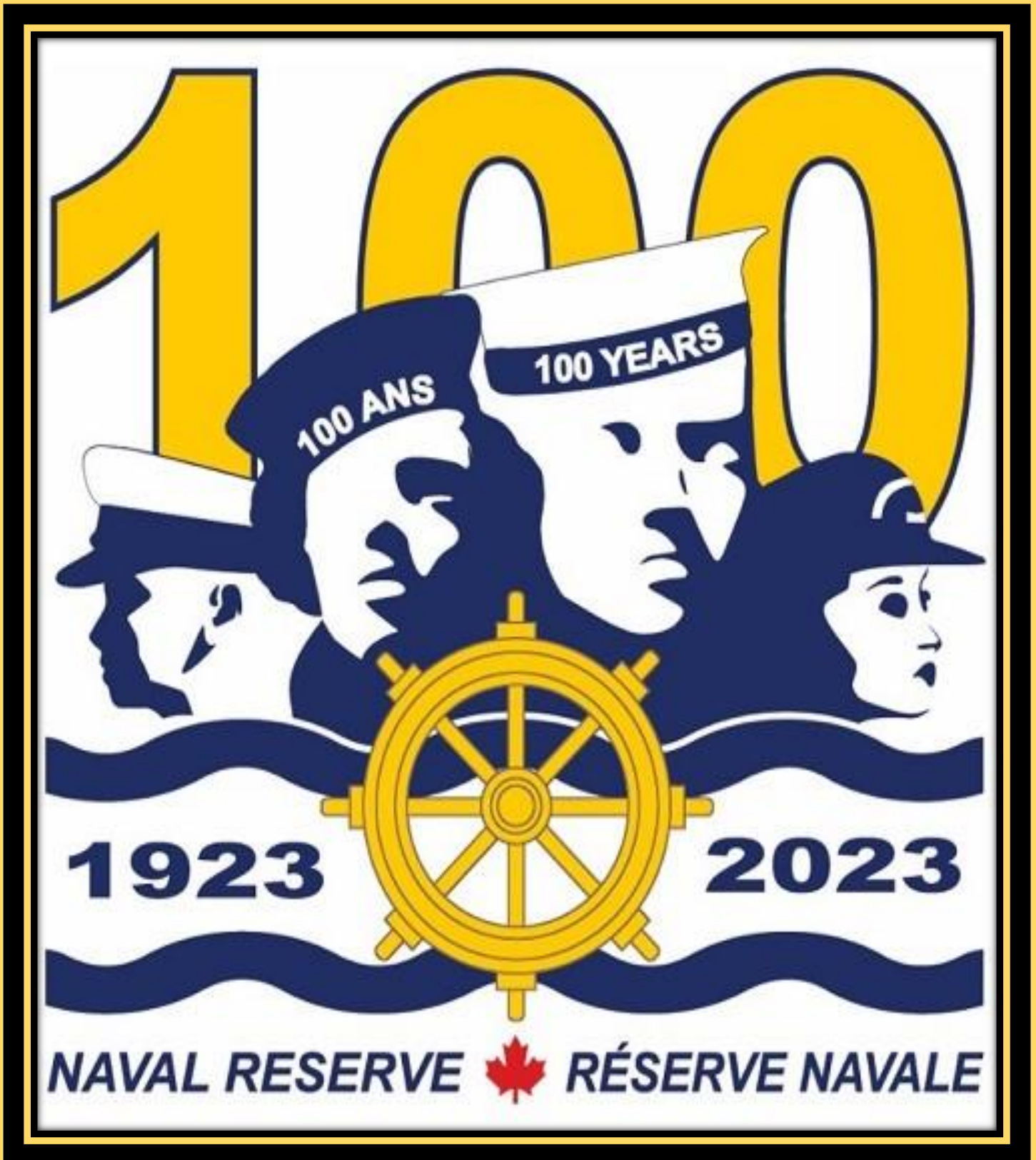


# Warrior

Spring 2023



HMCS HARRY DEWOLF



**For 100 years, the Naval Reserve has played a critical role in Canada's Safety and Security as a vital element of the Royal Canadian Navy & Canadian Armed Forces.**

