



SOUNDINGS

PATRON H.R.H. THE PRINCE PHILIP
DUKE OF EDINBURGH

This and previous editions of Soundings can be found on www.navalassoc.ca/soundings

THE NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA - OTTAWA
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.)

49.02

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

November 2013

1914 -2014 100th Anniversary of Canadian Submarine Service

H.M.C.S. GRILSE



HMCS *Grilse*, SS-71 was originally USS *Burrfish*, SSR-312, which was built in 1944 and saw combat in the Pacific. Its last mission in USN service was to mount a large radar and act as a radar picket in the air defence of North America. *Burrfish* was loaned to the RCN and commissioned as HMCS *Grilse* in 1961, serving in the Pacific fleet until 1969. See the history of the 100 years of the Canadian submarine service starting on page 5.





From the President

By Eric Deslauriers



Looking at the last few President's messages in Soundings, I noted they all started along the lines of "There has been a lot going on...". That remains very true and shows no signs of changing. I want to touch on three topics:

- what we have accomplished in the last six months;
- the "big picture" priorities for the branch in the next year or so; and
- finally, a few bits of information you should be aware of.

The Last Six Months. With a huge effort from Jay Plante and his team, NAC-O put on the first Battle of the Atlantic Gala in May of this year, to honour our naval veterans, and to highlight the RCN in the NCR.

In June, NAC-O successfully transitioned to the new Federal legislation governing Not-For-Profit corporations, and as part of that, adopted a revised Constitution and By-Laws. Also in June, at the Annual General Meeting the National NAC organization adopted a new Constitution and By-Laws. Importantly, these included for the first time the "one-member-one-vote" principle at the national level (at the branch level we have always had it). The new National Constitution and Bylaws will come into effect sometime this fall.

Through the summer and into September, your Board of Directors started the planning and long lead time arrangements for next year's BOA Gala, and National AGM & Conference (more on these a bit later), as well as making the arrangements for this year's speaker's program (Bob Hamilton) and fall Super Wednesday Event (Jay Plante again).

Priorities. While our well-established activities including (but not limited to!) producing Soundings, the speakers program, Member Support and Naval Affairs are important, for the next 12 months we in our branch, collectively, need to focus on three big things.

First, we have to organize and stage the second annual BOA Gala Dinner on 1 May 2014 at the Canadian War Museum. Mark your calendars! We set a high standard last year and we need to meet or exceed that same superb performance. We owe it to the veterans. By doing so, we also highlight the continuity between the Navy of the past and the Navy of the present, and set the stage for making the case for a strong Navy going forward. Organizing the dinner takes a big planning effort, which I will be leading this year. While last year's organizing committee was mostly drawn from your Board of Directors, this year I want and need volunteers from the membership. Think about it (a lot!) and contact me if you are interested.

Second, we will be hosting the NAC National AGM & Conference 2-5 October 2014 at the Lord Elgin Hotel and National Arts Centre. Mark your calendars! As we did for the gala, we set a high standard when we last hosted this event in 2012, with the AGM running smoothly, and the conference gaining the respect of the senior leaders of the RCN and highlighting important issues for the Combat Systems of the Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC). The 2014 conference will focus on submarines. Tom DeWolf is once again leading the organizing committee, and, as for the gala, he would like volunteers from the membership to make it all work. Contact him if you are interested in contributing to this important event.





Third, we have to continue recruiting new members. 10-20 members leave the branch each year, but we want to continue growing in size, so we collectively need to encourage friends, colleagues, and acquaintances with an interest in the naval past and future of Canada, to join. We have grown from about 300 to 375 members in the last 2 years and want to continue that growth. The immediate target is 400. Don't be shy--ask a friend!

Other Issues. Bob Bush, the webmaster for our web site, has been valiantly harassing people to provide him with new and updated content. If you have not visited the site recently, you really should, particularly the Governance and Program pages.

By now you should all have received a letter from Brooke Campbell, chair of the Endowment Fund, asking for donations. The letter explains very clearly what the Endowment Fund is and what it does. As the letter states, you can donate directly to the Fund, but you can also donate via the branch when you renew your membership. I ask all of you to seriously consider the Endowment Fund's request. If you prefer to donate to something closer to home, you can make specific donations to either the Cadet Bursary or to the branch.

And speaking of membership, it's time to renew yours. See Steve King's membership report below for details.

As you can see there is a lot going on. It takes effort and dedication by members to keep NAC-O vital and to continue to make these things happen. I look forward to your support in doing so. **S**

Branch Membership Report

By Steve King

Overview. As of this month, the Branch has 375 members of all categories, a net growth of about 25 in past year. The trend over the past three years continues to show a modest, but positive increase. This has been largely as a result of recruiting both serving and recently retired RCN members. The NAC change to welcome all-ranks and interested civilians into the organization is also producing results. Unfortunately our Branch success is in contrast to our sister Branches across the country. The future of our organization depends very much on our ability to recruit new blood. We are all recruiters – don't miss any opportunity to extend an invitation to join NAC.

We also have been fortunate in having had a very small loss of members due to moving away, death or folks otherwise leaving the Branch. Indeed, several persons moving to other climes have opted to remain with the Branch in the "out-of-town" category. The absolute and relative numbers of "paying" members is also on the increase. There 70 persons in the Honorary Life category, another 12 in the Paid Life category, and a further 22 1-year non-dues-paying Introductory Members (up from 13 in Spring 2013). Full dues-paying members stand at 271.

Of course, a good number of Honouraries and Paid Lifers also submit an equivalent or higher amount in donations, for which the Branch is truly grateful. The extra funds, as you will have seen reported elsewhere, allow the Branch to return better service to you, and engage in other charitable and education works.

The disappointing news is that a good number of members (25 at time of writing) have yet to pay dues for 2013. Of those 25 members, 10 were 2012 Conference registrants. I have begun to contact all those who are still in arrears. If you are amongst the 25, now would be an excellent time to pay up. Please do so at your earliest opportunity. Use the Joining and Membership Renewal page of the Branch website (<http://www.navalassoc.ca/joining>), or contact me by mail.

Income Tax Receipts 2013. It is recognized that members want to have their 2013 Income Tax Receipts earlier than in previous years. The membership database has been improved to make this so. Expect your tax receipts by end-January 2014 for the 2013 Tax Year. Your tax receipt is dated when the Treasurer receives your contribution.





Annual Dues for 2014. The drive for 2014 annual dues has started. Your payment should reach the Treasurer by 31 December 2013. Paypal, as a method of payment, has worked extraordinarily well over the past year. Of course, payment by credit card (also via the website) or personal cheque still works. To renew, you have two options:

Option One - go to the NAC Ottawa Joining and Membership Renewal webpage for details.

Option Two – fill out the membership form (located in this issue of *Soundings*) and mail it with your cheque to:

THE NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA – OTTAWA
Box 505, Station B, Ottawa, ON K1P 5P6

Dues remain unchanged from that approved at the 2010 Annual General Meeting:

Regular: \$80.00

Out-of-Town: \$70.00 (“Defined as residing more than 40km from HMCS *Bytown*.)

Serving Member: \$45

Surviving Spouse: \$45

Contact Information. I maintain contact information for all branch members. Contact information is used for postal mailings and emailing, both by the Branch and NAC National. Whenever we distribute *Soundings* or *Starshell*, or when a “Branch GEN” is sent by email to advise you of news and upcoming events, we invariably discover that some of the addresses are no longer correct. If you need to update your membership information, please use the online form at our website (located at Joining and Membership Renewal) and send it to the membership director (naco.membership@gmail.com). If you don’t have a computer, kindly advise me by mail whenever any of your contact information changes, It will ensure that you are kept informed, and can stay in touch with other members.

Membership Directory. The Membership Directory is published once a year and mailed with the hard copy version of the fall *Soundings*. For those who read *Soundings* on the Branch web site, you will notice the Membership Directory is not posted there, for reasons of privacy and personal security. By the time this edition has been published, our Branch President will have sent you a copy of the Membership Directory as an attachment to one of his weekly messages. If you have been inadvertently missed, send me an email and I will provide.

