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**Volume 2, Number 2**

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**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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Welcome Ken!

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## UNTDA 2023/Association UNTD 2023

### **National UNTDA Event – Naval Reserve Centenary 9-12 May 2023**

The bow wave is building...Mark your calendars now for a nostalgic and fun-filled four days in **Victoria/Esquimalt** to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Canada's Naval Reserve; the 80th Anniversary of the founding of the UNTD; and the 55 Anniversary of the creation of the ROUPT.

Watch for details in the next UNTDA Newsletter and stay tuned here as Gunroom Shots brings you future updates on this event and other planned activities.

### **Événement national UNTDA - Centenaire de la Réserve navale du 9 au 12 mai 2023**

La vague de proue se forme... Marquez dès maintenant vos calendriers pour un quatre jours nostalgiques et amusants à **Victoria / Esquimalt** pour célébrer le 100e anniversaire de la Réserve navale du Canada; le 80e anniversaire de la fondation de l'UNTD; et le 55 anniversaire de la création du ROUPT.

Surveillez les détails dans le prochain bulletin d'information de l'UNTDA et dans la prochaine édition de Gunroom Shots; ces deux publications vous apporteront des mises à jour futures sur cette événement et d'autres activités prévues.

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## **Citizen Sailors Virtual Cenotaph Project**

### **Project du cénotaphe virtuel des Marins citoyens**

Did you know? Canada lost 1769 Naval Reservists in World War 2.

Some of these Naval Reservists died in the 24 ships we remember at Battle of Atlantic. Many others died in motor torpedo boats, motor gunboats, in the fleet air arm, in more than 40 merchant ships, in combined operations, in shore establishments, and in 60+ Royal Navy ships.

Who were they? These Canadians joined the naval service at our Naval Reserve Divisions across the country. They enlisted "for hostilities only" and served in the RCNVR, RCNR and WRCNS. Their names can be found on the Halifax memorial and on more than 600 grave makers around the world, but their names are not well known at the NRD where they joined.

The UNTDA Board recently approved a virtual cenotaph project with a goal to "repatriate" these Naval Reservists back to their NRDs and to tell their story of sacrifice.

**Watch this space for details on how you can help...**

Le saviez-vous? Le Canada a perdu 1769 réservistes navals pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale.

Certains de ces réservistes navals sont morts à bord des 24 navires dont nous nous souvenons à la bataille de l'Atlantique. Beaucoup d'autres sont morts dans des torpilleurs à moteur, des canonnières à moteur, dans l'arme aérienne de la flotte, dans plus de 40 navires marchands, dans des opérations combinées, dans des établissements à terre et dans plus de 60 navires de la Royal Navy.

Qui étaient-ils? Ces Canadiens se sont joints au service naval de nos divisions de la Réserve navale partout au pays. Ils se sont enrôlés «pour les hostilités seulement» et ont servi dans la RCNVR, la RCNR et la WRCNS. Leurs noms se trouvent sur le mémorial d'Halifax et sur plus de 600 fabricants de tombes dans le monde, mais leurs noms ne sont pas bien connus à la BDNI où ils se sont joints.

Le Conseil d'administration de l'UNTDA a récemment approuvé un projet de cénotaphe virtuel dans le but de «rapatrier» ces réservistes navals dans leurs DRN et de raconter leur histoire de sacrifice.

**Gardez un oeil sur cet espace pour savoir comment vous pouvez aider...**

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### **Did You Know - Preparing for 2023**

(Historical factoids submitted by Stephen Rybak)

**RCNVR Summer Training** (Ed. sound vaguely familiar?)

“... after the evening drills of autumn and winter came two weeks of indoctrination sometime in the spring or summer, the first such course beginning in April 1923. By 1926 HQ staff could report how 11 officers of the executive branch had completed annual training that year. These officers took general courses in navigation and pilotage while two surgeon lieutenants reported for one-week's training and were attached to the district medical officer for training and experience in naval methods of medical procedure. Also two paymaster lieutenants reported for 14 days' training. These officers were given instruction in general accounting and all officers were given the opportunity to go to sea in vessels attached to the base. Some 226 ratings also reported for annual training.

“The ultimate experience for a member of the RCNVR was to participate in an RCN cruise. In September 1924, for example, about 50 of them embarked in ships of the North American and West Indies Squadron while they were cruising in Canadian and Newfoundland waters. In addition, British ships accepted thirty RCNVR men in HMS Constance, 11 in Calcutta and a dozen in Cape Town. These ratings took duty as part of the ship's company, participating in all drills and exercise carried out during the cruise. Some of their colleagues were luckier still in being able to serve in the battle cruisers Hood or Repulse.”