Presidents Message.....Pages 4-5  
 Into The Delta.....Pages 5  
 Naval Reserve Centennial.....Pages 7-11  
 Museum Curator’s Message.....Page 12-14  
 Letter to the editor.....Pages 15-16  
 Facial Hair .....Pages 18-20  
 Turkey Trauma.....Page 21-24  
 Swordfish - A Strike in the stern.....Page 25-35  
 Wall Tile / Membership.....Page 36-37

Submissions: Text submissions can be either paper, email or electronically produced in Word.

We will format the text for you. No need to centre headings, indent paragraphs etc. Graphics are best submitted electronically; they should be 300 dpi and a .tif file. A jpg file at 300 dpi is acceptable if no compression is used.

We will attempt to use any pictures, whatever the format. NOTE WELL: When sending mail of any kind, newsletter articles, letters, membership renewals, donations etc., please ensure the envelope is addressed correctly to:

**Shearwater Aviation Museum  
 Foundation or SAM Foundation 12  
 WING PO BOX 99000 STATION  
 FORCES HALIFAX, NS B3K 5X5**

Deadlines for receiving submissions are:  
 Spring 1 March  
 Summer 15 June  
 Winter 15 October  
 To contact us: Administrator:  
 Karen Collacutt – McHarg

**SAMF website:**  
[www.samfoundation.ca](http://www.samfoundation.ca) Newsletter  
 Editor: Karen Collacutt – McHarg  
 Email: [samf@samfoundation.ca](mailto:samf@samfoundation.ca)

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**COVER PHOTO:** Combat Camera

**# 20211105XCAH0005D102** Royal Canadian Navy members aboard HMCS HARRY DEWOLF keep a watchful eye on an MI-17 helicopter during a PASSEX with the Mexican Navy and the United States Coast Guard, during Operation CARIBBE in the East Pacific Ocean, November 5, 2021. credit: Canadian Armed Forces Photo

**Inside Front Cover:** was design by Sailor 2nd Class (S2) Joseph Dimayuga, previously from Her Majesty’s Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Discovery*.

Taken from The Canadian Government website



**Back Cover:** Artist Jim Rae, Auchtermuchty, Fife

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WE NEED YOUR SUBMISSIONS. Please send us your stories, pictures etc. We look forward to hearing from you. Any opinions expressed herein are deemed to be those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation, its members, the Shearwater Aviation Museum and/or 12 Wing Shearwater.

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We all have so much to be proud of around the Museum these days that my buttons are just bursting. The place is starting to look really ship shape, as so it should be after a 2 1/2-year hiatus. It's a nice mixture of readiness on SAM's part, and one gets the sense that the museum figures in many hearts and minds around Nova Scotia, at least judging by the number of visitors we are now starting to see at SAM. The figures from the last week of March break are telling. There were many Nova Scotians who brought family to visit us. That in and of itself is some form of validation for what the curator has been mulling over in her mind these last almost three years as she planned almost every little detail of how she wanted us to look in the eyes of new visitors, and by golly, it all seemed to work well. So, thanks to all who visited us over the March break with kids and grand kids in tow to see our many changes and additions that give our museum a new feeling to it. Well done to all hands for the hard work leading up to this which made this debut back to the main stage a reality.

There are some very nice plans afoot which also go hand in glove with the museum's new additions. Some of you I am sure are aware that in 2024, the RCAF will celebrate its 100th Anniversary. I am aware that plans are ongoing to reach across the country and bring awareness to Canadians from coast to coast to coast about the many successes and first's that the RCAF has to celebrate. While it was at the time it all unfolded a Navy triumph, the fact is that the RCAF inherited us back in 1968 and they plan to celebrate with us and with each community in the RCAF with the same distinction as all the other triumphs it has enjoyed.