And finally, to repeat, the future of our organization depends very much on our ability to recruit new blood. Happy recruiting! **S**



Bob Cleroux

NAC-Ottawa welcomes on board **Bob Cleroux**, who as of July 5th has retired from the RCN as a CPO First Class and the Canadian Forces Chief Warrant Officer, after more than 36 years of distinguished service at sea and ashore. Among other prestigious and demanding positions he was the CERA of HMCS *Ottawa* and the Coxswain of HMCS *Algonquin*. Bob, NAC-O is now stronger for your participation in our Branch activities. **S**





100 Years of Submarines in the RCN

By Michael Young

Author's note: This article is an adapted and condensed version of a paper written for the Friends of the Canadian War Museum's historical research project in collaboration with Michael Braham. The original can be found at

http://www.friends-amis.org/pdf/RP14_CdnSubmarines.pdf

Except for headline making events such as the tragic accident aboard HMCS *Chicoutimi* in 2004, the debate over the proposed acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines in 1987-88 or the recent problems associated with returning the *Victoria*-class to operational status, Canadians tend to be unaware that Canada even possesses, or has much involvement with, submarines. There is even less awareness of the chequered history of submarines in the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) or of the Canadians who served in them - a history that will celebrate its Centennial in 2014.

At the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the minuscule RCN, then just four years old, had only the old cruiser HMCS *Rainbow* based in Esquimalt for defence of the coastal waters of British Columbia. The Premier of British Columbia, Sir Richard McBride, was extremely concerned over the lack of naval forces to protect BC waters in the event that the German squadron of Admiral Graf von Spee approached the coast; a concern heightened when *Rainbow* sailed quietly on 3 August to meet the potential threat of the German cruiser *Leipzig*, then off Mexico and apparently heading north.



LCdr
Barney
Johnson
DSO RCNR

McBride acted upon his concern and on his own initiative. He had learned that the Seattle Dry Dock and Construction Company had two submarines available for sale. *Iquique* and *Antofagasta* had been built for the Chilean Navy, but the Chileans refused to accept them since there were significant unspecified deficiencies. After three days of negotiating back and forth between Seattle, Ottawa and Victoria, in the middle of the night of 4-5 August 1914 the submarines slipped out of the yard under cover of darkness. After an inspection by Canadian authorities in Canadian waters off Esquimalt, a cheque for \$1.2 million was handed over in exchange for possession of the submarines in the early morning of 5 August. The following day the Canadian Government ratified the purchase and commissioned the vessels into the RCN as HMC Ships *CC 1* and *CC 2*.

Their crews were drawn from volunteers from the Royal Navy Canadian Volunteer Reserve (RNCVR) and the tiny squadron was commanded by a retired British submariner living in Canada who was brought into the RCN. The addition of some technical personnel from the cruiser *Rainbow* meant there was a nucleus of naval trained personnel. Initially none had any submarine





experience so training for virtually all hands was necessary.

The submarines were placed at the disposal of the British Admiralty since, at the time, the fledgling RCN was fully under the operational control of the Royal Navy (RN), which decided that they should remain in BC waters for training purposes. There they stayed until the summer of 1917 when they were ordered to Halifax, NS, together with their depot ship HMCS *Shearwater*. Thus they became the first vessels to transit the Panama Canal flying the White Ensign. They languished in Halifax until 1920, when they were sold for scrap.

Some twelve Canadian naval officers served in submarines during World War I, and two in particular served with distinction. B. L. "Barney" Johnson was a master mariner and a marine pilot with the Vancouver Pilotage Authority who was temporarily attached to the RCN in Esquimalt. The temporary attachment became permanent for the duration of the war. He was commissioned as an Acting Lieutenant in the Reserve and appointed as second-in-command of CC 2. Subsequently, he was appointed to command one of the submarines building for the RN in Montreal¹. He commissioned *H 8* in 1915 and took her across the Atlantic to Britain. He became the first Canadian to command a submarine and he later won the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) for his exploits in command of the submarine in the North Sea.

Unlike Johnson, William Maitland-Dougall was a regular force officer. He had entered the Royal Naval College of Canada in 1911 at the age of fifteen as a member of the first term of cadets at the new College. After graduation in 1913 he had been in a British cruiser until recalled to Canada at the outbreak of war to serve in the newly acquired submarines. In 1915 he volunteered to serve in British submarines and underwent further training in Britain. After serving as second-in-command to Lt Barney Johnson in HMS *D 3* he qualified for submarine command and replaced Johnson in *D 3*. Thus he became the youngest to command a submarine and the first RCN (Regular Force) officer to do so. Maitland-Dougall was killed, just before his twenty-third birthday, on 12 March 1918 when his submarine was attacked and sunk while on the surface by a French airship in a tragic case of mistaken identity.

At the end of World War I, two H-class submarines that had been built in the United States were offered to the RCN by the Admiralty as they were surplus to British needs. This was a gift the Canadians did not want as they could not afford to run both submarines and do the necessary training for the surface ships. In addition there were not enough sailors to man

*Lt William
Maitland-
Dougall
RCN*



1. 10 H-Class submarines were built at Canadian Vickers in Montreal in early 1915 for the RN, initially without the knowledge of the Canadian Government. Five more were built in Vancouver and shipped to Russia in kit form. A further six, also built in Vancouver, never reached Russia and eventually ended up in USN service. See <http://www.gwpda.org/naval/cdnhboat.htm>





everything. Nevertheless, under pressure from the Admiralty, the RCN reluctantly took the two submarines, designating them *CH 14* and *CH 15*. Although some effort was made to keep the submarines operational, they were laid up permanently in June 1922 after the Government

refused to approve the annual upkeep costs necessary. There would be a hiatus of 23 years before submarines returned to RCN service.

Canada did not acquire any submarines during World War II, although at one point in mid-1943, there was a proposal to form a submarine branch of the RCN and acquire six submarines. The Naval Board ultimately rejected this proposal. Submarines did serve in Canada to train HMC ships. The Dutch submarine *O-15* arrived on the scene in Halifax from the Netherlands West Indies in August 1940. The RCN



After construction by Canadian Vickers, H-Boats in Halifax waiting for transfer to the UK

managed to hold onto *O-15* until well into 1942, by which time she had been joined by an obsolete but still useful British submarine *L27*. Throughout the remainder of the war, the Admiralty allocated to the Canadians a series of ageing submarines (most were over 20 years old), which had been acquired by lend-lease from the USN.

Even if the RCN lacked a submarine branch during World War II, it did not lack volunteers to serve in the submarines of the RN. Twenty-six officers, all from the RCNVR, underwent submarine training during the years 1942-1944. Of these, three went on to command British submarines. Two were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) with LCdr Freddie Sherwood from Ottawa earning a second award for actions in the Far East. One officer² who had volunteered for “chariot” (human torpedoes) operations was killed in January 1943 when the submarine in which he was taking passage en route to his target was sunk.

In 1945 the RCN took over two surrendered German U-boats; *U-889* and *U-190*. The former was transferred to the USN early in 1946 after supporting equipment trials by the RCN. *U-190* lasted until October 1947 when, due to her deteriorating state, she was sunk as a target off Halifax near the spot where she had torpedoed HMCS *Esquimalt* in April 1945. This time the hiatus would only last 15 years.

The post-war RCN evolved into a highly specialised ASW Navy. Effective operational training for the Navy, and the maritime patrol aircraft of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), required the services of submarines. The RN provided such services for the RCN and RCAF on the east coast after the war using the small U-class. For a variety of reasons, including cost, this arrangement was ultimately unsatisfactory for both parties.

In the early 1950s, negotiations began between the RN and the RCN for what became a complex agreement by which the RN stationed a squadron of three submarines in Halifax. In return, the RCN provided personnel for training and subsequent service in British submarines -

2. Lt C. E. Bonnell, DSC, RCNVR in HMS P311.
Soundings November 2013





not necessarily those stationed in Halifax. In the summer of 1955 the first submarine arrived to inaugurate the Squadron. This arrangement lasted for ten years and came to a close when HMCS *Ojibwa* arrived in Halifax in 1965.

On the Pacific coast there was no similar arrangement. However, there was a good relationship with the USN and the west coast ships and aircraft frequently exercised with submarines of the USN. While this was a beneficial situation, the amount of training time available to the RCN and RCAF in the Pacific was extremely limited and insufficient to sustain high standards of operational readiness in ASW.

Throughout much of the 1950s, the RCN considered the acquisition of submarines of its own - including a study of the option of obtaining nuclear-powered submarines. The cost of the arrangement on the east coast was increasing and Britain was anxious to reduce its commitment. In 1960 the government authorized the lease of the former USS *Burrfish*, a World War II-era USN boat in the reserve fleet, for a five-year period of service on the west coast. Renamed HMCS *Grilse* she was commissioned into the RCN on 11 May 1961. This decision resulted in two training streams - one USN and one RN. This would have some interesting repercussions over terminology and operating philosophies when the two groups merged during the introduction of the Oberons.

At the beginning of the 1960s the Navy had plans for a small force of six modern submarines, based on the USN *Barbel* design, which would have both an operational and a training function. *Grilse* was viewed as a stop-gap measure. However, politics got in the way of these plans during the major shake-up of National Defence initiated by Paul Hellyer, the Minister of National Defence.

