



the Ensign

Volume 24, Number 2

Spring 2015



news, views and seagoing tales from the
Naval Museum of Alberta Society



OUR COVER

A beautiful colour print of HMCS *Niobe*. As pointed out in the last *Ensign*, *Niobe* was the first ship of the RCN to enter Canadian waters and that recently led to the decision of the RCN to designate Trafalgar Day as *Niobe* Day.

From the Editor

Scott Hausberg



In the last issue of *The Ensign*, I was critical of the Navy for its creation of *Niobe* Day, and DND for its slow staffing and dealings with Valour Canada. I really thought I would get some reaction, positive or negative, verbal or written, to my comments. I heard nothing from any source—not even from a fellow board member or my dad. It makes me wonder if anyone is reading and should I next address something really controversial. Well, I won't, but I do have some more critical words directed at the *Calgary Herald*.

On February 11th, as I turned to the comment page of the *Calgary Herald*, I was pleasantly surprised to see a photo of an old friend. The photo was from the opening of the BC Legislature and showed Lieutenant-Commander Mike Erwin as guard commander. Though originally from Hamilton, Mike started his naval career in HMCS *Tecumseh* in 1980 (in the same naval cadet class as one of our directors—Scott Hanwell). Mike served in *Tecumseh* for approximately a decade and then moved to the Regular Force. I knew Mike well from our *Tecumseh* days and also from when he was in HMCS *Saskatchewan* while undertaking master navigator



A ceremonial Guard of Honour comprised of 100 members of Maritime Forces Pacific paraded during the opening of the first session of the 41st Parliament of the Legislature of British Columbia on February 10th, 2015. Escorting Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon is guard commander Lieutenant Commander Michael Erwin.

training. I thought that it was great that a former Calgarian was so prominent in the *Herald*, but realized that few readers would know this. So, I decided to write a letter to the editor. Considering the letters that do get published, I thought the *Herald* would readily publish my letter. Did you see it? Sadly, neither did I.

On a more humorous note, Mike stated the following on his Facebook page:

Guard Commander with the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the BC Legislature yesterday: I said, "Do you wish to inspect the Guard of Honour, Your Honour," and she said, "Sworda."

Lastly, I want to thank Mike Potter for stepping up and resurrecting the Operations Update segment of *The Ensign*. I think that hearing about what is happening behind the scenes at the museum is important to NMAS members.

Wondering what our cover image would look like in full, living colour? Why not opt to view the colour pdf version of *The Ensign* on line and at the same time help the Naval Museum of Alberta Society conserve printing costs and postage in favour of putting these dollars to better use in support of our museum. To opt out of the monochrome print version in favour of accessing a full colour PDF, please contact Ken Sivertsen at kensivertsen@nucleus.com You can also access coloured back issues at:

<http://navalmuseumofalbertasociety.wildapricot.org>

President's Report



Ken Sivertsen

This winter seems to be much different than last year's. Last year we are still getting snow warnings at this time of year, whereas this year, at least in Alberta, all the storm warnings seem to be for the eastern part of the country, most notably the Maritimes.

Last year at this time we were still wrestling with job descriptions, etc. in order to hire a 'permanent' curator for the museum. This year we have a work description and are in the process of finding a qualified person on a term basis.

A thank you brunch for all our dedicated museum volunteers was held on February 8th in the Wardroom of HMCS *Tecumseh*. Our volunteer group consists of volunteers who are watchkeepers, volunteers who help in the workshop, volunteers who help with the casinos and some who help in all three ways. Our museum could not be run without all of our volunteers and a big *thank you* is due to every one of them.

Sadly, we received a resignation from our Board of Directors. Dave Brown found that he can no longer act as a board member and membership chair because of conflicts he has for his time. We reluctantly accepted his resignation but the good news is that Eric Kahler has volunteered to replace Dave as the new membership chair. As you may be aware, Eric was with the Navy (Maritime Command and Royal Canadian Navy) for more than thirty years and has retired to Calgary. Eric has also joined the Calgary Naval Veterans Association and has been appointed their Master-at-Arms. Thanks are due to Dave Brown for all his work and the transition, with Greg McKenzie, to an electronic form of membership record keeping.

