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Volume 3, Number 2

April 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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CSVC Project Update

(Kim Kubeck, Project Manager)



This wonderful project is gaining momentum daily, and as it gathers steam it is generating greater need for additional researchers and technical support to ensure tabulation and posting of information is well-coordinated.

The goal of the CSVC project is to flesh out the life stories of the 1,769 Canadian Naval Reservists who perished in WW2, to tell their story of sacrifice, and to “repatriate” them to their home division. These stories are being developed by volunteer researchers from across the country. Happily, the research crew is growing and the project is beginning to attract the younger participants. Ideally the team will include current and past Naval Reservists, Sea Cadets, university students and other Canadians with an interest in military history.

Since the last report in Gunroom Shots, the number of completed stories has increased from 32 to 46, and there are over 130 in progress. During the course of the research, interesting facts emerge, and these are shared in what are called CSVC Vignettes.

You can find links to the completed stories and the Vignettes on the project site, and there will soon be other fascinating information to be added from the course of the research for these stories. The latest Vignettes focus on the RCNVR sailors who were recognized for gallantry during the sinking of their ships: the armed yacht HMCS *Otter* (March 1941) and the minesweeper HMCS *Guysborough* (March 1945).

The project now has its own section – still on the UNTDA website – but with its own home page and separate menus. Find the new CSVC home page [here](#), and the French CVMC page [here](#).

If you know someone who might be interested in taking part in this worthy venture, share this project description (<https://unttd.org/wp-content/uploads/CSVC-Project-Description-V4-for-Web-Site-With-Norris-Graphics.pdf>) or have them contact CSVC.CVMC@gmail.com

UNTD Memories

by Chris O'Brien (Carleton 1963)

Rose and the UNTD dance in Cornwallis

After many weeks of basic training in Cornwallis in '64, the powers-that-be (those who must be obeyed, those who rule) decided that Cadets should be encouraged to practise their social graces by attending a dance with some local girls. I would love to have seen how the invitation to the ladies was worded e.g. "chastity belts recommended" or "be prepared for sudden projectile vomiting", but many girls turned up anyway, their curiosity no doubt piqued by the opportunity to see what these strange, "socially"-starved beasts looked like.

We cadets filed into the dance hall and as the music started up, we began to inspect the bevy of beauties lining the far wall. Eventually, I spotted an attractive prospect and, gathering my courage, asked her to dance. She accepted my invitation and we sashayed out onto the dance floor. I noticed that she was chewing gum like a serious habitual user, but I wasn't going to hold that against her as she really was quite attractive.

Luckily the song being played was a slow one and conducive to some conversation, so I began with a real zinger guaranteed to impress her.

"So, what's your name?"

"Rose", she said without enthusiasm as she continued to chew her gum with real conviction. I thought, "surely she's not bored with me already; I'll keep trying."

"Oh, that's a *lovely* name!", I said with great enthusiasm, as though it was the loveliest name I had ever heard.

"Yeah", she replied flatly as her jaws continued to work on that gum. I couldn't help but notice by this time that she hadn't actually made any eye contact with me while we danced, but instead was constantly looking over my shoulder, no doubt to see what her girlfriends were up to, who was with whom etc. But I wasn't about to give up, so I pressed on.

"So, Rose, what do you do?"

"I work in the clam-packin' factory in Digby."

"Oh, that's *really interesting!*", I said with even greater enthusiasm, eager as I was to know more. "And what do you do there?"

For the first time since accepting my invitation to dance, Rose not only looked me square in the eye, but she stopped chewing her gum! I awaited her answer with 'bated breath.

"I pack clams!" she said in irritation and with a look of incredulity as if I was the dumbest dance partner she had ever had.

“Thanks for the dance, Rose.”

“Yeah.”

NBCD training on the West Coast

In my second year in the UNTD I was on the West Coast, and one of the more interesting segments of the training regime was NBCD. One thing we had to learn was how to use a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) that would allow one to (hopefully) avoid the nasty airborne substances associated with nuclear, biological or chemical attacks.

