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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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UNTDA Board Meeting

The UNTDA Board of Directors – an almost-full-house of 17(out of 18) – held a virtual Zoom meeting in early December and welcomed four to their first meeting, Daniel Haché, Kim Kubeck, Marta Mulkins and Nick Slonosky. Craig Walkington was unable to attend. The Board now has a broad wealth of experience to draw on and is appropriately representative of intake cadres across the years, gender and language. President Graham Scott commented, “I am delighted to note that many of you have already been actively engaged with some of our committees and have come forward with a number of valuable observations which are enormously helpful as we engage in substantial change from the world of UNTDs to an organization that is in effect an alumni for those who have served in the Canadian naval reserve as officers and Cadets.”

With this as an appropriate theme for the meeting, the accelerated efforts to reconnect with members were reviewed. Directors were reminded that of the roughly 10,200 members out of a potential 12,000 – 13,000, we have contact information for about 1,000. Whether they are Active or not, whether they pay dues or do not does not matter; as long as they get our e-mails, they can make the choice to engage or simply to observe. And there are a number of reasons to remain connected in this way, but a big reason is to be kept informed of the big plans(or even to help in the planning) for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Canadian Naval Reserve in 2023.

The 2023 Committee under the leadership of Roger Elmes is working hard with Naval Reserve Headquarters to ensure a memorable series of events, and is starting to sketch out the shape of a grand reunion in Victoria, BC.

Once again, in Graham’s words, “I am delighted that we received a superb Newsletter in October and the

excellent work of Bill Clearihue was once again on display! Importantly we welcomed another mode of communication – Gunroom Shots, prepared by Barry Frewer. A super addition to our communication efforts. I hope you will all make an effort to bring stories, histories and anecdotes to Bill and Barry for consideration in future publications.”

New Board Executives Elected

On January 21st Jennifer Bennett was elected First Vice-President of the UNTDA and Daniel Haché as Second Vice-President, by an unanimous vote of the Board of Directors. Graham Scott, UNTDA President, reported that this was the result of a creative and imaginative nomination process carried out by the V-P Nomination committee.

The Committee was chaired by Glenn Davidson and consisted of Roger Elmes, Past President of the UNTDA, Ross Connell, Treasurer of the UNTDA and Board members Marta Mulkins and Ken McCaw.

The appointment of the Vice-Presidents is the culmination of a board renewal that has been without a V-P since Graham stepped into the chair in January 2020. A number of new directors, all representing post-UNTD cadres and including three highly qualified women have added significant experience and depth to the organization, and have quickly become actively engaged in the Association as it expands its mandate.

Nouveaux membres du conseil élus

Le 21 janvier, Jennifer Bennett a été élue première vice-présidente de l'UNTDA et Daniel Haché deuxième vice-président, par un vote unanime du conseil d'administration. Graham Scott, président de l'UNTDA, a indiqué que c'était le résultat d'un processus de nomination créatif et imaginatif mené par le comité de nomination du V-P. Le comité était présidé par Glenn Davidson et était composé de Roger Elmes, ancien président de l'UNTDA, de Ross Connell, trésorier de l'UNTDA et des membres du conseil d'administration Marta Mulkins et Ken McCaw. La nomination des vice-présidents est le point culminant d'un renouvellement du conseil d'administration qui n'a pas eu de vice-président depuis que Graham a pris la présidence en janvier 2020. Un certain nombre de nouveaux directeurs, tous représentant des cadres post-UNTD et comprenant trois femmes hautement qualifiées ont ajouté une expérience et une profondeur significatives de l'organisation, et se sont rapidement engagées activement dans l'Association à mesure qu'elle élargit son mandat.

Did You Know - Preparing for 2023

(Historical factoids submitted by Stephen Rybak)

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.

It was via these volunteer organizations that Commodore Walter Hose wanted to educate the country about the important role of the navy. It was one of the wisest moves ever made in the history of Canada's sea service and was to pay incredible dividends between 1939 and 1945. Hose made the very bold decision to invest nearly half of the Naval budget of the day not on ships but on the RCNVR.

