Remembering service at home and abroad.

LOOKOUT
newspaper.com
MARPAC NEWS
CFB Esquimalt, Victoria, B.C.
Volume 64 Number 44, November 4, 2019

Taking a Knee, painted by Scott Waters, is based on a photo taken during Exercise Desert Ram at the CFB Suffield Training area in April 2011. This painting also represents the beginning of the month and half the artist spent with 3 Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry in their lead-up training and deployment on Operation Attention Roto 0.

Specifically, this image shows the culmination of a live fire attack and presents a soldier during the consolidation phase of that attack.

The painting itself was created for the True Patriot Love Foundation, as part of their annual gala and fundraising event.

Read the artist's story on page 8.

Message from the Admiral

THIS YEAR we commemorated the 75th anniversary of the Normandy landings and the start of the final push that ended the Second World War.

It was the largest seaborne invasion in history and it cost Canadians and our allies dearly. The invasion was a success, but it was only possible by the progress made in the Battle of the Atlantic, the continued support from the home front, and by the sacrifices made by tens of thousands of Canadians.

We remember the fallen and their sacrifice, and we grieve with the families and friends whose loved ones will never return to us. They served with honour and integrity before making the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country, indeed to our way of life.

With the upcoming 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic, we have to keep in mind that for many Canadian families, there is no distant beach to point to as the final resting place for their loved ones, or a graveyard in France to visit. Many are entombed beneath the waves in the ships on which they served - salt water their consecrated resting place.

We all grieve with those families, for our fellow Canadians, and we work hard to remember as we live our daily lives.

Veterans speak in schools to teach the next generation, while serving Canadian Armed Forces members parade down streets nation-wide, and every cenotaph is surrounded by Canadians in solemn reflection.

The poppy we wear ensures we do not forget those that served and those that continue to serve to make possible for us the peaceful lives we enjoy today.

RAdm Bob Auchterlonie

2019 National Silver Cross Mother – Mrs. Reine Samson Dawe

Courtesy the Royal Canadian Legion

Mrs. Dawe's son, Captain Matthew J. Dawe, was the Commander of 8 Platoon, C Company, 3 Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Battalion (3 PPCLI). His company was part of 2 Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group (2 RCR BG) serving in Kandahar, Afghanistan. He was killed in action in Afghanistan on July 4, 2007.

As the National Silver Cross Mother, Mrs. Dawe will place a wreath at the National War Memorial on Nov. 11 on behalf of all Canadian mothers who have lost a son or a daughter in the military service of Canada. Throughout the year, she will also be called upon to perform other duties honouring the Fallen from all conflicts.

Message from the Base Commander

DURING this time of remembrance, I encourage everyone to think upon the reason why we wear the red flower and hold ceremonies across this great country.

The freedom we enjoy here in Canada comes at a cost, paid by brave men and women who selflessly put themselves in harm's way during times of armed conflict.

It is important that we remember the toll, sacrifice, carnage, and causes of these conflicts so that in our solemn gratitude we do not repeat the mistakes of the past.

On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, when 101 years ago the guns fell silent on the fields of Europe, the world takes time to reflect and pay tribute to those that fought and shall not grow old.

Although the lessons of 'The Great War' did not stop us from engaging in future armed conflicts, they do give us this moment where each year we wear a poppy, and honour those who gave everything so that we might enjoy a future free from tyranny and persecution.

Many Canadians whose names we will never know, but to whom we owe a great debt, shall be remembered. While we are fortunate to have normal lives afforded us by the peace we currently enjoy, it is important the memory of the cost remains as a stark reminder to future generations. As you gather with others at Remembrance Day ceremonies across the country, please remember the sacrifice of those who have served, and those who continue to serve in areas of conflict.

Capt(N) Sam Sader

Remembrance Day Ceremonies Southern Vancouver Island

Personnel from Maritime Forces Pacific/Joint Task Force Pacific will be participating in several ceremonies in the Southern Vancouver Island region on Remembrance Day, November 11 2019. Wreaths on behalf of the Canadian Armed Forces will be placed at the following locations:

9 A.M.

NANAIMO
1630 East Wellington Road, Nanaimo

9:30 A.M.

ESQUIMALT
God's Acre Veteran's Cemetery, 1200 Colville Road, Between the 12th and 17th holes of the Gorge Vale Golf Club

10 A.M.

COBBLE HILL
Cobble Hill Community Hall, 3550 Watson Avenue. Followed by a ceremony behind the community hall at the Liberation Park Cenotaph at 11:00 am

VICTORIA
Afghanistan Memorial, 847-887 Courtney Street

10:30 A.M.

PENDER ISLAND
Royal Canadian Legion Branch 239 1344 Mackinnon Road

VICTORIA
City of Victoria Cenotaph (Legislature Building), 501 Belleville Street

10:40 A.M.

COLWOOD
Royal Roads University, 2005 Sooke Road, Italian Garden

FAIRFIELD
Ross Bay Cemetery, 1516 Fairfield Road

10:45 A.M.

CENTRAL SAANICH
Pioneer Park, 1209 Clarke Road

DUNCAN
Charles Hoey Memorial Park, 130 Canada Avenue

METCHOSIN
St. Mary the Virgin Heritage Church

SAANICH
Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Avenue

SALT SPRING
Centennial Park Cenotaph

10:50 A.M.

SIDNEY
Town Hall, 2440 Sidney Avenue

11 A.M.

ESQUIMALT
Memorial Park Cenotaph, 1200 Esquimalt Road

LANTZVILLE
Cenotaph, Huddlestone Park

LANGFORD
Cenotaph, Goldstream Avenue and Veterans Memorial Parkway

OAK BAY
War Memorial, Beach Drive, Uplands Park

PARKSVILLE
City Hall, 100 Jensen Avenue

SOOKE
Sooke Royal Canadian Legion, 6726 Eustace Road

VICTORIA
Ross Bay Cemetery, 1495 Fairfield Rd.

WEST SHORE
Veterans Memorial Park located at the intersection of Goldstream Avenue and Veterans Memorial Parkway (Millstream)

matters of OPINION

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Published each Monday, under the authority of Capt(N) Sam Sader, Base Commander.

Le LOOKOUT est publié tous les lundi, sous l'égide du Capt(N) Sam Sader, Commandant de la Base.

The editor reserves the right to edit, abridge or reject copy or advertising to adhere to policy as outlined in PSP Policy Manual. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of National Defence.

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LOOKOUT NEWSPAPER

Circulation - 3,550
plus 300 pdf downloads per week

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and join our growing social media community.

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Canadian Mail Product Sales Agreement 40063331

CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER AWARD 2018

WHAT SAY YOU

People Talk

Ahead of Remembrance Day, we asked veterans:

If you could impart one thing about your military service to the youth of today, what would it be and why?

Definitely excitement. The excitement of skills training, postings and international travel makes serving a plus for Canada's role in the world. Besides they pay for it!

George Baker, retired RCAF; resident at Alexander Mackie Lodge

One word: Grit. My military service has given me grit. In my civilian career I am able take on challenges partly because of how well the military prepared me to deal with difficult situations. When serving in the navy I often took it for granted how well we were trained and how well we coped under stress. Now I see that the grit we developed in the military can be a valuable asset in any environment.

LCdr (Retired) Rob Petitpas, HeroWork Volunteer

Respect for others because you become a part of a team that cares for one another and plays and works together to achieve a common goal.

Alf Bryan, retired RCN; resident at Alexander Mackie Lodge

Steady as She Goes

Bob Gwalchmai, RCN (Retired)

Ice pellets bit my hands as I slipped our life line to sanctuary
Slowly yet ominously we edged out into the smirking grey harbour
Shrouded souls trudged about, hiding anything Neptune might steal
The sea's ragged dance taunted us, giving us false hope
Foaming crests raced at us from the horizon… its waiting… out there.
Stead as she goes, boy, steady
The gods have no need for us this day

Eruptions of white spray exploded from the sides of the harbour wall
The sky, a swirling witch's cauldron, bubbled with our fate
Creaks and groans from deep within lamented a siren's mournful dirge
The building swells seemed to greet us from all sides, like feeding orcas
Fervent glances astern stole last glimpses of hearth and home… and hope

Steady as she goes, boy, steady
The gods have no need for us this day
Land faded in the mist, abandoning us to that wild undulating world
Each shuddering roll of the ship questioned, "just how far"…
"is this the one?"
The plunging bow tossed back spray each time it broke free from Neptune's grasp
Incessant rain joined the stinging spray in the battle for dominance
The sinking light of day deserted us to face the indeterminable night… alone
Steady as she goes, boy, steady
The gods have no need for us this day

In a blackness devoid of everything but the tormented sea, the unknown waited
Sensations of rising, and the shuddering shock when the falling stopped, fed our fears
Brilliant flashes of phosphorescence blasted the bridge windows, demanding access

A muted cacophony from beneath the deck belied the un-secured carnage below
Not a star, no smiling moon, just howling wind and beating spray … will this end?
Steady as she goes, boy, steady
The gods have no need for us this day

Imperceptibly, the siren's wail faltered and the pounding spray softened its assault
In the softening black, the green mountainous waves lost their threatening charge
The bow no longer struggled to escape Neptune's insistent invitation
As dawn's light crept into this surreal world, a gentle hand lifted us up and soothed us down
White-maned stallions raced off ahead of us to the horizon, a new sun lighting their way…
Steady as she goes, boy, steady
The gods have no need for us this day.

"In Loving Memory of Ordinary Seaman Heidi Clow
Oct 19, 1986 - Oct 4, 2009

"A Mind of Tribalism is a Pillar for Injustice and Corruption." Dr. Mohammed Abad Al Razak

Honouring Those Who Have Served Before

Captain Jenn Jackson
HMCS Ottawa PAO

When *HMCS Ottawa* departed Esquimalt harbour for Operations Neon and Projection on Aug. 6, it carried with her the ashes of seven veterans – two who served in the Second World War – which had been entrusted into the care of *Ottawa's* crew by their families.

"When we departed, along with our own families, present among the crowd were the loved ones of the ashes we carried, saying a final farewell knowing their loved one's remains would be committed to sea during the deployment," says Padre Lt(N) Andrew Klinger, *Ottawa's* Padre.

Committal of Ashes to Sea are coordinated through CFB Esquimalt's Chaplin Office and are conducted an average of two to three times a year. The ashes are always those of former Canadian Armed Forces members, and families provide the container, as well as a short biography that is read during the ceremony as Words of Remembrance.

"I am humbled to be able to honour the wishes of these veterans and their families," said Padre Klinger.

In keeping with the spirit of Remembrance Day, the ceremony will take place on *Ottawa* next week during a pause in her deployment in the Asia-Pacific region.

"I cannot think of a more fitting way to offer a final farewell to deceased navy veterans than to commit their ashes to sea from a vessel conducting operations similar to those that represented a significant and dedicated period in their lives," says Padre Klinger. "As I read through the Words of Remembrance for each set of ashes, I am struck by the commitment each made to their country through their service – just as I am serving now."

The ashes to be committed to sea are those of John Gilbert Lundy, William Gillison, Frank Charles Moore, Ursula Dorothy Vondette, Norman Allan Ridout, Stanley Raynham, and Sherwood Fredrick Charles.

May they rest in peace.

Padre Andrew Klinger prepares the ashes on the sliding board. Photo by Capt Jenn Jackson

History of the poppy

Courtesy www.legion.ca

Each November, Poppies bloom on the lapels and collars of millions of Canadians.

The significance of the Poppy can be traced back to the Napoleonic Wars in the 19th century, over 110 years before being adopted in Canada.

Records from that time indicate how thick Poppies grew over the graves of soldiers in the area of Flanders, France. Fields that had been barren before battle exploded with the blood-red flowers after the fighting ended. During the tremendous bombardments of the war, the chalk soils became rich in lime from rubble, allowing the "popaver rhoeas" to thrive. When the war ended, the lime was quickly absorbed and the Poppy began to disappear again.

The person who first introduced the Poppy to Canada and the Commonwealth was Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae of Guelph, Ontario, a Canadian Medical Officer during the First World War. John McCrae penned the Poem "In Flanders Fields" on a scrap of paper in May, 1915 on the day following the death of a fellow soldier. Little did he know, those 13 lines would become enshrined in the hearts and minds of all who would wear a poppy. McCrae's poem was published in Punch Magazine in December of that same year, and the poem later served as inspiration three years later for Moina Michael, an American teacher. Moina Michael made a pledge to always wear a Poppy as a sign of Remembrance.

During a visit to the United States in 1920, a French woman named Madame Guerin learned of the custom. Madame Guerin decided to make and sell poppies to raise money for children in war-torn areas of France. The Great War Veteran's Association in Canada (our predecessor) officially adopted the poppy as its Flower of Remembrance on July 5, 1921.

Today, the Poppy is worn each year during the Remembrance period to honour Canada's Fallen. The Legion also encourages the wearing of a Poppy for the funeral of a Veteran and for any commemorative event honouring Fallen Veterans. It is not inappropriate to wear a Poppy during other times to commemorate Fallen Veterans and it is an individual choice to do so, as long as it's worn appropriately.

Thanks to the millions of Canadians who wear the Legion's lapel Poppy each November, the little red flower has never died, and the memories of those who fell in battle remain strong.

HISTORICA CANADA'S NEW history teaching tool

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

A new teaching tool by non-profit Historica Canada is bringing first-hand accounts of veterans to the classroom just in time for Remembrance Day.

Record of Service: Canadian Contributions to International Peace and Security is geared towards middle school and high school students and includes a free education guide and accompanying DVD in both English and French.

The DVD was released in November 2018 with 4,000 copies distributed to date, while the education guide was released last month.

The new teaching tool encourages students to reflect on how international military engagements have shaped both individual experiences and the larger Canadian identity, says Mira Goldberg-Poch, Assistant Manager, Programs and Education at Historica Canada.

"The guide brings oral history into the classroom and includes activities that build research, analysis, critical thinking and communications skills. Students are invited to deepen their understanding of how international engagements have shaped both individual experiences and the larger Canadian identity, and to examine the legacies of these conflicts."

The education guide is broken into 15 activities and are focused on the first-hand testimonies and accounts of 15 military veterans who served Canada from the Second World War through to the war in Afghanistan.

Activity 4: Women and the Second World War offers a first-hand account from Janet Hester Watt who worked as a member of the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNs) more commonly known as Wrens. They played vital roles in the First and Second World War efforts in both Canada and Great Britain. Jobs they performed included cooks, clerks, telegraph operators, electricians, coder, signallers, radar plotters and mechanics.