**Entraînement d'été RCNVR** (Ed. Semble vaguement familier?)

«... après les exercices des soirs d'automne et d'hiver, deux semaines d'endoctrinement se sont succédées au printemps ou en été; le premier cours de ce type commençant en avril 1923. En 1926, le personnel du QG pouvait rendre compte de la façon dont onze officiers de l'exécutif avaient suivi une formation annuelle cette année-là. Ces officiers suivaient des cours généraux de navigation et de pilotage tandis que deux lieutenants chirurgiens se présentaient pour une semaine de formation et étaient attachés au médecin de district pour une formation et une expérience les méthodes navales de procédures médicales. Deux lieutenants finances ont également suivi une formation de 14 jours. Ces officiers ont reçu une formation en comptabilité générale et tous les officiers ont eu la possibilité de prendre la mer à bord de navires attachés à la base. Quelque 226 évaluations ont également été rapportées pour la formation annuelle.

«L'expérience ultime pour un membre du RCNVR a été d'aller en mer à bord de navires de la MRC. En septembre 1924, par exemple, une cinquantaine d'entre eux embarquèrent sur des navires de l'escadron de l'Amérique du Nord et des Antilles alors qu'ils naviguaient dans les eaux canadiennes et terre-neuviennes. De plus, les navires britanniques ont accueilli trente hommes du RCNVR à bord du HMS Constance, 11 à Calcutta et une douzaine au Cap. Ces matelots ont assumés leurs fonctions au sein de l'équipage du navire, participant à tous les exercices effectués pendant leur temps à bord. Certains de leurs collègues avaient encore plus de chance de pouvoir servir dans les croiseurs de combat Hood ou Repulse.

## Canada's Navy during WW2: An Appreciation

By T.B.H (Tom) Kuiper -Donnacona 1962

Sailors such as ex-UNTDs, who served their formative years in the RCN before the ill-considered unification of the Canadian armed forces, are the last who can empathize with the sailors of the RCN during that remarkable time when it was the third largest navy of the Allied nations. While we can *imagine* the feelings of those who served with Nelson at Trafalgar, we can't experience those feelings. However, we who served in minesweepers and frigates (super corvettes – almost destroyers) have memories of an environment and culture that pervaded during the Battle of the Atlantic. When we read about those times we can relate to them. It was with this in mind that I reread books, fiction and non-fiction, in my collection which are set in or around the Battle of the Atlantic.

The histories of those times present the facts: Joseph Schull, *Far Distant Ships*; Marc Millner, *North Atlantic Run*; Michael Hadley, *U-Boats against Canada*; but they lack emotional content and require a level of concentration that personal accounts do not. So I want to focus on the latter, both non-fiction and fiction. The accounts can be enriched by having at one's side *H.M.C.S.*, a collection of photographs by Gilbert Milne. The introduction also gives a brief overview (16 pages) of the Canadian navy in WWII which can help put the stories into a larger context. Jack Macbeth gives a beautiful illustrated history of the RCN, with both photographs and art, from 1910 through 1987, in *Ready, Aye, Ready*. The short essays accompanying the photographs are also an excellent introduction.

*The Canadian Naval Chronicle 1939-1945* by Fraser McKee and Robert Darlington which gives brief description of significant ship actions, combat and otherwise, is also a good resource to have at hand.

A very easy way to get started is with that classic *The Cruel Sea* by Nicolas Monsarrat. This is not Canadian but the navy in which Monsarrat served, the RNVR and corvettes, and its relation to the RN, was probably not very different from the RCNVR experience. Monsarrat's own involvement is described in *Three Corvettes* and in *A Sailor's War* written by Sam Lombard-Hobson who was Monsarrat's CO in HMS Guillemot.

The Canadian experience is well described by James Lamb in *The Corvette Navy*, and in *On the Triangle Run*. The first book's leading chapter, The Last Corvette, explains how the corvette class came to be, out of the somewhat panicked realisation by Admiralty that hundreds of convoy escorts would be needed quickly. The class was based on a newly designed whale-catching vessel, which are astonishingly good sea boats, capable of operating in almost any conditions, even when destroyers and merchant vessels were seeking shelter. The corvette eventually evolved into the frigate which we remember with great fondness.

....to be continued in the next issue of Gunroom Shots

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### What was your Entry Scheme?

