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HMCS CALGARY'S AIR DET AT WORK

Corporal Shannon Clayton, Aviation Systems Technician aboard HMCS Calgary, loads a torpedo on to a CH-148 Cyclone helicopter.

Photo by Cpl Lynette Ai Dang, Imagery Technician

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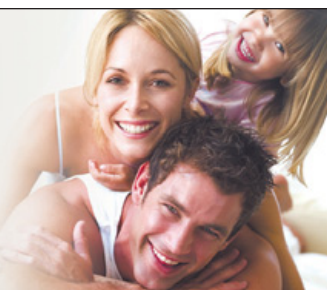
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Royal Canadian Navy sailors aboard HMCS Calgary bring aboard contraband seized from smugglers during counter-smuggling operations on April 30.

ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY MAKE FOUR DRUG BUSTS IN THREE DAYS

Combined Maritime Forces

HMCS Calgary has intercepted four more suspicious dhows off the coast of Oman during a string of high-tempo operations, leading to the seizure of illicit narcotics worth over \$14.44 million in just three days.

The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) warship conducted three back-to-back drug interdiction operations on April 30, seizing 6,836 kg (15,071 lbs) of hashish. Calgary's operational success continued on May 2 with a high-value interdiction of 520 kg (1,146 lbs) of methamphetamine, 625 kg (1,378 lbs) of hashish, and 5 kg (11 lbs) of heroin.

This is the latest in a series of six seizures in just seven days made by Calgary while in direct support of Combined Maritime Forces' Canadian-led Combined Task Force (CTF) 150.

"Four more major busts for HMCS Calgary and in only three days. This could not have been done without the incredible around-the-clock effort of the ship's company and support from Combined Task Force 150,"



said Commander Mark O'Donohue, Commanding Officer of HMCS Calgary. "This year, more and more meth is being transported through the region, and it feels good to be taking this very dangerous and lucrative drug out of the hands of criminal and terrorist organizations."

One of the key factors in Calgary's operational success has been the direct support provided by a Royal Canadian Air Force CP-140 Aurora aircraft based out of the United Arab Emirates, a Combined Maritime Forces partner. The Canadian patrol aircraft provides critical intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, facilitating the identification of potential smugglers to CTF-150 and to the warship.

"I am incredibly proud of the crew of HMCS Calgary and the tangible impact they have made in the region in such a short space of time," said Commodore Daniel Charlebois of the Royal Canadian Navy, Commander of CTF-150. "In only one week, they have successfully carried out six interdictions, helping to choke the revenue streams which feed regional terrorist and criminal organizations."

ABOUT THE MISSION

The Combined Maritime Forces is a multinational maritime partnership, which exists to uphold the International Rules-Based Order by countering illicit non-state actors on the high seas and promoting security, stability, and prosperity across approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters, which encompass some of the world's most important shipping lanes.

Calgary and CTF-150 are operating as part of Operation Artemis, Canada's contribution to maritime security in the Middle East, and its mission to stop terrorism in the region.

CTF-150 conducts maritime security operations outside the Arabian Gulf to disrupt criminal and terrorist organizations, ensuring legitimate commercial shipping can transit the region, free from non-state threats. CTF-150 is currently commanded by the Royal Canadian Navy, which is leading the task force for the fifth time.

Op Artemis is part of Canada's contribution to multinational counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism efforts under Combined Task Force (CTF) 150, facilitating the identification and cueing of vessels suspected of being engaged in illicit maritime activity on the high seas.

In 2021, Operation Artemis comprises the following contributions from the Canadian Armed Forces: HMCS Calgary, a Halifax-class Royal Canadian Navy Frigate; CP-140, a long-range patrol aircraft used by the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) for multiple types of missions over land and water; and the command and control of CTF-150 under Combined Maritime Forces, based in the Kingdom of Bahrain.



Members of HMCS Calgary stand with 3,350 kilograms of hash seized from a dhow during a counter-smuggling operation on April 30 in the Arabian Sea, as part of Operation Artemis with Combined Task Force 150.

Photos by Cpl Lynette Ai Dang, HMC Calgary Imagery Technician



Image courtesy HMCS Regina

HMCS Regina rescues stranded sailor drifting at sea

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

A retired U.S. Veteran has *HMCS Regina* to thank for ending his stranded-at-sea predicament.

The man was attempting to sail between Port Angeles, Washington, and Anchorage, Alaska, by himself on a 30-foot recreational sail boat.

