

January 2024

INSIDE

Trophy finds new role – and winner

Lt(N) Mara Pritchard and the repurposed UNTD Trophy | p..2

Griffons grow our ranks

The NRAC welcomes the Griffon Association who voted to join the Association as a group | p.4

An RCNR first

Laraine Orthlieb – the first woman in the RCNR promoted to the rank of Commodore | p.7

Call for nominations

Participate in the growth of our new Association | p.9



I congratulate the NRAC on its recent stand up, and look forward to seeing the progress that will be made in the coming years.

Cmdre Pat Montgomery

Fig. 1 –
Flags BRAVO ZULU
Congratulations



Cmdre Patrick Montgomery, Commander Naval Reserve, (right) presents a Naval Reserve Centennial coin to S2 Kelly Le, a member of HMCS Discovery, at the commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic in Liverpool, (UK), May 28th, 2023.

Greetings from Cmdre Pat Montgomery, Commander Naval Reserve.

I extend my warmest greetings to all members of the Naval Reserve Association of Canada (NRAC). It is both an honour and a privilege to appear in "Mess Deck Connexions du Carré" to address your members, who play a crucial role in fostering the spirit of naval service across Canada.

As Commander of the Naval Reserve, I congratulate the Naval Reserve Association of Canada on its recent stand up, and look forward to seeing the progress that will be made in the coming years. I pledge my support and

resilience of our naval community, past and present.

Your tireless efforts in promoting the importance of naval reserve service and fostering camaraderie within the naval community have not gone unnoticed. I was especially impressed by the leadership and initiative of NRAC when I attended your conference last May, and I wish you every success as you continue to evolve as a home and voice for our serving and retired naval reservists. The partnership between the Naval Reserve and the Naval Reserve Association is invaluable, and I look forward to the continued collaboration that will undoubtedly strengthen our organizations.

I am myself a proud member of the Association, and I am grateful to all members of the Association for their service and dedication. I am confident that, together, we will continue to uphold the proud traditions of the Royal Canadian Navy and ensure a prosperous future for our naval reservists—both retired and active service. +

encouragement, as you embark on your journey of representing both serving and retired members of the naval reserve. Your unwavering commitment to the principles of duty, honour, and service are a testament to the strength and

Your "Connexions" team would like to extend hearty greetings for 2024 and to thank you for your encouraging compliments on our inaugural issue. We will continue to try hard to meet your expectations for information and news about NRAC and its mission. Most importantly we invite our readers to share your stories and comments which bring added life and interest to "Connexions".

Note that we are now publishing "Connexions" in separate English and French versions. We felt this would make the newsletter less congested and enhance its readability by giving you an option to read it in its entirety in the language of your choice.

Given the challenges facing our Navy today the integration of Canada's 'citizen sailors' is essential in maintaining the operational readiness of our fleet at home and abroad. Apropos, in this issue we are focusing on some of the special people who are leaders in the Naval Reserve.

And speaking of leaders, NRAC President Graham Scott in this issue is announcing the call for nominations to the Board of Directors. Details on page 9.

All augurs well as we look forward to the continued growth of NRAC and its role in supporting, promoting and celebrating our reservists. **The gangway is open to new members and we welcome you to explore the website [here](#) for membership information and much more.**

Hope you enjoy this issue. +

UNTDA Proficiency Trophy winner.

**Lt(N) Mara Pritchard,
HMCS Prevost**

One of the many good news stories marking the Naval Reserve Centennial was the handover of the beloved UNTD Proficiency Trophy to the Naval Reserve and its presentation this last November to the first of the newer generation of Reservists to be awarded the trophy. The proud recipient is Lt(N) Mara Pritchard of HMCS Prevost. When it comes to talent, energy, and leadership potential, Mara is the distinguished winner amongst her peers from naval divisions across Canada.

History

In 2020, as a Centennial legacy initiative, the University Naval Training Division Association (now NRAC) offered to sponsor an annual award and trophy to highlight the achievements of the most deserving Naval Cadet/Junior Officer Under Training within NAVRES.

The trophy heretofore had been in the care of the Vancouver Naval Museum and had not been awarded since the UNTD program was terminated in 1968. While the Naval Reserve had an annual award for the top Master Sailor or below within the formation, it did not have an award for a top Junior Officer Under Training. So the proposal was developed to repurpose the UNTD Proficiency Trophy to fill this gap.

The award would not only complete the spectrum of recognition within the Naval Reserve, it would also re-enforce bonds with alumni organizations, and align core values with the best traditions of the RCN.