Le 31 janvier 1923 marquait la création de la Réserve des volontaires de la Marine royale canadienne (RCNVR) et l'annulation de la Réserve canadienne des volontaires de la Marine royale (RNCVR) par décret en conseil. L'effectif de la RCNVR était fixé à 70 officiers et 930 membres du rang organisés en compagnies de 100 et demi-compagnies de 50 dans les villes canadiennes de Calgary, Charlottetown, Edmonton, Halifax, Hamilton, Montréal, Ottawa, Québec, Regina, Saint John, Saskatoon, Toronto, Vancouver et Winnipeg. C'est par l'intermédiaire de ces organisations de volontaires que le commodore Walter Hose a voulu éduquer le pays du rôle important de la marine. C'était l'une des mesures les plus sages jamais prises dans l'histoire du service maritime du Canada et devait rapporter des dividendes incroyables entre 1939 et 1945. Hose a pris la décision très audacieuse d'investir près de la moitié du budget naval de l'époque non pas sur des navires mais sur la RCNVR.

Tiddly

- By Ross Connell

In a typically absurd regulation, "Lights Out" (Pipe Down?) in South Block at HMCS Cornwallis did not apply to the heads (or was it the laundry room?) where cadets would gather the night before ceremonial divisions to ensure a mirror shine on their boots.

The boot theme persisted, as in this recollection from Patrick Montgomery (UNTD2 '87) :

"During basic training in the summer of 1987, we had to spend a few days out at the weapons range. The end of each day in the field would be followed by hours of work needed to clean and polish our boots for inspection. Although we quickly gained boot-polishing experience, a group of us ventured to the local thrift shop to find some surplus used boots for use in the field. This then permitted the presentable 'parade boots' to be saved for those needed occasions! I was delighted that the next summer we were issued sea boots for our MARS III course on board the PBs (Bay Class Minesweepers), solving the problem a bit more formally."

The Spit & Polish technique has survived for generations, and survives to this day, as you can see [here](#).

Tidbits

Brass Monkey

In the heyday of sailing ships, all war ships and many freighters carried iron cannons. Those cannons fired round iron cannon balls. It was necessary to keep a good supply near the cannon. However, how to prevent them from rolling about the deck? The best storage method devised was a square-based pyramid with one ball on top, resting on four resting on nine, which rested on sixteen. Thus, a supply of 30 cannon balls could be stacked in a small area right next to the cannon. There was only one problem...how to prevent the bottom layer from sliding or rolling from under the others. The solution was a metal plate called a 'Monkey' with 16 round indentations. However, if this plate were made of iron, the iron balls would quickly rust to it.

The solution to the rusting problem was to make 'Brass Monkeys.' Few landlubbers realize that brass contracts much more and much faster than iron when chilled. Consequently, when the temperature dropped too far, the brass indentations would shrink so much that the iron cannonballs would come right off the monkey. Thus, it was quite literally, 'Cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey.'

And all this time, you thought that was an indecent expression....

Singe de cuivre

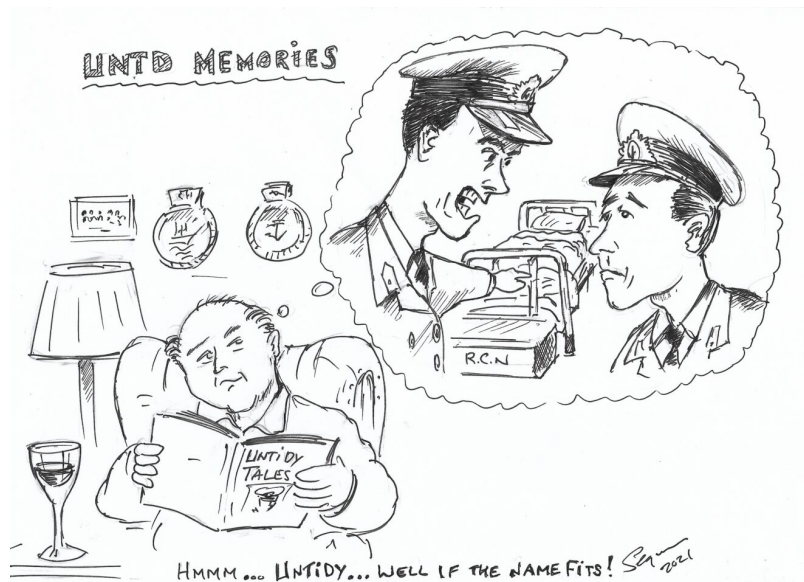
À l'apogée des voiliers, tous les navires de guerre et de nombreux cargos transportaient des canons de fer. Ces canons tiraient des boulets de fer ronds. Il fallait garder un bon approvisionnement près du canon. Cependant, comment les empêcher de rouler sur le pont? La meilleure méthode de stockage conçue était une pyramide à base carrée avec une boule sur le dessus, reposant sur quatre reposant sur neuf, qui reposaient sur seize. Ainsi, une réserve de 30 boulets de canon pouvait être empilée dans une petite zone juste à côté du canon. Il n'y avait qu'un seul problème ... comment empêcher la couche inférieure de glisser ou de rouler de sous les autres. La solution était une plaque de métal appelée «singe» avec 16 indentations rondes. Cependant, si cette plaque était en fer, les boules de fer s'y rouilleraient rapidement. La solution au problème de la rouille était de fabriquer des «singes en laiton». Peu de marins d'eau douce réalisent que le laiton se contracte beaucoup plus et beaucoup plus vite que le fer lorsqu'il est refroidi. Par conséquent, lorsque la température descendait trop, les indentations en laiton rétrécissaient tellement que les boulets de fer sortaient tout de suite du singe. Ainsi, c'était littéralement «assez froid pour geler les boules d'un singe de cuivre».