The warship received a request to investigate a sailboat-in-distress call from Esquimalt's Regional Joint Operations Centre (RJOC) on Saturday May 1.

They found him approximately 25 nautical miles west of Nootka Sound, and sent out a search and rescue (SAR) response team in the ship's RHIB.

According to LCdr Dave Dallin, *Regina's* Executive Officer, the small sailboat was in poor condition, without

electricity or communication capability, had taken on water during a storm, which destroyed his sails, and was gradually drifting southwest into the open ocean.

"He was relieved to have assistance but really had no idea the depth of his vessel's disarray," said LCdr Dallin.

Regina's SAR Team consisted of SLt Mitch Barr, Naval Boarding Party Officer; PO2 Raymond Moore, Boatswain; Cpl Scott Edney, Medical Technician; S1 Steven Desfosses, Marine Engineer; and Boatswains S1 Michelle Germain and S1 Tommy Mailloux.

Cpl Edney determined the man did not require immediate medical attention. He was given a care package of food from the ship's galley as his supplies were almost gone. Due to COVID-19 protocol, the stranded sailor remained on board while the boat was towed to the nearest safe harbour.

Junior Boatswain S2 Germain was lauded by her shipmates for her proficiency driving the tow boat, having only performed the procedure in training.

"I am very proud of her work, she did very well, was calm and professional, and exceeded the standards of operation and showed superior seamanship," said her supervisor PO2 Moore.

S2 Germain was assisted in driving the RHIB by S1 Tommy Mailloux as the two took turns at the controls for the duration of the tow. S2 Germain said factors that made the tow difficult included towing a larger, heavier vessel through strong currents and sizable waves of up to three metres and winds of 15 to 25 knots, but in the end rated it as a valuable learning experience.

"This man was definitely in need of our help and we saved a life on this day," she said. "This at-sea rescue is one of the

aspects of our work in the RCN that gives us all a true feeling of satisfaction and a job well done."

The tow took approximately five hours; the disabled vessel was then handed over to a Canadian Coast Guard vessel in protected waters. They towed the vessel to a port located near Gold River, B.C, where the individual was met by members of Canada Border Services Agency and the RCMP, and given medical attention.

"It was a very complicated rescue situation but one which was certainly not outside of the skill set, nautical and seamanship skills, and expertise of any RCN crew member," said LCdr Dallin. "When you put all the pieces together in a tense situation like this, we saw the best of what Canadian sailors are all about shine through in spades."



It was a very complicated rescue situation but one which was certainly not outside of the skill set, nautical and seamanship skills, and expertise of any RCN crew member"

LCdr Dave Dallin, HMCS Regina's Executive Officer

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WHAT SAY YOU



Safe Workplaces and Communities

Message from the MARPAC Formation Safety Officer – Catherine Leith

The North American Occupational Safety and Health (NAOSH) week was marked on May 2-8, 2021. Formation Safety would like to encourage the MARPAC Team to continue to consider the importance of creating and maintaining a safety culture in the workplace and in the community. We would also like to recognize and thank individuals that go above and beyond to ensure that we all get home safely to our families each day.

It has been a challenging year; with the COVID-19 pandemic adding to the overarching importance and need to ensure safer spaces to prevent injury and illness in the workplace, at home and in the community. To achieve this, we must all continue to follow the Public Health Measures and get vaccinated when it is our turn to do so.

Safety and health in the workplace is a shared responsibility. As such, every individual has the responsibility to demon-

strate leadership and due diligence in participating in safety programs and activities which promote a safe culture, thereby preventing illness and injury. It is important to be compassionate, supportive to others, and to ask for help when you need it.

The pandemic with the associated isolation created by the restrictive Public Health Measures, have highlighted an increased need for individuals to continually check their mental and emotional health. Managers and supervisors play an important role in creating an environment where individuals feel comfortable talking about mental health.

Continue to learn about your work environment, and strive to continually improve in safety protocols that improve safety culture and prevent illness and injuries.

Formation Safety is committed to providing support, resources, legislative advice, and guidance to promote a safe and healthy workplace for civilian and mili-

tary members of the Defence Team. We encourage all our members and civilians to actively participate in their Workplace Health and Safety Committees and volunteer for a special event that promotes safety and wellness.

We also encourage leaders and managers to hold regular safety talks and take time to discuss health and safety issues within their sections on a scheduled regular basis. We all have a responsibility to work together to improve the Health and Safety of our workplaces.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your Unit General Safety Officer or email Formation Safety and Environment (+ESQ MARPAC FSE Safety@MARPAC@Esquimalt). For more information on the NAOSH week, visit: naosh.ca

Together we can create safe workplaces and communities.