Of course, an SCBA can also be used to protect oneself from smoke inhalation when fighting a fire aboard ship. So, as part of our NBCD training, we got to try out an SCBA in as real-life a situation as possible. For that purpose, the NBCD boffins had constructed a mock section of a ship with several compartments and a couple of levels. The idea was to set an actual fire in one of the compartments and then have cadets wearing their SCBAs carry a fire hose down into the compartment and put the fire out.

It sounded straightforward enough, but there were a couple of wrinkles. First, the mock compartments were completely filled with thick black smoke, and the second daunting detail was that the compartments were in total darkness so that you could literally not see your own hand through the eyepieces of your SCBA.

I was a bit nervous because some months before I had had my first experience of panic-inducing claustrophobia during a rather unsettling frosh week initiation ceremony which required us to have pillow cases over our heads while all being squashed roughly together into the corner of a small room. The way I eased my panic was simply to raise the hem of my pillow case just enough to see my own arm which eased the panic nicely. But there wouldn't be anything to lift up out of the way as I descended down into the darkness of the smoke-filled compartments.

Anyway, after donning our heavy fireproof clothing and SCBAs, my team started down the ladder with our hose. As expected, I couldn't see anything at all except blackness even when I put my hand right up against my masked face, and I tried to ignore my rising anxiety. My position on the team was a few feet from the bottom of the ladder half-way along the length of the hose, so I wasn't anywhere near the fire itself, although I could hear my team-mates a couple of compartments away spraying water on the flames.

After a few minutes, I heard one of the instructors yell "Fire's out!", so the ordeal was almost over, but suddenly, the utter darkness and not knowing exactly where I was became too much for me, and the full-blown panic of claustrophobia took hold of me. I turned around and tried to find my way back to the bottom of the ladder but I bumped into another member of the team.

"Where are you going?", he asked.

"I've got to get out of here!"

Sensing my panic, he said, "Just hold onto the hose."

I did so, and immediately the panic left me. I knew where the hose led (out of the smoke and darkness) and all I had to do was to hold onto it as it was hauled back up the ladder to the world above. What a huge relief, but my SCBA trial wasn't over yet because an even scarier part of the training awaited — going into a small smoke-filled building, finding one's way through a rubble-strewn maze inside, and then out a door on the other side of the building. Knowing there was a good chance I'd have another panic attack and do something stupid or even dangerous, I appealed to the Chief in charge, and he let me off the hook.

Somewhat ashamed, I watched the rest of my Division take on the smoke-filled building without any problems (and no doubt with a good deal of humour), and I've wondered ever since, "Gee, maybe I could have done that after all."



The necessity of night driving when duty calls

Early in the summer of 1967 I was due to start my 3rd year training in Stadacona, but a week beforehand the owner of the Halifax Triumph car dealership asked me and a friend of mine, John Risley, to take delivery of a couple of brand-new Spitfire sportscars in the port of Montreal and drive them back to Halifax. I was mad about cars in those days and it sounded like a real lark even though we wouldn't be able to drive the cars very fast because they had to be broken in along the way.

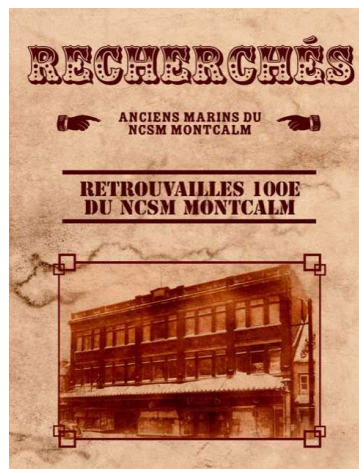
We duly picked up the two cars in Montreal and began the journey back to Halifax, but a short time after

we left the port we were pulled over by the local police. They checked the cars' papers and found something amiss, so John and I had to wait around for much of the day until the paperwork was squared away.

Finally, we were on the road, but we were now running many hours late, and given that I had to be back in time to begin my training ("Aye, aye Sir!"), we determined that we would have to drive non-stop back to Halifax with no chance of any sleep along the way. Initially things were fine and the first night of continuous driving went well enough, but in the afternoon of the next day we began to feel the toll of a sleepless night. Our eyelids were getting heavier and heavier, and the prospect of another night without sleep loomed ominously, but we had no choice but to keep going. For Queen and country!