Closer to home and in addition to all other events planned across the country, Shearwater is working closely with the Navy to finish off the Air Park across the road from SAM. You may have heard of this, but I have seen the preliminary plans for the refurbishment of our Air Park which is right across Bonaventure Avenue from the Museum buildings. The plans for this are partly born out of respect for the crew of Stalker 422, when we lost 4 crew and 2 Navy personnel from HMCS Fredericton in the Ionian Sea during NATO exercises. There is no doubt that this tragedy struck our community very hard. And I include all of the members of the RCAF by association, as well as friends, families and acquaintances of the deceased.

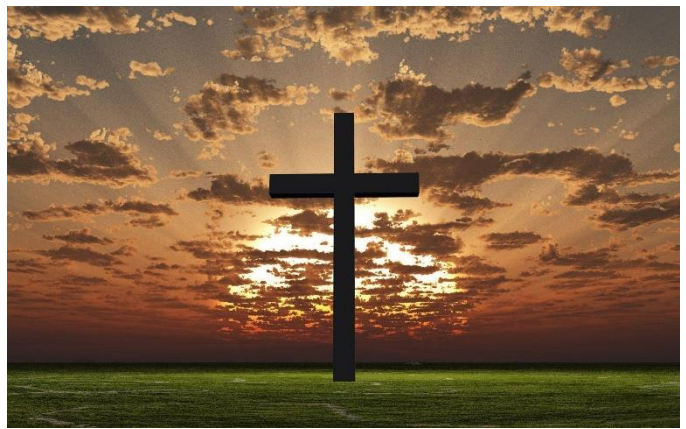
The Air Park will be refurbished very nicely with clearly marked walking paths between the various aircraft from our history on display. The monuments that were scattered around the airfield where the various Squadrons lived and worked, have all been gathered in this one place which is totally open to the public. There is a new monument on display there as well, which is an exceptionally tasteful and sensitive treatment of the crash of Stalker 422. The grounds will be improved which will make this an exceptional place to visit, either by oneself if you are looking for a quiet respite from your daily lives, or visiting with friends.

New additions in the museum itself include a pair of Banshee jet engines which were donated to us by an outfit in North Dakota which refurbishes retired Neptune Anti Submarine Fixed Wing aircraft as Fire Bombers. The Neptune had two piston engines, and had an additional two jet engines, one on each wing, which gave the aircraft a higher dash speed if it was required. The two engines are still in their travel containers but will soon see the light of day beside our Banshee fighter jet proudly on display in the new hangar where the majority of our collection is housed. Me thinks this will prove to be a popular addition to our collection. All this is going on at our facilities while the normal routines of cataloguing, cleaning, raising funds and heightening awareness of our many activities that are ongoing. For instance, by the time this hits the press we will have held our annual Model Hobby Show, which quickly outgrew our facilities and is now held annually in the Sea King Club. This is another seemingly effortless endeavour which has the magic of our Curator's hand's all over it. Hope you got to catch it if you live in the Halifax area. It's "just another of the many nice things" that go on at SAM all year round. And of course, you have to drop in and try our new electronic tour guides who will take you on a magical tour of SAM.

If I sound buoyant this time around, it is with good reason. We cannot change the things that come down from Ottawa. What we can do and are doing, is to "carry on carrying on" with our normal SAM activities. The things we cannot do anything about are just that, and if we start paying too much attention to all of that, we will lose our sense of the activities that have gone at Shearwater since 1918 when Richard E. Byrd first set up shop on the Shearwater waterfront. I firmly believe there will be more stories written here long after my personal demise. Our military personnel need to use our reference library to come in and learn about our past at this little piece of land on the east side of Halifax Harbour, or to just wander under and around these magnificent machines that are on display here. Imagine what it would be like to hold a full NORAD alert between Shearwater and Iceland for over 7 years while the Banshees were in place at Shearwater. Or of the many wintertime SAR's that went on with many found and saved, along with too many who were brought back to their families for sad burials. So, folks, please come on

down some day when you have a 1/2 hour to spend with us. You will leave with a refreshed sense of who you are and what you are doing here at Shearwater. And bring your kids back with you some summer weekend and let them see where mom and/or dad works. I think we will have many new friends on our lists were you to try us, just that one lunch hour that you decide to spend with us here at SAM. Try us...and you will come to like us. And if reference libraries are your thing, we have a terrific library of technical manuals dating back many years to the first aircraft that ever flew from these runways at Shearwater. Please come and give us a good look. Admission is free, and whether or not you spend a short time or a long time visiting us, you will remember your visit for a long time to come.