After approval from the Commander of the Naval Reserve, work began to create criteria for nominations and selection of a deserving Junior Officer on an annual basis. Submissions were solicited from all Naval Reserve Divisions and received in June 2023. (*cont. p.3*)



Lt(N) Mara Pritchard receives the UNTDA Proficiency Trophy. From left to right: Graham Scott (NRAC President), Lt(N) Pritchard, Tim Pritchard, Cmdre P.J. Montgomery (Commander Naval Reserve)

The first deserving winner, Lt(N) Pritchard, was selected by the Naval Reserve Honours and Recognition Committee soon afterwards and the Commander of the Naval Reserves made the presentation at a ceremony held in HMCS *Prevost*. NRAC's president Graham Scott was there to represent the Association.

Criteria

The UNTDA Proficiency Trophy recognizes the achievements of an individual Junior Officer, non-substantive Lt(N) and below employed on any terms of service within the Naval Reserve. Selection criteria includes academic achievement, as well as officer like qualities not limited to exemplary dress and deportment, professionalism, initiative, integrity, leadership, teamwork, dedication, perseverance, and physical fitness.

"It's great to be able to bring back this trophy and aligning it with the milestone of the Centennial of the Naval Reserve."

Lt(N) Mara Pritchard

When it comes to an all-rounder Mara shone as an outstanding candidate, said her divisional CO, Cdr Paul Hong.

Lt(N) Pritchard joined the Naval Reserve as a Naval Communicator at 16 years of age, while attending high school. She rose to the rank of Master Sailor before taking her commission in 2019 and becoming a Public Affairs Officer (PAO). She completed an undergraduate degree in Film and Political Science from Western University and is currently in her last year of a three-year MBA program at McMaster University.

As a class A sailor, she also works full-time as a Senior Product Manager at a software company. As Cdr Hong noted, "She deftly balances these demanding pursuits; and through her continual presence at HMCS *Prevost* (PVO) training nights and events, she demonstrates the depth of her dedication to the Canadian Armed Forces."

Under Lt(N) Pritchard's training and leadership her public affairs team drove PVO's social media to having the highest engagement on Instagram of any individual unit across the CAF, exceeding the metrics for entire formations. She has also planned, programmed, and delivered Central Region Public Affairs training which greatly assisted in content generation for building online awareness of the Naval Reserve Centennial year.

She is an avid rugby player for the London St. George Rugby Club in the Ontario Women's Rugby League, has achieved the Bronze level for FORCE testing, and has continually emphasized physical fitness within her unit. Furthermore, she has been instrumental in improving the unit's physical fitness center and their sports program. She also organizes many extra-curricular activities for unit members and their families.

Lt(N) Pritchard is a model junior officer and a quickly developing young leader, said Cdr Hong. "Her advice and expertise are greatly appreciated at the Unit!"



"Connexions" recently talked with Mara and we share her words with you:

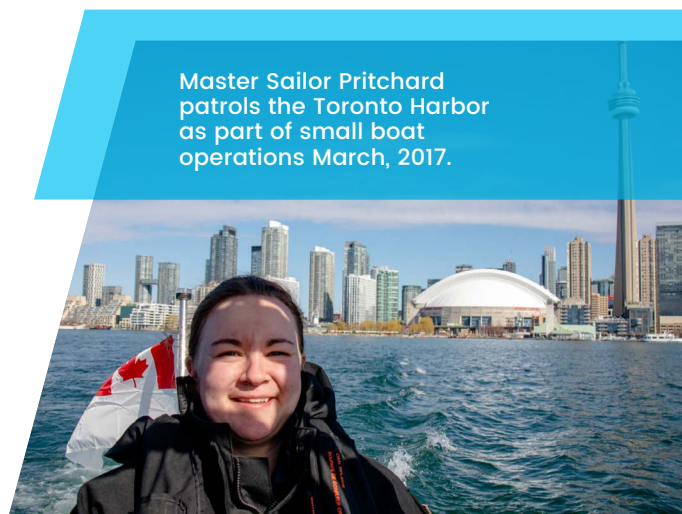
Connexions: How does it feel to be the first recipient of the NavRes UNTDA Trophy?

Lt(N) Pritchard: I feel very grateful and proud. As we entered the Naval Centennial I got to learn a lot more about the UNTD and its history. Being recognized by my peers and by the leadership of the Naval Reserve, it feels good that my dedication and hard work is recognized and opportunity ahead is bright. Honestly, it was a surprise to me but I accept the award with gratitude and I look forward to see who my peers and counterparts are in future years. It's great to be able to bring back this trophy and aligning it with the milestone of the Centennial of the Naval Reserve. The UNTDs have a really cool history and it was great to meet my counterparts and to share experiences and stories with them.

Connexions: What's your secret in being able to juggle your MBA program, volunteer work, full time job and Naval Reserve time to become so successful?