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HMCS VANCOUVER EYES RETURN TO SEA



Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

HMCS Vancouver returns to sea next month following a two-year extended work period.

The ship's 200-member crew will set sail and operate off Vancouver Island beginning the first week of June for Basic Single Ship Readiness Training (BSSRT), supported by Sea Training Staff.

Together, they will test the Halifax-class frigate's personnel, systems, and equipment following the extended work period, which involved Seaspans Victoria Shipyards, Fleet Maintenance Facility, and a number of other external agencies.

"The main intent of the BSSRT process is to find out what things, from a team and, or equipment perspective aren't working as expected, and work collaboratively with our friends at Sea Training to improve them," says Cdr Kevin Whiteside, Vancouver's Commanding Officer.

The success of a warship at sea also depends on how the crew is performing, he adds.

"Sailor's individual skill sets are maintained very well in the Royal Canadian

Navy, but the challenge of leadership during the first phase of our tiered readiness program is to have the ship's company perform as a team."

Basic Single Ship Readiness Training is expected to last two weeks and is the first at-sea step in the warship's Tiered Readiness Program, with the overall intention to have Vancouver ready for international operations in 2022.

The Navigation Officer, Lt(N) Anna Childerhose is crucial to the opening phase of the BSSRT, says Cdr Whiteside. She needs to ensure the ship's bridge team, navigation suite, and bridge equipment are functioning properly, and work with the ship's engineers to make sure all engines can provide the power required to the ship's various systems.

"The navigation side of the house will spend a lot of time working with our combat systems engineer Lt(N) Riley Nabigon to make sure the ship's many combat systems, including the ship's radar, are functioning properly to ensure we can operate safely and successfully in international operations," says Lt(N) Childerhose.

Cdr Whiteside lauded the efforts of Vancouver's crew during the extended work period. That included the massive job of de-storing and getting the ship



Photo by: Master Corporal Brent Kenny, MARPAC Imaging Services

ready for its refit, and then restoring, restocking, and restarting all the ship's systems upon its return from the shipyard. Much of this, he notes, was done under COVID-19 physical distancing restrictions.

"The heart and perseverance of our team has been excellent throughout this work period and it's unbelievable the amount of work every member has done in collaboration with the many

supporting shore agencies to get this ship ready," he says.

Following their initial time at sea, the crew will return to shore for summer leave, followed by a short work period. The final step of their Tiered Readiness Program will be Intermediate Multi-ship Readiness Training in early 2022, that will allow Vancouver to test its abilities beyond domestic operations with an eye to deployment.



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A very different Ramadan

Muslim sailors observe a month of fasting while on deployment with HMCS Halifax

Joanie Veitch
Trident Newspaper

During the month of Ramadan, Sailor Second Class Yunus Kurt gets up every day, an hour before sunrise, to have something to eat before beginning his daily fast. It will be about 16 hours before he will eat or drink anything again.

Ramadan is the most sacred time in the Islamic calendar. Muslims around the world fast during daylight hours. For S2 Kurt, along with S3 Ahmad Bitar, both Naval Communicators on deployment with HMCS Halifax, this is a most unusual Ramadan. Their ship left HMC Dockyard in Halifax on Jan. 1, and headed for Europe and a six-month deployment on Operation Reassurance alongside NATO allies.

"This is my first deployment and also the first time where I fasted during Ramadan while in the middle of the ocean," said S2 Kurt.

When Ramadan began on April 12, both S2 Kurt and S3 Bitar called their families to wish them well, and have continued to stay in touch using FaceTime and other messaging apps. While Ramadan usually sees families and friends gather to share the Iftar meal and break the fast together as the sun sets, that practice has

gone online for many Muslims around the world this year due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Using available technology to talk with family and friends from home and read their messages of support has been a huge help, said S2 Kurt.

"Fasting on Ramadan while at sea has been harder than I thought, when you don't have a home to come back to. That is one of the biggest challenges while sailing," he said. "It is very difficult being away from my community; however, I've become used to it since joining the military, due to the amount of moving I've had to do."

Although evenings after sundown during Ramadan are usually social, for Muslims it is also a time to slow down and take extra time for spiritual reflection beyond their daily prayers — not easy to do while on a warship.

"It is hard to slow down in a high-tempo program, but it adds an extra sense of accomplishment when you finish that day," said S3 Bitar. "It is difficult, but that is the whole purpose: fighting temptations. Just focusing and reminding myself helps me out through the day."