We are currently in the process of getting our D-Day video set up to run on demand in the museum. We plan to utilize the 103" TV that was donated to the museum by Shaw Communications for that purpose. This display will be located close to the Juno Beach diorama which has been upgraded and is now operational again, although it might be relocated to allow a better viewing of the display.

As a result of the recently released movie "The Imitation Game" which outlined the breaking, by Alan Turing and his

crew, of the German encryption code used during the Second World War, the Museum has seen an increase in the number of visitors who are specifically interested in the Enigma machine. QR77 radio recently interviewed Greg McKenzie in a one-half hour segment that I'm sure helped to advertise the existence of this machine in the Naval Museum of Alberta. With Greg's background as a teacher and former commanding officer of *Tecumseh*, it turned out to be an excellent piece. Bravo Zulu Greg!

If you will recall, the AGM of 2011 approved a Strategic Plan for the Society setting out a plan for the future operations of the Society. A sub-committee of the Board, under the leadership of Director Mike Potter, with Scott Hanwell and Eric Kahler as members, is working to take the Strategic Plan from a visionary document to a working plan that the Society can use for our future activities. More on this as it becomes further developed.

Fair winds and happy sailing!

Operations Update



Mike Potter

The crew of the NMAS workshop are currently putting plans together for several new exhibits. The first is finishing the plans for putting the huge 103 inch TV screen (donated to us by Shaw Communications) into a movable cabinet. This display will show the recently recorded Juno Beach D-Day landing in high definition video with surround sound in a theatre type experience. Although the finished product may not be available for several months, it is expected to generate numerous visits to the museum.

Over the past few months several computer monitor displays have stopped working. This is going to mean replacement of all the equipment that was installed shortly after the museum opened its doors at The Military Museums.

The large model replica of HMCS *Terra Nova* is still under design and construction; stay tuned for the unveiling of the first section later this year. This is one of four sections starting at frame 12 and finishing at frame 53. These sections put together will total about 30 feet. All sections will be visible through the sides and ends. Section 1 includes the 3"70 gun

and feed systems. Section 2 shows the magazine and fuel tanks along with all the mess decks, command offices and bridge. Section 3 will be all about the boilers and section 4 is the engine room complete with model turbine engines and gear boxes.

We expect the return of the model of HMCS *Bonaventure* shortly. One of our modelers has been working on the finishing touches and we look forward to seeing her on display very soon. The next to appear will be the refurbished models of HMC Ships *Huron* and

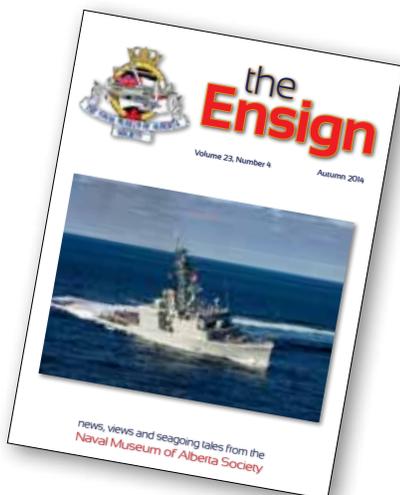
Nipigon which will be incorporated into the Cold War exhibit.

Last, but not least, will be the unveiling of the Korean exhibit that will explain the Royal Canadian Navy's role in that conflict.

RIGHT – The large scale model of HMCS *Terra Nova*.

The section shown is from frames 12 to 21 and is just aft of the bow. The section is 7 ft. long and 7 ft. tall right now, but when we add the gun turret it will reach about 8 ft. 6 in. in height.

BELOW – The model of HMCS *Nipigon* being refurbished in the NMAS workshop.



Past *Ensigns* are now available on the new NMAS website!

A new NMAS website was announced in the last issue of *The Ensign*. It has many great features but surely the best is the ability to view past issues of *The Ensign*. Read them over and over again in magnificent colour (for those who have only seen the black and white versions). The site is at... <http://navalmuseumofalbertasociety.wildapricot.org>

Ojibwa museum needs your help!



HMCS *Ojibwa* on display at the Elgin Military Museum in St. Thomas, Ontario.

Editor's Note: *The following item originates with the Elgin Military Museum in St. Thomas, Ontario.*

Please speak up for the Cold War warrior HMCS *Ojibwa*, an Oberon-class Cold War submarine, and the efforts of a small museum that took on a national challenge, met it head on and is now threatened after only a year and a half of operation.