That's it for me for this month. Work safe, fly safe and drive safe. We need you all to make it home every night. Until next edition.



*John M. Cody*



On 29 April 2020, the CH148 Cyclone helicopter, deployed with HMCS Fredericton on OP Reassurance, tragically crashed into the Ionian Sea. The entire four-member crew and their two passengers lost their lives that day. In memory of Brenden MacDonald, Kevin Hagen, Matthew Cousins, Maxime Miron-Morin, Abbigail Cowbrough and Matthew Pyke

**WE WILL NEVER FORGET YOU**

## IN TO THE DELTA

BLACKLOCK Kencil Ivan	Feb 2023
BRIGHT David J.K.C.	Mar 2023
CASEMENT Robert ( Bob)	Sep 2022
DAWS-KNOWLES Christopher	Jan 2023
DOBBIN Frank Lewis	Feb 2023
HAYTER, John Bryan	Jan 2023
HODGSON Michael	Feb 2023
KRUEGER Harold William	Oct 2022
MACCOLLUM Arthur Martin	Jan 2023
MACLELLAN Violet Louise	Feb 2023
MITCHELL Denis	Feb 2023
MURRAY, Lt Cdr Robert Thomas	Nov 2022
MCEWEN Margaret Leith	Nov 2022
Nimmo, David Stewart	Jan 2023
O'GRADY Raymond	Dec 2022
PEACEY Paul	Feb 2022
SHAW David Cameron	Sep 2022
SOUTHWELL Leslie Harold	Jun 2022
SULLIVAN Doris Marie	Mar 2023
TODD David Arthur	Feb 2023
WEST Rolland	Jan 2023
WILLIS Gerald	Dec 2022
ZBORIL Ronald Martin	Jan 2023



Last Saturday I had the pleasure of attending the 100th anniversary celebration of HMCS Carleton, where Sue started her reserve career in 1972.

At dinner I was seated beside Cdr Barb Morris (R) (Retd)...who Sue has known 'forever'. To our surprise, we learned much of her father's flying career...and that Edward (Spike) Morris was a founding member of SAMF

Edward Bernard "Spike" MORRIS, CDR,E, AE, P, RCN, P. Eng. (Ret'd) At the age of 85 in Halifax, died first January 11, 2005, in the Halifax Infirmary, QEII. Born in Regina, Sask., he was a son of the late Arthur and Mary (Campbell) Morris. In 1938, he entered the Royal Canadian Navy as a Special Entry Cadet, Engineering. He attended Royal Navy Engineering College, Keyham, England. During the Second World War, he served on various ships of the Royal Navy as a Marine Engineer. He then became an Aeronautical Engineer and Test Pilot, becoming the first pilot in the Royal Canadian Navy. In the RCN, Spike served in a variety of positions on sea and on land. He and his family lived in various places in Canada and in the United States, retiring from naval service in 1969. After retirement, he worked with Can Plan Consultant Engineering and at HMC Dockyard. He was an avid golfer, curler, woodworker and bridge player. He loved to travel and had travelled extensively throughout the world. He was also active as a volunteer and was a founding board member of the Shearwater Aviation Museum, and a trustee of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust HMCS, Sackville. He was a long-term member of the Naval Officers Association of Canada and the Geritol Club.

## HMCS Queen Charlotte / NCSM Queen Charlotte

HMCS Queen Charlotte members raised the Naval Reserve Centennial Flag at Government House today. Her Honour, Lieutenant Governor Annette Perry welcomed our group and HMCS Queen Charlotte Commanding Officer Lieutenant-Commander John MacDonald spoke about the history and contribution of the Navy Reserve.

On the 31st of January 1923, the Government of Canada authorized the organization of a Force to be called the Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve – the RCNVR.