Lt(N) Pritchard: I joined the Reserves when I was 16 and since it has been a constant part of [\(cont. p.4\)](#)

Master Sailor Pritchard patrols the Toronto Harbor as part of small boat operations March, 2017.



my adult life. That and my other activities are just a matter of habit, as opposed to actively trying to search for balance. It is the way the Naval Reserve organization is formed that allows me to do all these other things. The secret is being flexible, honest and transparent. The Naval Reserve recognizes that there are times in people's lives when they cannot dedicate as much time to the organization. But what that provides is a level of depth that the individual can bring back later when they do have the time. I think each facet of my life can contribute to one another in a positive way and I wouldn't choose to do anything less. I'm excited to see what more I can do with it. I feel that bright skies are ahead as everything comes together.

Connexions: What impact has the Reserves had on you?

Lt(N) Pritchard: I work in tech and small startups. When people hear that I'm in the military there is sort of a shocked response. "Oh these two things must be so different from one another," they say. But in fact they are quite complementary. That means I can stay mission focused in a hyper-growth organization; I can work with people, I can change and be flexible. So from a career perspective the Reserves have been super helpful and impactful. Socially I have been able to work with people of different backgrounds right across the country and around the world.

That has allowed me to build deep empathy and different ways of thinking and enjoying different experiences that also come into different areas of my life. As a student when I was 16 going through to my under-grad I thought it the best job in the world. Where else do you get to travel all across your country, learn applicable skills and maintain that job as long as you want or are able to. The Reserves can be whatever you want to make of it, which is one thing I try to impart on newer members when they join. I tell them to take the best from the Reserves for it is an experience very few people across the country will be able to have.

Connexions: In the face of the bad rap the military has been getting these days, how do you keep up your esprit and hope for the future?

Lt(N) Pritchard: What's really exciting is the opportunities our members still have. Whether that is to be able to sail in one of our newer ships or in the scope of the training I still do, it's really an exciting time for what we are able to do in our London division, and I hope the other members feel the same.

Connexions: Where do you see yourself 5 years from now?

Lt(N) Pritchard: I hope to finish my MBA in July of this year and I hope some growth in my civilian side will come with that. I hope to be in good health. As far as my military career goes I hope to make an impact on the junior members, more broadly than just at the unit level. I know there are lots of leadership opportunities for me within my home unit so I hope I'll continue to learn, develop and grow as an officer in the Royal Canadian Navy. As a Reservist in the Public Affairs classification we get the same training as the Regular Force so I have a great option to be able to go and work full-time with the Regular Force. (Time will tell.)

The Naval Reserve Association of Canada congratulates Lt(N) Mara Pritchard and we wish you continued success. +

Griffon Association joins NRAC en masse.

NRAC is delighted to welcome the members of the Griffon Association in Thunder Bay, who voted in November to join the Association as a group. Director Ray Zuliani promoted this step as a logical one for the GA members because it confirms their affinity for NRAC and provides them exposure to NRAC's benefits and national reach without obligation. In one step, all the members were granted either Passive or Associate membership and

invited, in their own good time, to become Ordinary members if they so wish. Naturally we hope many of them will choose this option, not only because only Ordinary members pay dues, but because it demonstrates a commitment to support our organization and to perhaps be actively engaged in its affairs.

Welcome aboard, shipmates. +



Spotlight on our Naval Reserve Fleet Chief.

Today's operational environment demands the best technical know-how and experience from our naval leaders. This is why many of our citizen sailors are recognized as the best of the best.

In this issue Connexions is proud to feature CPO 1 Robert C. Campbell who exemplifies the strength of character, scope of civilian/military experience and dedication that Canada's naval reservists bring to the Royal Canadian Navy.

Naval Reserve Fleet Chief Chief Petty Officer, 1st Class R.C. Campbell, CD

Credit – DND

CPO 1 Campbell was born in Montréal, Que., and raised in Burlington, Ont. He joined the Naval Reserve at HMCS *Star*, Hamilton's Naval Reserve Division, as an Ordinary Seaman Naval Combat Information Operator (NCI OP) in 1990. Upon acceptance into university, CPO 1 Campbell transferred to the *Prevost* Detachment of HMCS *Star*, prior to her recommissioning as HMCS *Prevost*, London's Naval Reserve Division, on 29 September 1990.

From 1990 to 1995, CPO 1 Campbell completed his NCI OP training and spent the summers primarily in Halifax. He sailed in HMC Ships *Skeena*, *Porte St. Jean*, *Moresby* and *Anticosti*, and participated in numerous coastal defence exercises.

In the fall of 1995, CPO 1 Campbell was selected for the first official crew of Maritime Coastal Defence Vessel (MCDV) 03, HMCS *Nanaimo*. CPO 1 Campbell served as the Senior NCI OP in *Nanaimo* (1996–1998). Highlights of his time in *Nanaimo* included: accepting the ship from Halifax Shipyards, the coastal transfer to the West Coast, the ship's commissioning in Nanaimo, B.C., Op Mandible (1997 waterborne security for the APEC Summit in Vancouver) and MARCOT 2-97.