Instead of the planned six, US-designed, “state-of-the-art” diesel-electric boats, the Government entered into negotiations with the Admiralty for the acquisition of three submarines to be built in Britain. These were of the *Oberon*-class which, although very advanced in some features, was essentially an update of the World War II German Type XXI U-boat design. The US design used the advanced “tear drop” hull form utilized by the USN for its nuclear attack submarines, which gave the diesel electric *Barbel* much better speed and diving capabilities than those of the *Oberon*-class. The *Oberon* was considerably cheaper however.

The first of the new submarines was commissioned as HMCS *Ojibwa*, at Chatham Dockyard, UK, in the summer of 1965. She had been laid down for the RN as HMS *Onyx* but was transferred to the RCN while under construction. She was followed in 1967 by HMCS *Onondaga* and in 1968 by HMCS *Okanagan*. *Onondaga* and *Okanagan* incorporated a series of modifications to meet specific RCN requirements. A fourth *Oberon*, to meet the west coast requirement, was vaguely promised but in the event was never authorized.

The Government was at pains to point out that the acquisition of these submarines was for the purposes of training the ASW forces of the RCN and the RCAF – and exclusively on the east coast. They were not to have any operational role. This despite the fact that the thinking within NATO ASW circles was that the best anti-submarine vehicle was another submarine. The *Oberons* did the same “clockwork mouse” evolutions for the surface ships and maritime patrol aircraft that their RN predecessors had done from 1955 to 1965. They spent a considerable amount of time at sea -- much more than their surface ship cousins.

By the late 1970s, the *Oberons* were getting tired. Most of their sensor systems were obsolete and spare parts were becoming scarce and expensive. The Navy made a successful case for an update program, the formal title of which included the term “Operational”. In addition to improvements in the submarines’ systems, new and modern electronics replaced the outdated analogue versions and a new torpedo, the American Mark 48, was acquired. The update took place between 1980 and 1986 and the result was a very capable submarine. Given this better capability, the Navy finally assigned operational tasks, other than simply training, to the submarines -- albeit reluctantly at the outset. The submarines proved their worth in several successful deployments in Cold War scenarios.





On the west coast the lease of *Grilse* had been extended for a further five years and she had been refitted in 1967. However, in 1968 the US Navy offered another submarine and the RCN bought the former USS *Argonaut*. She was commissioned as HMCS *Rainbow* and replaced *Grilse* which was returned to the USN in 1969. *Rainbow* only lasted until 1974 and for many years afterwards there would be no submarine based on the west coast. Occasional deployments of an Oberon from the east coast in the later 1980s alleviated the shortfall but did not solve it.

Although the modernization program for the Oberons was in progress in 1980, the Navy began the initial planning process for their eventual replacement with a modern diesel-electric submarine. This was a prudent move given the reality of very long lead times for such major projects. In 1983, a formal project was established with a small team of dedicated personnel, called the Canadian Submarine Acquisition Project -- CASAP for short. This action took advantage of an offer from the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), which also operated Oberon-class submarines, to participate in their replacement project which was at a more advanced stage. In the event, the cooperation with the RAN did not bear fruit (except for the Canadian team gaining much useful technical information) and each of the navies resumed their own courses of action.

In the mid-1980s, the newly elected Federal Government of Prime Minister Mulroney decided that the submarine replacement program should include nuclear-powered submarines. They were included in the 1987 Defence White Paper in support of a three-ocean policy. To say that this was a controversial move is a gross understatement. Two years later the program was cancelled when the funding was removed from the federal Budget.

The impact of this diversion of focus from the core element of CASAP -- the replacement of the *Oberons* with new diesel-electric submarines -- was devastating. In effect the project went back to basics and became a very low priority on the procurement ladder.

In 1998 an arrangement between the British and Canadian governments resulted in the acquisition by Canada of four diesel-electric submarines that were surplus to British requirements. Britain had opted to operate only nuclear-powered submarines and these four relatively new submarines had been laid up in a state of preservation (mothballed) since 1994. They were the only four built out of a planned nine *Upholder*-class that had entered service between 1990 and 1993. Designated as the *Victoria*-class by the Canadian Navy, the namesake of the class was commissioned in Halifax in December 2000. She was followed by HMCS *Windsor* in June 2003, HMCS *Corner Brook* in March 2003 and HMCS *Chicoutimi* in September 2004. The latter submarine suffered a major fire while en route across the Atlantic to Halifax. One officer, Lt (N) Chris Saunders, died as a result of smoke inhalation while fighting this fire. He became the second peacetime casualty in submarines³. Arguably, the *Victoria*-class has given the Navy a better capability than it had with the Oberons. The west coast has a submarine capability of its own again, and the submarines have an excellent operational ability that is being used. The era of nothing but "clockwork mice" tasks seems over.

With the arrival of the *Victoria*-class the era of the Oberons ended. However, two have been preserved as museum ships. *Onondaga* was the first true Canadian boat and had commissioned in the Centennial Year of 1967, so it is fitting that she is preserved. After unsuccessful attempts to bring her to the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, in 2008 she was relocated to the Pointe au Père Historic Site near Rimouski in Québec. She has been restored to a pristine condition and has become a major tourist attraction. *Ojibwa*, the first Canadian Oberon to commission, has also been rescued from the ship-breaker's hands and is now high and dry as a museum submarine on the shores of Lake Erie in Port Burwell, Ontario. Her passage through the Seaway and the Welland canal on a barge in 2012 generated much positive publicity. She is now open to the public as part of the Elgin Military Museum in nearby St Thomas, Ontario. **S**

³ The first was PO2 Verne McLeod killed when a HTP torpedo exploded in HMS *Sidon* in Portland, England on 16 June 1955.



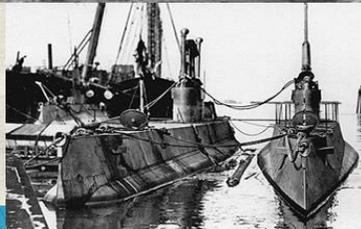


Mark your Calendar for the
Naval Association of Canada
2014 Annual General Meeting and Conference
2-5 October at the Lord Elgin Hotel and
National Arts Centre, Ottawa
(NAC Ottawa will host these events)

Conference Theme (Oct 2, National Arts Centre)

“Submarines: Past, Present
and Future “

Further details to follow





HMCS OTTAWA Keeps the Peace

By Slt Cody Black, HMCS OTTAWA

HMCS OTTAWA last reported her adventures to you in the Spring 2013 edition of *Soundings*. Since that time, OTTAWA has remained a workhorse in the Pacific Fleet, demonstrating her capabilities in several different patrols, exercises and even operational deployment. The ship, her Officers and Crew have been at sea more than they've been home with their families this spring and summer, and they're proud to be able to share their stories and accomplishments here.

When we left off in the last edition, HMCS OTTAWA had just conducted a Fleet Navigating Officer's (FNO) course in her home waters, shortly after returning from Hawaiian waters where she had participated in a US Submarine Commander's Course (SCC). Upon completion of the FNO sail, OTTAWA would enjoy a few short weeks alongside allowing for both rest and relaxation of her Officers and Crew, but also for repair to some of the ship's machinery and equipment. At the end of this period alongside in Esquimalt, OTTAWA looked forward to participating in JOINTEX 2013 and TRIDENT FURY. The overall exercise was a Canadian Armed Forces wide JOINTEX, with TRIDENT FURY designated as the maritime component in the Pacific. This joint exercise, held in different locations from coast to coast, saw OTTAWA deployed in her home waters. The Royal Canadian Air Force and Canadian Army were involved, as OTTAWA carried an air detachment and Sea King helicopter from 443 Squadron in Sidney, B.C., and a platoon of soldiers from the Royal 22nd Regiment from the province of Québec. The exercise saw OTTAWA at her finest as she worked day and night for three weeks with air, land and other sea components to ensure effective interoperability between those groups.

You may recall from the last edition that in the fall of 2012 OTTAWA had set sail for the Eastern Pacific and the waters off of Central and South America, in order to participate in OP CARIBBE, Canada's maritime contribution to the international war on drugs. OTTAWA was successful in seizing over 1,086 Kg of cocaine with an assessed wholesale value of over \$29 Million. For her efforts, OTTAWA's company earned the Operational Service Medal (Expeditionary). This medal was ultimately presented to the deserving sailors at a special ceremony in May of 2013.