As we drove into the darkness, inevitably we both began to suffer even more from the effects of sleeplessness. I found it harder and harder to keep my eyes open and I began to honk my Spitfire's horn in continuous bursts to keep myself awake. Deep into the night I began to hallucinate, and John was having the same trouble — at one point he brought his car to a screeching halt in order not to hit an imaginary cowboy and his horse as they crossed the road.

Somehow, early the next morning we made it back to Halifax without driving our Spitfires off the road, and I headed home to get ready for my first day of training. My father happened to be up and looked at me with obvious disapproval. Bleary-eyed and unshaven, I pulled myself together as best I could, dived into my uniform (damn that stiff collar!) and joined my fellow 3rd years just in time to begin my first Comms class of the summer. An inauspicious start to my "career" as an Acting Sub-Lieutenant RCNR!



HMCS MONTCALM's centennial reunion

2023 will be upon us sooner than we think and our unit will be blowing out its 100th candle along with the Naval Reserve!

Festivities will take place throughout the year from coast to coast!

Many sailors have served and proudly represented the Montcalm and we want to celebrate this milestone with them.

We are calling on you to share this publication in order to reach as many HMCS Montcalm alumni as possible!

Here is a group created for you to share your memories, stories and photos. You will be informed of the centennial activities and can even participate in the collective effort of the HMCS Montcalm logbook!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2337938859669392/>

Retrouvailles 100e du NCSM MONTCALM

L'année 2023 sera à nos portes bien plus tôt qu'on peut le croire et notre unité soufflera sa 100e bougie tout comme la Réserve navale!

Les festivités prendront place tout au long de l'année d'un océan à l'autre!

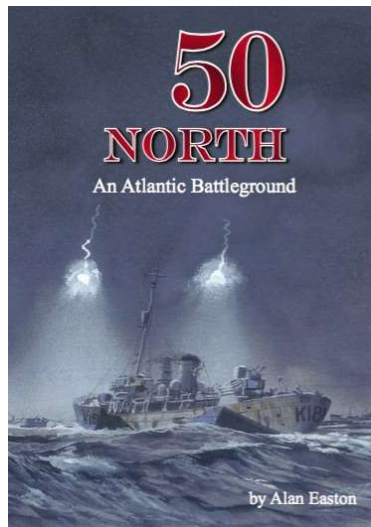
De nombreux marins ont servi et représenté fièrement le Montcalm et nous tenons à célébrer ce jalon à leurs côtés.

Nous faisons donc appel à vous pour partager cette publication afin de rejoindre le plus d'anciens et anciennes du NCSM Montcalm!

Voici un groupe créé pour vous, pour y échanger vos souvenirs, histoires et photos. Vous serez aux faits des activités du centenaire et pourrez même participer à l'effort collectif de mémoire du journal de bord du NCSM Montcalm!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2337938859669392/>

"50 North" An Atlantic Battleground



Editor: Glen Davidson and our president Graham Scott want to draw your attention to the recently re-issued e-edition of “50 North” by Alan Easton. Considered one of the RCN/RCNVR WWII classics, the E-book will be available on most platforms. The following dedication as part of the book’s promotion is a wonderful testament to the strength and spirit of the men and women of the Reserves who helped win the battle of the Atlantic and to those who continue to serve our nation with pride.

“50 North” An Atlantic battleground

Dedicated to all the men and women, past and present, who serve Canada in the Reserve Forces

Lieutenant-Commander Alan Easton DSC RCNR was already an experienced sea-officer from the Merchant Service and a member of the Royal Canadian Naval Reserves when war broke out in 1939. He immediately made himself available for action. After the briefest of training he was offered command of the home-built corvette HMCS Baddeck in which to become a leading actor on the stage of that vast theatre, The North Atlantic, in what would eventually become the longest-running battle of the Second World War.