**By Ross Connell**

If you joined the Canadian Naval Reserve after 1989, there may not be a satisfactory label because there was no formal Training Program in place. Those who joined the UNTD between 1943 and 1968 became members of a highly successful and enduring idea explored in detail on the UNTDA web site ([UNTIDies Ho!](#), [Impact on Canadian Society](#), and [here](#)). UNTD members constitute roughly 75% of the current membership of the UNTDA .

But what about the period from 1923, at the founding of the Naval Reserve, and 1943, and, more contemporaneously, for the period from 1968 to the present? This brief note is intended to begin to address that question, but more importantly, to invite the recollections of current members, to help fill in the gaps in the recorded history of Naval Reserve Officer recruitment in Canada.

From Stephen Rybak's article in the February, 2021 edition of Gunroom Shots: "January 31, 1923 marked the creation of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve (RCNVR) and cancellation of the Royal Navy Canadian Volunteer Reserve (RNCVR) by Order in Council. The RCNVR establishment was set at 70 officers and 930 ratings organized in companies of 100 and half-companies of 50 in the Canadian cities of Calgary, Charlottetown, Edmonton, Halifax, Hamilton, Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec City, Regina, Saint John, Saskatoon, Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg."

The marvelous "Interactive List" on the web site invites you to find people with shared experiences from a period, or a place, or an Entry Scheme - if you know it. The UNTD was replaced by the Reserve Officer University Training Plan (ROUTP) in 1969. In 1976, this became Naval Reserve Officer Cadet (NROC). There was an attempt to revive the UNTD in 1985, which became known as UNTDv2, and only lasted three years until declining enrolment and no consistent approach to recruitment and training defeated the labelling. The only enduring term since then, has been Reserve Entry Scheme Officers (RESO).

There are some serious gaps in this story, and if you can illuminate any of them, please let us know.

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**Tidbits**

We have lost contact with

**Graham S. Bickle**

Prevost '55

Last known address: Blind Bay, BC

Please contact

[membership@unttd.org](mailto:membership@unttd.org) if you can help us get re-connected.



**Mar 1, 2021**

**Stand Up Year:**

1911

RCN

1923

RCNR (braided stripe), RCNVR (wavy stripe)

1945/46

RCN(R)

Was created right after WWII and replaced both RCNR and RCNVR.

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## Letters to the Editor



**Ed note:** Several of you hit your editor with a broadside to address the "myth" behind the Brass Monkey which ran in our last issue. Here are a couple of them. And thanks for writing in...

### Brass Monkey

This is an excellent Newsletter and much appreciated. I was troubled, however, to read the Tidbit about the Brass Monkey. I have two problems with this so please excuse me for being a little technical.

The coefficient of expansion (or contraction) of brass is approx. 0.000019 and for iron, approx. 0.000012. If we assume the brass plate is about 20" (50 cm.) wide and if we assume that our ship experiences a significant fluctuation in

### Brass Monkey

Many thanks for another successful "Shot"! To whoever penned the "Brass Monkey", and the "indecent" freezing weather comment:

Percy Saltzman, the noted CBC TV weather man (remember "Tabloid") of the late 1950's, always closed his commentary and forecast with a chalk flip in front of his weather board map.

On this particular evening, a bitterly cold winter

experiences a significant fluctuation in temperature ranging from +40 to -15 degree Celsius, the brass plate would contract about 0.52 mm over that range. By the same calculation, the sum of the contraction of lower tier of iron balls supposedly situated on that plate would be about 0.33 mm. In other words the brass plate will have contracted by an amount equivalent to about the thickness of five sheets of normal printer paper and the iron balls about three sheets of printer paper – clearly insufficient to create the suggested imbalance.

Equally significant is that cannon balls, stacked as described, would be inherently unstable under any other than totally calm sea conditions. If they were to fall off and roll loosely around the deck, the gun crews would be at significant risk of injury from them. From my reading of the design of features of the gun decks aboard sailing ships, I believe that ready-use cannon balls were often placed on oak planks in holes slightly smaller in diameter than the diameter of the balls. As such, they were readily available but unlikely to roll off as the ship rolled.

I believe the only times that cannon balls were stacked as described was for ceremonial purposes at entrances to buildings, etc. In those instances, the balls were welded together in order to avoid pilferage.

Once again, please excuse my intrusions on this subject.

Best wishes,  
Douglas McWhirter  
York ( U-51760)

### **Never a Dull Moment**

It was a great pleasure reading your latest publication, and the 2028 reunion report is particularly well done.

