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Volume 3, Number 4

October 2022

A periodic publication of the UNTD Association of Canada designed to provide news and short stories in a lighthearted fashion. Back issues can be found on the web site here: [Gunroom Shots - UNTD Association of Canada](#)

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Invitation

UNTD Association
of Canada
Annual General
Meeting

Tuesday, November 15,
2022

1900 Eastern Time



Invitation

Association UNTD
du Canada
Assemblée
générale annuelle

Le mardi, 15 novembre
2022

1900 heure de l'Est

The legacy of the UNTD is
on the agenda at this
meeting.

Will your voice be
counted?

To attend this meeting you
MUST register in advance
using the following link:

Register Here

Registration will close at
1800 Eastern Time, 15
November '22

Timing is so Important..

How much **time** does a Naval Association have if its core membership joined between 1943 and 1968? The answer of course is not much unless it expands its membership. Great effort has been given to connecting with those who joined as ROUTH, NROC, etc with some success, but there is not the same glue to hold the disparate groups together.

A report to the board written by Director Marta Mulkins, among other things, recommended a formal review of the membership structure and after consultation with a focus group, recommended the expansion of membership to include all ranks of the Naval Reserve. This was unanimously approved at a

L'héritage de l'UNTD est à
l'ordre du jour de cette
réunion.

Votre voix sera-t-elle
comptée?

Pour assister à cette
réunion, vous **DEVEZ** vous
inscrire à l'avance en
utilisant le lien suivant :

Inscrivez-vous ici

L'inscription se terminera à
18 h 00, heure de l'Est, le
15 novembre '22

Board meeting on October 4, 2022, and a major transformation was upon us.

It's not just about membership numbers, though. There is a gaping hole that Canada's Citizen Sailors drop into when they retire. Sure, there are various associations, some tied to Reserve Divisions, the NAC, Pig Boat Sailors, etc. but no national body with the experience, credibility, and resources to nurture Canadian Naval Reserve connections. Your board is convinced the UNTDA can be transformed into that body and now's the **time**.

Arguably, the UNTDA name should be reconsidered, and Marta's committee has been asked to reconvene and make some suggestions for a consultation process with all members. The committee may be in a position to submit a preliminary report for the November meeting.

If you have been reading the publicity for the Conference next May, you know that this was always going to be a turning point for the UNTDA. **Time** was up for the UNTiDy's running the show and 2023 would be when new blood would take over. If the membership agrees with the Board and we change the bylaws at the AGM on November 15 to formally admit Non-Commissioned Members of the Naval Reserve, we don't have much **time** to beef up the membership with those sailors so they can participate in this transformation. It's that **time** thing again.

The point of this note is to highlight the fact that the AGM on November 15 is an inflexion point in the 35-year history of the UNTDA, 55 years since the UNTD program was abolished. **Make sure you are part of history-making by attending the meeting - to be part of the transformation of the UNTDA and the birth of something new.**

When you go to the home page of the UNTDA web-site you will see Notice of Annual General Meeting. Click on Details, but don't be put off by the "corporate" agenda items, there is much real meat to chew on, and if you don't want to read all of the background material, at least read the President's Report."



UNTDA 2023

Next May in Victoria there will be a major event for all former UNTD and other Naval Reserve officer cadets. It will include visits to Canada's modern warships, HMC Dockyard, the Venture training centre, Maintenance Facility Cape Breton and the 443 Maritime Helicopter Squadron. There will also be an extensive social program where you can meet former colleagues and discover how naval reserve officer

training has evolved since those fondly remembered days – when we were so YOUNG!! The program details can be seen at <https://untd.org/wp-content/uploads/Conference2023.pdf>

This reunion in May of 2023 celebrates the beginnings of the UNTD during Wartime 80 years ago as well as the creation of naval reserve divisions across Canada in 1923. 100 years of volunteer ‘citizen’ service to Canada.

You can also register now for the Victoria event at <https://secure.erbium.com/ui/register/e-yTr4caCFEb>

Registrations are coming in steadily, and if you’re putting off your decision till closer to the conference, you may wish to reconsider. Rooms at the Hotel Grand Pacific are still available at the special conference rate of \$199, but under our contract, can only be held for a limited period. Don’t be left out in the cold (or the rain).

Do register early, like many are doing, and discuss with your partner the alternative program events that are also offered that are less ‘naval’.