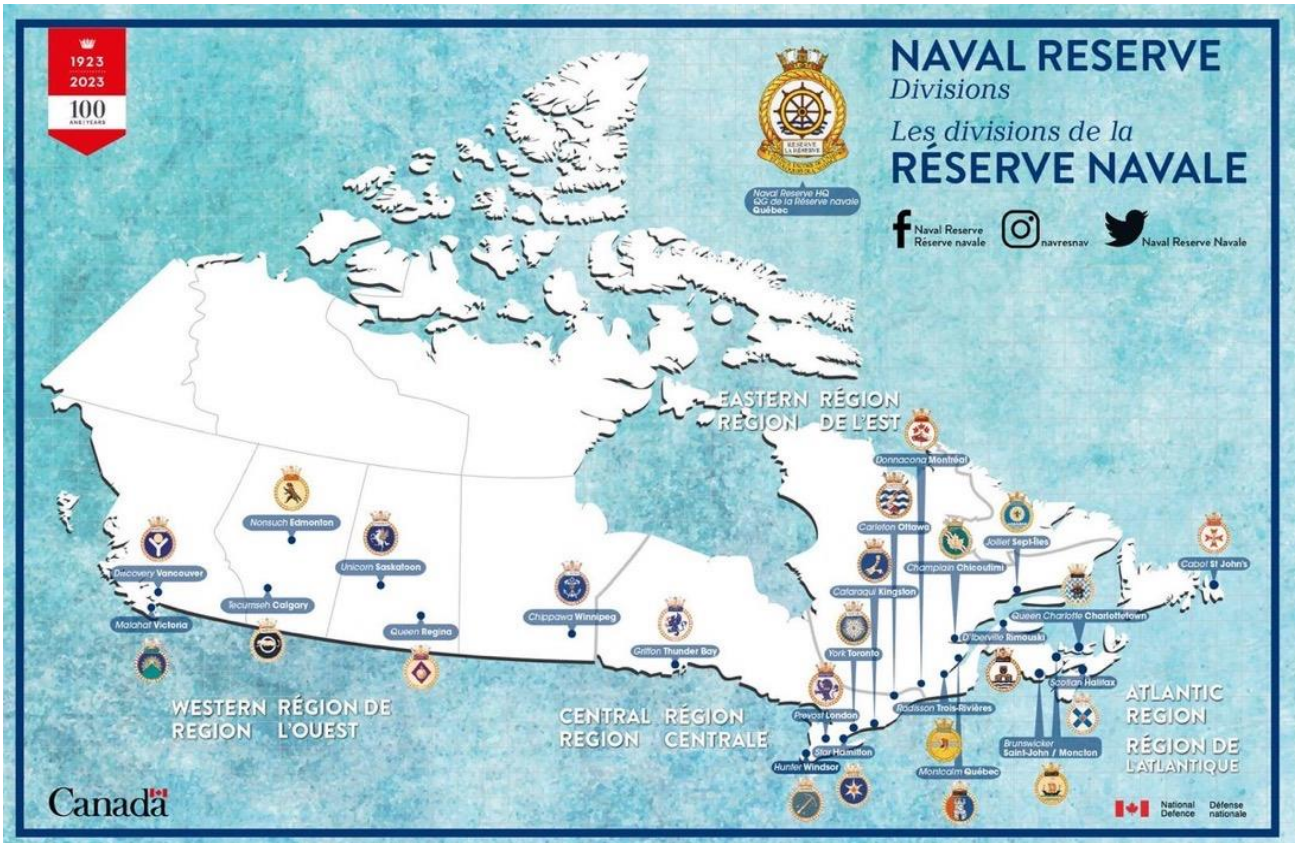
The formation of a Reserve Force was initially seen as a great way for the fledgling Royal Canadian Navy to build support from coast to coast. It envisioned the establishment of Naval Reserve Divisions in every major Canadian city, effectively bringing the Navy to Canadians living far from our coastlines. For 100 years, the Naval Reserve has played a critical role in Canada's safety and security as a vital element of the Royal Canadian Navy and Canadian Armed Forces.

