux**, **Dave Tate**, **Bob Murray**, **Glen Cook**, **Robbie & Di Hughes**, **Bob Falls** and about 40 others; **Gordon Shears** visiting from Halifax; **Ken Summers** visiting from VI; **HMCS Ottawa** receiving the "Key to the City" at an impressive dinner at City Hall; **GG Armstrong** hosting his boys (**Mike**, **David** and **Jamie**) to lunch at *Bytown*; **Russ Butler** and **Bob Mitchell** entertaining former work-mates; **Paul Godbout** making a rare appearance at the Round Table; **Bill Edge** and **Pat Nixon** entertaining **Jake Warren** in Seagull Corner; **Ted White** briefing **Len Forrest** and **Bruce Hayes** on their trip to the UK in search of "True Ale"; **Ted Forster** joining the Round Table with the capable assistance of wife **Janet**; **Jack** and **Catherine Colgan** (Virginia Beach) visiting their old haunts in Ottawa and taking the opportunity to see their friends at *Bytown* Mess, **Ron Wade** recovering well from spinal surgery; **Dan Mainguy** trying out his new knees by climbing the *Bytown* stairs; **Heather Armstrong** back with the bunch after successfully completing French Language Training.





## Drydocking Fun

By Richard Archer

Did I ever tell you the story of the occasion I put HMCS *Ottawa* into drydock in Saint John, NB? I was the XO at the time and the ship was due for a scheduled docking. The Irving shipyard, Saint John Shipbuilding, had won the contract.

Initially we were alongside the shipyard pier, getting ready. We quickly learned how to cope with the 30-40 foot diurnal tidal range. Getting the lines and the brow just right was an art form.

The captain, Jim Bell, and I had agreed that we would share the load – for two-week intervals one of us, plus half the ship's company, would be on board while the other would operate out of the ship's Halifax shore office set up in the Stad annex at Windsor Park.

It was my turn to be on board when one morning the shipyard dockmaster came unannounced to visit me and the ship's Engineer, Ian Mack, in the wardroom. The dockmaster was mid-forties and competent-looking in his work clothes, hard hat and communications gear. "Okay", he said, "we can get you into the drydock this afternoon. If you can't do it, the next chance will be three weeks from now." I mulled this over with all its ramifications, and raised an eyebrow at the Engineer, who said, "The ship is properly trimmed and in all respects ready." It seemed I had no choice. "Okay", I said, "let's do it."

"Right", said the dockmaster, and he launched into his standard patter. "It's a tidal dry dock. High tide is at 1430 this afternoon. This means that the window of opportunity starts at about 1330 and extends to about 1530. This is tight but doable. Low tide, when we'll close the gate, is later this evening. I don't want any sailor picking up any of the fish lying in the dry dock or we'll have a strike on our hands. We'll have two tugs to take you in. Don't worry if you're late getting in and get caught up on the sill, we'll use a tug to pull you off before it gets too serious." Hmm, I thought, so much for our sonar domes, but said,

"Okay, we'll be ready for the tugs at 1300," and got the ship prepared.

On the dot at 1300, the pilot arrived. He was short and portly, and seemed to be loaded down with too much UVic flotation jacket, hard hat and walkie-talkie. It was also soon evident that he had a problem with stuttering. We made our way up to the bridge and stood on the bridge roof, along with my part ship communications number. From the roof we couldn't see astern because of the hangar, but it was the pilot's preferred vantage point.

We discussed the plan. After getting out into the harbour proper we'd be turning the ship the nearly 180 degrees so as to face the drydock entrance. Then the smaller tug would secure alongside the starboard side of the fo'cstle to guide us in, while the larger tug remained secured by a line astern to keep the ship straight and to act as a brake if necessary. Because of the narrowness of the channel leading to the dock, we couldn't use the larger tug up forward, and because of the narrowness of the dock entrance, even the smaller forward tug would have to cast off just before the ship entered. Once the stem of the ship was over the sill, we'd use lines ashore to control the entrance and alignment. It sounded a touch dicey to me, but I knew they had done this sort of thing hundreds of times. Once in the dock, the dockmaster would order the adjustment of the lines to align the ship properly over the blocks.

I was normally comfortable with what we called a cold move, under the control of a pilot. I had done it a number of times before, starting as a junior Officer-of-the-Day. But I appreciated that while the pilot was nominally in charge, I would certainly wear it if there were any problems – at least a board of inquiry and censure, if not a court martial. And of course beyond any such personal considerations, there was always the supreme desire to keep one of Her Majesty's Canadian ships and its crew out of trouble and operational. The point is that I knew not to take anything for granted, and that I had the veto of any action I didn't like – I was ultimately in charge. By the way I talked to





him, I made sure this message got across to the pilot. He was only providing a service.

