

# the Ensign



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Winter 2010-2011



The River-class destroyer HMCS *St. Laurent* presents a lonely silhouette during WWII.

(DND Photo NP-22)

Newsletter of the Naval Museum of Alberta Society

# The President's Bridge

By Earle Shirley

## MANY GOOD WISHES FOR A HAPPY & HEALTHY NEW YEAR!

Your Society has been very active since last year's AGM. Our volunteers remain fully engaged supporting the museum in a number of ways, such as watchkeepers and artefact restorers. Through their great work, we have seen the unveiling of some significant new displays — the Enigma Machine and the new attack periscope. Your volunteer Board has also been very active.

Last year you asked your Board to look into finding a more suitable place to display the Korean War Monument. I am pleased to report that significant progress has been made in that regard, mostly due to the efforts of your Vice-President, Greg McKenzie. There are a number of choices: leave it where it is at **Tecumseh**; on the grounds of The Military Museums (TMM); on Canada Land's property at the old Curry Barracks; or on Memorial Drive, east of the Calgary Curling Club next to the navy mast. The old navy mast, which was next to the monument at **Tecumseh**, was recently sold to the Poppy Fund and now stands at the Memorial Drive location. We are waiting for a letter in response to some questions we have posed before a decision is made.

With the wind up of the Calgary Military Museums Society (CMMS), activities at TMM, CMMS was looking for office space, so NMA stepped up and offered space for them. CMMS has graciously picked up a number of operating costs for us. Speaking of operating costs, we have also been able to offset some of those costs by allowing the Cadet organizations, formerly housed in an old ATCO trailer at **Tecumseh**, to operate out of our building. The Navy League and Sea Cadet Corps have done a tremendous job renovating their new office spaces, which I hope will serve them for a long time.

Another significant achievement affects both the Burgess Library and the Macpherson Archives, both of which are in the process of being turned over to the University of Calgary's Military and Strategic Studies Library located within TMM, in order for professional librarians and archivists to handle this material. Not only will this increase accessibility, but eventually this material will be put onto the University's library catalogue system and digitized, so researchers and students around the world will have access to these collections. TMM maintains a climate controlled environment ensuring these valuable collec-

tions will be properly preserved for posterity.

Another significant undertaking involves the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Society and the Naval Museum of Canada, of which the Naval Museum of Alberta (NMA) is a part. This MOU will form the foundation of a strong working relationship between the NMA and the Society outlining the important roles and responsibilities of both parties to ensure the long term sustainability of the NMA.

Finally, your Board held a Strategic Planning Session last August. From that meeting, your Board established several committees which will focus on mapping out a new direction for our future. These three committees are strategic planning, internal relations and external relations.

## Executive Director's Cabin

By Murray Bialek

After our summer student program ended in August, the NMA hired a new part-time employee, Owen Tuckey, who comes in two half days per week. Owen, who is a University of Calgary student, will act as our new assistant curator and has five years experience working for The Military Museums (TMM) both as a volunteer and as a summer student employee.

I represent the NMA at The Military Museums' staff meeting held every Wednesday morning and I meet with our NMA Chairman, President and Vice-President every Monday at noon. I also attended a recent TMM Council meeting which was chaired by the new Area Support Group (ASG) commander from Edmonton, Colonel Kennedy. This Council is the military governing body which runs TMM. Now that the Calgary Military Museums Society has left TMM, two new organizations are in the midst of drafting Terms of Reference as to how TMM will be supported. Also, the intent is

for the new association to become the "sponsor" of the Army Museum of Alberta within TMM.

I was also a participant at the Alberta Museums Association's annual conference held in Edmonton September 23-25. The thrust of the conference was about creating vibrant museum spaces that attract people: places where people want to 'hang out'; places where museums are used for other purposes such as, meetings or book club gatherings, and places that are people friendly with lots of benches to sit on. The NMA has received significant grants in the past from the AMA, including a grant for this conference, and it is important for the NMA to continue its networking and be represented at conferences such as this.