During 2023, please join us in recognizing the Naval Reserve Centennial, and their place in our nation's military history and heritage.

Photos credited:

HMCS Queen Charlotte Facebook page







## Sailors inspire Naval Reserve Centennial graphic identifier design

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### Navy News / February 11, 2022

*By Lieutenant-Commander Paul Pendergast*

The Naval Reserve will be turning 100 on January 31, 2023.

To mark the one-year countdown to the Naval Reserve Centennial, the official graphic identifier was launched on January 31, 2022.

After a design competition, a panel of all-ranks members selected the design by Sailor 2nd Class (S2) Joseph Dimayuga, previously from Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Discovery*.

S2 Dimayuga joined the Naval Reserve as a human resources administrator in 2018 and served as full time staff in *Discovery's* ship's office until transferring to the Regular Force in March 2021.

S2 Dimayuga was born in the Philippines and immigrated to Canada with his family in 2003. With experience in advertising and after 12 years working as a garment manufacturer and master tailor, S2 Dimayuga was confident he could submit a winning design.

“I wanted to incorporate historical images of past sailors while highlighting the modern Naval Reserve,” said S2 Dimayuga, describing how he came up with the design.

“My plan was to represent the 100-year time line through the silhouettes and headdresses of sailors from the past and today. I kept the ship's wheel similar to the one on the present Naval Reserve badge, and made the waves a bit more emphasized as a nod to the old ‘wavy-navy’ term used to refer to Reservists,” he said.

“My silhouette was initially meant to be a placeholder for an image of a present-day sailor, then as the design progressed, it became permanent. It also became a subtle way of ‘signing’ my artwork.”

S2 Dimayuga chose S2 Kelly Le’s image to counterbalance the two historical images at the top and to represent the newer generation of Naval Reservists.

Born and raised in Vancouver to Vietnamese immigrant parents, S2 Kelly Le is the first member of her family to join the Canadian Armed Forces. Joining as a boatswain at HMCS *Discovery* in 2017, S2 Le has distinguished herself as an accomplished junior leader.

She attended the United Nations Peacebuilding Youth Forum as a youth delegate representing the Canadian Naval Reserves. Along with 150 other youth leaders, S2 Le participated in discussions surrounding issues such as support for Indigenous peoples, foreign policy, media and technology, economic equality and security and criminal justice.