"Once a Wren, always a Wren," declares Watt. "You can go into a place and you meet a total stranger and you find out she's a Wren, you've formed an association right then and there."

Goldberg-Poch says oral histories like Watt's help increase understanding and paint broader and more vivid brush strokes on the canvas that is Canadian history.

"Presenting history this way can be more interesting than a textbook because students often feel that Canadian history is dry and boring and they don't see it reflected in their daily lives," said Goldberg-Poch. "It doesn't seem real until they hear someone saying, 'this is what happened to me.'"

Those experiences are also relayed in the third and final offering by *Record of Service* with the launch of a podcast series that debuted on Oct. 15. Topics for discussion include the military's code breakers, medical staff, Metis veterans, code talkers and Second World War Prisoners of War who were sent to Buchenwald concentration camp.

Goldberg-Poch says that although they are no longer taking contributions for *Record of Service*, The Memory Project is always looking for guest speakers and oral history subjects and would be delighted to hear from anyone from Victoria's military community who is willing to contribute.

For more information on Historica Canada, The Memory Project, how to become a speaker, how to contribute, or how to obtain a free copy of *Record of Service* for your classroom or community centre, visit their website: www.historicacanada.ca/thememoryproject.

About Historica Canada

Historica Canada is also the producer of The Canadian Encyclopedia and is the largest non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing awareness of Canadian history and culture. Record of Service: Canadian Contributions to International Peace and Security is a component of Historica Canada's Memory Project.

The Toronto-based Memory Project is a volunteer speaker's bureau and to date has amassed the recorded testimonials of approximately 2,800 Canadians and 10,000 historical images. It also arranges for veteran and active members of the Canadian Armed Forces to share their stories of military service at schools and community events across the country.

Far right: Former Canadian Forces Artist Program volunteer Scott Waters depicts two members of 2RCR (Royal Canadian Regiment) sleeping in their light armoured vehicle during training at CFB Gagetown in 2006. *Right:* Artist Scott Waters.

Photo credit: Scott Waters.

ARTIST SCOTT WATERS PAINTS A PICTURE OF

A SOLDIER'S LIFE

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

Toronto-based artist Scott Waters' military experience has framed much of his work.

He served with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry between 1989 and 1992, and was stationed at Work Point. He and his platoon mates were preparing for war, hoping to be deployed to Kuwait for The Gulf War.

His insights into the reality of being a soldier is what led him to be accepted into the Canadian Forces Artists Program. A reality that doesn't always match with the public's perception. Much of a soldier's work is waiting for action, leading Waters to paint a more human aspect of them.

In 2006, he travelled to CFB Gagetown in New Brunswick to get images of soldiers training to deploy to Afghanistan. From that embedded opportunity he created a series of paintings showing soldiers in everyday situations.

This point of view is a detour from many other artists who depict soldiers in hardship moments. Waters' wanted to paint the truth of a soldier's journey – the boredom from waiting, the humour found in anticipation, the solemn nod to a lost comrade.

Sleeping in the LAV (Light-Armoured Vehicle) is among those. It depicts two Second Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment personnel resting in their vehicle during Exercise Royal Archer II in the lead-up to their deployment to Afghanistan.

"One of the issues I was interested in painting is how military service sometimes leads to death because that's the nature of the job," said Waters. "So, in this painting I have presented a rather quotidian [commonplace] image of two guys napping. But there is also the intended spectre of deployment in a war zone, and that pose of them sleeping can also draw a strong parallel to death."

He paints on sheets of plywood using bold colours to divide the background from the subject. His medium is acrylic and oil, and he incorporates the knots and grain of the wood into his artwork.

The 49-year-old says his art is an attempt to record the interactions of soldiers and how the military, and specifically the infantry, operate as a social unit, both in isolation from and relation to civil society.

His experience at Gagetown left him wanting more.

In 2011, he reapplied to the CF Artist Program and was again accepted. This time he was able to deploy with his former unit on Operation Attention between Kabul and Mazar-i-Shariff over four weeks.

Soldiers he met on his rotation in Afghanistan told him he should realistically portray moments of boredom – the unglamorous nature of a theatre of war.

The outcome from this direction led to *Coda (Lt Orde)*, an average, everyday moment captured at Camp Dubs near Kabul. It shows an act of remembrance by Lt Orde for his friend and platoon-mate Master Corporal Byron Greff, the last Canadian soldier to be killed in Afghanistan. Embroidered on the back of his ball cap is RIP Greff,

"Greff can be seen as a marker of the Afghanistan mission's draw down, but I was also interested in the laconic way in which Greff is remembered," says Waters. "Nothing fancy, just functional, but a daily reminder of the loss."

These days, Waters has moved the focus of his artwork away from the military. He seldom paints soldiers, but says his experiences in the military and with the CF Artist Program are always in his mind when he's painting.

About Scott Waters:

Scott Waters was born in Preston, England. In 1979, Waters' family emigrated from northern England and settled in Trail, B.C. He joined the military out of high school.

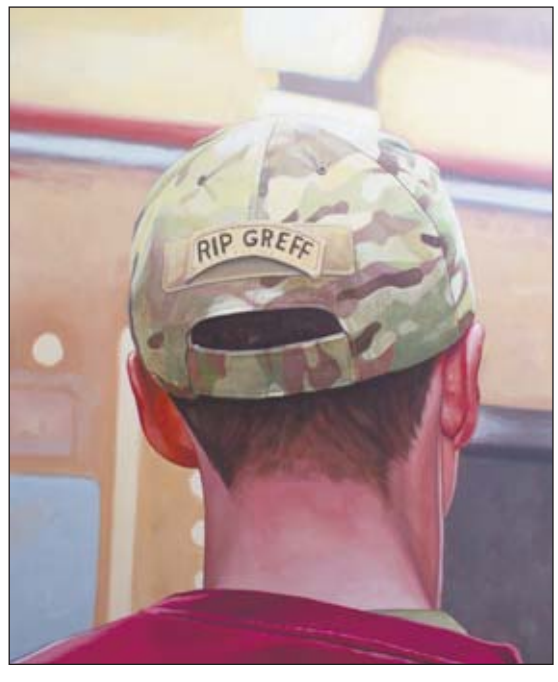
After leaving the military he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from The University of Victoria, and a Masters of Fine Arts from York University.

Waters' solo exhibition venues include The Vernon Public Art Gallery, Rodman Hall, The Art Gallery of South Western Manitoba, The Canadian War Museum, The Military Museums, YYZ Artist's Outlet, and The Glenhyrst Gallery.

Writing credits include the illustrated military memoir, The Hero Book (Conundrum Press) and the anthology, Embedded on the Homefront (Heritage House).

He has received multiple grants from The Toronto Arts Council, The Ontario Arts Council and The Canada Council for the Arts. In 2012, he was awarded The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

For more information about Waters and his work visit his website www.scottwaters.ca



Far left: This painting created by Canadian Forces Artist Program volunteer Scott Waters during his 2006 residency at CFB Gagetown depicts how camouflage in the military is based on a soldier's surroundings.

Left: In this painting Waters portrays Lt Orde wearing a patch in memory of MCpl Byron Greff, the last Canadian soldier to be killed in Afghanistan.

Photo credit Scott Waters

DISCOVERY BOX *makes history* TANGIBLE

Steven Fouchard
Army Public Affairs

The Canadian War Museum is bringing the Second World War to life for students across the country with a new "Discovery Box" of artifacts designed to stimulate discussion in the classroom.

The project is a follow up to the museum's Supply Line First World War Discovery Box, which has been borrowed more than 1,900 times since the museum launched the initiative in 2014.

This year, the museum is circulating 20 Second World War kits and 30 First World War kits, which will be loaned to schools free of charge for two weeks at a time. Both are aimed at students from Grades 4 to 12.

Sandra O'Quinn, a learning specialist with the museum, said the Second World War box contains 23 artifacts, some reproductions, others authentic. There are hands-on objects and clothing, photographs and documents. As was the case with the First World War version, she added, they were chosen to spark students' curiosity.

"A big part of the current curriculum in most provinces is teaching historical literacy skills and inquiry-based thinking," she said. "So, by giving them things that are curious and cause them to ask questions, it opens up a whole line of thinking for the teacher to run with."

Feedback from the first round of Second World War kit loans is still being gathered, but O'Quinn said she suspects students will be fascinated by two artifacts in particular: a lifeboat ration tin and a "sweetheart pin."

"It's a real ration. We filled it with epoxy so that it won't spoil. It's got chocolate tablets, some crackers. You open it up and it still smells like chocolate. Sweetheart pins were often given by a service person to their loved one," she said. "They really capture the daily lives of Canadians at home during the war."

Difficult history themes

One big take-away from the user feedback received, O'Quinn noted, was that teachers wanted more focus on the experiences of women and visible minorities in wartime. The museum has responded by incorporating the story of Japanese-Canadians who were forcibly relocated over concerns about their loyalty.

The product also deals with the Holocaust.

"Teachers don't want to shy away from difficult history so that's why we felt it was important to include those," O'Quinn said.

Also, among the artifacts is a helmet of the sort worn, not only by soldiers on the front, but also by Canadian Women's Army Corps members and civilians volunteers on the home front.

"We have an image of a group of African-Canadians in the Dartmouth area and they're all wearing the helmets," said O'Quinn. "It shows the diversity of those affected and of those participating in the war."

The museum has also created supplementary materials to aid teachers, and they include first-hand accounts from Canadians who lived through the period.

"I think there are a lot of opportunities to link those people with the objects and have even more depth of learning," said O'Quinn.

Bookings for both First and Second World War kits began Nov. 1

Bookings were completely filled by schools in all regions of Canada for the first school term.

Reservations for the winter school term can be made beginning Nov. 1. To book a box go to: https://www.warmuseum.ca/s1/supplyline/bookings/

This authentic Second World War-era coat is just one example of the contents of the Canadian War Museum's Supply Line Second World War Discovery Box. The resource is being made available to schools at no charge and includes other artifacts from the era to enhance classroom instruction.

Photos Provided by the Canadian War Museum.

VETERAN'S COMMON SCENTS BUSINESS

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

When Lieutenant-Commander (Retired) David Lewis launched his small business, he had a simple business plan that relied on one premise: The nose knows common scents.

Knowing there are about 450 olfactory receptors that communicate between the nose and brain, the 60-year-old veteran created Battle Rattle Candle Company - scented candles with a military twist. Ten per cent of net sales are donated to Canadian veteran charities.

All 30 of his candles are military themed. Afghan Tea, Galley Cookies, Kabul Snow, Duff, and the list goes on, "making scents of our time in the military," he says.

He has divided them into two categories: domestic operation scents and deployed scents, with a recent launch of holiday scents such as Ginger-Bloggins Man, and Moosemilk.

LCdr Lewis spent 13 years in the military as a public affairs officer. In 2011, he was posted to Camp Eggers in Kabul, Afghanistan, as Deputy Director of Social Media for NATO. Smelling a chai-scented candle a few months ago instantly brought him back to that deployment and the tea he drank.

"I began to ask myself, what if I created a line of scented candles for military members and veterans. Ones that would have a unique point of reference for anyone who has ever served in any branch of Canada's armed forces."

After a bit of research and experimenting, he set about turning his London, Ontario, home into a mini factory. Pots of paraffin wax are heated on the stove top before adding his special scent formulas and colours. Then he pours them into small tins, adding the final touch of a wick in the centre. Each tin is topped with a lid and label.

His candle names hold meaning to those who serve and have served. Some will even bring about a chuckle such as the Beardforgen, the approval of facial hair in branches of the Canadian Armed Forces. The smell is reminiscent of beard grooming products. Or the Freshly Minted Officer that is full of distinctive peppermint overtones.

On a more nostalgic note is When We First Met, a baby powder scented candle designed for military parents who were deployed when their child was born.

"There is a story behind each candle scent and we have a little write-up explaining each one that is available on the website," says LCdr (Ret'd) Lewis.

He sells them on his website – www.battlerattlecandlecompany – and so far they are available at The Military Museums Giftshop in Calgary, and The Canadian Warplane Museum Giftshop in Hamilton, ON. They retail for $14.

In the three months he has been in business, Battle Rattle has made donations to Veterans Voices of Canada, with future donations going to Wounded Warriors Canada, Can Praxis, Veterans Emergency Transition Services, and Quilts of Valour. He has also teamed up with Cadets Canada to provide personalized unit candles for fundraisers.

SACRIFICE AND LEGACY:

Two Amputees Share Special Bond

Courtesy The War Amps

Sean Borle, 24, recalls meeting Second World War veteran Lloyd Brown, 96, for the first time six years ago at a Remembrance Day ceremony.

"We had this magical moment where I reached out my right hand and he put out his left to shake hands," he says.

Borle was born missing his left hand, and Brown lost his right arm on Oct. 18, 1944, while serving with the Loyal Edmonton Regiment in Italy.

"I was staked at a farmhouse which had a children's treehouse located behind it," says Brown. "In the treehouse was a sniper who kept shooting at our boys. A tank then came which shot out shells, the shrapnel hitting my right arm."

When Brown arrived at the hospital, the doctors had to amputate his arm.

"Fortunately, I was in such shock that I didn't feel a thing," he recalls.

The ability to find the positive in a dark situation is one reason why Borle admires Brown. On Remembrance Day, the pair share a special tradition of laying a wreath on behalf of The War Amps, an organization entering its second century of service this year.

The War Amps was started by war amputee veterans returning from the First World War to help each other adapt to their new reality as amputees. They then welcomed amputee veterans following the Second World War, sharing all that they had learned.

Borle grew up in The War Amps Child Amputee (CHAMP) Program, which provides financial assistance for the cost of artificial limbs, emotional support and regional seminars to young amputees across Canada. It was started by War Amps members, like Brown, who realized their experiences of living with amputation could help others.

Through what they call "Operation Legacy," Borle and his fellow members of CHAMP have now "taken up the torch" of remembrance to pay tribute to the veteran members of The War Amps, whose efforts have made a difference in the lives of thousands of amputees.

"I can't overstate the impact these programs have on young amputees and their futures," says Borle. "Knowing there are people like Lloyd who understand what it's like to be missing a limb, makes you feel like you're not alone."

When Brown attends the Remembrance Day ceremonies, he reflects on all those in his regiment who never came home.

"It's heartbreaking to think of all those who lost their lives and it's important to remember them," he says.

For Borle, it's special to share Remembrance Day with Brown.

"I would not be the person I am today had it not been for that decision more than 100 years ago to begin The War Amps," says Borle. "It is our commitment as Champs that the legacy and sacrifices of Lloyd, and all the war amputee veterans, will be remembered and carried forward."