CPO 1 Campbell returned to part time service in HMCS *Malahat*, Victoria's Naval Reserve Division, in 1999. Between 1999 and 2005, he was employed in various departmental and divisional positions in *Malahat* and participated in Best Practices working groups at the Formation level. CPO 1 Campbell served as Coxswain of HMCS *Malahat* from 2005 to 2008.

CPO 1 Campbell has served in the following staff positions: NCI OP instructor at Canadian Forces Fleet School Esquimalt (1998), NCI OP training development at Canadian Forces Fleet School Québec (1999), Pacific and Northern Regional Chief Petty Officer (2010–2011), Naval Reserve NCI OP Occupation Advisor (2007–2012), the Naval Reserve Training Support Cell (NRTSC) Chief Petty Officer (2013–2015), Western Region Training Plans Chief Petty Officer (2014–2016), the Naval Reserve Chief Petty Officer's Assistant (2016–2017), the Western Region Chief Petty Officer (2018–2021) and the Succession Planning Chief Petty Officer (2021–2023).

While on temporary duty assignment with his civilian employer in Halifax, N.S., between 2016 and 2017, CPO 1

CPO 1
Robert C.
Campbell



Campbell volunteered at HMCS *Scotian*, Halifax's Naval Reserve Division, and contributed to four strategic change management initiatives: the Naval Security Team (NST) concept development, the Regenerative Training Requirements (RTR) Manual Working Group, the Retention Working Group and the Risk Management Work Group.

CPO 1 Campbell was promoted to his current rank on 13 May 2023; the same day he assumed his current role as the Naval Reserve Fleet Chief Petty Officer.

CPO 1 Campbell holds a B.Sc degree in Biology from the University of Western Ontario, a Certificate in the Application and Management of Information Technology from the University of Victoria and is a certified Project Management Professional. CPO 1 Campbell has over 23 years' experience in the Defence Industry working on complex domestic and international Naval Programs. He is currently employed with Lockheed Martin Canada as the Senior Manager, Combat Systems Integration Programs responsible for portfolio performance of Design and Build (DAB) and Sustainment programs and responsible for growing Lockheed Martin Canada's Combat Systems Integration portfolio with new and existing customers domestically and internationally.

CPO 1 Campbell resides in Saanich, B.C., with his wife Pamela and their children Gabrielle and Jamieson. +

NRAC/ARNC would like to make our members aware of the opportunity to nominate candidates for the **Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation**. No doubt we have many deserving candidates within our Association. The nomination form requires both a Nominator as well as a letter of support from a second. Anyone can submit a nomination.

Announcement from Veterans Affairs Canada.

Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation

As we enter a new year, Canadians from coast to coast to coast continue to honour the service and sacrifice of Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members and the Royal

Do you know someone who volunteers to support Canadian Veterans?

Canadian Mounted Police. These volunteers and the work they do make a lasting impact in communities across the country.

Do you know someone who volunteers to support Canadian Veterans?

Whether it's someone from your own organization or in your hometown, we encourage you to nominate them for the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation.

This award recognizes a diverse range of work performed in contribution to the care and well-being of Veterans, and the remembrance of their achievements and sacrifices.

We have extended the 31 January 2024 deadline to the end of February, so you have the opportunity to submit a fulsome application.

We encourage you to share this message with your colleagues.

Learn more and nominate someone today.

[Click here.](#) +

Fig. 2 –

Flag PAPA

All persons should report on board

NRAC/ARNC Annual General Meeting

**Monday, April 15, 2024
at 1900 Eastern**

All members are welcome to attend – only Ordinary members have a vote.

The meeting will be virtual. See our website for meeting updates.

Veterans' Careers & Employment Opportunities Webinar series.

February 6–7, 2024

Are you a transitioning military member, Veteran or a Reservist interested in a career or employment in the Public Service or Private Sector? Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), is organizing a two-day virtual career and employment opportunities webinar. +

Details and Registration here:

<<https://navalreserveassociationofcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/VAC-Careers-Webinar.pdf>>

NRAC salutes one of our Honorary members.

As effervescent as ever, Commodore (Ret'd) Laraine Orthlieb has been a valued advisor to the Association's Board for many years and participated in the Centennial celebrations in Victoria last May. We wish her many fulfilling years ahead.

Commodore Laraine Orthlieb: Breaking Barriers and Inspiring Change

*December 15, 2023 – Royal Canadian Navy
By Lieutenant (Navy) John Foster and
2nd Lieutenant Joel Breton*

In the tapestry of Canadian military history, certain people stand out as trailblazers who shattered glass ceilings and forged paths for future generations. Commodore (Retired) Laraine Orthlieb is one of those people. As 2023 marks her 85th birthday, it's an opportune moment to reflect upon her extraordinary contributions to the Royal Canadian Navy and the lasting impact she has left on the community through her involvement in The Naval Museum.