We hope to see many former shipmates in Canada’s wonderful west coast city next May. The Spring flowers will be out to welcome you!!

You can see a description of all of the UNTD Association centennial programs at <https://untd.org/accueil>

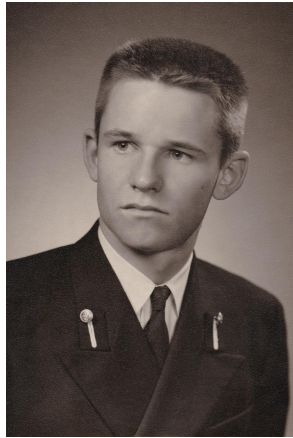
Ed Note:

Many of you wrote in to say how much you enjoyed Chris O’Brien’s reminiscence in the last issue of Gunroom Shots so we asked him to dig deep again.

We all look back fondly, and some not so fondly, on our early Cadet training days and the kick start they gave us on life’s later journeys. Well, here’s Chris’ take from Pig Boat wheelhouse to Barge helmsman, and then some.....

UNTD Memories

By Chris O'Brien (Carleton '63)



UNTD training conquers the canals of France (Halved)

In early '65 I decided to flunk myself out of Carleton U. and take a year off to “find” myself, so I flew off to England. I got a menial clerical position at the University of London, but the pay was so low that I hoped something better would come along.

One day, one of my fellow ~~slaves~~ clerics asked if anyone might be interested in a job on a cabin cruiser heading down through the canals of France to the Mediterranean and on to Cannes. I thought that here was a perfect job where I could exercise the full breadth of my first year UNTD training. Surprisingly, I was the only one interested in the job, so a couple of days later I went to meet the boat—a 35-foot wooden cabin cruiser named *Belle*—and its owners, a couple who worked in the film industry, one a producer and the other a cameraman.

Within the week we set off down the Thames for Calais, but it soon became apparent that neither of my bosses had much experience beyond cruising the quiet canals of Britain, and we almost capsized while turning back towards London in seriously mounting seas. So, a few days later we hired a “retired sea captain” to take command of *Belle* across The Channel. As it turned out, the day we made the crossing was, by Channel standards, almost flat calm and sunny as well, which was a real relief. The “sea captain” bade us farewell in Calais, but unfortunately, so did the nicer of the two owners who headed back to England leaving me, the dogsbody, to go all the way to Cannes alone with his grumpy partner, now my captain (I’ll call him “Grump”).

Eventually it was time to enter our first lock into the canal system, but Captain Grump had limited ship-handling skills. There was much grinding of gears as we moved ahead and then astern and back again as he attempted to line *Belle* up to enter the lock. At one point he thought he should give the lock keeper notice of our intent, so he gave me the order to “blow the horn!”

The horn in question was an antique brass Dutch barge horn meant for just such an occasion, and of which Grump was very proud, but unfortunately as I raised it to blow, it hit the top wire of the port railing, was wrenched from my hand and fell into the murky water below with a splash and a final plop.

Meanwhile, Grump had finally lined *Belle* up properly and was moving her slowly towards the lock’s gates. He asked why I hadn’t blown the horn yet, and when I told him I’d dropped it overboard he lost his temper in a big way. Luckily *Belle* had her own electric horn, so we sounded it and soon afterwards the lock gates

opened to receive us. Not at all an auspicious start to our voyage!

Grump eventually calmed down and over the next few days we settled into our new routine of negotiating the locks and dealing with the traffic, mostly 80-foot commercial barges which had to be treated with a great deal of respect as the barge skippers weren't used to having smaller vessels around.

I found northern France to be a bit flat and somewhat industrial, and the rainy, dismal weather didn't help, but gradually sunnier weather arrived and the countryside became more attractive. We motored along several canals southwards towards Paris and then up the Seine and then onwards via other canals and the River Saône to Lyons. The landscape was lovely as we cruised gently through some classic French countryside, each evening tying up alongside little towns and villages, going shopping for local meat, vegetables, bread and cheese, and occasionally filling our fuel and freshwater tanks.

Unfortunately, my tendency to drop things overboard recurred on a couple of occasions — first the lid of our garbage can and then, a few days later, the top half of a broken adjustable wrench. However, taking the initiative like any good Naval officer in training, I decided not to bother Grump with these minor mishaps so as not to distract him from his loftier duties.