The Calgary Naval Centennial Ball, jointly sponsored by HMCS **Tecumseh** and The Naval Officers Association of Canada, was held in the Crystal Ballroom of the Palliser Hotel on October 23, 2010, with over 250 guests in attendance. Guests were offered a tot of rum

from an authentic rum tub and the Ball featured a live orchestra playing music with a 1940s and 50s theme. Each guest received a valuable medallion specially created by Rod McLeod for this event. The navy was officially represented by MARPAC Commander, Commodore Peter Ellis and the special guests of honour were Mrs. Phyllis Gautschi and her daughter, Dr. Anne George. Phyllis Gautschi is the sister of Lt Hampton Gray, the only naval officer to win the Victoria Cross in WWII. In order to demonstrate our continued support and to say "Thank You" to our longtime volunteers, your Society provided twenty subsidized tickets for the Ball.

Our next volunteer "Thank You" was our Volunteer Appreciation Brunch in December. Not only does the NMAS pay tribute to our volunteers with BBQs, dinners, brunches, etc., but so does TMM (BBQs, wine and cheeses and levees, etc.). Why not become a volunteer, so you too can be invited to numerous volunteer functions. We are always looking for volunteers, especially watchkeepers and administrative help. We are also looking for a building manager for the old museum site on the grounds of HMCS **Tecumseh**. If you have some time to offer, why not phone me or send an email to [execdir@navalmuseumsociety.ca](mailto:execdir@navalmuseumsociety.ca) and we can discuss it.

Cadets are now fully moved into the front part of the old building and parade every Tuesday and Thursday evening. They also operate there on Friday evenings and on Sundays. They have done a great job of painting, polishing and generally 'buffing up' the old building.

Bob Bryden continues to do an excellent job of putting together the monthly watchkeeper schedule for the NMA, but his base of volunteers is dwindling. We have contacted Estelle, the Volunteer Coordinator at TMM, to try to procure some new watchkeepers through her.

As part of the Navy's centennial celebrations, the street in front of HMCS **Tecumseh** and your old museum building has been renamed by the City

of Calgary. In addition to the address being known as 24th Street SW, it will also be officially called "Navy Way." Also as part of the Naval Centennial, the NMAS provided photos for the creation of the Canadian War Museum's Virtual Centennial Project. Please view this at [www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/navy/home-e.aspx](http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/navy/home-e.aspx).

#### • Donors Recognized:

I would like to thank the following who recently made artefact donations: Andrew Miller, F. Mannix, Elmer Baltimore, Doug Bell, Mr. Herring, Valli Stuart, Frances W. (Bill) Stephens,

Marvel Evelyn, Chuck Von, Debbie Miggel, #285 Royal Canadian Legion, Phil Jones, George Moore, CPO2 D. Forsyth and Greg McKenzie.

#### • Recent Donations:

Include: aviation boots, tropical issue shoes, second world war era uniforms and accoutrements, loaned paintings, headphones, Morse key, radio manuals, HMCS **Iroquois** ship's badge, life jacket, books, ashtray manufactured from a 3"50 shell casing, blazer badges, personal papers, uniform components, periodicals, pamphlets and Centennial memorabilia.

## Board of Director's Retreat

Earle Shirley, President of the NMAS, facilitated a day long Board of Directors retreat on Sunday, August 22, 2010, to celebrate what the NMAS has accomplished, to tap into the talents of board members to a greater degree and to plan for the future. Honorary Directors of the NMAS were also in attendance, as was Bruce Connolly representing the Naval Museum of Alberta. The Naval Museum of Alberta Society has changed from an 'operating' board to a 'supporting' board. NMAS is still undergoing this transition and there are some 'hot button' issues that need to be addressed.

After a round table discussion, participants were asked to individually identify their top three issues. Three major categories emerged: volunteers, sustainability and relationships. Board members broke into groups to consider these three main groupings of issues. The groups then reported back to the plenary. A discussion was held to ad-

dress where to go next. The board decided to establish three special committees to work on the issues related to the main categories:

- **Strategic Planning Committee** will address, among other things, the mission/vision statements and the 5-year strategic plan.