During Ramadan, S3 Bitar also likes to take time to reflect on how he can be of service to others. "Doing good deeds, they

could be little things or big things, but I try my best to help people," he said. "It makes you feel better and it makes their day easier."

For S2 Kurt, Ramadan is a time to deepen his faith, noting that he has enjoyed talking with colleagues and supervisors who've shown interest in learning about his faith and the importance of Ramadan to Muslims.

Both sailors said that despite the hardships of fasting while at sea, they have felt supported by their shipmates — especially the kitchen staff — for saving them dinner to eat when the sun sets and they can break their fast.

"I give big thanks to the cooks," S3 Bitar added.

The end of Ramadan, which falls on May 12 this year, is celebrated worldwide with the festival of Eid al-Fitr. Although the two sailors don't know for certain how

they'll mark the event, they plan to spend the time together, along with another Muslim sailor observing Ramadan on board HMCS Halifax.

"I don't know where we will be, but probably somewhere in the middle of the ocean," said S2 Kurt. "We'll celebrate by hugging each other and hopefully breaking our fast together."



S3 Ahmad Bitar and S2 Yunus Kurt are both observing Ramadan at sea while on deployment with HMCS Halifax. Photo by: S1 Bryan Underwood

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Q&A



with HMCS Brandon's Executive Officer deployed on Operation Caribe

Captain Sarah Harasymchuk
Operation Caribe PAO

Lieutenant-Commander Tyler Ravnsgaard is currently deployed on Operation Caribe as the Executive Officer on board *HMCS Brandon*. His role is to advise the Commanding Officer, oversee training on board, and ensure the morale and welfare of the crew.

Operation Caribe is Canada's participation in the U.S.-led enhanced counter-narcotics operations in the Caribbean Sea and the eastern Pacific Ocean. Naval warships and aircraft deploy to the region on a rotational basis to support the American-led multinational mission to suppress trafficking in international waters and airspace.

Are you the first person in your family to be in the military?

No. Both of my parents were in the military, as well as one of my aunts and one of my uncles. I am the first officer in my immediate family. I also have some ancestors on my mother's side who were in the British and Danish militaries.

Why did you choose to join the Navy in particular?

My parents were in the Air Force and the Army, so I was somewhat familiar with those worlds. The navy offered something new and a different way of seeing the world. Travel was a big motivator for me to join. If I'm honest, I didn't really know what I was getting into when I joined, but it ended up being a great choice for me.

What is your favourite activity to do in your free time while at sea?

There's really not a lot of free time at sea, but I try to make time for exercise. There's a lot of administration in my role and if I don't get away from it for a bit each day my productivity drops. I also like to end my days with a book or TV show to take my mind out of the business for a little while.

What motivates you to be the Executive Officer (XO) of the ship?

Really, it's the people I work with. In the end it's the crew, not me, who achieves the mission. My favourite jobs in the navy have been the ones where I've been responsible for the training and welfare of the more junior members. It's very rewarding to know I've had a positive impact on lives and careers. As XO I can have a significant impact on the day-to-day life of the crew, and that motivates me to do my best. You can't always make the decisions that will make the crew happy as we have a mission to accomplish, and even when you can you don't always get it right. I'm still learning, and I don't think the learning will ever stop, but when I do get something right it's a good day.

What was the hardest thing you've had to do in your career?

There's two ways to think about this. The most challenging thing I've done is navigating a warship at night, at high speeds, in close proximity to dangers. There's a lot that goes into that, and the pressure can feel immense.

The hardest thing I have had to do is bring bad news to a sailor. There are times when you're in a position of responsibility and you have to inform somebody of something heartbreaking, knowing that there's very little you can do to soften the blow. Thankfully, that doesn't happen very often.

What's the first thing you do after a long sail?

There's a bit of a tradition among certain circles of a "shower, beer" as the first thing you do after a sail. It's more or less how it sounds. There's a lot of work that goes into the days we come alongside before we can leave the ship, and then we have to carry all our kit back into our homes. I typically smell a bit and am tired, so this helps me feel fresh and puts me in the time to unwind mindset. Part of my checklist before I leave for a long sail is to make sure I have a good beer in the fridge on my return.



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VETERAN'S MURALS

HONOUR THE PERTHS



Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

An art project by a Second World War veteran and his daughter retraces the heroic steps of Canada's Perth Regiment through Europe.

Former Infantryman Eugene McKinnon, 98, has transformed his wartime memories into window murals with the help of his daughter Catherine.