In spite of these embarrassing lapses of good seamanship, my presence aboard was a definite asset for Grump. He spoke little French, but I spoke it well enough to handle most situations, so Grump was really quite dependent on me although he didn't always follow my sage and UNTD-trained advice.

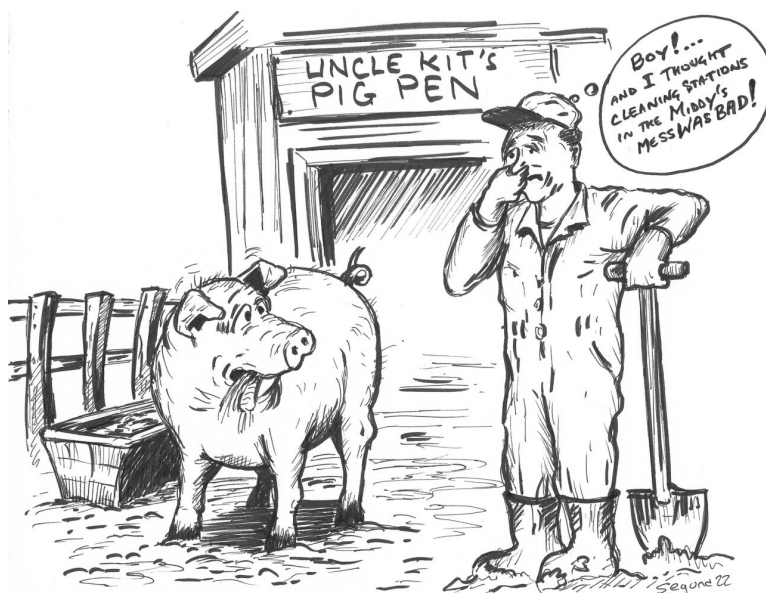
One evening we were tied to the end of a single-file line of barges being towed by a tug through a narrow one-way tunnel. As we exited the tunnel, Grump decided he wanted to tie up for the night right there, but I pointed out to him a warning on the wall above us—"STATIONNEMENT INTERDIT!". However, he was determined to stop there, so we let go of the string of barges and the tug towed them on and out of sight around a corner. We tied up right next to the warning sign, but suddenly a tug appeared around the corner up ahead towing a different string of barges back towards the tunnel we'd just come through! All of the barges had their engines turned off and were drifting freely back and forth as they approached us. The captains of the first two barges managed to turn their barges away from us, but the captain of the third barge obviously had no intention of doing so, and with my UNTD rel vel training it was obvious that a collision was inevitable. Slowly the barge drifted closer and finally struck us beam-on, rubbing up against us with much squealing of steel on wood and loud cracking sounds deep in our hull. All the following barges managed to avoid us, and although there was no major damage, *Belle* leaked like a sieve the rest of the voyage. An important lesson had been learned by Grump—always listen to your highly trained UNTD cadet!

We found a safer place to tie up for the night and continued on our way the next day with the bilge-pumping schedule suitably adjusted. Eventually we joined the Rhône and enjoyed a straight and swift run south to the Mediterranean which was calm and peaceful as we turned east towards Cannes. I can't remember how many more days it took to reach Cannes or how many stops we made along the way—Marseilles? Toulon? St. Tropez?—but I looked forward to the possibility that Grump would let me stay on as a member of *Belle's* crew as she started her new life cruising the Greek Islands.

However, I was to be cruelly disappointed the next morning. I didn't think Grump would mind that I had

slept in a bit, but when he returned after registering our arrival with the Cannes port authorities he asked, "Did you do the dishes yet?" I told him I'd just gotten up, and he said, "Right, mate, that's it. You're fired!" I could see there was no use arguing with him, and I got my things together and quickly went ashore.

I stayed on for a couple of days in Cannes before heading back to the UK, eventually arriving at my Uncle Kit's farm in Scotland with 10 shillings and 6 pence in my pocket. I earned my keep on the farm by sheep herding, wool picking, wool packing, pig-sty mucking, hay baling, and turnip thinning, none of which I could have done without my all-encompassing UNTD training!