Et, pendant tout ce temps, vous pensiez que c'était une expression indecente...



Tiller Talk

Recent e-mail traffic between three of our 'old salts': **Bill Clearihue**, **Greg McKenzie** and **Rudi Wycliffe** shared their Cadet experiences aboard the Gate Vessels *Porte St Louis* and *Porte St Jean*, which should invoke a few tales and misdemeanours from many of you...Send them our way



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Bill: I recall early in May '65, bringing the PSL and PSJ into the RMC Jetty, with Tom Hopkins and Glen Power as fellow-1st-year UNTDs, flying the "new" Cdn Flag, as both Ensign and Jack, the first RCN vessels to do so. The Flag itself having been designed by the then-sitting Dean of Arts at RMC. Of course we were too clueless to realize the significance of that at the time.

Greg: Summer of '67 we put into Kingston too. I think it was into Cataraqui. I got leave to visit relatives in Prince Edward County. Must have had an understanding DO.

Rudi: That photo of the Jean 'flying' reminds me of an incident which might have occurred on the return from Kingston.

We were returning to Hamilton in a pretty big swell for Lake O but it was pretty much on our nose. I was on the helm and for some reason the Jean was in formation ahead of the Louis, the senior vessel. At some point the squadron commander ordered us to fall behind the Louis as befitting the senior vessel should enter harbour ahead.

We did a 360 through this wonderful swell. It was quite a treat at the helm, port 15 or port 30, whatever the order.

Boy, did we roll!

My recollection is the aftermath; I was told that manoeuvre broke more than \$100 of unbreakable dishes...

Ah, that was the life!

Greg: Wasn't that on leaving Rochester? We weren't feeling very well after a night in Rochester bars open to us 18 year olds. While you were on the helm some of us were on the quarterdeck heaving over the side. A 'perfect storm' as they say... alcohol and rough seas.

Bill: Omg ... Rochester! Easter weekend 1969, as a SLT, long-weekend trip with DONNACONA and CARLETON manning the Gates. Radar became In-op, mid-Lake, on the night crossing, dawn arrival. Volunteered to take harbour watch in anticipation of studying for an exam on the Tues morning in Montreal. As the afternoon wore into night and then late night, the taxis and cop cars started arriving at the jetty, disgorging various and sundry Ship's Company, some demanding cash to clean up their vehicles. Back in Hamilton, we were missing one ATP manual (declared lost overboard), which I'd signed out for. A limnologist explained that it would take no less than 6 years, if ever, for it to wash up on the shores of Wolfe Island. Unpacking the suitcase late Monday night back in Montreal, I realized I'd not completely emptied my pewter mug before laying it on top of the school notes, now totally unserviceable, which hadn't been touched anyway.

Greg: Some follies just keep on being repeated it seems. Our night saw some return to the jetty and observe the huge "Gladys Bowater" merchant ship tied up astern of us. Naturally we had to wander over and take a closer look. We got invited aboard and spent much of what was left of the night drinking in their mess. A Brit crew as a recall. Another reason to feel a little queasy on leaving harbour. Actually leaving the wall was very challenging as there was an opposing wind blowing fiercely. Lots of shouting commands and counter commands as we tried to get to sea and avoid the other Gate Vessel and the Gladys Bowater. And

then of course Wycliffe was put onto the helm - what were they thinking!