The project began in June 2020 and was completed in August with their installation on 11 exterior windows of the Royal Canadian Legion's Coronation Branch 286 in Toronto's Rexdale neighbourhood.

"For me, art is very enjoyable and educational. It allows me to teach people about the hardships of war and that many people like me had no choice but to enlist or be conscripted."

He was born Sept. 9, 1922, in Mill Village, Queens County, N.S., and was the fourth in a family of 13 children.

As the Second World War raged, and he and his four brothers became of legal age, they all enlisted in the army. He had no time for art during the war, but the memories are heavily entrenched in what he paints.

His fondest memories of that time were VE Day and anything and everything afterwards, he says.

"That was the day we finally got to come home to our families and forget about the horrors we saw."

Remembering 'The Perths'

McKinnon was part of the Perth Regiment, Fifth Armored Division that sailed out of Halifax on the troop ship Queen Elizabeth. They arrived at the United Kingdom on Nov. 22, 1941. The Perths were mobilized under the code name Exercise Timberwolf and would spend the next two years in England in intensive training.



Eugene McKinnon

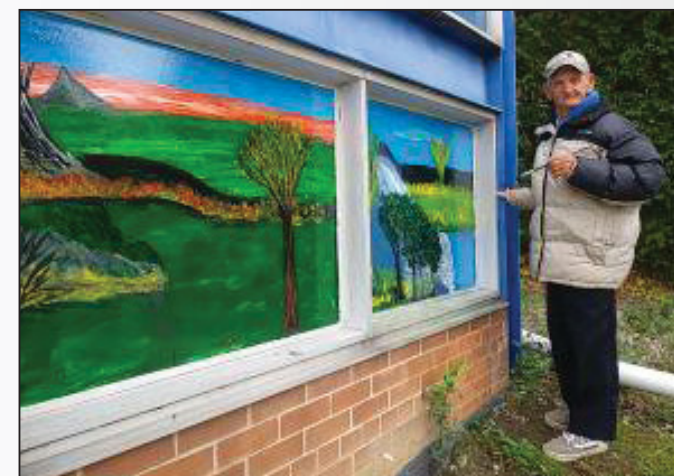
His regiment landed in Italy on Nov. 8, 1943, as part of the 11th Infantry Brigade, 5th Canadian Armoured Division.

During their 16-month campaign in Italy, the successes of the Perths mounted, such as being the first regiment to crack The Gothic Line and winning campaigns at the Liri Valley and the Battle of Monte Casino. Their mission eventually disrupted the German's hold on the Italian capital.

In March 1945, the Perths were deployed to France, Belgium, and the Netherlands for the remainder of the war.

He remembers how they travelled mostly by foot and how he was often called on to take part in dangerous reconnaissance missions where small teams of Perths would scout out enemy positions.

"A couple of times he was the only one who would return," says Catherine. "Like many other men who



had seen horrific things during military service, Dad didn't talk about the war until later in life."

Embracing Art

Post-war, he painted his first mural while working on the tugboats of St. John's Drydock and Shipbuilding Co. The crew had bunks on the tugboat and McKinnon painted a mural of a tiger above his bunk, which, he says, helped boost the morale for him and his bunkmates.

It was also during this time that he met his wife Jacqueline Barbara Turner. They married and moved to Ontario where they had seven children. He landed a job at Canadian Gypsum Company Ltd.

Following his retirement and the death of his wife in 2016, he began to paint more frequently.

The window murals chronicle his wartime and what he saw, such as paratroopers jumping from planes and being shot down by the Germans, a medic transferring the wounded through a swamp to a helicopter, the Normandy Landings, the Canadian 1st and 5th Divisions riding their tanks through the Liri Valley, and the large container ship that transported them to Italy. The final painting is a tribute to his uncle, a Canadian cavalry soldier in France during the First World War. It features a cavalry soldier on horseback with a Canadian flag. The final four windows are two of landscape paintings from his collection and two of Catherine's paintings.

His daughter was instrumental in getting his wartime memories onto the Legion windows as artwork. With his guidance, she stood on scaffolding and sketched his vision onto the window glass. The outline was then filled with weather resistant enamel paint.

"At Dad's age it would not be good for him to work hours in the hot summer sun on scaffolding," said Catherine. "But for two of the windows Dad was able to stand on the ground and paint them himself during cooler times of the day. It took over four months to paint the windows."



Eugene McKinnon paints some of the exterior windows of the Royal Canadian Legion's Coronation Branch 286. McKinnon, 98, is a former Infantryman of the Perth Regiment, Fifth Armoured Division. He worked with his daughter on the painting project that involved transferring his Second World War memories into artwork on the local legion branch's windows.