There was actually one more opportunity to use what I had learned in my basic training in Cornwallis. Encouraged by Uncle Kit—an ex-RN officer and dashing MTB captain—I applied to join the Royal Marines, and went down to Portsmouth to see if I was made of the right stuff. Given that I had actually fired a Sten gun at the Cornwallis firing range and knew how to 'fix a bayonet, I thought I'd be a shoo-in, but I made a strategic mistake during the simulated jungle warfare exercise and ended up stranded on the end of a rope over an imaginary forest stream. I didn't hear back from HM Marines, so I returned to Canada, got into King's in Halifax, and took up where I'd left off with the UNTD, going to the West Coast for second year training. More fun and games!

TIDBITS

ROUTP 72 Reunion

By Hugues Létourneau(Donnacona '72)

The boys (it was just boys back then) of ROU TP 72 held their reunion in Winnipeg, 18 to 21 August 2022, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their training year (see photo below). It was the seventh such event, held every five years since 1992. Previous reunions were held in Ottawa, Vancouver/Victoria, Halifax, Calgary, Quebec City and St. John's. In a concession to advancing age, the timeline for the next ones will be three years - with a return to Vancouver/Victoria scheduled for 2025.

Of the 40 cadets who successfully completed their first-year training in 1972, 18 made the trip, with seven being joined by their wives. Kudos to the boys from Chippawa - Don Connolly, Dave Jonasson and Dennis Schultz - who organized a flawless, excellent reunion. In another sign of the passing years, a toast was raised to four who crossed the bar: Chris Cohrs, Kerry Dowdell, Art Friedrichs and Rick Jones.

As anyone who has attended such reunions will confirm, there is never an unkind word said: all were genuinely happy to see each other, and indeed, the year - like any other - has produced a number of close, life-long friendships. ROU TP and the Naval Reserve officer training programs that followed it differ somewhat from the UNTD. While the UNTDs also had loyalty to their respective training years, they also had the UNTD program per se: an almost standalone organization with a crest, a song, etc. As a result, the UNTD sense of 'belonging' was arguably stronger than that of the programs that followed it. Most ROU TPs don't relate all that much to the program. But the year: well, that's another matter. I was ROU TP, yes, but much more important, I was ROU TP 72.

(Ed note: A gallery for 1972 has been established on the web site and the photo below is published there. If there are other (presentable) photos of the year, Ross Connell says he is happy to post them)



Back row : John Millar, Don Connolly, George Zimmerman, Dave Jonasson, Henry Mark, Jim Dee, Hugues Létourneau, Phil Parker, Tom Hague, Donovan Arnaud, Brian McIntosh.

Front row : King Wan, Gary Reddy, Mike Gervais, Brian McCullough, Dennis Schultz, Steve Perron, John MacLean.

HMS Royal Oak

By Steve Foldesi (Donnacona '64)

As background you are aware that **HMS Royal Oak** was sunk at Scapa Flow in October 1939.

I attended the National Defence College in Kingston 1987-88 and appointed COND upon graduation with command of all Naval Reserve Divisions. A few months later I received a call from Captain Gary Oman, CO HMCS York, with the following tale:

It seems that an old Shad very close to crossing the bar called him to clear his soul and reveal that some time before he and his mates dove on the Royal Oak wreck (illegally I presume) and managed to pry the 18 inch high solid brass letters R-O-Y-A-L--O-A-K off the superstructure. Regrettably they dropped one of the 'A's but he still had all the other letters. He now wanted them returned.

Gary told him that he and his wife both worked but he will leave the garage door unlocked for the following week so that the letters may be dropped off incognito. And there they were, hence the phone call. I told him I knew just what to do.

As it happened one of my NDC classmates was Captain Jeremy Howard, RN who was then the RN Advisor at the British High Commission in Ottawa. I told him the story and he undertook to retrieve the letters. He added that this could not have happened at a better time as the RN was about to commemorate the 50th anniversary (1989) of her sinking. He added that by some quirk of fate, they already had the missing 'A'.

Believe it or not!

ED Note : And then there is this follow-on from Bill Clearihue....

I remember Steve unwinding this story a number of years ago. At the time I found a picture showing the restored nameplate somewhere in the Orkneys. The text under the name plate is as follows:

Original nameplate from HMS Royal Oak

"These name plate letters were illegally removed from the wreck of HMS Royal Oak in the early 1970s by an amateur diver on holiday in Orkney. The diver later emigrated to Canada, taking the letters with him.