Alan Easton served Canada and the Allied cause almost continuously at sea in the North Atlantic battleground for four long and demanding years. His commands began with the badly-behaved corvette Baddeck and her constant engine ailments before transferring to the sweeter-natured corvette HMCS Sackville, now preserved in Halifax as Canada’s Naval Memorial and then to the new frigate HMCS Matane, culminating in command of the destroyer HMCS Saskatchewan. His ships escorted the vital Atlantic convoys, they fought the U-boats, they fought the North Atlantic, they sailed into history as the Force that swung the pendulum of battle away from the enemy towards the final Allied Victory.

With Victory secured Easton, worn down and exhausted by the demands of the North Atlantic was hospitalised, with time for reflection he wrote the definitive memoir of the Atlantic battleground. Titled “50 North” he captured with outstanding skill and accuracy what it was like to serve on this angry ocean in what has been described as “a bucket with an ill-fitting lid”. Constantly wet, continuously under threat from the enemy, endlessly at the mercy of wind and sea he led his men, his escort group, through it all, and

in this book, describes every detail of that epic adventure: This is a true classic of War at Sea.

“50 North” was last published almost 60 years ago. Now, 2021, it is being republished as an electronic book to be available on all major platforms, with much new material and a wealth of period photographs. This modern technology opens his account of life on the Atlantic Battleground to a global audience in a way that could not have been imagined in the 1960s. “50 North”, the new edition, is dedicated to all those men and women who serve Canada, then and now, like Easton himself, in the Reserve Forces. When Lieutenant Commander Easton DSC RCNR served in the north Atlantic Battleground Canada’s Navy grew from tiny to the third largest in the conflict, most of the heavy-lifting in that drama was done on the backs of the reservists, “When the trumpet called up yonder”, the Reserves answered it.

The publication of “50 North” coincides with the return of the last known corvette skiff, sea-boat, from Portsmouth Naval Base to Halifax NS and the last surviving corvette, HMCS Sackville, the little ship that won her place in history, and the heart of Alan Easton.

Canada, HMCS Sackville and the Canadian Reserve Forces, with the republication of this classic memoir, the World salutes you.

“50 North” is published by Lewin of Greenwich Organisation Ltd. A non-profit publisher of Military memoirs

Meet the next generation of Naval Reserve sailors

(submitted by Jennifer Bennett)



Meet Sailor 2nd Class (S2) Kelly Le! She is featured on the Naval Reserve Centennial logo “because she represents the newest generation of Naval Reservists.”

Born to Vietnamese immigrant parents and raised in Vancouver, B.C., S2 Le is the first member of her family to join the Canadian Armed Forces. She joined as a Boatswain at HMCS Discovery / NCSM Discovery in 2017 and has since distinguished herself as an accomplished junior leader.

She has led members of DISCOVERY in undertaking major philanthropic and fitness enterprises, including for Honour House, the B.C. Cancer Foundation, and B.C. Children’s Hospital Foundation. S2 Le also served

during Operation LASER as part of HMCS DISCOVERY's team that executed domestic operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and other natural disasters.

When asked about being featured on the Naval Reserve Centennial logo, Kelly said, "It was an honour when S1 Dimayuga asked to use my image, and I am very proud to represent all modern Naval Reservists on the logo that will be featured prominently throughout the Centennial year."

#NavResNav #NavResCentennial #WeTheNavy #NousLaMarine #MyCAF

Une image du matelot de 2e classe (Mat 2) Kelly Le figure sur le logo du centenaire de la Réserve navale pour faire contrepoids aux deux images historiques dans le haut du logo et pour illustrer la nouvelle génération de réservistes navals.

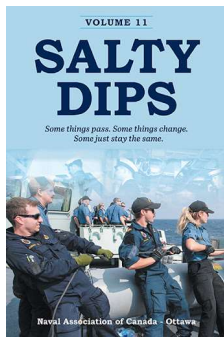
Le Mat 2 Le est née et a grandi à Vancouver, en Colombie-Britannique. Elle est la première de sa famille originaires du Vietnam à se joindre aux Forces armées canadiennes. Elle s'est enrôlée en 2017 à titre de manoeuvrière au NCSM Discovery et s'est depuis démarquée en tant que jeune leader accomplie.