Supplied photo



Virtual art gallery

In October 2020, the McKinnons' work was featured in Steel Spirit's live-streamed art presentation entitled Culture Days. Founded by Brown in 2017, Steel Spirit showcases the unique artwork of military police, firefighters, paramedics, hospital practitioners, and other first responders. He also participated in the group's Artist's Social on social media App Zoom. Steel Spirit is looking for new and emerging artists from every background and age. Visit their website www.thesteelspirit.ca





» PROFILE

Capt Dominic Lafrenière, CD

Faith Community Coordinator



A/SLt Wen Guo
Base Administration

There was a seed of doubt in Captain Dominic Lafrenière's mind when he joined the military to become a chaplain. As he ventured through his military training and chaplain courses at CFB Borden it remained a nagging worry that perhaps he wasn't good enough. An instructor doused that concern in one sentence.

"When I first joined as a RESO (Reserve Entry Scheme - Officers) student in 2001, I was afraid I would be a poor chaplain because as an introvert I am on the quieter end. At the end of the course, the instructor said to me, 'We have enough chaplains that speak regularly, we need more chaplains who listen'."

So began his career as a Padre in the Canadian Armed Forces, which has led him to his current ministry as a Faith Community Coordinator at CFB Esquimalt. He is originally from

Shawinigan, Quebec. His military journey began in 1999 as an Officer of the Cadet Instructors Cadre, and then to the Primary Reserve serving in the military chaplaincy as a student in 2001. He transferred to the Regular Force as a Military Chaplain at CFB Valcartier in 2012, with a degree in Theology from Laval University.

Military chaplains work individually and have a special chaplain commission that is different than a regular officer's commission. They focus on the well-being of military members, which is a goal Capt Lafrenière strives to provide daily.

In his role as a Faith Community Coordinator, he oversees the Roman Catholic Our Lady Star of the Sea Chapel and its community. He presides over religious services, spiritual guidance, and provides administrative support to the Formation Chaplain. His role also includes taking care of those who want to share any aspects of their life.

"We are versatile, open to all spirituality, and are always open-minded, ready

to listen, communicate, and help out."

During the pandemic, it has been challenging for Capt Lafrenière to provide some services including counselling members and leading spiritual discussions and religious services. Despite these challenges, Capt Lafrenière still holds virtual Sunday services over Zoom as a way of bringing members together virtually.

"We are primarily religious leaders, but most of our work is to support the overall well-being and moral of our members through counselling and talk therapy. I am also proud to help our members effectively communicate with their chain of command and to bring up matters they are not comfortable with. I believe we can have the most effective, open, and supportive command when our differences are communicated and resolved."

Capt Lafrenière looks forward to providing spiritual services and meetings in person again as he believes this provides better emotional support. He notes it is important to observe body language and

subtle gestures to understand a person's unspoken words.

The CAF represents the religious diversity of Canadian society with sacred space for members of non-Catholic and non-Protestant religions.

"It is increasingly important to be inclusive of all religions, faith and cultures" says Capt Lafrenière. "My priority and mission is to consistently promote a strong physical and mental well-being of all members, so they feel safe and comfortable at work and can carry out their specific duties as effectively and efficiently as possible."



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Lieutenant (Navy) Steve Dyck and Petty Officer First Class Ryan Hart on board HMCS Calgary during Operation Projection.

Winnipeg-raised navy members make record-breaking heroin bust and huge dent in terrorist cash flow as leaders of a specialized tactical unit with HMCS Calgary

Capt Jeff Klassen
HMCS Calgary PAO

They're two of the toughest guys in the Royal Canadian Navy. One was originally going to be an underwater archeologist. The other, a bass clarinetist.

Instead, Lieutenant (Navy) Steve Dyck and Petty Officer First Class Ryan Hart joined the navy and are now part of HMCS Calgary's counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism operation in the Arabian Sea.

Calgary arrived in the Combined Maritime Forces area of operations as a part of Canada's Operation Artemis on April 15. Artemis is the Canadian Armed Forces mission to help stop terrorism and make Middle Eastern waters more secure.

The two sailors are members of the ship's Naval Tactical Operations Group (NTOG) boarding team – call sign Reef. Reef directly contributed to the ship's recent seizures, including 1,286 kilograms of heroin, the biggest heroin bust in Operation Artemis' history.