Another very important event took place this spring, as the Change of Command ceremony was held in the forenoon on Monday the 3rd of June. The ship's company came to Divisions on the flight deck to say farewell to Commander (Cdr) Scott Van Will and welcome Cdr Julian Barnard as OTTAWA's new Commanding Officer. Cdr Barnard has enjoyed a long and distinguished career in the Royal Canadian Navy, and has now earned the prestigious opportunity to command a Canadian warship. Commodore (Cmdre) Scott Bishop was in attendance, and took the opportunity to recognize and congratulate the ship's company on their accomplishments during OP CARIBBE 2012. As per naval traditions, Cdr Van Will disembarked into a whaler crewed by all the heads of departments. The ship's company gathered on the





quarter deck and cheered as Cdr Van Will was pulled away. The ceremony was followed by a wonderful reception on board.

In addition to Cdr Barnard, the new Command team includes our Executive Officer Lieutenant-Commander (LCdr) Corey Gleason and Coxswain Chief Petty Officer 1st Class (CPO1) Michael Miller. LCdr Gleason has served in OTTAWA before, both as Combat Officer and Senior Naval Communicator. Chief Miller has returned to Esquimalt to serve in OTTAWA, continuing a very long and rewarding career serving Canadians at home and abroad.



OTTAWA's first mission with her new Command team was in familiar waters, as the ship set off once again for the Eastern Pacific and another OP CARIBBE deployment. This deployment would span almost the entire summer sailing season, with port visits in San Diego, USA, Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala and Bahia Malaga, Colombia. We are happy to report that OTTAWA has been successful twice in as many deployments, this time keeping 440 Kg of cocaine from reaching its intended destination. After a fast paced interdiction of a suspect-vessel, OTTAWA was able to secure control of the vessel and search it, ultimately discovering and seizing the cocaine from hidden compartments throughout the boat. Our ship's company is very happy with the results of the mission, and those members who had not participated in last year's OP CARIBBE deployment have now earned their own Operational Service Medals.

HMCS OTTAWA still has plenty of adventure ahead of her in 2013. After enjoying a brief leave period upon completion of OP CARIBBE, OTTAWA has deployed once again to assist in the training of future Fleet Navigators on another FNO sail. This sail will take OTTAWA to port visits in Vancouver and Seattle. Upon completion, the ship will spend a weekend at home before slipping her lines in order to participate in another Task Group Exercise (TGEX). This coming TGEX will see HMCS OTTAWA heading south in consort with HMC Ships REGINA and PROTECTEUR, where she will conduct her port visit in the popular port of San Diego, California. The completion of this TGEX will also mark the beginning of the end of a very long and very busy sailing period for OTTAWA. As the Royal Canadian Navy continues to undertake its Halifax Class Modernization programme, HMCS OTTAWA too, in continuous service since her commissioning in 1996, will have her turn for refit. That time is still several months in the future, however, and in the meantime, HMCS OTTAWA will continue to work hard and to excel in the achievement of her missions at sea and alongside. **S**



Guest Speaker

*Then NAC-O Branch President **Jim Carruthers** presents VAdm (Ret'd) **Ron Buck** with the latest Salty Dips in appreciation for his talk on the Navy League of Canada. **S***





Historic Monument to Canadian Naval Aviation

By Peter Milsom

While serving in 2007 as the UNTD rep on the Ottawa Naval Centennial Committee (later the NCR Canadian Naval 2010 Committee), it became clear that there was not a great deal of focus on naval aviation in the preparation for the big year. After all, with Integration, the Air Force had taken over responsibility for all maritime flying operations and they no longer loomed large in the focus of the Navy.

After expressing my concerns that this important historical component not be overlooked, two things happened: I was dinged to be the Naval Aviation rep on the committee (Captain Bob Duncombe kindly volunteered to take over the UNTD chair) and the Chairman, Captain John Pickford, in discussions in December 2007 with Parks Canada and the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), sought and received approval for a submission to be made asking for formal recognition of the “establishment of the Royal Canadian Naval Air Service.”

After an initial foray was not accepted by the HSMBC, Hampton Gray VC Chapter of the Canadian Naval Air Group took the project on in early 2010 as one of its eleven 2010 Centennial projects. Referencing the vast collection of historical material gathered by Cdr Bud MacLean for his own CNAG centennial project (nominating Canadian Naval Aviation for the prestigious Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame “Belt of Orion” award), and with the strong endorsement and support of John Pickford, Bud MacLean joined me in collaborating on the drafting of the submission to the HSMBC requesting the approval of a national historic site plaque identifying Shearwater as the “Birthplace of Canadian Naval Aviation”. Seemed a straightforward task at the time – but little did we know what we were in for!

It now being 2010, we had to move to the fast track, hoping to get an approval of the submission by the Board in its late fall executive meeting thereby accomplishing a 2010 approval of the historic site. After meetings and a number of exchanges with the Executive Secretary of the Board (HSMBC), not to mention a number of rewrites, the submission was forwarded on 20 July 2010. Nothing was heard from the Board leading to and after the fall meeting and, in late March 2011, our query on the status of the submission was met with a reply on 25 March 2011 from the HSMBC Executive Secretary that the Canadian Naval Aviation Nomination had been approved by the Minister.

The letter received that week from Minister of the Environment, the Honourable Peter Kent, P.C., advised he had “designated Canadian Naval Aviation during the Cold War as a national historic event”. The letter included a copy of the December 2010 minutes of the Board and its decision regarding the submission. While we rejoiced that the Board had approved the submission, the shift from an “historic site” to an “historic event” and the imposed constraint on the historical context to operations during the Cold War only, were very difficult to understand.

This was especially so because the research paper by Kate MacFarlane of the Historical Research Branch of Parks Canada, written to support the submission and which pulled supporting material from a myriad of historical sources including, among others, writings by Jack Beeman, Stu Soward, Keally and Russell, Bruce Forsyth and contributions by noted naval historian Michael Whitby, strongly endorsed, justified and indeed amplified, the full scope of our submission. The constraint, to our dismay, resulted in the exclusion of the accomplishments of Canadian naval pilots during the First World War and eliminated any opportunity to acknowledge WWII naval aviators such as the feats of the Canadian Navy’s only Victoria Cross winner, Lt. Robert Hampton Gray, VC, DSC, MiD, RCNVR.

Although originally seeking an historic site approval, the decision was made by the Board to more appropriately honour the “event” of Canadian Naval Aviation. We understood this shift as it made sense. But we wanted the Board to acknowledge what truly constituted “Canadian Naval Aviation”. It should not be artificially constrained to flying operations taking place in

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Canadian units. Canadian Naval Aviation as an historic event is really comprised of the aggregate skills and accomplishments of Canadians performed in the *naval* environment since the start of Canadian aviation history, as Pilots, as Observers and as Observers Mates.

It is equally comprised of engineers, technicians and maintainers in the naval environment whose knowledge, efforts and skills kept the machines serviceable, operational and in the air. It is comprised of the tangible, broadly-recorded proofs of their accomplishments but, more importantly, it is the efforts and accomplishments of all of these people exercised at the behest of their homeland, Canada, and on its behalf in protecting the national interest, at home and abroad, during conflict. More concisely, it is Canadians engaged in the domain of aviation in the naval environment throughout modern history. *That* is the Canadian Naval Aviation we were seeking to celebrate and acknowledge. Regrettably, that is also the historical record of which Canadians are largely unaware.

Even though most did not serve with a Canadian unit in the World Wars, Canadian naval aviators and their technical support teams did have a profound and lasting impact even apart from their personal exploits and accomplishments. As Ms. MacFarlane's research paper stated, quoting Dana Johnson. "*With the establishment of the Royal Canadian Naval Air Service (RCNAS), the foundations of a domestic air force had been established.*" She goes on to state, "*Canada's current air force may be said to trace its beginnings to the final months of the First World War when a pioneer military body of short duration, the Royal Canadian Naval Air Service, was founded. Modest in accomplishments, this organization represents the first official establishment of a Canadian aerial force.*"

As many of the WWI naval aviators joined the RCAF and RAF, (in a number of cases rising to overall command of the RCAF or the RAF or senior commanding positions in WWII) and many of the Canadian Naval Aviation personnel who served in RN units in WWII joined the RCN Fleet Air Arm and Naval Air Branch after the war, the impact of Canadian Naval Aviation on the Canadian defence effort of the Cold War was explicit and real.

Similarly, the impacts of these personnel moving into research and development, into the domestic defence and commercial aviation industry and into strategic and operational planning and training development during the Cold War are also far too significant to be discounted as meaningless or without impact. A high proportion of Commanding Officers at sea in RCN warships during the Cold War were also naval aviators. Little of this factual record is known by Canadians.