Since my entry into the navy was via the UNTD program, [HMCS Malahat, 1952, ROTP HMCS Discovery, 53 and 54], my recently published book, Never a Dull Moment, which includes anecdotes from that era will, I am certain, be of interest to my fellow Untidies.

On this particular evening, a bitterly cold winter weather snap in Ontario, after pronouncing the severely cold temperatures, cautioned all viewers across Canada with:

“So the word for tonight is - keep all those brass monkeys inside!”

After the show he quickly received a severe reprimand from the CBC Brass for this “indecent” attempt at humour, and I can only assume that there was no one around to defend his reference to this standard naval practice.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Percy\\_Saltzman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Percy_Saltzman)

Cheers to all!  
Doug Begin  
Carleton (U-1689)



It may be obtained in printed or e-book format from Barnes and Noble or Amazon, or directly from the publisher by googling Friesen Press Bookshop.

Please continue your good work.

With best wishes,

George Plawski.

Malahat 1952

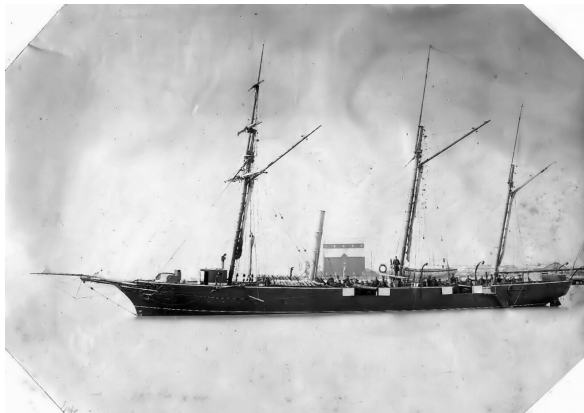
### **Help Welcomed**

Do we have any CAD aficionados amongst us? Any model builders? Any 3D printers? Any one using a laser or mitre saw for fine cutting? Any maritime painters? Any researchers for period RN detail – uniforms, ship fittings, engineering? Any of our children who might be interested?

Would welcome them to my project on creating museum model(s?) of Britomart class gunboat, 3 of which were active on the Great Lakes during the Fenian raid period (1866-68). Relevant reading “Gunboats on the Great Lakes 1866-68”, Cheryl MacDonald, Lorimer ISBN 978-1-4594-1122-7. Have copies of original drawings from Greenwich.

I've inserted a photo of the Heron in Toronto harbour. Note guns in front of 2 groups of crew.

I also have a mystery brewing. The second attachment is a painting by an unknown artist of 3 (presumably Britomart) gunboats. It may be a painting by George Cuthbertson, but we can not pin it down. Does someone recognize the painting and/or the artist?



Bryan Kerman

Prevost 1961

[bkerman@lara.on.ca](mailto:bkerman@lara.on.ca)

## Items for Sale

With confinement at home the past year, we've been sorting through and disposing of the results of a long lifetime of acquisition, so as not to become part of the "Boomer Burden" to our children when we pass on. Four items that might be of interest to members turned up. I've no idea of their present worth but willing discuss them to mutual advantage. They were acquired at the HMS Victory museum about 40 years ago:

- A pen and ink sketch of HMS Victory, 8"x 12", by J. Mortlock, 1970
- A set of 12 annotated pencil sketches of parts of HMS Victory, 6"x 9", by Christine Warburton, date unknown but likely circa 1970
- A spectacular blackline drawing of the profile of HMS Victory showing hull construction and a wealth of interior details, 18" x 48", artist unknown, published for Her Majesty's Stationary Office by the Hydrographic Department, 1966
- And a more recent acquisition, a set of 6 prints of ships of the Victorian Navy, 6" x 8", from water colours by William Frederick Mitchell (1845-1914), copyright W.J. Diggle, 1990.

Many thanks,  
Andrew V. Okulitch,  
Discovery 1959  
[aokul](#)

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## Membership Renewals

**If you're receiving Gunroom Shots, you're already a member of the UNTD Association, and participating in its central theme – Maintaining Connections. By now you will have received a membership renewal form with all the contact information we have on file for you. This is how we make sure we don't lose the connection. Stay connected – make sure our contact information is correct.**

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May he rest in peace  
HRH Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh  
1921-2021



Halifax, July, 2010. HMCS Sackville behind

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Send your letters, anecdotes or suggestions to Barry Frewer, Editor at:

[Gunroom.Shots@UNTD.org](mailto:Gunroom.Shots@UNTD.org)

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