The bank—for reasons beyond our control, has started the process to call our loan—albeit with the option to negotiate. Nevertheless, our position is currently precarious. We were named the “Innovator of the Year” by the tourism associations of both the Province of Ontario and the national Canadian Tourism Association while in our first full year of operation in 2014—an astounding accomplishment. Our ground breaking programming is recognized as unique in the world.

Please help us over this growing pain so that we can

continue this work. Most will understand that it is difficult for a not-for-profit museum to generate large funds in its initial year or two of operation. Once we have our building in place alongside our submarine, we will be able to open year-round and thereby stabilize our financial position. We urgently require your support. A supporter of our museum has started the following petition of support to federal and provincial ministers: <http://www.change.org/p/ministry-of-tourism-culture-and-sport-the-honourable-shelly-glover-the-honourable-michael-coteau-speak-up-for-our-silent-warrior>

The Elgin Military Museum in St. Thomas, Ontario has been self-sufficient and able to double in size twice in the thirty years it has existed without government support. Taking on the task of saving an important piece of our national heritage requires a little assistance. Please help.

You will find us at:

<https://www.facebook.com/museumNH>



University of Calgary Library at The Military Museums

Jeremie Clyde

Head, The Military Museums Library and Archive, University of Calgary Library

The library has been concentrating its efforts on the John Burgess Navy Library with a focus to increase recognition, access and preservation of the collection. In order to maintain and preserve the collection over time, we are reviewing each item and where age, rarity and/or delicate physical condition require it, the item is moved to our special collections.

The books in the collection that do not warrant special collection status will be placed in the regular stacks with the rest of the collection.

Access will also be increased by getting all items catalogued so they can be searched for and found using the library's online catalogue.

We are also working to catalogue and make available the significant journal publications that came with the collection. At the same time as we process them to increase access, we are also making changes to increase recognition of the collection. Each Burgess item has a tag in the library catalogue system so it can be located by



Jeremie Clyde.

library staff and has a spine label with the NMAS logo making it easy to identify by library users. With items shelved by subject the positive impact of this donation is hard to miss with NMAS logos appearing regularly throughout the library. Additional items in naval arts and science and naval history are being added to our collection with the goal of making this a collection of excellence for students and researchers working on naval matters.

Over the next year, more books with the NMAS label will be appearing on the shelves every month (we have added an additional row of shelving and shifted the entire collection to better accommodate the new titles).

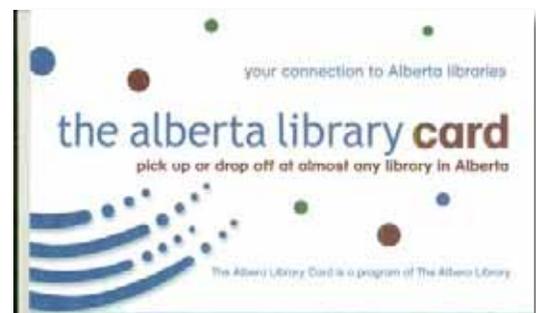
Please consider visiting the library to see the collection. If you would like to check titles out this can be easily done using The Alberta Library (TAL) card, which you can pick up from any Calgary Public Library branch. There is no cost to this card and it gives good access to not just this collection but any library collection in the Province.

How to borrow a book from the John Burgess Collection

Greg McKenzie

It's easy when you know how. Stop at any Calgary Public Library branch and ask for the TAL Card (stands for The Alberta Library). You will be issued with a card that can then be used at The Military Museums, the University of Calgary and most other libraries throughout Alberta.

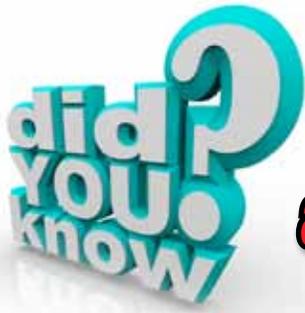
Rare books can be viewed only at TMM but other books may be signed out. Library fines are steep though, \$1.00 per day ... so don't be late in returning loaned books.