The original text proposed for the plaque by Parks Canada, without reference to the original submitter, focused entirely on the Cold War. Canadian Naval Aviation, however, did not start in the Cold War. The original submission highlighted but a few of the extraordinary honours and achievements of Canadian naval aviators in WWI: i.e. of all the major navies of the allied world, a Canadian naval aviator was the first to attack a submarine from the air, was the first naval aviator in the world to become an ace (1916) and was the first ever pilot of any nation to score five victories or more. Fifty-three Canadian naval pilots became aces in WWI. Also in the First World War, the most successful *naval* pilot of the War was a Canadian. Kate MacFarlane's research paper provided very considerable endorsement and amplification of this record.

It is a fact that there was a Canadian Naval Air Service, albeit short-lived, in the First World War. That was a clear expression of intent by the Government of Canada to establish a naval aviation capability for the country. The end of the War prompting its demise as a fledgling service and the fact that for most of the war Canadian Naval aviation personnel wore the uniform of the RNAS does not obviate their record and their achievements as Canadian Naval Aviators. The fact that the RNAS was absorbed into the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) and then subsequently into the Royal Air Force (RAF) did not result in British historians declaring that the RNAS did not happen. Of greater import, these were not British achievements that we are asking to be publicly recognized -- they were Canadian achievements. Red Mulock and Raymond Collishaw and company are not conspicuously celebrated in England. If we do not acknowledge and celebrate





the accomplishments of these and other intrepid Canadian naval aviators and their teams in the interests of their country, who will?

Much in history has been accepted as fact on far less than empirical evidence. The record of the War of 1812 has been substantially rewritten to remove the biases exercised by the observers of that conflict. Much of what is accepted as historically true in this world is derived from "custom and usage" which makes it an acceptable truth, not an empirical fact. This notwithstanding, the truth of the claim in this case lies primarily in the reports of objective observers, in the writings of a number of respected historians and researchers and in the experiences of the people who were there, who actually participated and were personally involved in the events. The constraint to the Cold War period for this acknowledgement made no sense to us but though we queried the constraint at length, the Board's decision remained firm.

The next hurdle came with the negotiation of the text of the historic plaque. Peter Kent's March 2011 letter to us advised that "Preparations for a plaque unveiling ceremony entail discussions with you and other interested parties regarding the plaque text..." On 6 July 2011, we received a message from Parks Canada in Nova Scotia advising of the chosen text for the plaque in the complete absence of any discussion with the authors of the submission. After a number of exchanges, our concern expressed to the HSMBC regarding what we saw as the excessive narrowness of scope of the text was acknowledged in the fall of 2011 and we were invited to submit our own recommended text constrained to the original 622 spaces.

Our HSMBC liaison was not available to us until early March, 2012 and after a meeting we received our guidelines regarding space constraints for the plaque, a requirement to not contradict the intent stated by the Board's approval and a requirement to produce a text that was compatible with the Board's approach to its script. A flurry of exchanges between the authors, with the active assistance of Paul Baiden, National Chairman of CNAG (and fellow NAC-O member), accomplished this task within one week and it was submitted on 12 March, 2012. Our text submission was circulated to a number of HSMBC historians and advisors and the revised text was to be presented for approval to the Board in its December meeting.

We received a letter dated 22 August, 2012 advising that the text had been circulated to the Directorate of History and Heritage of the Department of National Defence to review. The feedback provided was that the Directorate "felt that some of the claims are probably true but hard to substantiate." We were therefore asked to substantiate and justify our use of the phrase "Through the extraordinary honours and achievements of the two world wars" by explaining exactly how these did have an impact on the Cold War period. Secondly, we were asked to provide the sources to confirm that Canada's Anti-Submarine force was "second to none in the Western World." A five page document with two comprehensive annexes were sent on 25 October, 2012 to address these issues along with a third annex providing three variations to the plaque text for the consideration of the Board.

On 21 November we received an amended text for the plaque for review and with two or three minor word change suggestions we achieved an agreed text by 23 November that was submitted, along with our original text, and the full final text justification and version suggestions, to the Board for approval during its December meeting. The final text emerged as follows:

Canadian Naval Aviation during the Cold War

During the Cold War, naval aviation and carrier operations were vital to Canada's security at home and abroad. Drawing on the achievements of the two world wars, this fully integrated aviation team matured into one of the best anti-submarine forces in the Western World, delivering highly capable aircraft to combat the threats of the day in support of NATO and NORAD. Naval engineers also developed the ingenious "Beartrap" haul-down system, which allowed large helicopters to operate from small ships at sea. Adopted by other navies, this helicopter/destroyer "marriage" became the international identity of the Canadian navy.





We had been advised as early as 2011 that the plaque unveiling ceremony would take place in Halifax in the summer of 2013. We waited anxiously, month by month throughout the spring of 2013, for word that the Minister had approved the event. Tentative plans were made over the fall of 2012 and into 2013 to collaborate with the Sea King 50th Anniversary celebrations to be held in Halifax and Shearwater at the end of July. In June, with the expected time for the HSMBC event rapidly approaching and with nothing being heard by the Nova Scotia Parks Canada staff of the Minister approving the ceremony, things became tense.

Colonel (Ret'd) John Cody, an ex-Shearwater Base Commander who was spear heading the Sea King 50th Anniversary Committee and who was a strong supporter of the CNAG initiative, asked one of the ex-Sea King navigators, Erin O'Toole now MP for Durham, Ontario, to intervene to rescue the program. Mr. O'Toole not only cleared the log jam at Parks Canada, he volunteered to be in Nova Scotia to participate in the unveiling ceremony.

Thanks largely to the extraordinary efforts of these two prominent naval aviators, and to the generosity of the Sea King 50th Anniversary project team, the ceremony was saved. The Nova Scotia Parks Canada team of Theresa Bunbury and Alicia Brett also provided great support against difficult odds as the ceremony became a reality. Catherine Cournoyer, Inscription Co-ordinator and Julie Dompierre, Director Commemorations Branch of Heritage/Parks Canada in Ottawa were particularly helpful in the submission and approval process.

In all, a long and complicated process spanning five years of effort was required to make this historical acknowledgement a reality. If the reader refers to the article in the current *Starshell* that contains the detailed submission to the HSMBC, it will immediately become clear why the authors were moved to ensure this formal historical testimony recognized more than just the Cold War. The history and contributions of Canadian Naval Aviation, spanning a large portion of the first century of the Canadian Navy, is a story that needs to be told to, and be recognized by Canadians everywhere. **S**



Unveiling of the plaque on the Grand Parade in Halifax. L to R: Captain Peter Milsom, Mr. Erin O'Toole, Cdr Bud MacLean, Dr. David Sutherland, HSMBC representative.





Sea Memories – Part Six

By Jake Freill

We mourn the loss of Jake Freill earlier this year. Part One of Jake’s memoir was published in the Spring 2011 edition of Soundings, with subsequent parts in succeeding editions. When we left him, Jake’s command, HMCS Iroquois, was berthed in New York in July 1976, and expecting visitors. Look for Part 7 in the next Soundings.

That evening *Iroquois* hosted a reception on board that went very well. To give some of the stewards a break we had volunteers from the ship’s company act as waiters for the reception, and that worked so well that we continued that policy for all future receptions.

The next morning when the Secretary of the US Navy, J. William Middendorf, came up the brow and was greeted by Admiral Boyle, Ambassador Jake Warren and myself, he asked to be taken directly to the engine room. But, but, but, I tried to interrupt him but he would have none of it. When he finished looking at the engine room he said that of the 236 engine rooms he has visited *Iroquois*’ was the cleanest and asked me to muster all the “snipes”, as he called the stokers, so that he could present them with his Golden Snipe Award.

That was accomplished but he was now 20 minutes over his time when he decided that he next wanted to see the galley. Another five or more minutes and he still hadn’t seen the Beartrap. The Admiral told me that he wouldn’t have time to go to the flight deck. But sir, “I promised”. “Forget it”, was his reply. Just then I interrupted the Secretary and said I want to show him the Beartrap before he left the ship.

Against the strong objections of his staff he agreed and up we went to the flight deck where the Air Officer Goose McLennan and the air department gave a demonstration of the Beartrap operation.



Secretary Middendorf viewing the Beartrap demo



US Secretary of the Navy J.W. Middendorf presenting Golden Snipe Award

I also explained to him what USN Captain Sigmond had told me. [See Part 5.] He was very interested and stayed and asked several questions. His schedule was completely thrown off by his extended visit to *Iroquois* and I heard about it later, but I kept my promise. It was to pay off later in the year.

On July 6th we landed a 50-man marching contingent as part of a mammoth street parade with contingents from 30 other navies. The march ended at City Hall where they heard Mayor Abraham Beame read a proclamation hailing the celebrations as the “most magnificent and glorious display of maritime splendor in this century”. The *Iroquois* platoon with the Canadian flag flying got the loudest cheers from the crowds. When the sailors returned to the ship they said the





cheers made them feel very proud to be Canadian.