- **External Relations Committee** will address, among other things, relationship with DND, including transition letter and/or letter of agreement.

- **Internal Relations Committee** will address, among other things, improving relations and communication between the board and volunteers.

The retreat wrapped up with Tom Glover thanking Earle for the tremendous job he had done as facilitator and suggesting the NMAS should have a retreat like this yearly. **Note:** At the time of writing, the special committees had all met at least twice and have all generated positive ideas with regard to the issues under consideration.

## Annual Alberta Museums Association Conference & AGM

Our Executive Director, Murray Bialek, attended the annual AMA Conference and AGM in Edmonton in September. The thrust of the sessions were on how to create vibrant museum places within

a community, where people will want to come and 'hang out.'

Really great museums are places where people want to be, not just places to visit once and then feel as if they've seen it all. Successful museums

are full of people, places for social gatherings, like book clubs, chess clubs, cafés, poetry readings, student research places and more. The education team at TMM won a provincial Alberta

Museums Associations "Innovation Award" for their use of SMART Response System Technology in their "Canada and the Cold War" program. Of course, one of the most important

aspects of the conference was the networking that occurred and the information gathered regarding the AMA's grant program application process.

## HMCS Calgary Cup Regatta

In September, the NMAAS participated in the annual HMCS Calgary Cup Regatta on the Glenmore Reservoir. We were represented by Owen Tuckey, Gord Aker, Scott Aker, Commissioner Bill Sinka and Kimberly

Hinds. Although we didn't win, all participants had a great time. The event was organized by Ashley Beauchamp. Head chef, Paris Sahlen and his team, cooked up a great lunch of corn-on-the-cob, hot dogs and

sautéed onions. Due to operational commitments, crew members from HMCS Calgary were unable to participate this year. The HMCS Calgary Cup Regatta is always a great time, full of fun and naval fellowship!



**L to R** – The Cooks: Cal Annis, Chuck Von, Paris Sahlen and (inset) Bill Buchanan.



Commissionaire Bill Sinka and Kimberly Hinds.



Getting ready to start the race.



**Left Foreground** – Johanne Aylett and Jack Kucherawy.

# Volunteer of the Year



## Bob Bryden

Bob Bryden is shown above (right) being presented with **The Volunteer of the Year** award by NMAS President, Earle Shirley, at the Annual General Meeting of the Naval Museum of Alberta Society on November 23rd, 2010.

Bob is a WWII veteran who spent about two years with the Canadian Navy and started his training as a wireless operator in Winnipeg. He studied electronics and radio communication for 50 years and there was a time when he thought he knew something about it. While in the navy he learned how to get seasick, how to sleep standing up on guard duty, how to present arms like they do in the US Navy (he only received three or four days CB — confined to barracks — for that), and he also learned you are not supposed to stuff your hammock in your locker (more CB!). After the war, Bob joined the RCMP and served with them for 29 years. After retiring, he ran his own communications company for another 20 years. One of his more interesting jobs was developing some 50 or more cellular station sites for Rogers Cantel.

Bob has been a volunteer with the NMAS for approximately 15 years. Every single month for the last 10 years or so, as our Watchkeeper Coordinator, Bob has phoned about 20 to 40 volunteers to check their availability to stand a duty watch in the museum. He then creates a monthly watchkeeper's schedule which is distributed to each watchkeeper. If he can't fill a time slot, it is not uncommon for him to take a shift himself. For special occasions, such as Remembrance Day, etc., Bob will line up 3 to 4 volunteers for the day. Not only has Bob done this job, but he has quite often acted as the contact/RSVP point for various NMAS functions.

Bob has been a very loyal volunteer who says: "It is a privilege to be involved with so many outstanding people." **CONGRATULATIONS BOB!**

# Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Naval Museum of Alberta Society was held at 1900 on November 23rd, 2010 in the Naval Museum of Alberta.