"Operation Artemis is the NTOG operator's Holy Grail," says PO1 Hart. "This is what every NTOG operator fights to do. This is putting all the hard work that every operator has gone through, from the selection process and right through all the training, to get to the level that my team is at right now. This is what NTOG was designed to do, this specific mission. We are so ready for this."

Lt(N) Dyck was born in Swan River but grew up on Eaglemount Crescent in Winnipeg's Linden Woods neighbourhood. He worked at Toledo Food Service as he made his way through Kelvin High School in River Heights. After graduating, he obtained an anthropology degree from the University of Manitoba and worked at maritime museums in Florida and Bermuda, and then as a professional shipwreck diver conducting research and salvage.

He joined the navy in 2013 because he had a "pretty solid five-year plan" to gain experience and then retire early as an underwater archeologist. However, during his early career sails he worked alongside NTOG members and it influenced him to change his path to become one in 2016.

"I was pretty intrigued seeing a group of highly motivated individuals working as a team and bringing a new skillset to the navy, something that could have a direct impact in the world," says Lt(N) Dyck, who is now Reef's team leader.

PO1 Ryan Hart grew up in Selkirk, Manitoba, and then in the St. Boniface area of Winnipeg. His first love was music and after high school he went to the University of Manitoba and majored in bass clarinet. It took him one year to decide it wasn't for him; so, he did a 180 and became a crane operator at the Gerdau Ameristeel steel plant in Selkirk. Seven years later he wanted more. He wanted to travel. His grandfather was in the British Royal Navy in the Second World War. In 2006, he followed in his footsteps and became a boatswain because he "liked the grunt work and doing the tough stuff." He has traversed the circumference of the world with the navy and visited countless locations with various ships.

"I think about Selkirk quite a bit still. Every year I visit and on the drive from the airport I pass the rolling mill – that's what we call the steel plant. I will always carry a piece of it with me," he says.

PO1 Hart got into the NTOG tactical unit as the team's first boat coxswain in 2014, and then as an operator in 2017. He is now the second-in-charge of Reef.

NTOG teams are not Special Forces, but they are a unique group in the navy and specialize in weapons use, hand-to-hand combat, rappelling, boarding ships, investigation techniques, intelligence gathering, and tactical mission planning. Unlike some other sea trades, they normally work with different ships going from mission-to-mission around the world. They are a relatively new capability for the navy; people sometimes compare them to the American's Navy Seals.

"We don't use that comparison. Seals, Marines, and Canadian Special Forces operators are trained to a larger skillset. We are a small unit that mostly specializes in protecting a ship and maritime interdiction. However, I will say, we are incredibly good at the set of things we do," says Lt(N) Dyck.

On Calgary's current mission Lt(N) Dyck and PO1 Hart are, for the first time, able to really show what their team can do.

Calgary has had amazing success on its current operation. Within days of beginning patrols in April, the ship made its record-breaking heroin bust, the biggest in the history of Combined Maritime Forces followed by five more seizures.

"It's amazing to be out here making a difference. I can't stress that enough," says Lt(N) Dyck.

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Naval Fleet School (Pacific) Graduation Ceremony

Lieutenant-Commander William Vanderstelt, Operations Division Commander of Naval Fleet School (Pacific), presented Certificates of Military Achievement on CISN Administrator during the Naval Communicator QL5B Graduation Ceremony April 29.

Photos by Sailor 1st Class (S1) Sisi Xu, MARPAC Imaging Services, Esquimalt



Sailor First Class A. Korb receives a Certificate of Military Achievement on CISN Administrator.



Sailor First Class M. Nicolle receives a Certificate of Military Achievement on CISN Administrator.



Sailor First Class M. Mcneil receives a Certificate of Military Achievement on CISN Administrator.



Sailor First Class G. Meulblok receives a Certificate of Military Achievement on CISN Administrator.



Master Sailor L. Priftakis receives a Certificate of Military Achievement on CISN Administrator.



Sailor First Class K. Smith-Rojo receives a Certificate of Military Achievement on CISN Administrator.



Sailor First Class A. Shaw receives a Certificate of Military Achievement on CISN Administrator.



Master Sailor M. Santos receives a Certificate of Military Achievement on CISN Administrator.

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Bravo Zulu



HMCS Winnipeg Awards and Presentations



SLt Murphy is promoted to Lt(N) by Cdr Layton and Lt(N) Summers.



SLt Alonso-Rodriguez is promoted to Lt(N) by Cdr Layton and Lt(N) Mullin-Lamarche.



MS Halbert is promoted to PO2 by Cdr Layton and PO1 Clark.