The two tugs had been hired from a local company. The smaller one, Beech, was secured to the bow by the head rope through the bullring, while the larger one, Aspen, was secured to the stern. Under the directions of the pilot, who seemed to be keeping his stutter reasonably under control, we slipped from the pier and the tugs guided us carefully down the narrow gap between two huge tankers and out into the harbour.

I had my first look at the entrance to the drydock. It was at the end of a channel that had a slight ess-bend. But that wasn't the only problem. A stiff breeze had come up and was blowing directly into the dock.

Things started calmly enough after we came to rest in the harbour. The pilot was talking to the two tugmasters in the local vernacular. "B-b-beech, take 'er up there towards the cannery. As-as-aspen, pull towards the c-c-cable wh-wh-wharf there." Each time, I scanned the harbour surroundings to find the landmarks he was referring to.

Things were going smoothly until the ship became beam-on the wind. As usual, with its huge sail area in the hangar, et al., the ship liked this relationship and mightily resisted turning at rest any more. It was apparent that the smaller tug was struggling, and that the ship was gathering headway sideways. My thoughts turned towards the anchor, which was ready to let go. The pilot began to lose his composure. "As-as-aspen, t-t-t-ake 'er up t-towards the t-t-t-anks. I looked for the oil tanks and there they were with their expected Irving logos, but crikey! the pilot was ordering Aspen the wrong way. He'd got the tugs mixed up!

"That's for Beech", I growled at him, and he quickly corrected himself. Although the tugmasters only responded to orders with toots of their horns, I imagine they were getting as exasperated as I was. I grunted, "Tell Aspen to pull the stern up into the wind with some stern way." This he did, and we gradually got ourselves aligned, with the bow pointing at the dock entrance even if going slowly astern. I looked at my watch. Still time.

We secured Beech to the starboard bow as planned, and she managed to take the stern way off and then gather some slow headway towards the narrow channel. I looked at my watch again. Still okay.

Things were going according to plan as we entered the channel and approached the dock gate. But as we slowed even further, on its own accord the ship started to turn to put its port beam into the wind. Naturally, the tug alongside the starboard bow couldn't stop this. The ship stopped turning and I knew the bow was aground. I waited to see if the pilot's exhortations to Beech were having any effect. None was apparent, and we were completely misaligned with the dock entrance. I decided to get the hell out of there.

I forget exactly what I told the pilot, but it was along the lines of, "Get Aspen to pull us astern!" This was accomplished, and as the ship began to gather a touch of sternway I saw Beech, without any direction from the pilot, slip from the starboard side and bail out astern. This was fine with me – it wasn't doing any good and was only in the way. As the ship gathered sternway it of course became aligned perfectly with the entrance. I decided to give it one last try.

"There!" I called to the pilot, "tell Aspen to push us in!" Almost immediately thereafter I felt the ship surge forward. A report came from the quarterdeck. "The tug has cast off its line, turned around and pushed us hard!" Okay great, but that meant we had no brakes.

We were entering the dock okay and none of the many fenders we had out were being challenged, but I heard the Dockmaster call from the dock side (he was calling on the pilot's radio, but I could swear I heard his actual voice even over the wind), "Ottawa, you're going too fast! We won't be able to stop you!

I ordered all parts of ship to get their lines ashore as quickly as possible, and to use them to slow the ship. I watched as the fo'cstle crew flung the lines ashore to the waiting dock hands who dropped them over the nearest bollards. The fo'cstle officer and his petty officer ordered just the right amount of strain by the sailors backing up







the lines – enough to make the severely stretching ropes smoke on the windlass drums, but not enough to break them. But before the ship was stopped, the lines ashore began to run out of length. Quickly they were released and moved up to bollards further forward. More smoke and strain, while the concrete end of the dock disappeared under the bow. I assumed the other parts of ship, the top and quarterdeck, were doing the same although I couldn't see them. Thankfully we came to a gentle stop without any evident bumps and then settled back a bit...and I began to breathe again. After several seconds of absolute silence, I heard the dockmaster say calmly into his radio, "Okay, Ottawa, it looks like you're perfectly aligned with the blocks and no further adjustment is necessary."

I tidied up ("In fenders, double up all lines, brow port side", and so on), and before heading down to the bridge proper to get the bosuns mate to make the expected pipes (secure special sea dutymen, revert to a lower damage control state, ordering all heads and washplaces out-of-bounds, that sort of thing) I turned to the pilot, but he wasn't anywhere to be seen. I soon found him in the wardroom holding a stiff whiskey in a trembling hand.