The following NMAS directors were elected:

**Tom Glover**  
Chairman

**Earle Shirley**  
President

**Glenn Hardie**  
Past President

**Greg McKenzie**  
Vice President

**Lorne Hanson**  
Treasurer

**Linda Bialek**  
Secretary

**Johanne Aylett**  
Director

**Scott Hausberg**  
Director

**Nancy Olmstead**  
Director

**Mike Ervin**  
Director

Bob Bryden was presented with the **Volunteer of the Year** award.

The President and Treasurer each presented reports on the previous year's activities. Ongoing items are:

- one of the screws from HMCS **Huron** will be mounted on a concrete pedestal outside the lower TMM entrance doors;
- a 3" 70 cal. gun from HMCS **Terra Nova** is on its way from Halifax. It will be placed in the old museum for restoration; (the gun has arrived. Ed.)

- Mount Royal University students are producing a video about the Enigma Machine for the NMA.

Issues raised by the membership during the AGM were:

- What is happening regarding the Korean exhibit? Bruce Connolly, Volunteer Assistant Curator, for the NMA indicated that no decision regarding this exhibit has yet been made.

- It was reported that a funnel display which was part of the Battle of the Atlantic display was removed from TMM without the NMAS's knowledge or consent. This is being investigated.

## Volunteer Appreciation Brunch

Our annual Volunteer Appreciation Christmas Brunch was held on December 5th, 2010 at 1000 in the Dining Room of Mewata Armoury.

This is a small way to thank all of the Naval Museum of Alberta Society's volunteers who devote their time, expertise and energy to the business of

the Society in many ways: acting as watchkeepers for the NMA, working on the Board as directors, restoring artefacts, accessioning artefacts, helping with the newsletter, stuffing envelopes, working in the library, working on on-site and off-site displays, helping with ceremonies, working on storage, writing grant proposals for funding,

working on casinos, dealing with outside agencies (DND, AMA, Heritage Canada, Young Canada Works, etc.) and many other valuable volunteer activities.

So, from the Naval Museum of Alberta Society's Board of Directors, many thanks to everyone for their continuing dedication!



**L to R** – Harold Hutchinson, Neil and Barbara Murray.



**L to R** – Keith Scott, Lorne Hanson, Judy Hanson, Kay Luna and Bill Buchanan.



**L to R** – Bill Kane, Linda Bialek and Elly Bialek.



Alexander Shirley with his dad, Earle Shirley.

# The *New* Naval Museum of Alberta Society

By Terry Thompson

It hardly seems like it was a year ago that I stepped down as a sixteen year member of the Board of Directors of the Naval Museum of Alberta Society.

What a ride it was, and I have since looked back with some nostalgia on the good times. Of course there were many speed bumps as we progressed as a dynamic, self-owned, self-managed naval museum on the prairies. Yes, there were disagreements, there were errors, and there were occurrences that seemed at times to be insoluble.

Yet the volunteer management and staff and the watchkeepers persevered through the turbulence, maintaining order and good management through a harmonious and dedicated volunteer cadre and their determination to present realistic and educational historic naval displays to students at all levels and to the general public. The work wasn't always clean, nor was it easy. Hefting ten tonne guns around the floor (*awe shucks Terry ... it's a deck ... didn't we larn ya? Ed.*) or for that matter, any of the other heavy lifting activities, are not meant for weak backs.

As we began preparing for the transition to the new Military Museums in 2003, the way ahead was shrouded in sea fog. DND agreed to take over museum management at some point and none of us was too sure just what that meant. The Naval Museum of Alberta Society owned the collection with the exception of a few well identified artefacts. The Society, in its desire to present the highest possible display standard following the move to the new location in TMM, restored, updated, improved, added to the collection and worked tirelessly with museum designers and technical experts in the field.

A conscious shift to high technology interactive displays was planned into the design of new exhibits and displays. New museum display technology was introduced, providing interactive displays that could be operated by the observer, thus enhancing their knowledge and understanding of the past and present day weapons systems.