Cmdre Orthlieb's journey to become the first woman in the Royal Canadian Navy Reserve promoted to the rank of Commodore spanned a lifetime of remarkable achievements. Born in 1938 in Saint John, New Brunswick,

she grew up in an era when gender roles were firmly entrenched. Yet, from a young age, Orthlieb displayed a resolute determination to break free from the conventional norms that sought to limit her ambitions.

While she had first enrolled in the navy as a nurse in 1959, she chose to raise a family and work as a civilian Registered Nurse – until 1974 when she rejoined the Naval Reserve. She then reclassified to a trade known as "Naval Control of Shipping," as she hoped to go to sea. Little did she know, this desire was to be one of her first steps in a significant career shift. When asked, Cmdre Orthlieb recalls one situation, which demonstrates her willingness to push the boundaries that were firmly set in place at the time:

"An early memory was when I heard that the training at sea was canceled, as there were not enough seamen available. I had asked many times over the years to go to sea. I was always told that women did not go to sea in the navy. I proposed

That was the beginning; that first experience of [women] finally getting the opportunity to go to sea.

to the Commanding Officer (CO) that the women in *Tecumseh* could augment the crew. He said it was not possible. One of the many reasons he mentioned was that women could not sleep aboard ship. I asked the Seaman's Mess for funds. They came to our rescue and donated the funds for night accommodation ashore.

I made a detailed plan, and after several attempts to convince the CO, he agreed that the women could augment the crew. We knew that if we did not perform well, we might never get the chance again. The other women and I did an excellent job onboard the ship! That was the beginning; that first experience of finally getting the opportunity to go to sea."

Her determination and willingness to go above and beyond earned her higher levels of responsibility. In 1983, 24 years after her enrolment, she took command of His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Tecumseh*, a Naval Reserve Division (NRD) based in Calgary, Alberta. This appointment was historic, as it made her the first woman to assume such a high-ranking leadership role within HMCS *Tecumseh*.

Orthlieb's tenure as Commanding Officer of HMCS *Tecumseh* from 1983–87 was marked by a commitment to excellence and a passion for fostering inclusivity. Under her guidance, the NRD flourished, achieving new levels of professionalism ([cont. p.8](#))



Commodore
Laraine Orthlieb

and readiness. This excellence was noted. In 1985 HMCS *Tecumseh* won the Award for Best Naval Reserve Division. They won the award for demonstrating excellence at both the leadership level and at every level below. Her dedication to the proud men and women under her command earned her the respect and admiration of her colleagues, setting a high standard for future leaders.

Breaking barriers wasn't without its challenges. Cmdre Orthlieb faced skepticism and resistance along the way, but her unwavering resolve and competence silenced the doubters. Her rise through the ranks sent a clear message: gender should never prevent someone from achieving their full potential. As proof of her determination, she was promoted to Commodore in 1989, making her the first woman to achieve the position of Flag Officer in the Royal Canadian Navy.

Beyond her distinguished naval career, Orthlieb's contributions extended to preserving the rich maritime heritage of Canada. She played a pivotal role in the establishment of The Naval Museum of Alberta, a vital component of The Military Museums complex in Calgary, Alberta. Her passion for naval history, and her dedication to sharing it with the public were instrumental in making the museum a reality.

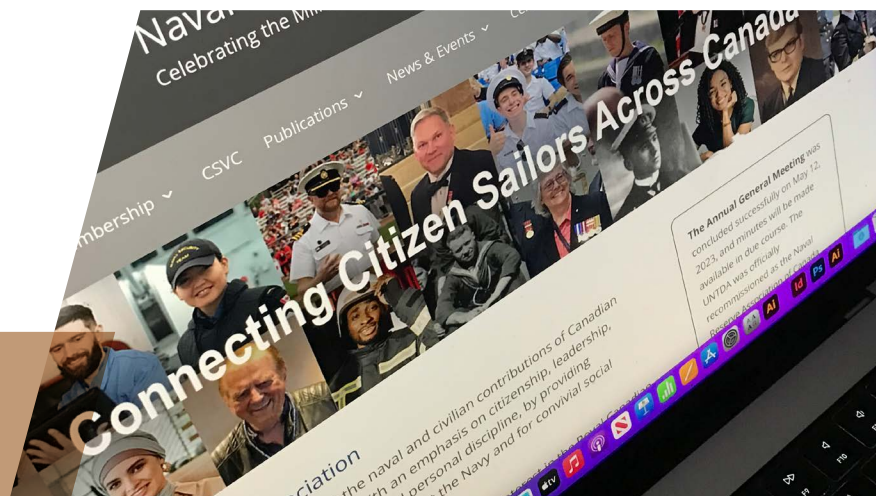
The Naval Museum of Alberta is a treasure trove of artifacts, stories, and memorabilia that pay homage to

Canada's naval history. It's a place where visitors can explore the nation's maritime past and gain an appreciation for the sacrifices made by those who served in the Royal Canadian Navy. Orthlieb's vision and tireless efforts ensured that this institution would endure as a lasting tribute to Canada's naval heritage.