PO2 Halbert receives her Scroll certificate from CPO1 Lee.



Sgt Hagans receives her Scroll certificate from CPO1 Lee.



S1 Froebe is promoted to MS by Cdr Layton and Lt(N) Wychopen.



Cpl Allen is promoted to MCpl by Cdr Layton and CPO2 Elliot.



S2 Dupas is promoted to S1 by Cdr Layton and PO2 Barrett.



S2 Smith is promoted to S1 by Cdr Layton and CPO2 Mills.



S2 Espinoza is promoted to S1 by Cdr Layton and PO1 Clark.



S3 Immel is promoted to S2 by Cdr Layton and CPO2 Mills.



S3 Dion-Tessier is promoted to S2 by Cdr Layton and Lt(N) Wychopen.



HMCS Victoria Awards and Presentations

Awards and promotions presented by
LCdr Eric Isabelle, Commanding Officer HMCS Victoria.

Bravo Zulu



S1 Santisban-Bazan and MS Steele receive their Submarine Dolphins.



Sgt Musgrave receives his Submarine Dolphin.



MS Barber and Lt(N) Elsabagh receive their Submarine Dolphins.



MS Miedema, MS Noa, S1 Makohin, Lt(N) Brown, and SLt Saxena receive their Submarine Dolphins.



Lt(N) Hlobilek and S1 Sage receive their Submarine Dolphins.



S1 Goundry is presented the Special Service Medal (Expedition).



PO2 Beaton is presented the Special Service Medal (Expedition).



Lt(N) Somogyvari-Courchene is presented the Canadian Forces' Decoration.



CPO2 Tison is presented the Operational Service Medal.



LCdr Nguyen-Huynh is presented the Special Service Medal (Expedition).



MS Berandin is promoted to his current rank by CPO2 Tison and LCdr Giraldo-Mejia.

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Couple HOPES: Initial Development of a Guided, Internet-delivered Couple Intervention for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Relationship Enhancement

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a common and disabling condition associated with intimate relationship problems and mental health problems in partners of those with PTSD. Recognizing the need to improve access to evidence-based interventions for those with PTSD and their families, our team has developed an Internet-delivered, self-help intervention to improve PTSD, enhance relationships, and improve partners' mental health: Couple HOPES (Helping Overcome PTSD and Enhance Satisfaction).

Couple HOPES is comprised of seven interactive modules that systematically target PTSD symptoms and enhance relationship functioning. These modules cover the following topics: (1) Psychoeducation on PTSD symptoms and relationship functioning, (2) safety building in relationships and introducing skills to manage relationship conflict, (3) communication skills, (4) approaching situations, conversations, and experiences that are avoided as a result of PTSD symptoms, (5) sharing feelings, (6) sharing thoughts, and (7) consolidating intervention gains and relapse prevention. Each online module contains (1) web-streamed videos and activities that are approximately 30 minutes in length; (2) interactive exercises and homework for couples to complete between modules; and (3) messaging with a paraprofessional Coach before and after the module to troubleshoot homework completion and use of the platform, monitor PTSD symptoms and relationship satisfaction, clarify information as needed, and encourage the use of the platform.

The proposed three-phase project aims to refine and finalize Couple HOPES. In Phase 1, a series of 10 couples with at least one partner who is a Canadian military member, veteran, or first responder with clinically significant PTSD symptoms and their intimate partners will receive the intervention and will provide initial qualitative and quantitative data on safety, efficacy, and usability. These cases will be used to iteratively refine the intervention. In Phase 2, we will test the safety, efficacy, and usability of the finalized Couple HOPES intervention in an uncontrolled trial with 20 couples wherein one partner is a Canadian military member, veteran, or first responder with clinically significant PTSD symptoms. Lastly, in Phase 3, we will conduct a randomized controlled trial (RCT) comparing Couple HOPES against a delayed intervention group (all couples will receive the intervention within 2 months) to assess safety, desirability, and efficacy in 70 couples with at least one partner who is a Canadian military member, veteran, or first responder with clinically significant PTSD symptoms and their intimate partners across Canada.

The potential benefits of this study include couples learning new skills to reduce PTSD symptoms and enhance relationship functioning, although this is not guaranteed. Risks include participants finding the assessments distressing, or possible worsening of PTSD symptoms or relationship functioning. These risks will be mitigated by continuous monitoring of PTSD symptoms, relationship functioning, and adverse events, and intervention by study staff.

Point of Contact: Robert Valela, Couple HOPES Project Manager | couplehopes@ryerson.ca