Ottawa settled on the blocks a short time later without it being noticed inside the ship, and in the evening at full low tide the gate was closed.

The next morning it was low tide again, and I saw just how narrow the channel looked without any water in it. Led by Ian Mack some of us descended into the drydock to have a look at the hull and everything attached thereto, starting with the propellers. Everything looked fine until we got to the bow. The foot of the stem was bent at a severe angle to port. Uh oh, I said to myself...but I would have thought it would have been bent to starboard. But without any prompting from me, one of the junior officers piped up that the damage had probably been done when Ottawa entered Saint Petersburg on the first visit by east coast Canadian warships to a Soviet port – that is, before I arrived on board. Apparently a local pilot there had fouled up and they

believed that the ship might have touched ground. I wasn't about to argue with this opinion. The Engineer said he'd get it fixed.

### Code's Nautical Notes (Cont'd)

**KILLICK** - Earlier, a simple anchor, a rock or a weighted hook; later, a grapnel type. It is also another word for sentinel, a weight on an anchor cable to improve the anchor's holding power. Possibly from Old Norse. In the Canadian Navy, a Leading Seaman.

**KNOT** - (1) A general term for tying a rope to an object or, more properly, to another rope.(14th C.) It has several sources: Anglo-Saxon *knotta*, Old Norse *knutta*, all meaning knot. (2) A vessel's rate of speed, a nautical mile per hour. Briefly, this was attained by running out astern a line that was knotted at measured intervals, and timing the run with a timeglass. This is a term recognizable in all of the modern Teutonic languages.

**KNOW THE ROPES** - Rope has been put to literally hundreds of uses aboard the old-time sailing vessels, and was given a name for almost every different function. There was hawser, line, and cable, along with sheets, lanyards, painters, shrouds, stays, marlin, rode, and many others. During a storm or any other crisis that can occur at sea, when the captain yells to a crew member to tighten, loosen or haul a rope it is essential that the sailor grab the right one - to know the ropes.

**KIP** - (1) Sleep. (2) Protective sheet of dark green and waterproof material from which a "basha" or "bivvy" can be constructed. Derived from the stores item *Kit Individual Protection*, and also known as a kip sheet.

**KIT** - Also has two meanings, e.g. (1) Equipment. "It's good kit" meaning that it works well, or that it is a special piece of kit.

**KIT MUSTER** - Formal inspection of a rating's full issue of clothing and personal equipment, often as a punishment for a persistently slack or untidy individual; also a euphemism for vomiting, presumably because the stomach contents have also been laid out for inspection! (RN)

*Principal Sources: Origins of Sea Terms, by John G. Rogers; Scuttlebutt, by T. Degler; Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea; Jackspeak, by Rick Jolly and Tugg Wilson*





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## Membership

Annual Dues Payable January 1st Annually:

Ordinary & Associate Members

Local: \$70.00

Out-of-Town: \$60.00

Serving Officers: \$35.00

"Out-of-town" is defined as residing more than 40km "as the crow flies" from HMCS *Bytown*.

Membership includes a membership Directory, delivery of **Starshell** and **Soundings**, and other mailings throughout the year. Our Members reside across Canada, the United States, and overseas.

### Fellow Members of NOAC Ottawa Branch

Your Membership Chair needs recruiters! Our Branch is growing slowly, as of this time we number **about 320**, but we are still the largest of the lot.

The difficulty is that your Membership Chair does not know the majority of the people on the lists; hence there is no personal approach.

Full details respecting membership are available on our Website:

[www.noac.ottawa.on.ca](http://www.noac.ottawa.on.ca).

### Membership Directory

A Directory is enclosed with each issue as an aid to our membership. However, its accuracy depends on how we are advised about errors, changes and additions. We now have most members who are on the Internet and with whom the Branch can communicate with ease -- a magnificent medium for the rapid movement of information. Think about it! Please advise your Membership Chair, John Bell, of changes to your email address. When

messages are bounced you are removed from the network.

## Soundings

This newsletter was founded in 1982. It is published twice a year, normally in May and November, reporting on NOAC Ottawa Branch programs and activities, trends and other matters of interest to its members. It is posted on the branch web site.

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Contributions, input, feedback, ideas, anecdotes, naval signals, trivia, reminiscences, humour, salty dips, good and bad news items, comments and letters to the Editor are welcome and invited.

Contributions by telephone, mail, fax, email, CD or disk are welcome. Electronic files should be converted to Word 97 format before transmission to the Editor. Please remove all automatic formatting!

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