Le Mat 2 Le a amené des membres du Discovery à entreprendre d'importants projets philanthropiques et axés sur le bien-être, notamment pour la « Honour House », la fondation du cancer de la Colombie-Britannique (B.C. Cancer Foundation) et la fondation de l'hôpital pour enfants de la Colombie-Britannique (B.C. Children's Hospital Foundation). Elle a également servi durant l'opération LASER comme membre de l'équipe du NCSM DISCOVERY qui a pris part à des opérations nationales en réponse à la pandémie de COVID-19 Elle a aussi contribué lors de d'autres catastrophes naturelles.

Voici ce qu'elle a dit au sujet du logo du centenaire de la Réserve navale : « J'ai été honorée lorsque le Mat 1 Dimayuga m'a demandé s'il pouvait utiliser une image de moi. Et je suis très fière de représenter tous les réservistes navals d'aujourd'hui sur ce logo qui prendra une place importante tout au long de l'année du centenaire. »

TIDBITS

Salty Dips



Volume 11 of “Salty Dips” was recently published by the Ottawa Branch of the NAC with a theme that is common to our discussions about the way ahead for the UNTDA - “Some things pass. Some things change. Some just stay the same.”

It includes a Chapter “UNTDA – University Naval Training Division 1984 written by Louise Mercier. E book copies as well as paperback and hard cover versions of the book are available online through links on the site below.

[Salty Dips Volume 11 by Naval Association of Canada - Ottawa Branch | The FriesenPress Bookstore](#)

HMCS *Haida*

A video has just been released that chronicles the journey of HMCS *Haida* from the edge of the scrapyards to the jetty in front of HMCS *Star* where it stands out as the ceremonial flagship of the RCN.

“How and Why the *Haida* Was Saved” is narrated by Peter Ward, one of *Haida*’s saviors and is now on the Links and Videos page of the UNTDA web site [UNTD.org](#)

RCN Ensign



In 2011 the Canadian government began a process of restoring the navy’s Royal designation, the “executive curl” and other symbols lost in Unification. This led, in 2013, to a new and improved naval ensign for the RCN. Those with an interest in vexillology will appreciate this [article](#) recently posted under Publications\Books & Articles on the UNTDA web site by Captain (N) N. Jolin RCN Ret’d. It provides a definitive explanation of the various terms, flag, ensign, jack, etc. as well as a comprehensive history of our naval ensign’s roots.

(By the way, if you’re browsing the Books & Articles page on the web site, it will quickly be apparent that the page needs serious renovation. This is a job for someone at home with html. If you fit that bill, please contact [Ross Connell](#).

Glossary

(From Ross Connell)

For all of you who broadcast to our slaving public, and wish to remain CBC-correct, the French-English dictionary has been renamed a [Glossary](#) and has been updated with new and helpful terminology like the pre-unification and post royal-restoration names for the RCN in French. Moreover, given its growing stature, the Glossary has been moved from the bowels of the Links menu to its own spot under

Publications – en les deux langues.

Seriously though, finding the correct French terms for long-retired words has been a challenge for those like Émilie working on the CSVC project. If you have a secret stash of useful terms, send them along to and I'll update our list.

Find out what “Ready Aye Ready” is in French and Latin!

Translation Can Be Messy

(From Ross Connell)

Up until unification, the “Royal Canadian Navy” was “Marine royale du Canada” in French at which time it became (ugh!) Maritime Command. In 2011 when the “Royal Restoration” was enacted, the translation was reviewed and changed to “Marine royale Canadienne” because, after all, the reverse-translation of “Marine royale du Canada”, “Royal Navy of Canada” is not cool. Happily, the initials, MRC were the same, so no buttons had to be changed. (With apologies to Richard Gimblett, retired Command Historian, who was in the centre of this.)

Naval Reserve Centennial Crest



The new Naval Reserve Centennial crest is now available in stickers and magnets through CANEX online or in the Halifax and Ottawa outlets. It will be available in other locations soon.

Letter to the Editor

I wanted to inform members of the UNTDA that I have written a book which, among other topics, includes how I joined the navy, and stories about my naval career including flying off the Bonnie.