Second World War amputee veteran Lloyd Brown shares a special bond and Remembrance Day tradition with Sean Borle.

the goggle-eyed life saver

This gas rattle was one of the noisemakers that warned troops of chemical attacks.

Sharon Adams
Courtesy Legion Magazine

The first gas mask issued to British troops after the Germans unleashed the devilish new weapon in 1915 was devised by a doctor from Newfoundland.

On April 22, 1915, German troops on the Western Front released 160 tonnes of chlorine gas, which turned into a yellow-green cloud six kilometres long and half a kilometre wide. It drifted on the wind over Canadian and French lines and, heavier than air, settled in low areas turning trenches into death traps.

When chlorine contacts moisture in the eyes, nose and lungs, it turns to an acid that blinds, burns and blisters. It destroys lung tissue; victims drown in their own body fluids or die of asphyxiation. There is no antidote.

Back then, no one was prepared. Men began hacking and coughing after breathing the bleach-scented gas. Many died, others were blinded and burned; most survivors suffered lifelong lung problems.

Canadian artillery officer Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Morrison was horrified to see men "literally coughing their lungs out," later to "roll about like mad dogs in their death agonies."

In the second attack two days later, Canadian troops were told to hold a handkerchief or sock wet with water or urine over their noses so the chlorine would crystallize there before reaching the lungs.

On May 3, 1915, the British issued 30,000 gauze-wrapped cotton pads, which were dunked in bicarbonate of soda, then held over the nose and mouth. Goggles were issued to protect the eyes. This was improved by the Black Veil respirator, which featured a string to hold the pad in place.

It wasn't enough.

By June 6, British and Canadian soldiers were issued the first gas mask—hood, actually—designed by Captain Cluny Macpherson, medical officer of the 1st Newfoundland Regiment.

Macpherson suggested covering the whole head in a flannel bag soaked in a chemical mixture rendering it impervious to gas. The Hypo helmet, known as the British Smoke Hood, had a visor of mica or cellulose acetate. It was fragile and caused headaches, likely from a build-up of carbon dioxide, but it was a start.

It was followed by a hood with eyepieces and a valve through which troops exhaled. It was described as the "goggle-eyed bugger with the tit."

Macpherson continually improved his designs, even after he returned home, his attention turning from soldiers to miners' lung problems.

Two years into the war, all sides were using artillery shells containing gas, and more and more sophisticated gas masks were developed in response to continual development of lethal vaporous threats.

On July 12, 1917, the Germans began using mustard gas, which did not need to be inhaled to be lethal—this colourless, oily vapour can be absorbed through the skin. It stripped the mucous membranes in the lungs and stomach, causing internal bleeding. Its long-lasting pollution of soil, mud, water and clothing continued to claim victims from secondary poisoning for weeks after attacks.

By 1917, the small-box respirator had been developed and distributed to British and Canadian troops. Air was drawn through a filter box and decontaminated before passing into the face mask.

Troops cursed gas masks. Regardless of design, they were uncomfortable and cumbersome. But they were also thankful for them.

A soldier wears an early gas mask for protection from poisonous clouds.

55 MILLION
British gas masks produced

2.5 MILLION
Number of Hypo helmets distributed

1.3 MILLION
Gas casualties on all sides

185,000
British and Empire gas casualties

112,000
Tonnes of chemical weapons released by all sides

90,000
Battlefield deaths due to mustard gas

Firefight in Kandahar

Sharon Adams
Courtesy Legion Magazine

For weeks in April 2011, Kandahar in Afghanistan had endured an increasing number of Taliban attacks. On May 7, the city of a million descended into chaos.

Somewhere between 60 and 100 insurgents and 20 suicide bombers attacked multiple targets, including the governor's compound, Afghan army headquarters, three police stations, the mayor's office, two high schools and an Afghanistan intelligence agency office.

Insurgents had taken over a three-storey shopping centre and were shooting down into the governor's compound.

The Afghan National Police sent in their special response team, and soon help was asked of Canadian Special Operations Task Force 58 and the embedded partnering team at forward operating base Graceland, commanded by Captain David Suffoletta.

One of the team's first objectives was clearing the massive shopping centre, a job that took about 12 hours.

The combined force moved through the lower floors fairly quickly, finding some civilians, and taking into custody wounded young men who might be terrorists. But insurgents, who had carefully barricaded themselves in shops on the top floor, had a clear range of fire and took every advantage of it.

It took half a dozen attempts under heavy fire to clear the building.

Eventually, hot ammunition set alight flammable goods in shops surrounding the insurgents, providing cover for the joint force to fire into the terrorists' lair, and coincidentally setting off their stockpiled ammunition.

The fire was out and the building secure at about 6 a.m.

Canadians involved in the battle earned two Stars of Military Valour, a Medal of Military Valour, a Meritorious Service Cross and three Meritorious Service Medals. Their names were not initially released "for security and operational reasons," at the time the awards were presented.

But names of two recipients of the Star of Military Valour were declassified in 2017.

Capt Suffoletta was one of them. His citation reads, "Under intense fire and at great personal risk, he led his team through a close-quarter clearance operation of a multi-storeyed building, valiantly coordinating multiple assaults that successfully neutralized the insurgent threat."

He repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire to provide cover for his men.

"He provided me with the white light needed to place the munitions in the correct room thereby seriously divulging his position to the insurgents," recalled one colleague quoted in an article by Colonel Bernd Horn on the Canadian Military Journal website.

The other recipient was Sergeant Sébastien Courville, who "demonstrated exceptional courage and dedication while mentoring an assault element…during a spectacular and prolonged attack," reads his citation for the Star of Military Valour.

Sgt Courville "never hesitated to lead the assault against insurgents and exposed himself to close range fire each time," said Capt Suffoletta, quoted in the article. "He showed incredible skill in his ability to motivate his wavering Afghan force for each assault."

Canadians involved in the battle earned two Stars of Military Valour, a Medal of Military Valour, a Meritorious Service Cross and three Meritorious Service Medals.

AMBUSH in Zhari District

Gunners go into action at Patrol Base Wilson, Zhari District, Kandahar Province, Afghanistan.

Photo by MCpl Robert Bottrill, Combat Camera

Sharon Adams
Courtesy Legion Magazine

It was the middle of the night on June 4, 2008, when a squad of five Canadians and a company of 55 Afghan army recruits they were mentoring left base to check on some empty Taliban weapon caches in the Zhari District west of Kandahar.

After a long march, they stopped between two farmers' fields. Bullets suddenly hit a low mud wall nearby.

The Taliban, perhaps as many as 60, had been waiting for them.

The Canadians and Afghans dove for cover behind the metre-high wall, and soon realized they were pinned down.

"They pretty much had us," Corporal Cary Baker said in a Global News interview. "They came very close to completely encircling us."

The Afghan recruits were green, but soon followed the Canadians' example in shooting back; popping up over the wall to fire some shots, ducking for cover and changing position as Taliban fighters shot back, then repeating.

Captain Jonathan Snyder coordinated the defensive firing, sending Capt Robert Peel and Cpl Baker to the south end of the wall and Cpl Steven Bancarz to the north end. Cpl James Ball and a small Afghan team were dispatched to find a way out.

In the following two-hour fire-fight, two Afghan soldiers were seriously wounded.

Cpl Ball managed to contact reinforcements to the north of the wall, and when the firing eased a bit, Capt Snyder ordered a retreat and exhorted the Afghans not to leave wounded comrades behind. Capt Peel, Cpl Bancarz and Cpl Baker laid down covering fire during the escape.

They made it to safety, put the two wounded on helicopters and returned to base.

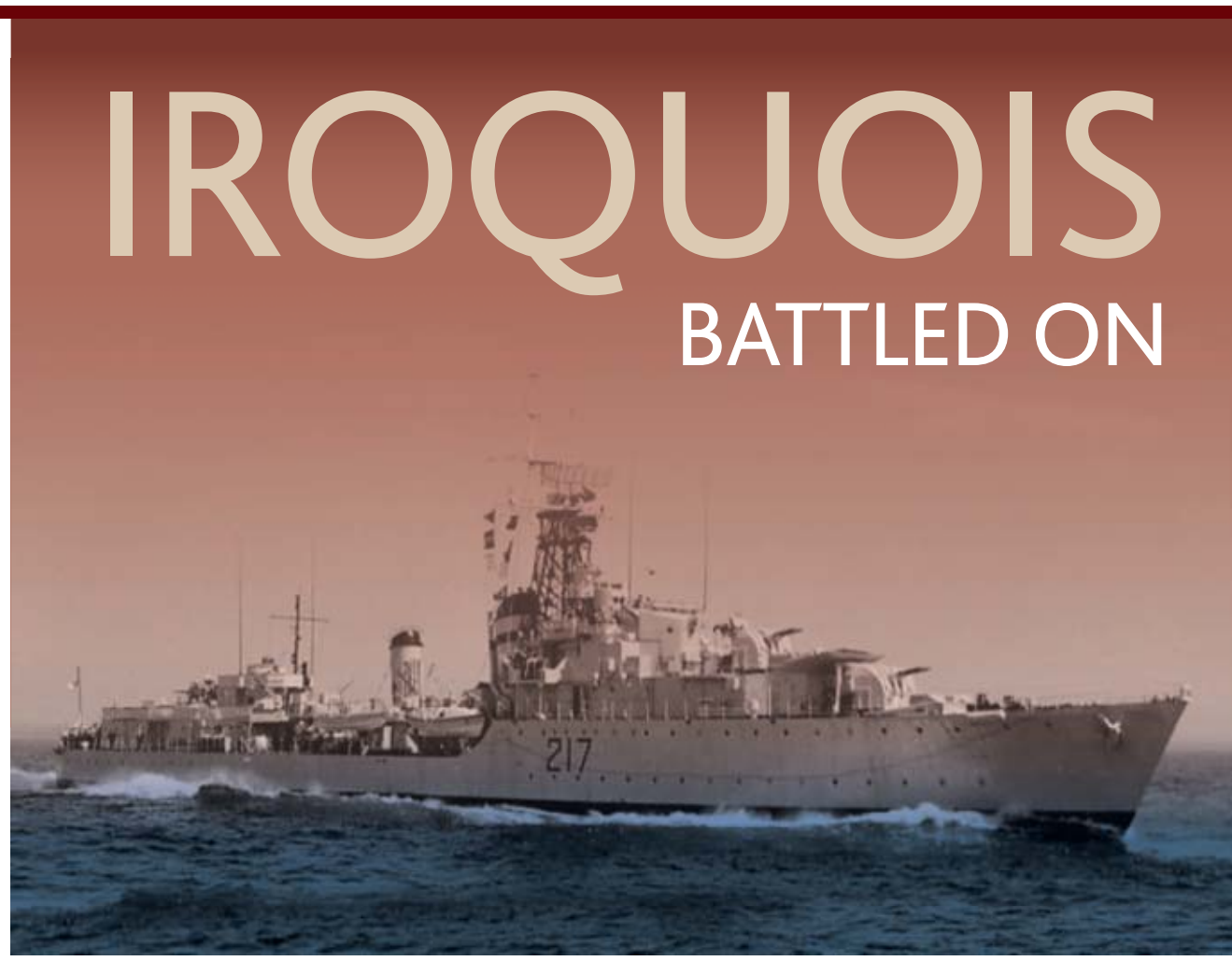
Capt Peel, Cpl Bancarz and Cpl Baker received the Medal of Military Valour, and Cpl Ball, who risked enemy fire to keep the escape route open, and Capt Snyder, who coached the Afghan commander and coordinated the fight, were awarded the Star of Military Valour.

"With little chance of survival, they exposed themselves to great peril and retaliated against the enemy while encouraging the Afghan soldiers to do the same," reads the Governor General's citation.

However, Capt Snyder was not at the medal ceremony. Just three days later, he stumbled into an unmarked well during a night patrol and died.

IROQUOIS BATTLED ON

Sharon Adams
Courtesy Legion Magazine



HMCS Iroquois was on its first tour of duty in Korea, under frequent fire as it patrolled the peninsula's east coast, itself frequently firing on North Korean rail lines.

A tunnel near Songjin on the main rail line carrying war supplies from Russia to North Korea was shelled and under constant repair. It was the target for about two hours on Oct. 2, 1952, as Iroquois worked to keep repair crews from bringing the line back into operation.

At 4 p.m., the Tribal-class destroyer stopped firing and began a long, slow turn seaward. North Korean shore batteries opened fire when Iroquois was fully broadside.

In the petty officers' mess, Peter Fane was positioned to pass shells from the ship's magazine to the gun battery on the deck above. Suddenly over the ship's broadcast system came the words "Alarm, surface port, gunfire."

Shells destroyed the gun overhead.

"Our secondary armament consisting of a twin three-inch, 50-calibre gun and one of our Bofors [anti-aircraft] gun batteries opened fire and quickly silenced the battery," Fane recalls in a Memory Project interview.

Lieutenant-Commander John Quinn was killed, as well as Elburne Baikie, a loader who had been holding a four-inch shell, which exploded.

"This shell hit the deck between the legs of another gun loader [Wally Burden] and he fell through the hole with both legs blown off."

Able Seamen J.A. Gaudet and E.M. Jodoin were seriously wounded and eight others suffered splinter wounds.

Burden "lasted for about five hours before he succumbed to his wounds." He had asked Commander William Landymore, who later became a rear-admiral, that he not be buried at sea.

"HMCS Iroquois thus became the only Canadian naval ship to suffer losses due to enemy action," said Fane.

The ship transferred its dead and seriously wounded onto a U.S. navy tanker on its way to Japan and returned to duty after a short memorial service.

"The next day, we re-entered the bay where we had been hit and were closed up at action stations for just over an hour and a half," said Fane. "I think this was the longest period of time any of us lived, for we had no way of knowing if the North Koreans had brought in another field gun battery. Thankfully they hadn't."

Iroquois, with help from a spotter aircraft, picked off the main North Korean gun battery and several smaller ones, putting them all out of action.

The dead crew members were buried with full military honours in the Commonwealth war cemetery near Yokohama, Japan.

"The living owe it to those who no longer can speak to tell their story for them."

Korean War Veteran receives special medal

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

There were hugs, cheers and tears for the family of an ailing veteran of the Royal Canadian Navy when he received an Ambassador for Peace medal for his service in the Korean War.

Chief Petty Officer First Class (Retired) Melvin Hiles, 90, was presented the commemorative medal by Korean Consulate Official Kangjun Lee during a private ceremony at the Kiwanis Village seniors home in Nanaimo Oct. 8.