Rudi:

One of the 'Bowater's' fished my cap out of the Welland Canal...

They were behind us locking up I think.

My Covid Remembrance, 2020

By Ross Connell

On Sunday, November 8, I read the honour roll in church. How sad only 50 people could be there to take part in an abbreviated but moving service, punctuated by superb singing and stirring trumpet renditions of the Last Post and Reveille.

Graham Scott, UNTDA President, suggested we attend the service at the Burlington Naval Ships Memorial, so we joined 25 or 30 people there at 9:00 am on November 11. All 4 levels of government were effectively represented by the local MP and Minister of International Development, the local MPP, the Regional Chair and the Burlington mayor. They spoke eloquently and briefly, although the unseasonably warm weather did not have us anxiously scanning the skies for the usual rain.

Bill Thomas, Chaplain. Burl-Oak Naval Veterans Association and UNTDA Chaplain and director, officiated as is his wont at many of these Naval events. With a uniformed colour party, red-coated mounties, and a full-throated legion member to sing the anthems, the ceremony was as moving as ever. If you have not visited this memorial on the Burlington waterfront, it is well worth the drive to Burlington, especially if the weather is cooperative.

Bill concluded the event with a very welcome tot of rum and a toast to "Absent Friends", after which, Graham and I retired to the patio of a local coffee shop. Our morning reached a fitting conclusion as, sitting in the sun, we were treated to a flypast – just for us – of the Lancaster bomber at 2,500 feet.

John Horton, Marine artist

We wanted to alert our readership to a fascinating Zoom presentation on the works of Marine artist John Horton, courtesy of the Vancouver Maritime Museum at:

<https://vanmaritime.com/2020/11/24/giving-tuesday-john-horton-the-gift-of-talent/>

It speaks masterfully and poetically to seamen and to artists as well as to students of art and seamanship. As Citizen Sailors you might be interested in some of the paintings of the era of Captain George Vancouver and his HMS *Discovery*, as well as those of Canadian ships from WW2 and the 2000's.

Letter to the Editor:

New RCN junior rank designations

Having begun, 77 years ago, as an Ordinary Seaman, and being a traditional naval historian of sorts, I might presumably have been against this new 'Sailor' nomination. But I'm not – anymore than I'm not against women in sea appointments. We indeed have to move forward with changing times. This isn't 1805 – or even 1910. Some changes I **much** regret but obviously are necessary – the loss of the white ensign; the change of 'asdic' (that didn't mean anything anyway, despite Churchill!) to 'sonar' – a better acronym anyway. Even N.O.A.C.

I don't object to changing 'Seaman' (now outdated) to Sailor. But the term 'Sailor 3rd Class' and '2nd Class' is ridiculous, and I'm astonished that the Seamen presumably consulted agreed to those terms without a noisy struggle – like RADML Bill Landymore with the changes Hellyer was proposing in his day.

"What are you doing?"

"I'm in the Navy!"

"Oh, that's great. What are you?"

"A Sailor 3rd Class" !!! It has a faintly American Army connotation.

What an indication – a second, or worse, third class sailor! I'm not sure what to do about OD's, but Ordinary Sailor, Able Sailor and Leading Sailor would surely be better – at least not a 3rd Class Sailor. Maybe 'Trained' could be used.

Good thing I wasn't asked!

Fraser McKee (York 1943)

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Web Site Wanderings

Did you know that Bob White authored a 100-page publication about the 75th Anniversary UNTD Reunion in St John's in 2018? It's chock full of pictures and commentary on things UNTD and things Newfoundland. It lists all the attendees, but also provides a teaser for those who have not visited our most Easterly province, and it can be found here:

[75th Anniversary Reunion in St John's](#)

A reminder also to those of you who attended the 2018 Reunion to have a look at the newly acquired

digital copy of the souvenir booklet, a treasured memento which can be found here:

[75th Anniversary Reunion Souvenir Booklet](#)

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. In a couple of weeks you will receive 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. Oh sure, we talk about membership dues; but that's really secondary. You only pay dues if you want to be an Active member. Stay connected – make sure our contact information is correct.



Ed Note: A reminder that we are all fighting the good fight from behind the mask

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

Gunroom.Shots@UNTd.org

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