Should anyone be interested, the title is NEVER A DULL MOMENT, and it can be obtained in all its forms by googling FRIESEN PRESS BOOKSTORE.

George Plawski (Malahat 1952)

Volunteers Appeal



Volunteers needed in Three Critical Areas:

UNTDA Communications Committee needs volunteers to assist with (strategic) communications planning and social media outreach, with particular attention to maximizing the reach and appeal of our Facebook group.

UNTDA 2023 Committee would benefit from an expert in event planning. The planning for the convention scheduled for May, 2023 is well advanced, but the committee needs someone dedicated to the support and encouragement of class/year/ship group reunions to be held at the same time.

UNTDA Governance and Nominations Committee With incorporation comes the need for improved definition of the UNTDA's detailed policies and governance structure, along with finding the right people to fill important roles

Bénévoles recherchés dans trois domaines critiques :

Le comité des communications de l'UNTDA a besoin de bénévoles pour aider à la planification (stratégique) des communications et à la sensibilisation des médias sociaux, en portant une attention particulière à maximiser la portée et l'attrait de notre groupe Facebook.

Le Comité UNTDA 2023 bénéficierait d'un expert en planification d'événements. La planification de la convention prévue pour mai 2023 est bien avancée, mais le comité a besoin de quelqu'un qui se consacrerait au soutien des réunions de classe/année/navire qui se tiennent en même temps.

Comité de gouvernance et des nominations de l'UNTDA Avec l'incorporation, il est nécessaire d'améliorer la définition des politiques détaillées et de la structure de gouvernance de l'UNTDA, ainsi que de trouver les bonnes personnes pour remplir des rôles importants

finding the right people to fill important roles.

UNTDA Finance Committee This committee currently consists of one member and the work is not onerous, but a backup is essential – someone with good knowledge of Excel, and ideally, VBA. Diversity is very important to provide effective representation of a large membership, but since the vast majority currently are ex-UNTDs, to serve the future, the ideal volunteers will be those who joined the Naval Reserve in the 80's, the 90's and beyond.

**Send a quick email to
Communications@UNTD.org with your phone
number to pursue any one of these
opportunities.**

remplir des rôles importants.

Comité des finances de l'UNTDA Ce comité est actuellement composé d'un membre et le travail n'est pas onéreux, mais une personne ressource additionnelle est nécessaire pour assurer la continuité. Cette personne devra avoir des connaissances en Excel, et idéalement "VBA". La diversité est très importante pour assurer une représentation efficace d'un grand nombre de membres, mais comme la grande majorité sont actuellement d'anciens UNTD, pour servir l'avenir, les volontaires idéaux seront ceux qui se sont joints à la Réserve navale dans les années 80, 90 et au-delà.

**Envoyez un e-mail rapide à
Communications@UNTD.org avec votre
numéro de téléphone pour saisir l'une de ces
opportunités.**

Crossing the Bar



Harold (Harry)Raymond Steele

"The Commander"

died in St. John's on Jan 28 at age 92

It is with sadness and nostalgia that we acknowledge the recent passing of a great shipmate, Harry Steele, known to many as The Commander for his tight command aboard ship and in his businesses.

One of Newfoundland's most prolific entrepreneurs and philanthropists, he started his business career after 20 years as an officer in the RCN. He bought and became CEO of Eastern Provincial Airways. Harry also owned Universal Helicopters and invested in a series of hotels, newspapers, magazines and radio stations... not to mention the many national boards he sat on.

Harry went to Memorial University and entered the UNTD program (Cabot 1950). He later joined the RCN full time where he trained as a Communications Specialist and eventually worked in Naval Intelligence. After serving in many types of ships he was posted to Gander for 4 1/2 years as Station Commander. He retired from there as a LCdr.

In 1992 Harry received the Order of Canada.

He is survived by his wife ,Catherine; sons, Peter, Rob and John; seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Harry, we salute you!

"Do you hear there!"

The UNTDA continues its communications drive to reach and attract members, particularly those from the UNTD follow-on training schemes - ROUDP, 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.....



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.

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

Gunroom.Shots@UNTD.org

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MailPoet