CPO1 (Ret'd) Hiles served aboard Royal Canadian Navy destroyer HMCS Sioux from June 1950 to March 1951 during his 25-year military career that ended with an honourable discharge in 1973.

The ceremony was attended by his children and other family members, including his 98-year-old sister Laura who also resides at Kiwanis Village. She was moved to tears of joy according to her nephew, 58-year-old Garth Hiles.

Because of health problems, CPO1 (Ret'd) Hiles was unable to offer an acceptance speech or speak at the ceremony. Garth says his father immediately "perked up" upon receiving the award including an ear-to-ear grin.

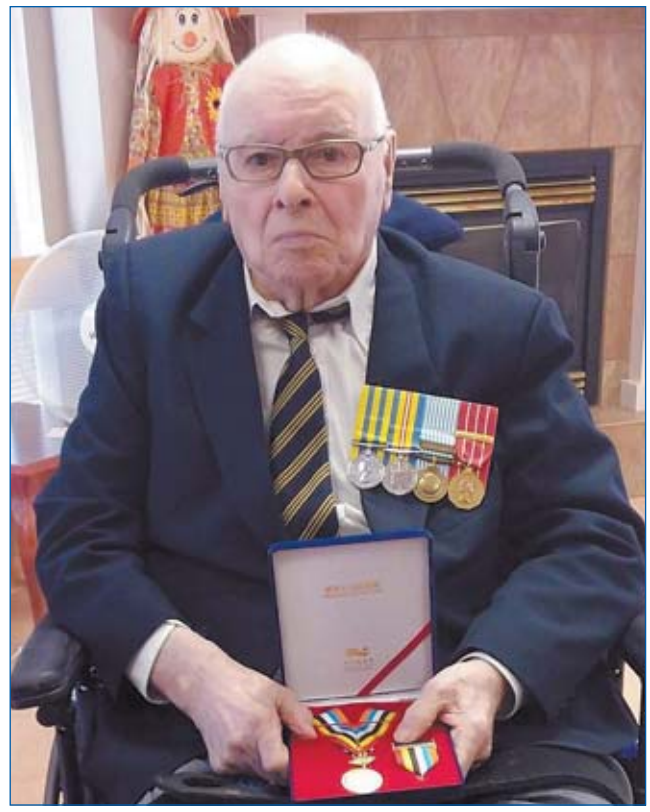
"Dad has always been a man of few words, but he was touched by receiving any form of recognition of his vast sacrifices in his naval career," said Garth. "He is proud of his country and all the navy has done for other countries in their fight for freedom."

Garth and his wife Siobhan applied for the medal on behalf of his father.

"When I first found out he was going to receive the award it made me very emotional and it still brings tears to my eyes whenever I think of Dad and others who have served and sacrificed for our freedom."

The commemorative award contains a medal, pin, and commemorative certificate, an expression of appreciation from the government of South Korea. It is awarded to foreign servicemen and women who served in the Korean War. It was first awarded to veterans as a special memento for those who returned to South Korea through its Revisit Program.

The inscription on the commemorative certificate reads: "When you first arrived in Korea it was a nation with no hope or dream. However, as you risked your life to defend a country you never knew and a people you never met, you left the seeds of hope and a dream; so that Korea can rise as the Peaceful, democratic and prosperous you now know today."



Chief Petty Officer First Class (Retired) Melvin Hiles, 90, is presented with his Ambassador For Peace medal by Korean Consulate Official Kangjun Lee during a private ceremony at the Kiwanis Village seniors home in Nanaimo on Oct. 8.

Credit Garth Hiles

An undated file photo of Melvin Hiles from his first days at CFB Esquimalt.

Melvin Hiles, a Prairie boy

CPO1 (Ret'd) Hiles was raised on farm in Dummer, Sask. He enrolled in the navy on March 13, 1948, at recruiting office in Regina. In 1949, he was posted to HMCS Naden in Victoria where he was then assigned to HMCS Cayuga as an Ordinary Seaman.

His sons say they know few details about their father's military career and his many deployments during the Cold War. He was like many military men of his era who seldom talked about their service or wartime work.

"My father seemed to always be away on deployment somewhere," said Garth. "My early childhood memories are of dad sending post cards by air mail to me from all over the world. I often wonder how my mother raised four boys on her own, but I do know the navy families were very close and supported each other while the dads were at sea."

CPO1 (Ret'd) Hiles' grandson is carrying on the navy legacy. Leading Seaman Tyler Hiles works in *HMCS Vancouver.*

For more information on how to apply for an Ambassador For Peace Medal visit the South Korean Consulate Webpage: http://overseas.mofa.go.kr/ca-ko/index.do

Did you know

Every year on November 11, Canadians pause in a moment of silence to honour and remember the men and women who have served, and continue to serve Canada during times of war, conflict and peace. We remember the more than 2,300,000 Canadians who have served throughout our nation's history and the more than 118,000 who made the ultimate sacrifice.

A FORGOTTEN HERO OF A FORGOTTEN WAR

Above: **Murray Edwards attends a ceremony for his 90th year certificate presented by Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry at Veterans Memorial Lodge at Broadmead in November 2019.** Credit: Peter Mallett

Top of page: **Lt Governor George Pearkes (left) and Lt Mike Levy review the Guard of Honour on the grounds of the B.C. Legislature, during its opening in 1963.** Credit: Mike Levy

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

A 99-year-old veteran of the Korean War isn't giving up his lifelong quest to see a platoon mate receive proper recognition for his unparalleled heroism at the Battle of Kapyong.

Murray Edwards served Canada from 1942 - the height of the Second World War - to the Korean War, Cyprus, and the Six Day War in the Middle East before his retirement from the Canadian Armed Forces in 1969.

Edwards, a resident at the Veterans Lodge at Broadmead, turns 100 in January. While his mobility has been hampered by a stroke and he uses a walker to get around, his memory remains crystal clear of his time in Korea and the selflessness of Lt Mike Levy.

He says Lt Levy was intentionally excluded from a Military Cross medal for heroism because of the commanding officer's bigotry towards Jews.

Edwards says Levy is truly a forgotten hero of Canada's 'Forgotten War'. Levy died in 2007.

"I was lucky to know him and we were lucky to have him as the most experienced officer in the entire [PPCLI] battalion," said Edwards. "We were also lucky to have him in the right place at the right time at Kapyong."

Recalling Kapyong

In 1950, when war again broke out in Korea, the Second Battalion Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry were deployed to the Korean Peninsula as part of the United Nations Command Forces response to the invasion of South Korea by communist forces from the north.

On April 21, 600,000 soldiers from North Korea and of the 60th Chinese Infantry Division began their march south in an ill-fated attempt to break Allied lines and capture Seoul.

A year later, the advancing army flooded the Kapyong Gorge. The UN contingent from New Zealand, Australia and the United States were grossly outnumbered, but occupied strategic positions.

The Battle of Kapyong began in the nighttime hours of April 25, 1951, as the Chinese launched a massive assault on 700 Patricians exposed in a vulnerable position on Hill 677. Those included Lt Levy's Platoon 10, which he commanded.

In multiple radio transmissions, and hunkered down in a foxhole, Lt Levy ordered mortars and artillery be fired near his position to attack the enemy.

More than 2,300 shells fell in close proximity to him, some of them landing within 10 yards. The heavy fire worked, resulting in the decisive victory for UN Forces and mass casualties for the Chinese.

"If it had been someone like myself or another officer in his place, we wouldn't have been as effective in calling in the artillery or mortar fire the way he did," said Edwards. "The big thing was he put his own personal safety and survival aside and called in mortar fire, drawing it perilously close to his position."

Robbed of honours

According to Edwards, and multiple accounts from other PPCLI veterans, after catching wind of Lt Levy's remarkable efforts, PPCLI commanding officer Lieutenant-Colonel Jim Stone declared "I will never award a medal to a Jew."

Instead of Levy receiving a Military Cross for his role in the victory, a medal was awarded to the Commander of D Company headquarters, Captain J.G. 'Wally' Mills, who was the man that helped monitor and relay Lt Levy's coordinates.

Since Lt Levy was such a well-known figure in the PPCLI and his reputation from the Second World War preceeded him, word of LCol Stone's remarks spread like wildfire. Edwards says many of his fellow Patricians were "truly devastated" to hear their commanding officer's decree.

"Hearing Stone's comments on Levy lowered our unit's morale and esteem and made us all wonder how our own colonel could make such a remark. It was very obvious the colonel did not single out Levy as an individual, but that is how he felt about Jewish people. I think his [Levy's] chance of getting a medal ended there."

Levy's son, Ottawa-based accountant Don Levy says he and his family are still perplexed by reports of Col Stone's comments, since neither he nor his siblings or their parents ever identified as being Jewish.

"Over the years many people have mistakenly assumed our family is Jewish, but we are not, and in all the writings about my father and the Korean War, the error has never been corrected," said Levy.

Righting the wrong

In the years following the war, Edwards obtained accounts from dozens of PPCLI members who had heard LCol Stone's comments in an attempt to get Lt Levy due credit. Lt Levy and his entire battalion did receive the rare United States Presidential Unit Citation in the years following the war, but nothing similar came from Canada.

But time would eventually expire on Edward's hopes, as military proviso prohibits the retroactive awards for military personnel after a period of five years.

He tried to get that reversed with the help of Hub Gray, historian author of *Beyond The Danger Close*.

"In a situation that can only be described as frantic life or death battle, Levy demonstrated his capabilities under the most trying of conditions," wrote Gray in one passage.

With the help of Canadian military historians Dan Bjarnason and David Bercuson, Gray managed to open up a clearer understanding about how Kapyong was won.

Their efforts caught the attention of former Governor-General of Canada, Adrienne Clarkson which resulted in Lt Levy being granted a Coat of Arms in 2004.

In 2017, Lt Levy was posthumously awarded an Apostle of Peace Medal by the Democratic Republic of Korea during a ceremony in Calgary.

During the acceptance speech by his son Guy Levy said that if his father was here today he would immediately want to share the recognition with the 17 men of his platoon who "so valiantly defended Hill 677 and the road to Seoul."

Edwards isn't giving up his dream to see more recognition bestowed upon his friend. He is hoping community leaders in Victoria and across Canada see the light and name a public building in Lt Levy's name.

Engineer recalls tragedy of Kootenay explosion

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

It's been 50 years since a deadly explosion and fire ripped through HMCS Kootenay, but the "awful aftermath' still haunts 71-year-old Englishman Robert Twitchin.

The east coast tragedy is still considered the worst peace-time accident in the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), killing nine sailors.

It all went wrong in the engine room of the Restigouche-Class destroyer on the morning of Oct. 23, 1969, as the ship underwent a full-power trial 200 nautical miles off the coast Plymouth, England.

The explosion created a blackened bulge in the starboard side of the vessel. Kootenay was towed approximately 200 miles to the Davonport Royal Dockyard in Plymouth.

Twitchin was a junior member of a six-man team of civilian engineers that assisted in the investigation and subsequent repairs. He was a mechanical fitter and worked on the removal of the ship propellers, and then on the investigation that involved the dismantling of drive trains and the ship's problematic gearbox and bearings.

Two years previously, on the Royal Navy Aircraft Carrier HMS Eagle, Twitchin had also witnessed the terrible aftermath of a fatal fire in B boiler room, an experience that helped him confront the "devastation" awaiting him and his fellow engineers as they descended into the Kootenay engine room.

TRULY SHOCKING

Prior to their investigation, the team was briefed by their Technical Supervisor Albert Benson, who advised them to "tread lightly" and sensitively in their investigation. That advice would very soon make sense.

"When we first got down into the Kootenay engine room and saw the extensive destruction, including the ripped-open starboard gear case cover and the damage from the exploding lubricating oil vapour, it was truly shocking," said Twitchin. "The whole compartment had been blackened by the explosion and fire with lots of debris all around, and there was an overwhelming burnt smell throughout the ship."

After his first visit to the engine room and learning of the fatalities and seeing the immensity of the tragedy, Twitchin said he immediately picked up on the "deathly quiet sadness" of the few RCN personnel who had stayed with the ship.

The team carried out their investigation work over two weeks, in their search for the cause of the explosion. Twitchin says that "from the very beginning of the investigation, just by looking at the shattered gear case cover, it was immediately clear there had been no monitoring of the gear case bearing temperatures."

The engineers quickly realized that neither of the port or starboard gear case covers were fitted with local thermometers, but instead had screwed blanking plugs fitted in their place.

It was also noted by the team of engineers that the blanking plugs were caked in old paint, which implied they had not been removed regularly.

"It would have been impossible for engine room watch keepers to monitor a bearing overheating; in essence the ship was running blind," said Twitchin.

HORRIFIC ACCIDENT

The board of inquiry would publically determine the explosion was caused by insert bearing shells in the starboard gearbox that had been installed backward. This situation disrupted the flow of lubricating oil causing an overheating of the bearing and eventually the ignition of the lubrication oil.

Seven of the nine men killed in the explosion were working in the engine room, which had only three survivors.

Commander (Retired) Al Kennedy was one of three engine room survivors and was awarded a Wound Stripe medal by the RCN in a ceremony at CFB Esquimalt in May 2019.

Earlier this year, on Feb. 8 in Halifax, Able Seaman (Retired) Allan Dinger Bell was awarded the Wounded Stripe by Vice-Admiral Ron Lloyd, Commander Royal Canadian Navy.

A third shipmate who escaped the engine room fire alive, John MacKinnon, died in 2008. He did not receive the Wound Stripe because it is not awarded posthumously.

Kennedy suffered a host of injuries from the explosion and fire including severe burns to approximately 30 per cent of his body, smoke inhalation, chronic pain syndrome and PTSD. He recalled the incident upon receiving his medal.

"The climb was only seconds but seemed like an eternity. The only thing going through my mind was a feeling of sadness that I was going to die and not be able to see my three month old infant son."

On Oct. 23 in Halifax, the RCN hosted a ceremony to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the explosion. While the tragedy had devastating effects, it ultimately "shaped and redefined" the RCN's firefighting and damage control practices making them core competencies, said Vice Admiral Art McDonald, Commander of the RCN during his address.

In the days, months and years following the impact of the disaster, the experience weighed heavily on Twitchin and the team of engineers at Devonport Royal Dockyard.

"After being so involved in coping with the aftermath of such a horrifying accident, it is very simply a sober reminder of the threat posed by the compact machinery on a warship," said Twitchin. "With superheated steam, high-pressure hydraulics, high pressure air, and electrical supplies everywhere, there are immense potential dangers to ship's staff. When I look back over my 43 years in Davenport Royal Dockyard, the memory of the Kootenay explosion will always be there with me."