We have all seen the results which were achieved, well beyond most expectations — but the most important consequence has been the major increase in museum attendance. It is not uncommon to see a half dozen school buses lined up in the parking area during the week. Within the museum during these periods there are signs of children and students of all ages everywhere. Mingling with the veterans of previous wars and peacekeeping operations, they are learning first-hand about Canada's history and the military sacrifices made by so many to make possible their free and peaceful lives within a democratic nation called Canada.

Every drop of sweat and toil to bring our museum to where it is today has been worth it. As I sit during the monthly board meetings, now in my role as an observer, it once again occurs to me that the job is not yet complete ... nor is it ever likely to be. The Naval Museum of Alberta Society has successfully completed a major transition. The separation of the Naval Museum of Alberta from the society that supports it is complete in terms of defining the interrelationship responsibilities.

The responsibility of the NMA under the direction of DND is now the day-to-day management of the museum and the maintenance and control of the NMAS owned artefacts. It is the responsibility of the NMAS to act as the

line of communication between DND and the local naval community and to provide financial support for special mutually approved museum projects and the volunteer services needed to support them.

The NMAS board, now free of management responsibility, is not idle. There are many more speed bumps on the road ahead. The NMAS is in the process of redefining itself. Your board, for the most part, is now comprised of the younger veterans of the Cold War and even some with recent experience in the field of combat. It is called progress. While we must remember the past and those who gave their lives to make the present possible, we must accept change.

In the last fifty years, technological developments in communications alone have changed the way we think, the way we talk to each other, and in some aspects have modified our language.

Astonishing advances in weapons systems have moved warfare into unfathomable scenarios that can only be comprehended by the experts we train over years in our armed forces.

There is still much to be learned by those who wish to preserve the past for the future. But, your new board has seized the torch. They are on track and on course to guide the NMAS in its mandate to preserve Canadian Naval History.

Get to know them; they are a fine progressive group who have the helm and will carry us well into the next century of naval history ... and they will need **your** help.



Call Murray Bialek 403-242-0002



## Frank's 85th!

Our not so recently retired Curator and General Manager, Frank Saies-Jones, celebrated his 85th 'milestone' amongst many good friends at his home in High River, Alberta, late this past summer. It is rumoured that his 'catch-of-the-day' included some seventeen (17!) bottles of scotch!

**A BELATED, BUT SINCERE  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY FRANK!**



## Naval Traditions

## "Heart of Oak"

"Heart of Oak" is the official march of the United Kingdom's Royal Navy, the Canadian Navy, the Royal Australian Navy and the Royal New Zealand Navy. The music was composed by Dr. William Boyce and the words later written by David Garrick. The music was originally written as an opera. The wonderful year referred to in the first verse was 1759-60, when Great Britain was victorious in a number of important sea battles. These successes contributed to the song's popularity.

The oak referred to in the song references both the oak composition of British sailing ships of the time, and "heart of oak" referred to in the *Aeneid*.

While all of us are very familiar with the tune "Heart of Oak," and perhaps the chorus, how many of us know all the words?



# Heart of Oak

Come, cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer,  
To add something more to this wonderful year;  
To honour we call you, as freemen not slaves,  
For who are so free as the sons of the waves?

(Chorus sung once...)

Heart of oak are our ships, heart of oak are our men,  
we always are ready; Steady, boys, steady!  
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

We never see the French but we wish them to stay,  
They always see us and they wish us away;  
If they run, we will follow, we will drive them ashore,  
And if they won't fight, we can do no more.

(Chorus sung once...)

They swear they'll invade us, these terrible foes,  
They frighten our women, our children and beaus,  
But should their flat bottoms in darkness get o'er,  
Still Britons they'll find to receive them on shore.

(Chorus sung once...)

[Verse sometimes omitted]

Britannia triumphant, her ships sweep the sea,  
Her standard is Justice — her watchword, 'be free.'  
Then cheer up, my lads, with one heart let us sing,  
Our soldiers, our sailors, our statesmen and king.

(Final chorus, sung twice...)

With thanks to Wikipedia.com

# Naval Museum invades Ottawa

By Sam Whitehead, Cremona School, age 13

Every year schools around the country put on a [sic] Historical Fair where students can enter a project on Canadian history. These fairs are sponsored by the Canadian government in order to promote an understanding of history in young people today.