After leaving New York on the 7th I heard from Commodore Martin and Admiral Train. Martin wrote that “all were impressed with the smartness of the ship and the quiet efficiency of your officers and men. I came away with the knowledge that you have a good handle on it and I believe the same was conveyed to Secretary of the Navy and Ambassador Warren. The Ambassador was most impressed with his tour and has waxed eloquent on it ever since”. Admiral Train, then Commander Sixth Fleet, wrote to say thanks allowing him to view the INR from *Iroquois* “rather than the madhouse on *Forrestal*. A fringe benefit was the opportunity to look over your fine ship. I must admit to a twinge of jealousy over many of the capabilities which you possess and which my ships lack. I was equally impressed with the relaxed competence and confidence of your crew. After 27 years of observing ships, it is not difficult to distinguish the champion professionals from the also-rans and the amateurs.”

Jim Crist wrote; “Whatever I may have done for you has been returned in kind-chiefly in knowing that you have not forgotten; and would think enough of those early days as to wish me to join an event which proved to be one of the most memorable experiences of my lifetime”.

We arrived back in Halifax on the 9th where Jim Crist, Barry and his friend left the ship. We had carried a number of sea cadets and family members of the crew and they also left when we got back.

On the 10th we were back at sea on a Fishery Patrol off south eastern Nova Scotia, not as exciting as on the Grand Banks. Not many fishing vessels but lots of fog and fishing buoys to avoid. The OOWs had to be on their toes at all times. During the patrol we visited Roseway Bank, then Baccaro Bank and finally Brown’s Bank. The problems we had on some of those banks were with the Americans and to a lesser extent the Canadians. But there were no significant incidents while we were there.

Thank God that the Montreal Olympics started while we were out there so we were kept from getting too bored by watching some of the events on the ship’s TVs. We returned to Halifax on the 20th and sailed again on the 27th. Peter and Norman, who now had his sea legs, decided to sail with me again when we headed out on what was called a Cantac Patrol. In fact we were sent to protect a very important transatlantic cable that the Department of External Affairs thought the Russians may try to damage or break. This cable carried all the Olympic Games transmissions to Europe. So for one week we ran up and down the cable looking for any vessel that came anywhere near it. We didn’t see any but External Affairs thanked us for looking after it. While we were out there we had a volleyball and golf tournament. The volleyball games were played in the hangar and the golf was played on 2 decks within the ship using sonobuoy tubes to get down to the lower level of the course.

We arrived back in Halifax on August 1st. and remained alongside till September 13th, so everyone who wanted leave got some. I forget where we in my family camped but it was either to PEI or Kejimikujik National Park. During this period the *Iroquois* was host ship for the Italian Naval Training Ship “*Amerigo Vespucci*”. This was a lovely old large sailing ship with a few hundred cadets onboard. A reception was held in *Stadacona* and Leonne, Shirley and I were invited to a formal dinner onboard in Captain Roberto Palombrieri’s cabin. It was an evening to remember. Something like dining in the *Victory* if you can imagine that.

We sailed for Quebec City on the 13th and arrived there on Wednesday, the 15th. The Harbour Master wanted to jam me in between two Russian merchant ships, but I was having none of it and got him to move me to a better berth, which he reluctantly did. So we ended up at Pier 102 Anse Aux Foulon (Wolfe’s Cove). We were in Quebec to act as a base for the Governor General’s reception and lunches. That was because the GG’s residence in La Citadelle had been damaged by a fire earlier.

The arrival of His Excellency, Governor General Gilles Leger and Mrs. Leger on the following day at 1215 marked the beginning of a 3-day period of excitement, hard work and long hours for the officers and men in the ship.





During the visit The Governor General and Mrs. Leger hosted five different functions on board. At noon that day The Governor General lunched privately with Premier Robert Bourassa.

After lunch I was called to my cabin and asked by the GG if I could show the Premier the ship. I obliged and after about 30 minutes the tour ended in the Operations Room where I had previously arranged to have the CCS 280 system up and running and all positions manned. With Mr. Bourassa by my side we took him through a simulated anti-submarine war scenario. Part way through the demo he said that he was glad that I was the Captain and not him. He then informed me that he must leave because he had to meet with Mr. Rockefeller of the Chase Manhattan Bank in Montreal.

He said that he had to renegotiate the loan for the James Bay project. I believe that was the LG2 project and that the workers there were on strike at the time, costing the Quebec government millions of dollars a day. He also said that Mr. Rockefeller may insist that I get a new mandate from the people before the loan can be renegotiated. It was a few days later that Premier Bourassa declared that there would be a provincial election in November. We, of course, know that the separatist party, the *Partie Québécois*, under René Lévesque won that election. I wonder if Mr. Rockefeller knew that his request may have given the separatists what they had been hoping for, a chance to form the government and to eventually try to lead the province out of the Canadian Federation.

That evening the GG held a reception on board for approximately 300 guests. Over half of those guests were Quebec recipients of the Order of Canada. I got a chance to talk to Peter Price who was managing the Chateau Frontenac and told him that I was staying in his hotel with Leonne for the duration of the visit. The reception was an outstanding success and when Leonne and I eventually got back to the hotel we found a basket of fruit and a note from Peter saying that if we wanted to change rooms for a better view to let him know in the morning. This we did and ended up in a nicer room with a view of the river and at no extra cost.

At noon the next day the GG held a private luncheon in the wardroom for about 40 guests which included political, Jean Lesage; military, BGEN Michaud; and education representatives, Larkin Kerwin, the Principal of Laval University; and their spouses. Cardinal Roy also attended. Leonne was also invited. I had one of the ship's officer's sit at each table. As expected the lunch went very well. There was a second reception that night for just as many guests as the night before again with many Order of Canada recipients. As we did in New York, we had no problem getting volunteers from the ship's company to act as stewards.

The following morning Iroquois became the first Canadian Navy ship to hold a Canadian Citizenship Ceremony on board when the Governor General presented 21 new Canadians with their citizenship papers. The Regional Director sent a thank you message on behalf of the presiding judge, Hélène Baillargeon Cote. "It was a great event and a complete success."

The Regal party left the ship at noon Saturday and we then opened it to visitors both Saturday and Sunday afternoons. I was disappointed with the low number of visitors on Saturday so on Sunday morning I had 2 of the junior officers call every radio and television station in the city and ask them to announce that one of Canada's most modern guided missile destroyers, built in the province, would be open to visitors that afternoon and that there was no charge. We encouraged them to come with their families. It worked because we had nearly 10,000 people show up.

Leonne and I took the opportunity to invite all our Quebec friends to lunch on Sunday. With the party in full swing I got a call from the RCMP that Mrs. Leger wanted to show her grandchildren the ship and was on her way down. After looking around I asked her if she would like to meet some of my Quebec friends and she joined the party and had a great time talking to my guests. In turn our guests were thrilled to meet and talk with her. **S**

Look for Part Seven in the next Soundings.





**CERTIFICATE OF
APPRECIATION
Bravo Zulu**

**CERTIFICAT
D'APPRECIATION
Bravo Zulu**



NAC Ottawa Branch

For outstanding teamwork and commitment in promoting the RCN's contributions to the nation and raising the prominence of the Battle of the Atlantic within the greater Ottawa community, by conceiving, planning and flawlessly executing the inaugural Ottawa Battle of the Atlantic Gala Dinner. The Ottawa Branch established a new standard for celebrating the RCN as a national institution and commemorating its historic achievements, while pioneering an approach that seamlessly blends advocacy and strategic engagement through the bonds of community friendship.

IN RECOGNITION OF
OUTSTANDING
SERVICES
TO THE ROYAL
CANADIAN
NAVY

EN RECONNAISSANCE
DE SERVICES ÉMINENTS
RENDUS AU
SEIN DE LA MARINE
ROYALE CANADIENNE

*Commandant de la Marine royale canadienne
Vice-amiral*

*Paul Maddison, CMM, MSM, CD
Vice-Admiral*

Dated this 2nd day of March 2013

Commander Royal Canadian Navy

En date du 2 mai 2013

This is the Certificate of Appreciation and Bravo Zulu presented to the Naval Association of Canada – Ottawa by **Vice-Admiral Paul Maddison**, Commander Royal Canadian Navy, in recognition of the highly successful, NAC-O-organized Battle of the Atlantic Gala on 2 May 2013, among other initiatives supporting the Navy.

The **2014 Gala** will take place at the Canadian War Museum on the evening of **Thursday, May 1st.**

Mark your calendars now!