LEST WE FORGET:

AB Nelson Murray Galloway
AB Michael Alan Hardy
LS Pierre Serge Bourret
LS Thomas Gordon Crabbe
LS Gary Wayne Hutton
PO2 Lewis John Stringer, CV, CD
PO1 Eric George Harman, CD
CPO2 William Alfred Boudreau
CPO1 Vaino Olavi Partanen, CV, CD

Funeral service for the nine deceased crew members of HMCS Kootenay with the burnt and damaged ship in the background at Devonport, UK, Oct. 27, 1969. The ceremony was held on board HMCS Saguenay, a fellow ship that had served alongside Kootenay in the naval exercise.

WAR OF BREAD AND POTATOES

Soldats Canadienne très bon!

Sharon Adams
Courtesy Legion Magazine

When fighting drew close to the small village of Montigny-en-Ostrevent, France, near the end of the First World War, civilians wisely evacuated.

When they returned home, many found their houses and cottages occupied by Canadian liberators—squatters who were nonetheless warmly welcomed.

"We struck a fine cottage for a billet," wrote signaller Elmer McKay of the Toronto Regiment in his diary on Oct. 23, 1918. "Cleaned out the house. Got bed to sleep in. Table to eat at, with full dinner set. Vase of flowers. Stove with plenty of coal for fire. Made a real comfy Home Sweet Home. This is a jake old war. Almost every night since start from Canal de la Sensée we have found a bed to sleep in. Aaaa…"

The next day, they discovered villagers' gardens "still full of vegetables." Of which they no doubt took liberal advantage.

Within two days, villagers began returning.

"They are perfectly satisfied to have soldiers sleeping in their houses," reads the war diary of the 3rd Battalion on Oct. 25, 1918. "Our men and the civilians most friendly. 'Soldats Canadienne très bon' is all they say. Our men share their rations with them. The French are very grateful as they have not had meat for three years. They are in very bad shape physically through starvation by the Huns."

Three days later, relief supplies began to arrive.

"There are nine men and 20 women and one child, all without food. The men divide their rations with them and assist them every way possible," said the diary.

Yet when soldiers investigated the cellar at nearby Lambrech Chateau, which had at times hosted German General Erich Ludendorff and President Paul Von Hindenburg, they found "thousands of bushels of potatoes," wrote McKay. "Fritz flooded the cellar, but we got to work and rescued the murphies."

As the war ground on and on, food shortages spread farther and farther across Europe. Germany regularly requisitioned food from the local population in occupied territory, since German citizens themselves were on a near-starvation diet.

The shortages even reached the Middle East.

"Jerusalem has not seen worse days," wrote Arab diarist Ihsan Turjman in 1916. "Bread and flour supplies have almost totally dried up…for several days the municipality distributed some kind of black bread to the poor, the likes of which I have never seen. People used to fight over the limited supplies, sometimes waiting in line until midnight. Now, even that bread is no longer available."

The First World War was also a war of bread and potatoes, said historian Avner Offner. The situation was not immediately rectified after the war. In France, fields were littered with unexploded artillery shells and had to be cleared before crops could be sown. Those shells continue to surface even today.

RCAF's first Distinguished Flying Cross recipient

Squadron Leader Ernest McNab was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the first member of the Royal Canadian Air Force to be decorated.

Sharon Adams
Courtesy Legion Magazine

On Oct. 22, 1940, Squadron Leader Ernest McNab of Saskatoon was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the first member of the Royal Canadian Air Force to be decorated (excluding those Canadians serving with the Royal Air Force).

Commanding officer of Canada's first fighter squadron, McNab was also the first to see combat. He shot down a German Dornier bomber on his first foray with the RAF during the Battle of Britain on Aug. 15, 1940, during a training mission to gain battle experience.

He bagged the Dornier, staying on its tail as it rolled and corkscrewed, attempting to get away. As the plane steadied for a moment, McNab sprayed it with machine-gun fire. A second blast shortly afterward brought it down. McNab was a superb pilot, described as "a helluva scrapper who is a handful for any three Germans he meets upstairs."

McNab, called Pee Wee by his friends, took up flying at university and entered the air force after he graduated. He was on the air force team that put on flying demonstrations across the country.

When war was declared, McNab was appointed commander of No. 1 Squadron, RCAF, which he led overseas. After the squadron had received its battle training, it flew as a unit in Canadian-made Hurricanes for the first time on Aug. 25, shooting down two Dorniers.

By mid-October, "at least 23 enemy aircraft have been destroyed by the squadron" led by McNab, reads the citation for his award. "This officer destroyed four of these." By November, the squadron's total had risen to about 70.

In an article for the British press about Canadian involvement in the Battle of Britain, McNab talked about the might of German air fleets launched against London and its effect on "ordinary people of London—people going downtown daily to work in their offices and in their shops—housewives going about their daily chores.

"These people saw their offices dissolve in clouds of debris—returned home to find their dwellings in a disorderly rubble of bricks and beams. There were gaps in their families—in their circle of friends—each time the raiders droned away and the all-clear signal brought London's millions up from the shelters.

"This has been the battle of London—an unremitting nightmare of screaming bombs, falling masonry and crackling flames under a ruddy sky. (Canadians) did our best to drive those masses of German bombers back from the heart of the Empire."

McNab was a superb pilot, described as "a helluva scrapper who is a handful for any three Germans he meets upstairs."

PROFILE OF COURAGE

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT PETER BICKFORD

Major (Retired) William March
RCAF Historian

2019 marks the 75th anniversary of Operation Market Garden, the audacious and ultimately unsuccessful push to secure bridges over several rivers in Holland and thus open a corridor through which the Allied ground forces could sweep, with the goal of ending the war by Christmas 1944.

Flight Lieutenant Peter William Bickford was rejected by the American military because he was a British citizen. So, he came north to join the Royal Canadian Air Force, and eventually found himself in the thick of the action during Operation Market Garden.

Bickford was born in Bristol, England, on July 16, 1920. His family immigrated to North America in 1925 and 10 years later settled in Monongahela, Pennsylvania.

He graduated from the Monongahela High School in 1939 and became a sports editor for the local newspaper, The Daily Republican. In his spare time, he took courses at the Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics.

In the months following the Japanese attack on American forces at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on Dec. 7, 1941, he attempted to enlist in the United States Army, planning to become a flyer. However, he was a British citizen and was turned down.

Welcome to Canada

He then travelled to Toronto in April 1942 and was welcomed with open arms into the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Selected to become a pilot, he undertook basic flying training at No. 13 Elementary Flying Training School, St. Eugene, Ontario, on the Fleet Finch. From there he proceeded to No. 8 Service Flying Training School, Moncton, New Brunswick, on Avro Ansons.

After receiving his pilot wings in May 1943, the newly promoted Pilot Officer Bickford proceeded overseas to England.

After advance training at No. 12 Operational Training Unit, Royal Air Force Station Edgehill, Oxfordshire, and No. 1657 Heavy Conversion Unit, RAF Station Chedburgh, Suffolk, he was posted to 115 Squadron in June 1944. Operating out of RAF Station Witchford, Cambridgeshire, the squadron was part of No. 3 Group, RAF Bomber Command and equipped with four-engine Avro Lancaster bombers.

Mission start

Bickford and his crew flew their first mission on June 14 in support of the Normandy campaign. Over the next several months they conducted more than 25 missions throughout occupied France and Germany; although many of their comrades on the squadron lost their lives, he and his crew came through unscathed. Yet, the ever present stress of operations and the constant loss of friends affected Bickford and he confided as much in a letter written on July 19 to his mentor and friend at The Daily Republican, Floyd M. France.

"Death no longer seems to me the strange and forbidding thing that it once was. Yet even now, though I see it so frequently, I must still ponder its 'cause and effect,' and its real necessity, for it seems too often to claim the very best of men.

I have noticed this consistently: that those whom I like and admire most are the very ones to go. I sometimes find it hard, in the light of this, to acknowledge the unfailing 'benevolence of God.' But it's convinced me of one thing, at least—that God (and I think He must exist in some manner) chooses his new companions with a discriminating eye.

Death is of course no hardship to the one it claims, and if we could but look at it through His eyes we would see little cause for sadness. Certainly, those in this service who think about the matter fear much less for themselves than for the pain their deaths will cause others. But we mortals, being by nature a selfish lot, must grieve; and it seems to me that when we do, we grieve chiefly for our own loss – not really for the one who has gone.

I, myself, have asked 'why?' many times now, and just as often found no answer. At any rate I must believe that life and death are more than accidents – that nothing is created without a purpose … some object in some greater master plan."

Flight Lieutenant Peter William Bickford (left) with pilots Flight Lieutenant Ken Gadd and Flying Officer Peter Anaka. Along with his entire crew, Flight Lieutenant Bickford died on the night of Sept. 16, 1944 - the first night of Operation Market Garden. Photo via www.aircrewremembered.com

Operation Market begins

Late in the evening of Sept. 16, 1944, Bickford—now holding the rank of flight lieutenant—and his crew in Lancaster LM 693 (KO-T) took off from Witchford with 11 other aircraft from 115 Squadron. They were part of a 54-aircraft attack in support of Operation Market Garden, an aggressive combined airborne and armoured thrust into occupied Holland. Their targets were German flak positions defending the bridge near the Dutch town of Moerdijk.

It was the first night of Operation Market Garden and Flight Lieutenant Bickford's 29th mission. He was one mission short of completing a 30-mission tour of duty.

Enemy flak was light, but the skies were crowded as the aerial armada dropped their high-explosive cargos.

Flight Lieutenant Bickford successfully completed his attack but during the climb away from the target area his Lancaster collided with an aircraft crewed by members of the RAF from 90 Squadron. The crews of both aircraft perished; they were the only losses incurred during the mission. None of the German targets were hit during the attack.

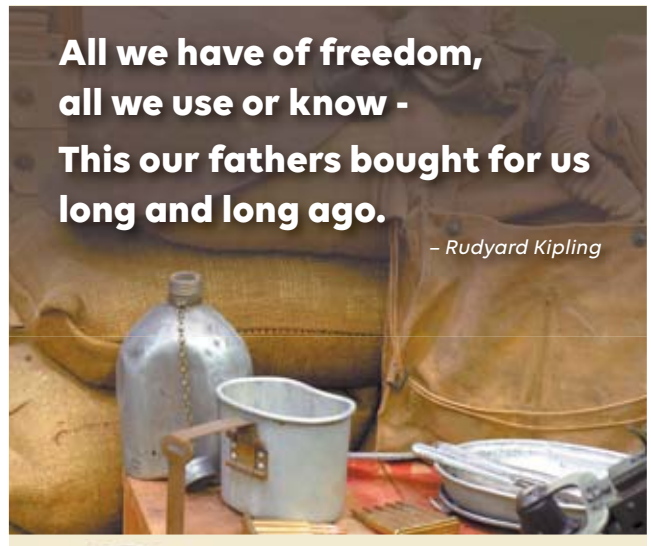
Flight Lieutenant Bruce Johnson, another RCAF pilot with 115 Squadron noted the loss in his diary:

"Not a great deal of opposition but we lost Bickford and crew on it. Came as a bit of a shock to us! Saw a chop [slang for an aircraft loss] right at the target which must have been Bick. At the time I thought it was a bit big for a chop—but I guess it wasn't."

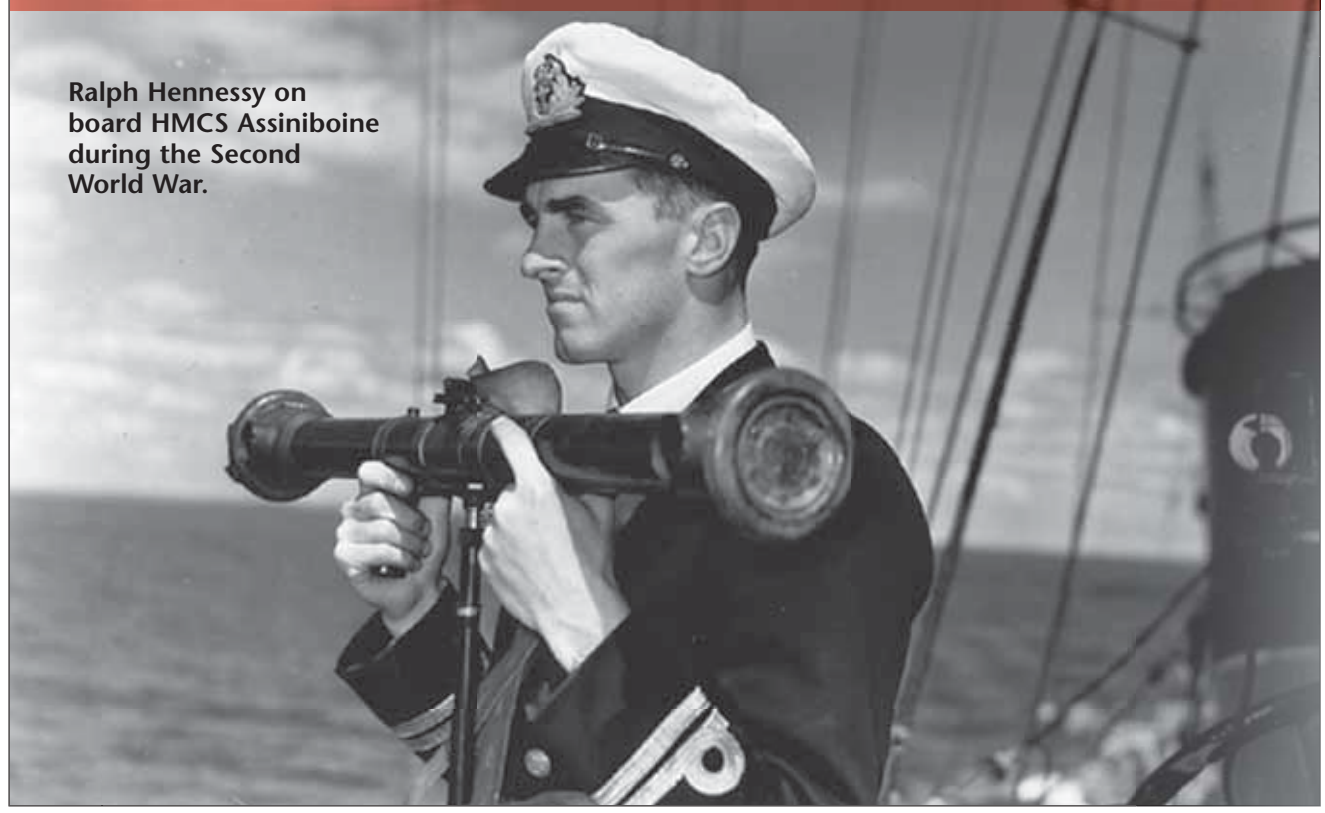
Along with Flight Lieutenant Bickford, Flying Officer Wilfrid George Scanlan (bomb aimer, 22, Westport, Ontario), Flying Officer Arnold Ney Johnston (navigator, 28, Burketon, Ontario), Pilot Officer Douglas Dawson (air gunner, 23, Cookstown, Ontario), Pilot Officer Donald George Flood (air gunner, 20, Woodstock, Ontario) and two members of the RAF—Pilot Officer P.L. Dooley (flight engineer) and Flight Sergeant U.B. Butters (wireless operator)—were killed.