Commodore (Retired) Laraine Orthlieb's journey is a testament to her determination and capacity to transcend barriers. Her pioneering spirit paved the way for countless women and men who aspire to lead in the Canadian military. Her legacy is etched not only in the history of the Royal Canadian Navy Reserve but also in the hearts of those who have had the privilege of serving under her command and those who have explored [The Naval Museum](#).

As we celebrate her 85th birthday in 2023, let us recognize and honor the indomitable spirit of Commodore (Retired) Laraine Orthlieb — a trailblazer, a leader, and a guardian of Canada's naval heritage. Her story serves as a reminder that courage, dedication, and a pioneering vision can reshape the course of history. +

Front page presence !



If you've browsed the NRAC website lately you might have noticed the photo collage on our home page.

We've done what we can at an early stage to show our goal – photographs of active, retired, or historic Canadian Naval Reservists. If you would like to join that crew send us two images – one in uniform and one in civvies – for an ongoing visual of our 'Citizen Sailors' depiction.

Please provide rank in the military photo if it is not obvious, date of photos (approximate is fine), first and last name, a Reserve Unit and civilian occupation at the time of image. Civilian 'role' is key –vs– the specific employer, e.g. 'Pharmacist'. Not a 'must-have', but surrounding visual clues to civvy occupations are helpful (within a tighter frame). +

Send pictures and/or questions to webmaster@navalreserveassociationofcanada.ca

Call for nominations of Directors to be elected at the NRAC/ARNC Annual General Meeting on April 15, 2024, at 1900 Eastern.

This is an opportunity for any former or current Naval Reservist to participate in the growth of our one-year-old Association to serve the naval reservists of Canada.

Nomination Process

All current Ordinary members are eligible to either self-nominate or nominate fellow Ordinary members to run for election as directors at the AGM by completing and submitting the form [here](#). **Please submit by Thursday, February 29th**

The current list of Directors can be found below. Board Committees are listed on the website [here](#).

For further information, explore the website [here](#).

Nominations and Questions may be sent to nominations@navalreserveassociationofcanada.ca

Guidelines

Board members are advisors and ambassadors for the Association. As such, they actively participate as corporate officers, committee chairs and members in the Annual General Meeting and quarterly Board meetings and ongoing Association business during their terms. The Association seeks members who have been actively engaged in the Naval Reserve, who have a variety of skill sets arising from professional, volunteer, and life experiences, and who are both willing and able to fully participate and engage in the Association. We are looking for diversity through representation of all ranks and all regions of Canada.

Expectations

The Association Board meets virtually at least quarterly and once for the Annual General Meeting (Scheduled this year by Zoom on Monday, April 15, 2024).

Directors are also encouraged to serve as Committee Chairs and members, and in Executive positions. Additional details on the role and expectations of Directors can be found in the Bylaws and draft Policy Manual [here](#).

Thank you very much. +

Board members.

Bob Blakely	Cmdre (Ret'd)	<i>Nonsuch</i>	Director and Legal Counsel (<i>Edmonton, Alberta</i>)
Nancy Bunting	PO1 (Ret'd)	<i>Star</i>	Corporate Secretary, Executive Committee (<i>Waterford, Ontario</i>)
Cheryl Bush	CPO2 (Ret'd)	<i>Chippawa</i>	Director (<i>Carp, Ontario</i>)
Bill Clearihue	SLt (Ret'd)	<i>Donnacona</i>	Director and Chair, Archives Committee (<i>Burlington, Ontario</i>)
Ross Connell	Lt(N) (Ret'd)	<i>Star</i>	Treasurer, Website Manager, Communications, Executive Committee (<i>Oakville, Ontario</i>)
Roger Elmes	Lt(N) (Ret'd)	<i>Star</i>	Director and Chair, Events Committee (<i>Vancouver, BC</i>)
Daniel Haché	LCdr (Ret'd)	<i>Donnacona</i>	1st Vice-President and Chair, NavRes Liaison, Executive Committee (<i>Gatineau, Québec</i>)
Ian Holloway	Lt(RAN) (Ret'd)	<i>Brunswicker</i>	Director (<i>Calgary, Alberta</i>)
Gordon Laco	Lt(N) (Ret'd)	<i>York</i>	Director (<i>Midland, Ontario</i>)
Francois Laplante	LCdr (Ret'd)	<i>Montcalm</i>	Director and Chair, Membership Committee (<i>Saints-Anges Québec</i>)
Marta Mulkins	Cmdre	<i>Donnacona</i>	2nd Vice-President, Executive Committee (<i>Ottawa, Ontario</i>)
Iain Munro	SLt (Ret'd)	<i>Star</i>	Director (<i>Kingston, Ontario</i>)
Mark Nicolle	CPO2 (Ret'd)	<i>Cabot</i>	Director (<i>St Johns, NL</i>)
Andy Pollock	PO1 (Ret'd)	<i>York</i>	Director (<i>Mississauga, Ontario</i>)
Graham Scott	Lt(N) Ret'd	<i>Prevost</i>	President, Executive Committee (<i>Toronto, Ontario</i>)
Nick Slonosky	LCdr (Ret'd)	<i>Chippawa</i>	Director (<i>Winnipeg, Manitoba</i>)
Craig Walkington	Capt(N) (Ret'd)	<i>Brunswicker</i>	Director (<i>Labrador City, NL</i>)
Ray Zuliani	RAdm (Ret'd)	<i>Griffon</i>	Director and Chair, Transitions Committee, Executive Committee (<i>Thunder Bay, Ontario</i>)