In 1994 the letters were handed over to the Royal Navy in Canada and then returned to Great Britain. After restoring and mounting the letters, the Royal Navy presented them to Orkney Islands Council in October 1995.

They are on display here as a memorial to those that lost their lives in the sinking."

UNTDA Regalia

Maybe Final Sale!

The diminishing number of participants in the UNTD program means fewer customers for UNTD-badged regalia. Therefore, it probably does not make much sense for the Association to top up its inventory of the following items:

- Plaque
- Blazer badge
- Ball cap

So, if you've always hankered after one or more of these items, now is the time to snap it up before they are all gone.

If you want to avoid the shipping charge, you can opt to pick up your item(s) at the Conference next May. Order [here](#).

When you check out the web-site, you will see that there are centennial-themed items available; these you order direct, not through the UNTDA.

Letters to the Editor

Spence Memorial Exhibit

My wife and I are pleased to inform you that the Spence Memorial exhibit featuring my wife's cousin and godfather Wavy-Navy LT Lou Spence is now complete and open at the Muskoka Lakes museum in Port Carling, Ontario, for public [viewing](#). [it](#) describes the history of boatcraft, boating, and sailing on the Muskoka lakes, and features the life and wartime service of Lou Spence in Corvettes during the second world war and his subsequent civilian career developing radio and television broadcasting across Canada, culminating in retirement on Lake Muskoka and keen involvement in laser sailboat racing. My wife and I sponsored this exhibit to salute Lou Spence and the other members of our families who volunteered for naval and other military service from the South American war 1899-1902 to the end of the cold war in the 1980s and 90s. May all UNTD Association members enjoy!

Jim Stevens (Chippawa '73)

'Plotting' Positions

I thought this photo might amuse your readers.

The location is the compass platform on HMCS Portage, during our cruise to Quebec in '54. Cadets busy

plotting positions.

Cheers,

Graham Mitchell (Scotian '53)



West Coast Recollections

Summer on the west coast began the first week in July and has continued in the pattern that I recall from my Naden years, "57 and "59. I still feel strongly that these years shaped all of us and we achieved an experience that is sorely missing in the millennium crowd! One of my favourite recollections is of meeting our Admiral (Pullen) at his residence dressed in overalls and crawling under the dock, hammer in hand. He barked at me to stop standing there and grab a screwdriver. I hopped to it, of course, my reward being to crew on his bluenose that summer. Got me out of a lot of guard duties but raised some jealousies amongst my fellow officer cadets and junior officers. Those days lead to a lot of Bluewater racing and membership in the Royal Ocean Racing Club when we moved to London in 1985. The Brits love their sailing and the Club provided ample opportunity to crew and learn from fellow sailors. Great memories!

You are doing a great job to keep these memories alive for this old sailor! I wish many times that I could get that balance back and setting a spinnaker on a rolling deck!

Dick Bennetts (Donnacona '55)



Count Yourself In

In the run-up to the 2023 Conference and Celebration, the UNTDA is wanting to add to its contacts lists in order to keep everyone informed of planned events.

Please forward Gunroom Shots to your chums and encourage them to go to the home page at www.untd.org and give us their preferred email and current city. Another way is to email their coordinates to membership@untd.org.

2023 promises to be exciting for us - please encourage others to sign up and be part of the celebrations.

Vous Compter

Dans la perspective de la Conférence et Célébration de 2023, l'Association UNTD du Canada souhaite compléter ses listes de contacts afin de tenir tout le monde informé des événements prévus. Veuillez transmettre Gunroom Shots à vos amis et les encourager à se rendre sur la page d'accueil de www.untd.org et à nous donner leur adresse e-mail préférée et leur ville actuelle. Une autre façon est d'envoyer leurs coordonnées par courriel à membership@untd.org.

2023 promet d'être passionnant pour nous - veuillez encourager les autres à s'inscrire et à faire partie des célébrations.

"Do you hear there!"

The UNTDA continues its communications drive to reach and attract members, particularly those from the UNTD follow-on training schemes - ROUTH, NROC, UNTDv2 and RESO. Gunroom Shots and the Newsletter would love to run your stories and anecdotes as a reminder that the Naval Reserves legacy continues to live on through you, our younger members. Waiting to hear from you.....



Send your letters, anecdotes or suggestions to Barry Frewer, Editor at:
Gunroom.Shots@UNTD.org

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