They are buried in the Strijen Protestant Cemetery in Strijen, Holland.

Flight Lieutenant Bickford was 24.



Firefighting heroics save Assiniboine



Ralph Hennessy on board HMCS Assiniboine during the Second World War.

DND

A fire raged aboard His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) Assiniboine, Lieutenant Ralph Hennessy led the fight against the blaze that threatened to sink the destroyer.

Hennessy, just 24 years old, was the Executive Officer of Assiniboine (second in command) in August 1942 when it was assigned to protect a convoy of merchant ships from predatory U-boats in the Atlantic. At the time, one Allied ship was going down every six hours.

During the ocean crossing, Assiniboine engaged German submarine U-210 in a surface battle fought through dense fog. The destroyer was set ablaze when the submarine's deck guns hit the bridge and riddled it with bullets.

"It was pretty spectacular because the gasoline storage for the two motorboats was stored right below the bridge, so that's what caused the fire," said Hennessy. "The fire was so intense I couldn't get down either bridge ladder to the upper deck – it was just a sea of fire right through the bridge structure. So, I leapt off the back of the bridge onto the mast and shimmied down and got the fire parties organized, then went down into the bowels of the ship to get the shellfire damage repaired. And I was still down there doing that when Johnny (Captain Stubbs) rammed the submarine!"

Hennessy led the crew's fight against the fire as Stubbs directed the attack against U-210, first with 120 mm shells, then with the ship's bow. Assiniboine sent the submarine to the bottom of the Atlantic by ramming it twice.

"We found out later we had killed the Captain (of U-210 - Rudolpe Lemcke)," Hennessy said. "I think the most impressive thing to me was not that Johnny rammed the submarine, but that the submarine bounced back up guns firing. So, give them full marks, the Germans," Hennessy said.

Ten prisoners were picked up by Assiniboine and 28 by His Majesty's Ship Dianthus, six of whom were later transferred to Assiniboine. Among them were the submarine's Executive Officer and Engineering Officer.

"We put them head to toe in the bunk of the doctor's cabin, which was burnt out, and with a tough sentry on the door with a loaded gun in his hand. And with orders from me, any problem – fire!"

The other sailors were held in the boiler room and soup was lowered down to them in big bowls with cups.

"We were nice to them," Hennessy said.

Due to the damage to its bow during the altercation, Assiniboine left the convoy and returned to St. John's for repairs. It later returned to action.

Hennessy was presented the Distinguished Service Cross by King George VI for his heroic actions fighting fires during the encounter.

But for Hennessy this was par for the course at the height of the Battle of the Atlantic.

"Every convoy that we took over was a group of merchant ships," Hennessy explained. "Normally, these convoys would run about 40 or 50 ships and we would have all too few escorts against a German submarine pack if we ran into one. So, our main job and the job of our authorities ashore was to route us so that we didn't run into a German Wolf pack. Well, that didn't always work. Sometimes we did and then all proverbial hell broke loose."

Hennessy survived 80 convoy escorts during the war.

Other notable war time actions included participating in the early stages of the chase for the German battleship Bismarck; screening the battleship HMS Prince of Wales with Prime Minister Winston Churchill embarked for the historic meeting off Argentia, NL, to draft the Atlantic Charter; and two appointments in command of Assiniboine.

When the war ended in 1945, Hennessy commissioned the destroyer HMCS Micmac as its first Commanding Officer. He then went on to have an illustrious career in the Royal Canadian Navy, eventually becoming Canada's senior naval officer from 1966 to 1968. He retired as Chief of Personnel of the Canadian Armed Forces in 1971 after 35 years of service.

Hennessy died on June 13, 2014.

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill boarding HMCS Assiniboine.

JAPANESE SUBMARINES BROUGHT UNEASE TO WEST COAST

William 'Glen' Ryder

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

ON a cool, sunny day inside a glassed solarium at Veterans Memorial Lodge at Broadmead Care in Saanich, 97-year-old William 'Glen' Ryder reflected on his days as a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Marine Squadron.

During the final three-and-a-half years of the war, Ryder was part of the Marine Squadron's flying boat squadron of watercraft that patrolled the waters of Canada's Pacific coast.

"There certainly was a good dose of fear and panic in the aftermath of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941," said Ryder. "There were multiple reports of Japanese submarines off the west coast."

Ryder grew up in Athabasca, AB, before moving to the west coast, finding work aboard Canadian Pacific vessel Princess Maquinna, a passenger ship that operated on Vancouver Island's west coast.

With the threat of conscription in Canada looming, he decided to enlist at the RCAF Marine Squadron office on Government Street in an effort to avoid becoming a member of Canada's army.

"I didn't want to be a foot soldier and thought the prospects of getting my call to the army was getting too close for comfort."

Based out of Western Air Command's headquarters at Jericho Beach in Vancouver, Ryder was one of a six man crew that patrolled the waters of Vancouver Island aboard RCAF boat Malecite.

Named for the Algonquin tribe of New Brunswick, Malecite was built in 1941 by the Canadian Power Boat Co. Ltd. of Montreal. The 70-foot vessel had two 1,350-horse power engines capable of reaching speeds of 47 knots full throttle, but were often hampered by rough seas and poor weather conditions of coastal B.C.

It was the job of boat crews to search for downed aircraft, ferry supplies, and escort and provide force protection at six marine squadron stations located in Ucluelet, Alliford Bay, Prince Rupert, Coal Harbour, Bella Bella and Jericho Beach.

"It was also our job to be stationed in areas with heavy air traffic and to be ready and prepared for a downed air craft," said Ryder. "There was a lot of waiting involved and there were only two occasions where Malecite was called out to search for downed aircraft."

Ryder notes both plane crashes were due to a combination of mechanical problems and pilot error.

But the threat of a submarine attack seemed more real to Ryder and his crew.

Submarine attacks

In the summer of 1942, panic and hysteria heightened at the threat of a Japanese attack.

In early June, U.S. Merchant Marine vessel Coast Trader was torpedoed and sunk by Japanese submarine I-26 in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Within two weeks, Canadian freighter Fort Camosun was also torpedoed off Cape Flattery by sister submarine I-26. Ryder's brother Gordon was aboard Camosun, but survived the attack. The ship was eventually towed safely to port after a rescue by RCN corvette HMCS Quesnel.

Rydar's wife Velma's family was not so lucky. Her cousin had married a sailor who worked aboard Coast Trader and had died during its sinking.

That same month the lighthouse at Estevan Point on the west coast of Vancouver Island sustained minor damage after being shelled by a Japanese submarine.

On more than one occasion, Ryder says, they were called into port to wait it out after sightings of Japanese submarines.

The attacks were an attempt by the enemy to disrupt west coast shipping lanes and the flow of goods and commerce, with the added goal of terrorizing residents of the west coast of North America.

Velma, 92, remembers the weekly air raid drills that usually occurred in the middle of the night, with the sirens echoing through the streets of Victoria.

"It was curtains drawn and lights out and everyone was told to go down to the basement and hide in the corner," she recalls. "Some said the drills were an effort to help boost sales of War Bonds, so many people really didn't know what to think, and for many others a state of panic set in."

War's end

Following the horrific events in Pearl Harbor in 1942, the war would drag on for three more years before coming to an end on Sept. 2, 1945. The end was signalled by the detonation of two nuclear weapons over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, by the United States in August 1945 that killed over 200,000 people.

"It was a relief when the war was finally over because everyone believed it could have been much worse; worse than the horrors already seen in Western Europe and Asia," said Ryder.

Following the war, he returned to work aboard Princess Maquinna and would eventually become captain of the vessel. He met Velma in 1949 during a voyage from Victoria to Tofino. They were married later that year, with their marriage lasting more than 70 years.

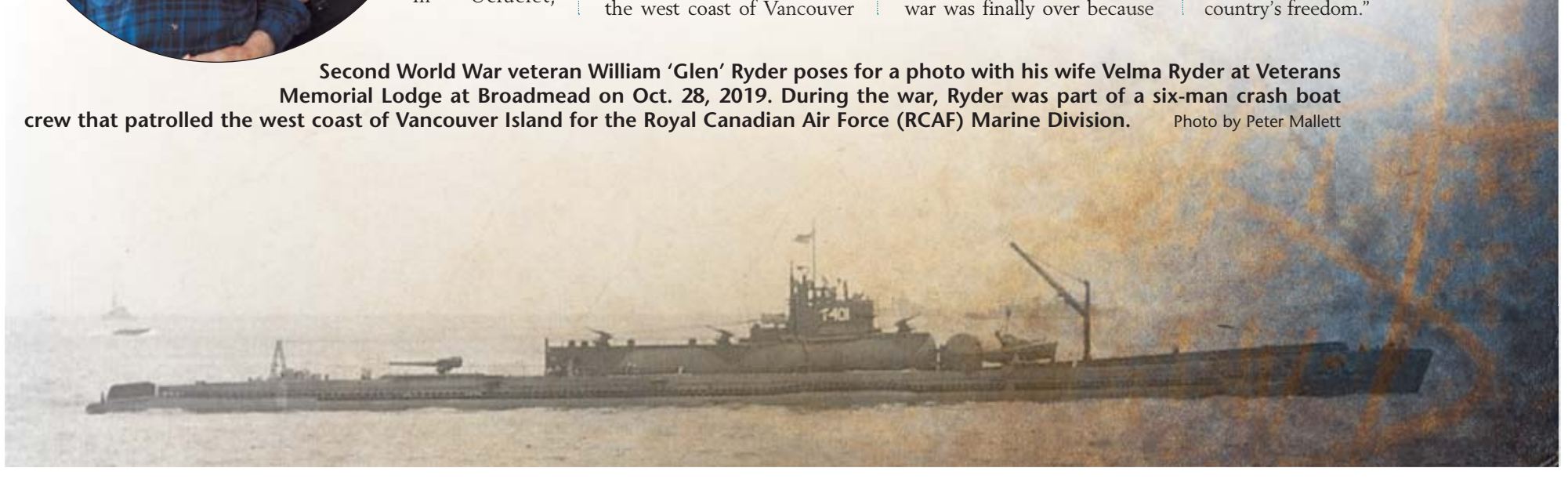
"I was fascinated with everything to do with ships, so when Glen walked out of the ship's wheel house, noticed me, and said hello, I never stood a chance," said Velma.

The couple would raise two sons and two daughters.

With Remembrance Day approaching, Ryder says the moment will give him a chance to reflect on his military career and all of Canada's military personnel, past, present and future. His experiences as an airman in the Marine Division of the RCAF taught him volumes about the value of military service, no matter what the role.

"I think the jobs the men and women do for Canada's military in peacetime are just as important as those during wartime, and are of great importance to protecting our country's freedom."

Second World War veteran William 'Glen' Ryder poses for a photo with his wife Velma Ryder at Veterans Memorial Lodge at Broadmead on Oct. 28, 2019. During the war, Ryder was part of a six-man crash boat crew that patrolled the west coast of Vancouver Island for the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Marine Division. Photo by Peter Mallett



Canada's Indigenous soldiers

THEIR UNBREAKABLE CODE

The clever use of Indigenous languages to create an unbreakable secret code played a vital role in the victory of the Allies in the Second World War.

Corporal (Retired) Charles (Checker) Tomkins during the Second World War, circa 1940. He was part of a group of Indigenous Canadian soldiers who created a secret code using their own language that the enemy had no way to break.

Photo courtesy Alex Lazarowich

Lynn Capuano with files from Shannon Morrow
Army Public Affairs

Secrecy in communication during the Second World War was as important as it was difficult. What better way to create an unbreakable secret code than to use a little-known language as its base?

Messages, whether in plain language or in code, were constantly being intercepted, stolen, overheard or deciphered. It was vital that Canada and its Allies find a way to send secret messages the enemy could not decrypt.

They finally succeeded towards the end of the war. Termed "Code Talking," it cleverly used Indigenous languages to create an unbreakable spoken code.

The job was simple but ingenious in its application. The Code Talkers would translate a secret message into words from an Indigenous language, speak it over the radio and another Indigenous soldier would translate it back into English at the other end.

One of the languages used was that spoken by the Cree First Nation people in Alberta and Saskatchewan. There were many patriotic Cree men and women who served during the Second World War and, since Cree was little-known and only spoken in Canada, its use as a code baffled enemy forces.

One of the few known Code Talkers

Because they were sworn to secrecy during and following the war, few Cree Code Talkers are known by name. However, one was Corporal (Retired) Charles (Checker) Tomkins.

Cpl (Ret'd) Tomkins was born Jan. 8, 1918, in Grouard, Alberta, about 170 kilometres northeast of Grande Prairie. A Métis of Cree and European ancestry, he joined the Canadian Army's Second Armoured Brigade in 1940.

Cpl (Ret'd) Tomkins' family was unaware he had served as a Code Talker until two months before his death in August 2003 at age 85. As he had vowed to remain silent, the family only found out when two Smithsonian Institute interviewers arrived at his home in 2003 once the files had become declassified.

The interviewers asked him questions for an exhibit the museum was preparing on Code Talkers.

Navajo was the primary language American Code Talkers used as code for American Pacific defence, a language that does not have a written form. This made it virtually impossible to break. The Cree-based secret code also used spoken Cree, although it has a written form. Varying dialects among the speakers made it even more cryptic.

During his interview with the Smithsonian researchers, Cpl (Ret'd) Tomkins discussed few details, but he did name some of his deceased comrades, most of whom he helped recruit for the Code Talker program: his brother Peter Tomkins, his half-brother John Smith, Louie Norwest, Walter McDermott and Archie Plante.