Letters

Fig. 3 –
Flag Kilo
*I wish to
communicate
with you*

BZ to all who worked on the first issue of “Connexions”. It is very well done and full of really good articles – contemporary and historical. Salutations to all those involved in the successful Centennial activities, publications and events that are covered. The contributions by Joe Homer are particularly moving and appropriate. Moving because of the material and content covered; appropriate to this first issue of an all ranks newsletter because it weaves together the telling stories of shipmates – of a team that gave so much and together saved a ship and consequently the lives of so many.

Cheers
Roger Elmes

Just following up on your first issue of “Connexions”. It’s a good, rounded newsletter with plenty of meat for readers. BZ to everyone involved.

I want to thank you for running the info I provided about my book, “The Wind from all Directions”. It’s very much appreciated, as it’s hard to get word out about books in this country. I hope it’ll be of interest to NRAC members.

There’ll be a book launch event in Toronto on March 14, and if any NRACs are interested, I welcome their attendance. (The book will actually be published Feb 22, but March 14 is the formal party.

Rear-Admiral Ray Zuliani and Jennifer Bennett have already read it (in proof form) and might provide some comment down the road.

Once again, profound thanks.

Sincerely,
Ron Thompson

ronald.g.thompson111@gmail.com

A friend forwarded your newsletter to me because of my interest in Naval postal history. My colleague, Mike Street, who is the chairman of the Canadian Military Mail Study Group (CMMMSG) and myself are putting together a data base of DB/N censor numbers used during W.W. II to censor mail, and the ships they were assigned to. For my part I go deeper and collect all Naval censored mail and try to identify the censor’s initials. I do have a great deal of reference material but the one most used is the web site “For Posterity’s Sake”. Being a member of the British North America Philatelic Society I do exhibit my material.

What I am trying to find is an official listing of DB/N censor numbers and the ships they were assigned to. At the moment the only way to identify the ship to which a number was assigned is by a return address. It seems as though this list was destroyed after the war.

I am a former reservist (R-25129) having served out of HMCS *Donnacona* in the early 60s for a couple of years.

Anything you can do to help will be gratefully accepted.

Peter J. McCarthy
London, Ontario

peter7mcc@gmail.com

Thanks for the good job of editing and presenting my *Kootenay* story. If you get any hits on it please feel free to pass them onto me via my e-mail.

Regards
Joe Homer

jjhomer41@gmail.com

We look forward to receiving your letters at:
Connexions@navalreserveassociationofcanada.ca

The Naval Reserve Centennial – Not All Smooth Sailing.

LCdr David Arsenault, Project Manager, Naval Reserve Centennial Project

As 2023 ended, so too did the 100th year of service to Canada of the Naval Reserve and the celebrations that accompanied this remarkable milestone. These celebrations were widely considered highly successful, and a lot of work went on in the background to make this happen. A small team of dedicated reservists worked diligently to put together and execute an achievable plan, but for all the successes the year was far from “smooth sailing” throughout.

The first major event planned was a visit by Naval Reservists from across Canada to the House of Commons on 31 January, to celebrate the date

needed tickets to get into the House of Commons for Question Period, and the Minister only had 10 available. Fortunately, Centennial Project Director Capt(N) Beth Vallis was able to contact the Members of Parliament in the Halifax/Dartmouth area, and anxious to support the RCN they quickly delivered the rest of the tickets needed. In the end, the event went off perfectly, including a lengthy meeting with the MND and Speaker of the House, and with the reading in the House of a statement congratulating every member of the Naval Reserve past and present on the outstanding service to Canada they have provided.