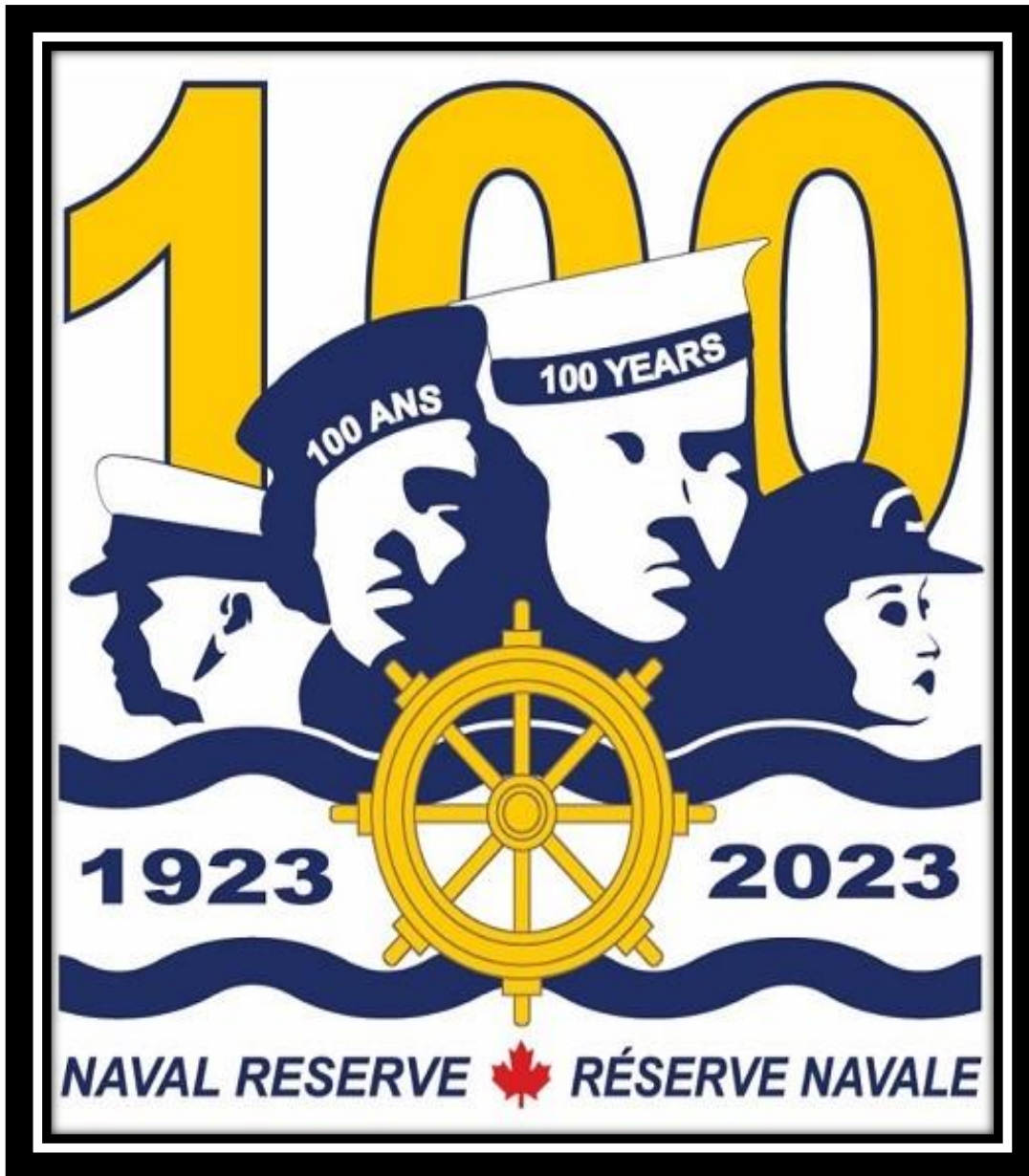
In 2019, S2 Le organised a group of HMCS *Discovery* sailors to participate in the Adrian Oliver Memorial Run, a 5 km race held in support of Honour House, a home away from home for first responders and their families. The group also participated in the 10 km Sun Run to raise money for various charities, including the BC Cancer Foundation and BC Children’s Hospital Foundation.

S2 Le volunteered for [Operation Laser](#), the CAF’s response to a worldwide pandemic situation, where HMCS *Discovery* generated two platoons of sailors in Vancouver to help respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. S2 Le also went to sea with HMCS *Vancouver’s* crew when they conducted sea trials in 2021.

“When S2 Dimayuga showed me the design he was working on, I was very impressed. It was an honour when he asked to use my image, and I am very proud to represent all Naval Reservists on the design that will be featured prominently throughout the Centennial year,” S2 Le said.

To commemorate the Naval Reserve Centennial, there will be a year-long celebration throughout 2023 that will include national events and initiatives, as well as local events at all 24 Naval Reserve Divisions.

The Naval Reserve Centennial will allow its sailors to showcase the Naval Reserve to Canadians, and demonstrate its proud history in each of the country's major cities. It will also be an opportunity for Canadians to celebrate our naval history and the service of reservists to Canada.





From the Curator's Desk  
By Christine Hines

We've spent a busy winter working on some behind the scenes projects, such as rebuilding stored collections furniture, conducting an artifact inventory, installing new shelving/map cabinet combination units (thank you SAM Foundation!) in the archives and working on restocking the gift shop before the busy spring season. I am pleased to say that we have had brisk visit numbers, getting back to normal-ish, and ready for a great high season! It is great to be getting back to normal museum operations. If we can judge by March Break visit numbers, we will have a great 2023 season.