These men served in Charles' immediate circle and are some of the only known Cree Code Talkers. The six survived the war but all have since passed away.

Secret recruitment of Code Talkers

Cpl (Ret'd) Tomkins was called to Canadian Military Headquarters in London on Aug. 22, 1942, along with a number of other Indigenous soldiers, for a mysterious mission. Soon enough, they learned they were about to become a secret weapon.

Cpl (Ret'd) Tomkins estimated 100 men were in the room with him the day of his recruitment as a Code Talker. Cree speakers as well as Indigenous soldiers from Ojibwe and other First Nations were tested. Cree speakers were valuable as they were often fluent in other languages such as French and English, especially if they were Métis like Cpl (Ret'd) Tomkins.

The Americans were first to recruit Indigenous people for this task. The American Code Talkers and their role in the Pacific theatre of war was told in the 2002 movie Windtalkers. As a result, the American story is more well-known than the Canadian one.

Like the Cree code, the Navajo code was never broken.

Code Talking begins

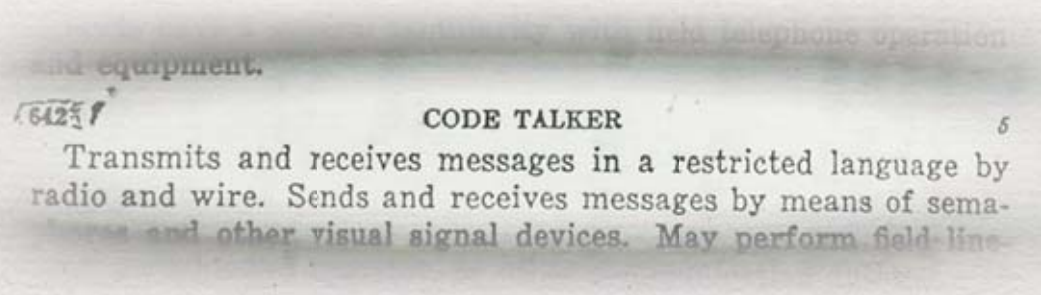
Cpl (Ret'd) Tomkins was assigned, along with other Cree speakers, to the 8th U.S. Air Force and 9th Bomber Command in England. He began translation immediately and described orders over the radio for aircraft that were carrying out bombing orders from England, as well as orders for troop movement and supply missions.

Cree Code Talkers were improvisers. Because the traditional Cree language didn't have words for "tank", "bomb" or "machine gun", they began inventing new terminology.

For example, Cree Code Talkers would use the Cree word meaning "fire" as code for a Spitfire plane, and the Cree words for "wild horse" to identify a Mustang aircraft. The Cree words for "bee" and the number 17 indicated a B17 bomber.

Following their time as Code Talkers, Cpl (Ret'd) Tomkins and the others returned to their Canadian units to prepare for the D-Day invasion. He was a motorcycle dispatch rider with the Second Armoured Brigade, landing in France six days after D-Day. He also served in Germany and Holland.

When the war ended, Cpl (Ret'd) Tomkins returned home to Canada and re-enlisted in the Canadian Army. He served 25 years with a number of different regiments, including Les Fusiliers de Sherbrooke, the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps and Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.



CODE TALKER

Transmits and receives messages in a restricted language by radio and wire. Sends and receives messages by means of sema-

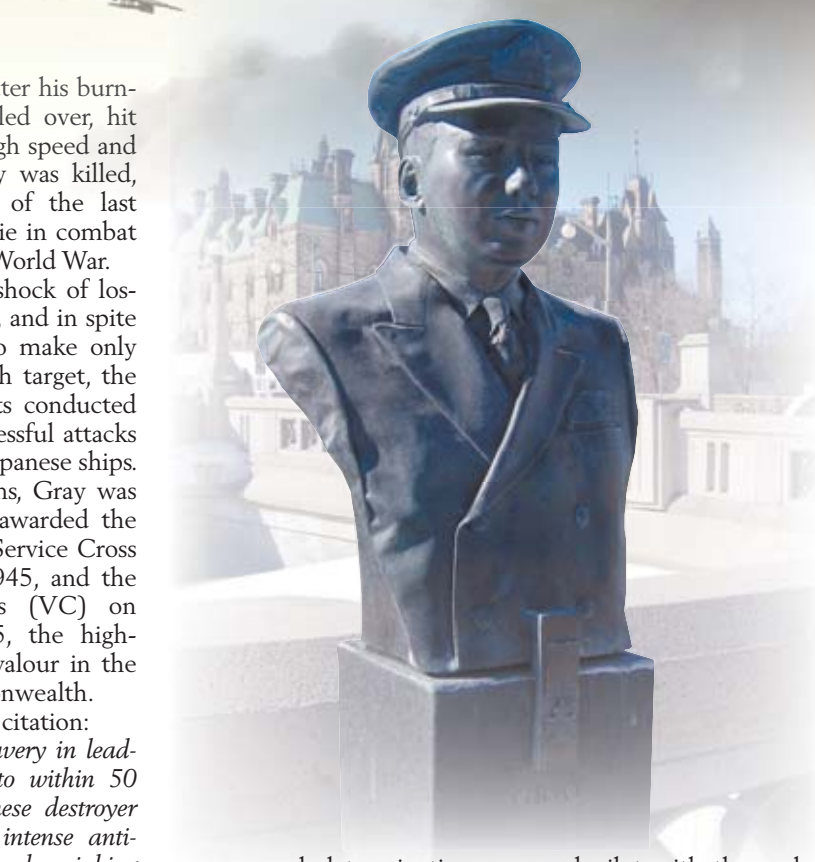
Cpl (Ret'd) Tomkins at age 85 in 2003. He was one of the few known Cree Code Talkers who used the Cree language to create a secret code that may very well have turned the tide of the Second World War in favour of the Allies.

Photo courtesy of Adele Laderoute

ROBERT HAMPTON GRAY:

Cool Courage

in the face of death



DND

AS the second atomic bomb was falling on Nagasaki in southern Japan, Lieutenant Robert Hampton Gray was leading two flights of Corsair aircraft against airfields in the Matsushima area of northern Honshu.

It was Aug. 9, 1945, and the Second World War was almost over.

Gray, a Canadian naval pilot serving with the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm, was flying with 1841 Squadron from the aircraft carrier His Majesty's Ship (HMS) Formidable.

There was little enemy activity; a first strike from Formidable had left the targets in ruins.

Since Gray was briefed for the secondary target of naval ships at nearby Onagawa Bay, he decided to attack again.

The other flight members recall him saying he was going in and peeled off to follow him in the high speed run.

As Gray levelled out his Corsair, it was blasted with cannon and machine gun fire.

The aircraft was set on fire and one of his 500-pound bombs was shot off. He steadied the aircraft and aimed his remaining bomb. It hit the ocean escort vessel Amakusa below the after-gun turret, exploding the ammunition locker and blowing out the starboard side of the ship.

Amakuza rolled and sank immediately.

Gray continued flying but brief seconds later his burning aircraft rolled over, hit the water at high speed and broke up. Gray was killed, becoming one of the last Canadians to die in combat in the Second World War.

Despite the shock of losing their leader, and in spite of the order to make only one run at each target, the remaining pilots conducted two more successful attacks on the target Japanese ships.

For his actions, Gray was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross on Aug. 31, 1945, and the Victoria Cross (VC) on Nov. 13, 1945, the highest medal for valour in the British Commonwealth.

From his VC citation:

"For great bravery in leading an attack to within 50 feet of a Japanese destroyer in the face of intense anti-aircraft fire, thereby sinking the destroyer although he was hit and his own aircraft on fire, and finally himself killed.

"He was one of the gallant company of naval airmen who, from December 1944, fought and beat the Japanese from Palembang to Tokyo. The actual incident took place in the Onagawa Wan on the 9th of August 1945. Gray was leader of the attack, which he pressed home in the face of fire from shore batteries and at least eight warships. With his aircraft in flames he nevertheless obtained at least one direct hit which sank its objective."

In a condolence letter written to Gray's wife, Lieutenant-Commander Richard Bigg-Wither, 1841 Squadron's Commanding Officer, said Gray's "cool courage and determination in the face of heavy odds and the loss of their leader inspired the others who pressed on in two further attacks, putting paid to the first destroyer which rolled over and sank. The two destroyer escorts were hit and badly damaged."

Bigg-Wither said Formidable's crew was devastated by the loss.

"The bottom fell out of life on board after it happened and the victory, when it came, seemed so hollow somehow. He was so well loved by us all and simply radiated happiness wherever he went."

Flying hard

Gray was born in Trail, B.C., and enlisted in 1940. By September 1941, he was a naval pilot with the rank of sub-lieutenant. He was sent to the African theatre of operations where he spent nearly two years flying Hurricanes and other aircraft for various Royal Navy shore-based squadrons. Hungry for action, he was appointed to 1841 Squadron aboard HMS Formidable as senior pilot in August 1944.

After four years of service, Gray was going into combat.

His first action involved four attacks against the German battleship Tirpitz when the 42,500-ton vessel was holed up in a Norwegian fjord. In the fourth attack, on Aug. 18, 1944, Gray led his flight in a daring low-level strike against ships protecting the battleship. Other targets included the adjacent seaplane base and airfields in a bid to draw fire away from the attacking Barracuda dive-bombers. The bombing attacks failed. Six Corsairs were lost, and three Barracudas crashed on landing.

The final strike came on Aug. 29, 1944, when Gray repeated his audacious low-level attack against three heavily armoured German Narvik-class destroyers. His aircraft, and 16 other Corsairs, suffered flak damage. An additional Corsair was lost.

Gray was awarded a Mention in Dispatches for his "undaunted courage, skill and determination in carrying out daring attacks on Tirpitz."

HMS Formidable's next assignment was the Pacific. The carrier joined the British Pacific Fleet in April 1945. The first major action was strikes against Japanese air bases supporting Japan's defence of Okinawa. Aircrew losses were heavy – the British carriers lost 47 aircraft to enemy fire and operational causes.

A leader emerges

Gray's character during this period was reflected in a letter home to his parents. To ease their fears, he played down the air operations as "fairly hard flying, but not dangerous."

Similarly, he downplayed the effect of the deadly kamikaze attacks on his ship and the dreadful loss of personnel and aircraft.

Gray's ability to lead under such heavy pressure while remaining relaxed was remarkable, and he was well known for his unruffled manner under combat stress.

By July 1945, the combined Allied fleets were attacking the Japanese mainland, striking any target to be found. Gray continued to lead his flights in heavy strikes. In addition to successful low-level strafing attacks against airfields, he headed a strike against the Japanese naval base at Maisuru. Here he made a direct hit on a Japanese destroyer, setting it afire and finally sending it to the bottom of the ocean.

His leadership in this action against well-defended ships was so remarkable that Admiral Philip Vian, then in command of the Carrier Group, sent a congratulatory message to Formidable.

Gray was just 28 years old when he was killed in action.

He was the last Canadian to be awarded the Victoria Cross.

A memorial to Gray is part of the Valiants Memorial near Parliament Hill in Ottawa, and there is another one at the Norman Rogers Airport in Kingston, Ont., where he underwent part of his pilot training in 1941. As well, his name is inscribed on the Sailor's Memorial at Point Pleasant Park in Halifax.

The Japanese government also erected a memorial in his honour on the shore of Onagawa Bay in 2006, close to the area where his plane is known to have crashed.

He is the only member of a foreign military to be so honoured by Japan.

MERCHANT NAVY VETERANS get their day

Sharon Adams
Courtesy Legion Magazine

Winston Churchill said that the only thing that ever really frightened him during the Second World War was the U-boat peril.

Britain's entire war effort and the survival of its people were dependent on convoys of cargo ships from North America manned by merchant sailors.

A week before war was declared, the Royal Canadian Navy took control of merchant shipping. Canada declared war on Sept. 10, 1939, and on Sept. 16, a convoy left from Halifax, the first of 380 from Canada during the war.

As 1939 closed, 25 convoys comprised of 527 ships had crossed the Atlantic, with only one lost by U-boat attack, another by collision and two to mines.

That changed quickly.

The summer and fall of 1940 was the "happy time" for U-boats, when they roamed the east coast of North America, picking off ships often within sight of land. That fall they began attacking in groups called wolf packs. Eighty-eight per cent of casualties among Canada's merchant sailors occurred before 1943. After that, the Allies' anti-submarine strategies began to turn the tide of the sea war.

About 12,000 Canadians served in Canada's merchant navy and under the flags of many other Allied nations. The merchant navy was a beacon for those unable to join other services, particularly those turned down for being too young or too old.

About 1,600 Canadian merchant sailors, or about 13 per cent, did not survive the war, a higher proportion than the army, navy or air force, which had combined losses of less than four per cent.

Merchant sailors lived in constant fear of danger, around the clock, year in and year out, knowing their chances were slim if they had to abandon ship. Less than 50 per cent of crew who went into the water were rescued.

"We never had any protection or anything, not in those days…we were slaughtered," recalled Jim Boutiler, who signed up when he was 15 and was aboard the MV Montrolite when it was torpedoed twice on Feb. 4, 1942. "We were in the lifeboat about three days, rough weather all the time…It was just like a nightmare."

It took the SS Rose Castle about 90 seconds to sink after being struck by a second torpedo on Nov. 2, 1942, sucking under Gordon Hardy of Ingonish, N.S. He surfaced in pitch dark in frigid water, buffeted by snow and wind.

"I could hear the people calling to God and the Virgin Mary around me in the dark. I was in the water at least a couple of hours and I came across a life raft," he said.

He was pulled aboard and could no longer stand by the time a rescuer hauled him off the raft. "He locked both hands on my wrists," he said in a Memory Project interview. "And that was the greatest feeling that I ever felt. I knew I was going to make it."

"Every time you went out you never knew if you were coming back," said Jack Matthews of Dartmouth, N.S., one of 50 merchant sailors to tell their stories in *Running the Gauntlet* by Mike Parker. "I never took my life jacket off. I slept with it."

By war's end, German U-boats had sunk nearly 3,000 Allied vessels—2,845 of them merchant ships.

Despite the risks, many merchant mariners signed up again after their two-year stints or after surviving the sinking of their ships. Steward Allan Harvie survived nine different torpedo attacks; twice he was the only survivor, once, one of only two of a crew of 55 to come out alive. When a torpedo hit the explosives-laden ship, he and the cook were saved because they were in the icebox at the time.

"Saved by bacon and eggs!" he said later in a Star Weekly article.

Yet when the war ended, merchant mariners were not recognized as veterans.

"The only regrets I ever had was the rotten deal that we did get," said Boutiler.