No sooner had the first event finished when an unexpected course-correction was required – the Royal Navy was planning their last large commemoration of the Battle of the Atlantic in Liverpool, UK, and the Centennial team was tasked with getting another contingent of thirty Naval Reserve sailors – again representing every single NRD in Canada – together to travel to Liverpool and represent the RCNVR sailors of the Second World War at the event – in only three months. By the time travel was approved and the contingent was selected, plans for a coordinated arrival in the UK were gone and instead 30 sailors took wildly different routes from across the country through Dublin, Frankfurt, Paris, Brussels, Munich or Amsterdam, to arrive in Manchester within a few hours of each other. As these travel-weary sailors met each other in an airport terminal for what was in many cases the first time, bonds began to form before an hour-long bus ride to Liverpool. The rest of the whirlwind week included an exchange with the Royal Navy Reserve sailors of HMS *Eaglet*, where friendships were quickly made, and a tot of rum authorized by the King to celebrate his coronation was shared between the sailors of both Navies. The week concluded with the reservists marching proudly through the streets of Liverpool before a return trip to Canada with some great “dips” to spin with their shipmates at home.

The team had just barely returned from the UK when the next surprise tasking came up – have at least 250 reservists in “Tropical White” uniforms (*cont. p.12*)

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on which the RCNVR was established in 1923. But being recognized in the House of Commons is not a simple matter. Leveraging a Professional Development event in Ottawa a couple days earlier, a contingent of about 30 reservists from every single Naval Reserve Division, including the Commodore and Fleet CPO, were pre-positioned in Ottawa and left on “stand-by”. Finally, about 18 hours before the event, a call from the Minister of National Defence’s office confirmed the event was a go. But there was a problem, we

unfurl the world's largest Canadian Flag in the outfield during the pregame ceremony before the Toronto Blue Jays game on Canada Day. The July long weekend is not the easiest time to find available reservists – many are away on training on the coasts, and others are enjoying some summer vacation time. It took tremendous coordination to source the required sailors from all across Ontario and arrange transportation for all, but a few days before the event some choppy seas came up – about thirty of the selected sailors did not have the required white uniforms – either because they were on Temporary Duty away from home or were newer sailors who had not been issued the uniform yet. An “emergency flare” was sent up and quickly answered, and sailors from Winnipeg, Montreal, Quebec City, Charlottetown, and Halifax quickly jumped on planes and flew to Toronto to augment the group resulting in a spectacular opportunity to highlight the Naval Reserve Centennial to over 44,000 fans in attendance and over one million Canadians watching at home.

The final major event of the Centennial year was the re-commissioning of the Naval Reserve Monument in Ottawa held on 14 Oct 2023. As the original monument was dedicated by Roland Michener, the Governor General of the day, the concept was to have the current Governor General Mary Simon do the re-dedication. That presented a

challenge as the GG's schedule is tightly controlled and not released far in advance, but finally her attendance was confirmed, and Rideau Hall staff worked closely with NAVRES staff to plan the day's events. However, we were missing one important thing – a monument to dedicate. The General Contractor ran into supply chain, scheduling, and labour issues, and then the granite supplier suffered a string of setbacks in mounting the striking black granite façade on the existing monument plinth. The morning of the ceremony, as chairs were being set up and the red carpet was being rolled out, work crews were still feverishly trying to get the seams in the granite aligned and sealed. Only three hours before the Governor General was to arrive, the work was completed leaving a very relieved project team ready to oversee what was a dazzling ceremony featuring a 50-sailor Guard of Honour and the National Band of the Naval Reserve marching on to see the Governor General and Commander of the Royal Canadian Navy VAdm Angus Topshee pull back the spinnaker and unveil this truly spectacular monument to all members of the Naval Reserve past and present.

The opportunity to participate in the Centennial celebrations was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for all the members of the Centennial project team. Despite the setbacks and course corrections required, the team rose to every challenge and were truly blessed to see Naval Reservists past and present come together to proudly celebrating this historic milestone. +



Videos on the NRAC website.

Check out “An Enduring Tradition” The RCN in 1960 – the 50th Anniversary video with narration by Rear Admiral Hugh F. Pullen and Vice-Admiral Harry deWolfe. This adds to the historical material gathered [here](#). +



Kitbag humour.

We are calling on all you artists to help bring a little levity to our fledgling publication by sending us any personal drawings and cartoons, or archival cartoons depicting our **Reservists** at their humorous best.

To start us off in this issue our resident cartoonist Paul Seguna has provided these examples that many of you have seen in “Gunroom Shots”. (Remember those initial jitters at the NBCD training school or what it was like coming off the mid’s watch on a cold night in the mid-Atlantic!)

Send your contributions [here](#). +



It's enough
to freeze the balls off
a brass monkey



It's a note from mi Mum Chief!

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