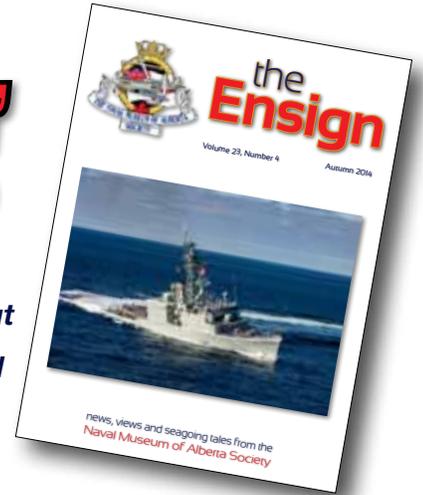
Volunteer of the Year



The annual Volunteer Brunch was held in the *Tecumseh* Wardroom on Sunday, February 8th, with about sixty people in attendance. During the brunch, Greg McKenzie (above left) was acknowledged as Volunteer of the Year for 2014 and presented with a plaque by NMAS President Ken Sivertson. Greg is a Monday morning regular and has been instrumental in getting the NMAS website into its current state as well as helping out in numerous other ways. A special thanks to Johanne Aylett and her team for once again organizing this yearly event.



... that back issues of 'The Ensign' are available on the NMAS website?



The NMAS website has many great features but surely the best is the ability to view past issues of 'The Ensign.' Read them over and over again in magnificent colour (for those who have only seen the black and white versions). The site is located at...

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SURPLUS ITEMS FOR SALE!

In the coming months, do visit the Gift Shop at The Military Museums. You'll see some museum surplus items on sale. Watch for surplus books, but later, you may see some surplus ship's badges and the like.

All proceeds from the sale of these items will go to support
The Naval Museum of Alberta Society

We highly value your membership in the NMAS, but another year has rolled around and once again it's time to renew that membership. Kindly use the handy form below.

Thank You!



PLEASE RENEW OR PURCHASE A MEMBERSHIP IN THE NAVAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA SOCIETY



YES, please renew/accept my Naval Museum of Alberta Society membership. A cheque for \$20.00 is enclosed and my information is filled out below (please print):

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

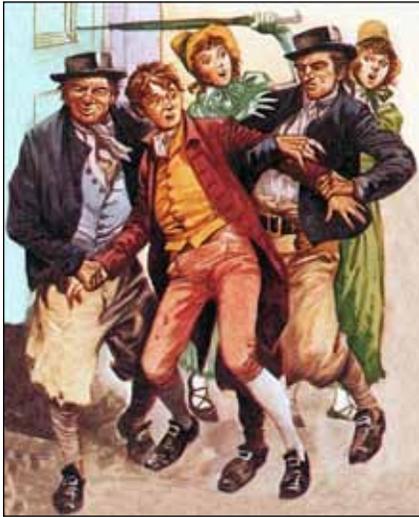
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

Please check this box only if you would like to receive *The Ensign* by mail rather than by email (because we do not have a colour copier, these will be in black and white, emailed copies are in full colour PDF format and save the Society both paper and postage).

Please check this box if you would like to make a donation to the Society. A tax receipt will be issued for all donations in excess of \$20.

Please return this form with your cheque payable to NMAS.
Mail to: Naval Museum of Alberta Society, c/o HMCS *Tecumseh*,
1820 - 24th Street SW, Calgary, Alberta T2T 0G6

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



We always have a 'pressing' need for volunteers to serve as Naval Museum Watchkeepers!

If you would like to enlist in our fine body of Watchkeepers, please contact Bill Buchanan at 403-274-7535 or by email to cutknife@telus.net and we promise not to send the Press Gang to your door!

2015 Membership Drive

The Naval Museum of Alberta Society continues to seek new members! Every new member adds to our ability to provide credible support to our museum. Please do your part to help us grow in 2015!

- Membership Application on page 9 •

Content is always wanted for *The Ensign*

If you have any material you think would be appropriate, please send it to Editor, Scott Hausberg scott.hausberg@outlook.com

ISSN 1483-7080

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Creative services and layout are provided by
Cascade Creek Publishing®

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The Naval Museum of Alberta

is located at The Military Museums
4520 Crowchild Trail, SW, Calgary, Alberta T2T 5J4
Telephone 403-974-2807

Admission Prices

Adults \$10.00, Seniors \$5.00, Youth 7-17 \$4.00
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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