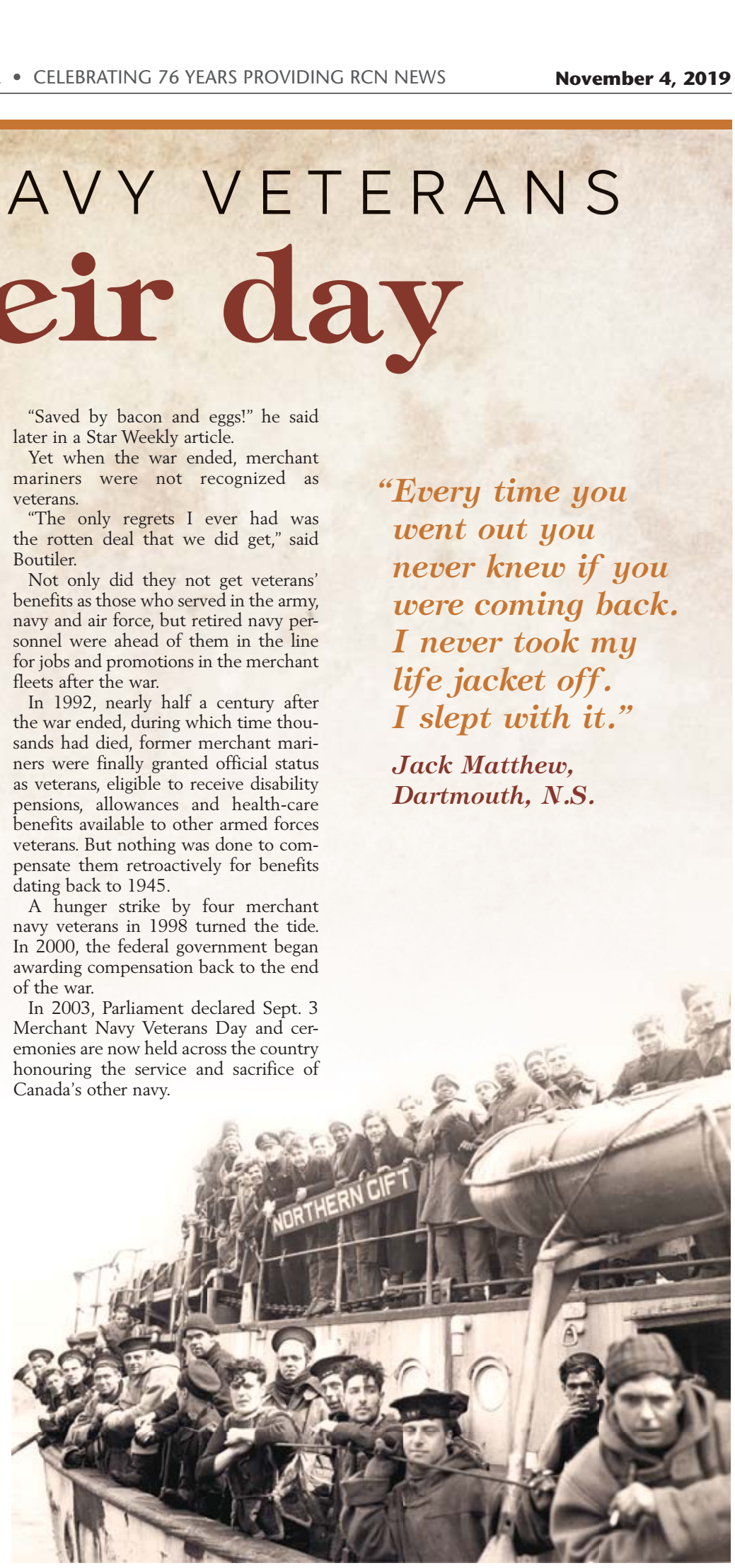
Not only did they not get veterans' benefits as those who served in the army, navy and air force, but retired navy personnel were ahead of them in the line for jobs and promotions in the merchant fleets after the war.

In 1992, nearly half a century after the war ended, during which time thousands had died, former merchant mariners were finally granted official status as veterans, eligible to receive disability pensions, allowances and health-care benefits available to other armed forces veterans. But nothing was done to compensate them retroactively for benefits dating back to 1945.

A hunger strike by four merchant navy veterans in 1998 turned the tide. In 2000, the federal government began awarding compensation back to the end of the war.

In 2003, Parliament declared Sept. 3 Merchant Navy Veterans Day and ceremonies are now held across the country honouring the service and sacrifice of Canada's other navy.

> *"Every time you went out you never knew if you were coming back. I never took my life jacket off. I slept with it."*
>
> ***Jack Matthew, Dartmouth, N.S.***



Survivors of two merchant ships crowd the decks of a rescue trawler in St. John's in April 1943.
Gerald M. Moses, Library and Archives Canada – Pa153052

RECOVERED GERMAN WARPLANE TELLS A STORY

Sharon Adams
Courtesy Legion Magazine

Six weeks into the Battle of Britain, on Aug. 26, 1940, a squadron of nine German aircraft flew across the English Channel to wreak havoc on an airfield in Kent, an area known at the time as Hellfire Corner for the ferocious fighting that went on overhead.

The formation was detected and Royal Air Force squadrons scrambled to intercept them above the Kent coast. In one British Defiant was Pilot Officer Frederick Desmond (Hawkeye) Hughes, the third-highest scoring RAF night fighter, and his gunner, Fred Gash.

"The specks grew into the long pencil-slim silhouettes of Dornier Do 17s, and suddenly, there were the black crosses, insolently challenging us in our own backyard!" wrote Hughes, who later rose to air vice-marshal.

The squadron attacked the Dorniers from below.

"Fred Gash took as his target the second Dornier… his De Wilde incendiaries twinkled all over it, but particularly on its engine."

Two crew parachuted before the aircraft crashed.

The British crew's second kill of the day was another Dornier Do 17 that was separated from its fighter cover. Gash took aim. Gunfire hit both engines and peppered the cockpit.

The Dornier's 24-year-old pilot Willi Effmert attempted to land the stricken aircraft on a sandbank about 10 kilometres off the coast, but the plane somersaulted. Two of the crew were killed, but Effmert and his 21-year-old observer Hermann Ritzel were captured and sent to Canada as prisoners of war.

The Dornier sank into the seabed and lay undisturbed for six decades, until snagged by a fishing net. In 2008, a diver investigated and when he found an aircraft instead of a shipwreck, reported it to archeologists. The crash site was surveyed and the hulk of the twin-engine aircraft was detected 15 metres underwater. Because it was not a war grave, permission was given to recover the wreck.

In 2013, the hulk was carefully raised. Although more than 1,500 Dorniers—known as the Flying Pencil—were built, this was the most substantial example known to exist today.

The aircraft was taken to the Michael Beetham Conservation Centre in Cosford, where the long conservation process began. Bits of the aircraft have been put on display in the RAF Museum at Cosford as conservators process them, but there are no plans to restore it to its original condition.

A virtual-reality display in the museum allows people to see a digital Dornier in flight as it would have been in 1940.

"The discovery and recovery of the Dornier is of national and international importance," said Peter Dye, director general of the RAF Museum. "The aircraft is a unique and unprecedented survivor from the Battle of Britain and the Blitz."

CANADIAN WOMEN TRAIL BLAZE NEW RIGHTS

Bart Armstrong
Contributor

It was exactly 20 years ago on Oct. 18, 1999 that a memorial for five female trailblazers was inaugurated in Calgary.

A year later to the day, a similar memorial was unveiled at Ottawa.

The five woman honoured were Emily Murphy, Louise G McKinney, Irene Parlby, Nellie McClung, and Henrietta Muir Edwards. They would later become known as the Famous Five or the Alberta Five.

It was their 13-year battle that earned them the recognition, as they sought to clarify for their male counterparts that Section 24 of the British North America Act (the Constitution Act of 1867) did not preclude their being appointed to the Senate of Canada. The argument against their inclusion was the BNA wording said that only "qualified persons" could be so appointed.

The battle was taken to several provincial courts, the federal and appeals courts, and to several Prime Ministers of the day. All promised but failed to deliver the results they sought.

The five then petitioned the Governor General to send their appeal to the Supreme Court, which at the time was located in England.

On March 14, 1928, lawyers for the Famous Five presented their case. The crown took just six minutes to argue its case against the women. On April 25, 1928, the court issued its decision: a full-scale rejection of the women's case.

Back in Canada politicians supportive of their goals promised to resolve the matter by amending the BNA Act, but in the end failed to do so.

After seeking and receiving permission from Canadian authorities, the women successfully appealed the decision to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London. In July 1929 it took five days to hear the case, and another three months to make the decision. The court ruled in their favour on Oct.18, 1929.

The decision ruled the BNA wording did not preclude women and added, "Customs are apt to develop into traditions which are stronger than law and remain unchallenged long after the reason for them has disappeared."

Decades later, in 1979, staff of then MLA David MacDonald's office brought to his attention that the year marked the 50th anniversary of the Persons' Case. As Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, MacDonald was asked by his staff to take steps to highlight this major accomplishment for women in Canada.

He agreed and commissioned the creation of a medal called the Person's Award and invited people from across Canada to nominate a woman who they felt was due recognition for efforts to the betterment of women and girls nationwide.

Nominations poured in and, while five were intended to be awarded, the level of excellence coming forth was so high that seven women were awarded the first-ever Persons Awards.

Today the medal is known as the Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case. Between 1979 and 2018 there have been 221 medals awarded. Four have been awarded to residents of the Greater Victoria area.

Twenty eight years ago Women's History Month got its start through the efforts of three Greater Victoria women. The three were actively involved in a committee encouraging women to run for public office. Their names are Lyn Gough, Cathy Blazkow, and the late Kay (Cathryne) Armstrong.

Bart Armstrong is a Canadian military historian. To read more of his work visit www.canadianmedalofhonor.com

Unveiling of a plaque commemorating the Famous Five, June 11, 1938. Front row, left to right: Muir Edwards, daughter-in-law of Henrietta Muir Edwards; J. C. Kenwood, daughter of Judge Emily Murphy; Mackenzie King; and Nellie McClung. Rear row, left to right: Senators Iva Campbell Fallis, and Cairine Wilson. Part of the Famous Five monument on Olympic Plaza in Calgary, Alberta. Courtesy Wikapedia

International task force ready to work

Lt(N) Tony Wright
CTF 150
Public Affairs Officer

The pre-deployment preparations and training for the Australian-led Combined Task Force (CTF) 150 mission have wrapped up at HMAS Watson with a stamp of approval from Commodore Flotillas Force Generation Directorate.

Royal Australian, Royal Canadian, and Royal New Zealand Navy sailors have spent the last six weeks in Sydney, Australia, getting ready for this mission, and are now certified ready in all respects to deploy to Bahrain.

CTF 150 is headquartered in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and is one of three combined task forces within the Combined Maritime Force.

The 33 member nations of the Combined Maritime Force work together to strengthen maritime security in the Middle East region, conducting maritime security operations, capacity building activities, and regional engagement.

Sailors came together in Sydney in late September as a group of strangers. But after four weeks working together to develop processes and procedures, they are now a solid team, speaking the same language regardless of where they're from.

Preparation for the mission was put to the test over two weeks of mission readiness evaluations at the Naval Synthetic Warfighting Centre at HMAS Watson. The team were put through their paces in an operations centre designed to mimic the one they will use when deployed. Scenarios used were real-world examples from previous missions. All of that realism, a compressed timeline, and an experienced training staff that had previously deployed on a CTF 150, made for an intense training environment.

As part of the training program, Commodore Mal Wise, CTF 150 Commander when Australia led the task force in in 2017/18, paid a visit during mission readiness evaluations.

"The purpose of this mission is maintain and enhance maritime security in the region," said Commodore Wise. "At the same time, it is critical to maintain and enhance the reputation of our respective countries and navies with our allies, partners, and even adversaries in this complex area of operations. Looking at this team, I have full confidence that you're going to hit all of your mission objectives."

In late November, staff will deploy to Naval Security Activity Bahrain, a U.S. Navy base in the City of Manama in the Kingdom of Bahrain. In early December, they will take over from the United Kingdom and France and direct ships from participating countries to seek out and seize drug shipments and other illicit cargo that fund terrorist operations in the region and around the world.

CTF 150 will also engage other countries in the region to help build relationships that support the mission and build capacity.

Photo courtesy Hayley Young, CFMETR

HMCS Regina conducts sensors and weapons testing

Stephen McCormick
CFMETR Range Engineer

As part of ongoing ship readiness preparations, *HMCS Regina* was at the Canadian Forces Maritime Experimental and Test Ranges Oct. 24 to 25 to conduct FORACS testing - FORACS is an acronym that stands for NATO Naval Forces Sensor and Weapons Accuracy Check.

Over the past 22 years Canada has been a regular member of NATO FORACS and relies upon this organization to provide accuracy measurements of key sensors and combat systems equipment for submarines, destroyers and frigates.

The ranges measure the bearing, range, position, and heading accuracy of sensors in surface ships and submarines to satisfy national requirements and to meet NATO material readiness standards, through dynamic combat system performance evaluation.

FORACS services are provided at three fixed ranges: the AUTEC Range in the Bahamas, Stavanger Norway, and Souda Bay Greece.

Canada has use FORACS services on an opportunity basis in order to ensure submarines and warships are technically ready for weapons firings and mission obligations. In addition to the three NATO FORACS check sites, a number of ranges have NATO FORACS test equipment available, including CFMETR.

To assist in *Regina's* testing, staff from AUTEC (Bahamas) and Fleet Maintenance Facility Cape Breton sailed in *Regina*.

"This is the first time I have conducted FORACS that I can recall, and I have been impressed by the FORACS team in their approach to integrating into the ship," said Commander Landon Creasy, *Regina's* commanding officer. "It's been very interesting for my operators and technicians to work with some world-class engineers from a variety of backgrounds. It's given us the opportunity to chase down faults with on-hand experts, optimize sensors, and get a deeper understanding of the equipment we work with on a daily basis."

By using deployable FORACS capabilities and the CFMETR test site, the Royal Canadian Navy is refocusing their priorities to meet both the near term operational and the future capital program requirements.

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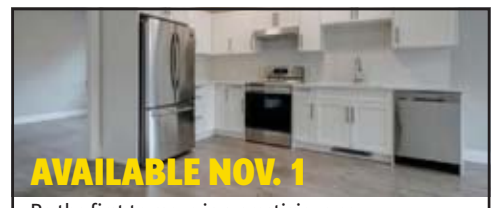

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