VAdm Maddison presenting the certificate to then-NAC-O Branch President Jim Carruthers.





Remember

By Pat Barnhouse



Active Members

Glenn Harry BROWN, Captain(P) (Colonel), OMM, CD**, RCN(Ret'd). In Kingston 27/07/13 at 76.

Charles Edward DOUCET. In Ottawa 23/05/13 at 78.

Gerald George FREILL, Commander, CD*, RCN(Ret'd). In Ottawa 01/05/13 at 79.

Harold Richard TILLEY, Captain(N), CD**, RCN(Ret'd). In Ottawa 27/06/13 at 90.

Victor Jura WILGRESS, Captain(P), CD*, RCN(Ret'd). In Ottawa 31/07/13 at 92.

Others Known to Members

John David CAMPBELL, Petty Officer, CD, RCN(Ret'd). In Ottawa 27/06/13 at 82.

Claude Edmond LaCHANCE, Chief Petty Officer 1st Class, CD, RCN(Ret'd). In Ottawa 08/09/13 at 50.

Joseph Paul Emile POTVIN, Chief Petty Officer, CD, RCN(Ret'd). In Ottawa 25/05/13 at 82.

Roger R. RICHARDSON, Lieutenant Commander(Ret'd), CD**. In Ottawa 30/03/13 at 64.

Frederick Henry SHERWOOD, Lieutenant Commander, DSC*, RCNVR(Ret'd). In Ottawa 14/05/13 at 98 (Former Member). **S**





The Ovlov Saga

By Richard Archer

Did I ever tell you the story of the Archer acquisition of a 2002 Volvo in Brussels? Marilyn and I were within a couple of years of departing NATO HQ, and thought we'd take advantage of the Belgian duty free process to buy a new car. We had heard from some fellow Canadians that the Volvo company handled all the details in stride. When the time came to depart Belgium, one just left the car with them and as part of the purchase price they shipped it to Canada and handled all the customs and other details. All we needed to do on arrival home would be to pay some residual Canadian tax based on the then-current book value of the car and claim the keys. It was a very good deal and we went for it. And in concert with the family predilection for giving everything names, we called the car Ovlov.

Before we had left Ottawa for Brussels in 1997, the car we were driving was a 1990 Honda Accord EX-R (I'll spare you the family name). Before 1997, Marilyn and I had spent two years at NATO HQ, with me in uniform on the International Military Staff, and we had managed to ship the Honda over and back in the same containers as our other personal belongings. So we knew that it was a great car on the European highways. And in 1997 we knew as well that I'd need to use a car to drive to and from NATO HQ every work day. So for the new job at NATO the idea was to ship the Honda over again, and once there buy a second smaller car that I'd use principally for commuting.

As an aside, concerning the Honda we believe it had more sea time than an AB. Most of the original parts presumably came across to Canada over the

Pacific...and we shipped it across the Atlantic three times. When the time came at the very end of our second time in Brussels in 2004, we had purchased Ovlov and so didn't want to take the Honda home with us. But we didn't have much hope in selling a 14-year-old Canadian-spec Japanese car on the local market, even if it had been slightly upgraded with Belgian requirements for a fog light and additional safety equipment, and had passed every roadworthiness inspection – a tense and universally hated annual drama called *Contrôle technique* in French or *Autokeuring* in Flemish. But one day towards the end, with Ovlov somewhere westbound in mid-Atlantic, we were shopping for one more Belgian memento in the Brussels suburb of Waterloo (of Battle fame), and on return to the Honda a flyer was under a wiper asking if we were looking to sell the car. We contacted the telephone number, and it turned out to be a group of who appeared to be Algerians. They liked the car, with the only stipulation that it had to have air conditioning. These negotiations all occurred, of course, in French, so we were a little nervous as to what we had agreed to. But we turned the car over to them the day before we departed Brussels in exchange for the proper sales documentation and 1000 euros in cash. So we think that our intrepid Honda-the-Sailor added some extra sea time across the Mediterranean to North Africa. And maybe she's still going strong.



The Honda at the Vimy Memorial in France





But back to 1997: in January I departed Ottawa to start my new job as a civilian on the NATO International Staff, but Marilyn had to stay behind in order to sell the house in Nepean. Luckily I found some temporary accommodation within walking distance of NATO HQ, but one of my tasks was to purchase the small car that would be the adjunct to the Honda once Marilyn and it came over.

I approached the car purchase with some trepidation. In the HQ there was a separate office that handled internal registration and sales transactions. Belgian authorities allowed non-Belgian HQ employees like me to purchase a car from a fellow employee without the 21% VAT being applied. Such cars registered under this regime sported different-coloured license plates than the ordinary Belgian cars. (The foreigners working for the many European Union institutions in Belgium had yet another plate colour scheme.) This was also the office where we purchased the cheap tax-free petrol coupons for use at any Belgian Fina station – we paid less for gas in Belgium than we did in Canada.

I had been warned to be careful of the two guys who ran the office. While they did indeed do all the paperwork associated with registration and issued you the plates, they also had a side business where they flipped cars they perceived to be undervalued. So if they offered to buy the car from you, you probably weren't asking enough....

Regardless, I responded to a sales notice pinned to the notice board and acquired from another staff officer a 1995 Opel Corsa – five-door and five-on-the-floor. This was a great little car that served us very well right up to the time Ovlov came on the scene. When that time came, I had no trouble selling the Corsa to another HQ staff officer.

But eventually the time came to think about a duty-free car that we could take home with us back to Canada. As mentioned, we settled on a Volvo – an automatic, four-door S60 2.4T sedan with a number of bells and whistles, plus what Volvo called the luxury package – heated and power leather seats and the like. Very nice! We dealt with a salesman named Pascal Bell, who handled all sales to non-Belgians and who was therefore well-known to the Canadian community.

The car was assembled in the town of Ghent, just to the west of Brussels, but had to be built to Canadian specs. This turned out to be no problem. When the car was delivered to us we looked for and found the Canadian Inspector's maple leaf insignia on a door jamb.

But as it happened, that delivery was delayed by a month. Apparently, our car had to be sent back to the factory. Uh oh...not exactly a red flag, but perhaps an amber one. But at last we took delivery of Ovlov and drove it home. We loved it!

A few weeks later, our two daughters were visiting and one Saturday we decided to mount an expedition just across the German border to the town of Aachen, where the shopping was felt to be superior. As I left the driveway and was driving down our street I felt a problem in the shifting of the transmission. It was serious enough that we aborted the expedition, and I took Ovlov in to the Volvo dealer as soon as I could. They checked the car over but could find no problem. In any case, they re-booted the electronics associated with the transmission and pronounced the car to be as fit as a fiddle. And sure enough, Ovlov seemed to be acting normally again.

Then a month or so later, we were visited by Marilyn's brother Ernie Cable, and his wife Carol. I had some leave and we had a great trip planned. First we would drive Ovlov to the walled medieval town of Rothenburg, in Germany. Next we would stay at the town of Garmisch-Partenkirchen in the foothills of the German Alps, including a visit to the fairy-tale-like castle of *Neuschwanstein*, and to Oberammergau, the home of painted houses and a famous passion play once every ten years. Following that we would drive via Innsbruck, Austria and over the Brenner Pass (1375 m, 4511 ft) in the Tyrolean Alps down to Venice. After a couple of days in Venice we would make our way to the Lucca, Pisa and Florence area in Tuscany, Italy. Enroute home use the 17 km Gotthard Tunnel and would stay in the small town of Vitznau on the north shore of the Lake of the Four Cantons, or *Vierwaldstättersee*, in Switzerland, so as to visit Lucerne.

A great plan, but unfortunately it was one that didn't pan out as hoped.





Marilyn, Richard, Carol and Ernie in front of Neuschwanstein Castle

The first sign of trouble occurred in Garmisch. Once again Ovlov's transmission shifting was all wrong. While Ern and Carol explored the city, Marilyn and I took Ovlov out to the nearest Volvo dealer, some ways out of town. The problem with the transmission seemed to diminish with driving, so by the time we got to the dealer, the mechanic couldn't find anything wrong. Okay, the visits to Oberammergau and the castle went without problem, and back on the road two days later we got across the Brenner Pass and made our way down to Venice.

My boss in NATO HQ was a retired Italian Navy captain. He had used his connections with the admiral in Rome, who was the chair of the NATO Naval Armaments Group, to arrange the difficult-to-make room reservations at the naval officers mess on Venice's main island. He had also given me a letter in beautiful Italian to present to the *Capitano del Porto* (ie, the Coast Guard's port captain) to allow me to park free in the Coast Guard's compound.