In the spring of 2009, I entered my school fair, and my project was on Naval Gun Art from World War II. Since I was one of only three kids in my school to enter the project, I was able to move directly on to the regional fair in Red Deer. At this fair my project was judged to be above the standard of excellence.

Because of this my name was put into a draw along with the other kids whose projects were excellent. My

name was drawn and I was selected to attend the National Historical Fair taking place in July in Ottawa.

The judges liked my project because it was an original idea with a good presentation. I also had many first-hand sources, such as artefacts and interviews. I was helped greatly by the information in the Naval Museum of Alberta and from its volunteers. They told me stories about the ships in WWII. I was able to talk to people who had been there, and they helped me find books and lent me artefacts.

Going to Ottawa for the National Fair was an amazing experience. I was one of eight students selected for the Alberta delegation. The actual fair was one day and took place in the Museum of Civilization. We explained our

projects to visitors to the museum, as well as politicians and others who were there for the fair itself. I was in Ottawa for a whole week, staying with kids from all over Canada. We toured the nation's capitol seeing the Parliament Buildings, the Mint, the War Museum and lots of other sites. I met lots of great people and made friends with kids from all over the country. Some of these friends I am still in contact with.

I have learned a lot from the Naval Museum from the displays and from the people. I would like to thank everyone who helped me, either directly by answering my questions, pointing me in the right direction for information, or indirectly by putting together and maintaining such great displays.



## Volunteer Spotlight



### Marguerite Perry

Marguerite enlisted in the WRCNS during World War II and was stationed in Halifax. More details of Marguerite's war experiences were published in the last issue of *The Ensign* (see Vol. 20, No's. 2 & 3, Spring/Summer 2010, p.9.) She joined the Naval Museum of Alberta Society in 1995 and has volunteered since. She met Walter Trueman, another volunteer, and they settled down together as partners for nine years until he passed away in 2009.

Marguerite says that joining the Wrens was the best decision of her life. She loved the Navy then, and loves it now. She treasures her naval friends and is never alone (she is also a longtime, active member of the Calgary Naval Veterans Association). Someone is always there for her. She volunteers as a watchkeeper in the Museum and is involved in many other naval activities. She was instrumental in having the lovely Naval Centennial placemats produced which were used at the Naval Centennial Veterans Dinner in May 2010.



## *In Memoriam*

It is with deep regret we report that a number of Naval Museum of Alberta Society members have slipped their cables over the past few months. They are:

**Cdr (Ret'd) Arthur B. Harris**  
**Gordon Kelly**  
**Ed Simpson**  
**Cliff Stewart**

They will be missed.

# Casino Alert!

*Our next Casino will be held on May 11 and 12, 2011 at the Cash Casino on Blackfoot Trail, SE.*

***Volunteers are needed!*** Please contact Johanne Aylett if you are able to help. Her telephone number is 403-245-4517 or you can send her an email at [jaylett@telusplanet.net](mailto:jaylett@telusplanet.net).

**Annual memberships in the Naval Museum of Alberta Society for 2011 are now due.** Your membership dues greatly assist with creating and publishing the Society's newsletter 'The Ensign,' as well as in undertaking various projects to preserve our Canadian naval heritage.

At \$20 per year we're still one of the best deals in town! Enclosed with this issue of 'The Ensign,' or attached to the email message for those of you who receive the newsletter in pdf format on-line, you will find a Naval Museum Society Membership Renewal Form. Please complete the form and send it in with your cheque for \$20 payable to the Naval Museum of Alberta Society today. An updated membership card will be mailed to you in response.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!**



**REMEMBRANCE DAY** at The Military Museums, 2010.

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**Admission Prices**

Adults \$6, Seniors \$4, Youth 7-17 \$3  
 Children 6 and under FREE  
 Serving Personnel (past and present) and their families FREE  
 NMAS Members FREE  
 Ample free parking

**Hours of Operation**

Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm  
 Weekends and Holidays 9:30 am to 4:00 pm

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