We arrived at the gate of the compound but couldn't get the gate to open for us, so I parked in an empty area across the road. I walked over to the gate and managed to talk my way in and proceeded to the nearby guardhouse. I showed the letter to the petty officer...and began to be treated like visiting royalty. Yes, they would be honoured for us to park there.

In the meantime, Marilyn saw what looked like a member of the port police approaching.

She dug out her English-Italian dictionary. "Quickly, what's the Italian word for 'husband'?" After a few questions and Marilyn's references to the *Capitano del Porto*, the policeman was evidently satisfied and left them alone. I returned to the car and drove into the compound through the now wide-open gate.

Once I had parked, a leading seaman who had helped me in the guardhouse came over and offered to help with the luggage. He had no English and our Italian was minuscule, but we seemed to communicate okay. I asked him the way to the *terminale di vaporetto*. Having looked at the map earlier, I believed I knew the way, but wanted to make sure. It wasn't far, a block or two. The guy immediately leapt into action. He flagged down a passing city bus, bundled the four of us and our luggage onto it, and yelled instructions at the driver. Great! We recognized the destination *terminale* when we saw it, without having paid any fare got off at the right stop, and engaged in inescapable negotiations with the *vaporetto* ticket seller. He recognized us as tourists, of course, and wanted to sell us a three-day pass or at least a *biglietto andata e ritorno*. But all we wanted was a one-way ticket to the stop we knew was closest to the officers mess so as to keep our options open...and we also wanted to ensure that the *vaporetto* we caught was the one that used the *Canal Grande*.

This all came to pass and we steamed down the Grand Canal, under the Rialto Bridge. We suggested that Ern and Carol go up to the bow to see the passing panorama, and they did so. While they were gone Marilyn and I moved all the luggage to the boarding area for ease of disembarkation. When Ern and Carol returned from the bow, they initially couldn't find us,





which must have given them a turn. But it all worked out and on arrival we had to walk only a short distance, but over three or four steep, picturesque bridges, to the officers mess, which is located just outside the two pillars which mark the canal entrance to the *arsenale navale*.

The two days in Venice went by all too quickly. Marilyn and I have one abiding memory I'd like to share with you. The first morning I went down from our comfortable room to the ground floor to check out the breakfast arrangements, and found it to be a tiny cup of thick coffee along with a *biscotti* or two. The Italian naval officers were all standing at the main bar, where the morning coffee was served, gearing themselves up for the day. Hmm, other arrangements seemed necessary for us Canadians. The four of us headed out the front door and down to the main lagoon front, where we found a small café with outdoor tables overlooking the lagoon, its islands and the nearby canals. A light shower was just finishing, and we sat there enjoying our croissants, yogurts and a milder version of Italian coffee, while Venice came to life around us. The bustle started from next to none but rose to full pitch. Among the arresting sights, we saw the iconic boatman in his open motor boat heading out on business, holding a black umbrella over his head.

On the last morning Ern and I went to the office to pay the bill. It came to 10 euros each for each of the two nights – a total of 20 euros.

On arrival back at the *Capitano del Porto*, I started Ovlov, but a dashboard warning light came on with the message “DO NOT DRIVE CAR”. What now?

The guardhouse sailors graciously let me use their telephone to call the Volvo trouble number. I arranged for Volvo to send a tow truck to take us to the nearest dealer, which turned out to be in the town of Mestre on the mainland. The truck duly arrived and loaded Ovlov on its flat bed. Marilyn and Carol crowded into the cab with the driver while Ern and I sat in Ovlov on the back, maintaining our dignity. We got to the dealer about 11 am, and fortunately the head guy spoke English. One of the younger mechanics gestured me into Ovlov's passenger seat and asked for the key. He took us into the car storage lot, lined up in one of the lanes between the rows of cars and jammed his foot to the floor. We braked sharply at the end of the row and turned up another to head back. He did the same, again applying the brakes just in time. Finally he turned to me, looked me in the eye as I started breathing again and said, “You gotta bigga problem.”

I went through about an hour and a half of back and forth telephone discussion with Volvo and our home dealership in Brussels. But 12:30 arrived, and in concert with all retail and other businesses in Italy, the dealership shut down and shuttered for lunch. Fortunately, we could see a small shopping mall a block or so away; we headed over there and found a restaurant. The dealership opened again at 4 pm, and I finalized the arrangements – just in time as the foreman was getting upset at his burgeoning phone bill. Volvo offered to fly us home, but I insisted that we continue the trip. Ovlov would be left with the dealership, while a taxi would take us to the local airport where a suitably large rental car for four adults and luggage would be waiting for us.

The taxi was an adventure. At times it hit 170 km/hr. Marilyn was sitting in the middle seat in the back where there wasn't any seat belt.

A problem was that Venice's Marco Polo airport was brand new – it had opened officially literally the day before, and the taxi driver didn't have a clue as to where to go. But eventually we found our way to the car rental desk – and not entirely unexpectedly the lady behind the desk hadn't heard of any requisition from Volvo for us. More phone calls to Brussels, and I put the lady on the phone. It was classic – “Fax?”, she asked, raising her eyebrows, and turned to a pile of paper, finding Volvo's fax as the top document. More negotiations ensued, this time as to the size of the vehicle.

The vehicle we finally found in the rental car parking garage was a diesel, standard-shift van-type. Fine! We loaded in the luggage and headed out. Next stop, Lucca!

We found the right *autostrada*, obstructed only by a car on fire that held us up for a while and by a heavy hail storm that we worried would damage the van. Night descended. The highway to Tuscany crossed the backbone of Italy, the Apennines, which were a series of sharp ridges





interspersed with deep valleys. So the *autostrada* was a series of tunnels joined by high bridges over the valleys. Okay, but a problem was that while the bridges were three-lane in one direction, the tunnels were only two. And the two lanes of the tunnels were always aligned with the left-hand two lanes of the bridge.

The many trucks would inevitably move over to the far right hand lane on a bridge, but when a tunnel approached they would move over to the centre lane without so much of a by-your-leave. So we would be forced over into the far left lane...but this too was a problem. This was night time, so periodically an Italian with a death-wish would pass us going 200 km/hr. Being forced over by a truck would put you in their way. Looking in the rear view mirror did no good, because even though nothing could be seen, as soon as you went to move over they would appear out of nowhere, angrily flashing their lights.

After this adventure and some wrong turns in the dark, we found our way to our B&B outside Lucca. What followed was a great introduction to Tuscany, the medieval walls and buildings of Lucca, the leaning tower of Pisa and by local train to the spiritual architecture of Florence.

From Italy, the rest of the trip went off without a hitch. Home in Brussels, we turned in the Italian rental car, picked up a Volvo loaner from our dealer, and saw Ern and Carol to the airport. We heard from the Brussels dealer that the Volvo dealer in Mestre was refusing to do any repairs. To tell the truth, I shrugged my shoulders – I knew Volvo would fix it.

A week or so later I was back at work and Marilyn received a knock at the door. She could see Ovlov on the flat bed of a tow truck out on the street. The driver spoke no English but indicated that he was there from Italy to deliver the car. Marilyn got out a city map and showed him the complicated way to our Volvo dealer, through a series of roundabouts and one-way village streets to the dealership in an adjoining suburb. The driver evidently arrived okay, because we soon received a call from the dealer that the front wheel drive and transmission had to be completely replaced – about a week's work.

In due course, we got Ovlov back in one piece, and even though my attuned senses picked up some previously unheard squeaks every time the car was stopped, they eventually dissipated.

But the saga wasn't quite over. On our return to Brussels I wrote a letter to Volvo Sweden to complain about our car's performance and the inconvenience, disappointment, embarrassment, etc. it had put us through. We really didn't trust Ovlov at this point in time and

we wanted a new car! Volvo placated us with paying for two nights in a hotel anywhere, which wasn't too hard to take. We knew we weren't going to get a new car out of them. So we found a very nice hotel in Paris on the left bank, in the middle of what we were hoping to see and visit. We wished Ern and Carol were there to share in the bounty, but a very pleasant weekend ensued.

As it turned out our confidence in Ovlov returned over time, and we continue to drive it to this day. Ovlov is still going strong. **S**

Ovlov and friend, today





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Naval Association of Canada - Ottawa

Membership Directory

A Directory is enclosed with each autumn 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. Please advise your Membership Chair, **Steve King**, of changes to your email address. When email 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 NAC - Ottawa programs and activities, trends and other matters of interest to its members. This and previous editions are 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.

Submissions by email (preferred), telephone, mail, fax, CD or memory stick are welcome. Electronic document files should be converted to WORD format before transmission to the Editor. Images should be in jpeg format. Please remove all automatic formatting!

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