With the arrival of spring, we are also happy to have been given permission to restart our annual spring hobby show fundraiser. A multi-disciplinary hobby show, this two-day event is held at the Sea King Club and is a signature event, and hope that its return will be the first of many more events to come in 2023. Stay tuned!

I would also like to welcome to our team two new volunteers, Dwight Bazinet and Ken Sanders. Both are Veterans, and bring much wisdom and experience to our team. Dwight is working on creating interactive exhibits and Ken is working with visitor services and tours. We have also welcomed two new interns to the library and archives, Cassia Symonds and Stephanie Bellussi, both students at the Nova Scotia Community College Library Technology program. We have been working on our

oversized maps, plans and general arrangement drawing, and also cataloguing a large collection of books and research materials about 423 Squadron and the RCAF from 1939-1945 generally, donated by Chuck Myles; Cassia and Stephanie have been steadily working at the materials, ensuring they are well catalogued and properly stored for easy access.

If you have not been to visit SAM in a while, please check out our revitalized website, including our new virtual tour. We refresh it periodically, as new exhibits are installed, they are scanned and added to the tour by our friends at Canaview Real Imaging. You can see our virtual tour here:

<https://tours.realimaging.ca/> or by visiting our website directly at <https://shearwateraviationmuseum.ca/>

See how we have grown!

As always, many thanks for your continued support and belief in our work. Hope you can see us soon!



### Quilts of Valour – Canada Society

Our mission is to ensure that injured Canadian Forces members are recognized for their service and commitment to our country. We give this support through the presentation of quilts to comfort our injured past and present Canadian Forces members. [www.quiltsofvalour.ca](http://www.quiltsofvalour.ca)



# Quilts of Valour – Canada

March 26<sup>th</sup> 2023



Bill Shenidon



Glenda Ross



Bill Young



Jennifer Eddy

## Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal Presentation

The Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal was presented to the following deserving volunteers on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023 at the Shearwater Aviation Museum:

Brad Thomas and Peter Staley

As you may be aware, prior to her passing, Her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, approved the creation of a commemorative medal to mark the 70th anniversary of Her accession to the Throne as Queen of Canada. The Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal is being awarded to 5,000 residents of Nova Scotia who have made a significant contribution to Canada, Nova Scotia, their communities, or fellow citizens.

Brad Thomas and Peter Staley have demonstrated exceptional qualities and outstanding service to our Province in the field of volunteerism for heritage at the Shearwater Aviation Museum and treasurer for the Shearwater Aviation Museum Foundation. Brad is a Restoration Team member, and is also works with groups for educational tours and an attendant at our Air Show Atlantic sales kiosk. Peter has worked, often behind the scenes, as the Treasurer for the SAM Foundation, a time-consuming and important job in any charitable endeavour.

We are so very proud of all of our volunteers, and appreciate the commitment of Brad and Peter to our organizations. All of us at SAM are delighted that you have received this well-deserved honour as a lasting recognition of your dedication and service.

Christine Hines  
Manager/Curator  
Shearwater Aviation Museum





Karen Collacutt- McHarg: Editor

#### Letter to the editor

This tale has a Naval Aviation thread by:  
Dave Williams

This tale of coincidence and happenstance is held together by a long, thin thread of naval aviation. The story started in November 1954. HMS Illustrious is stationed in the Irish Sea to provide a deck to carrier qualify for a Commonwealth course of Pilots.

The Canadian group was: R.L Rogers, Gerry Watson, Willie Long, Mike McCall and Myself, Dave Williams. Upon completing her mission, Illustrious steamed to her home port near Plymouth, where she decommissioned. She then went to Clyde in Scotland, where she scrapped. In the office of the yard work, a young Scottish Lass who, during her employment, fell into the ownership of two very large, Heavy Brass Portlights. She also happened to marry a young German man named Walter Kuchmeister. They were a happy couple, but Walter had a lifelong dream to live as a pioneer in the wilderness of Western Canada. His wife had an equally lifelong dream to live in her beloved Scotland.

They decided to remain happily married. They would live their own lives an ocean and continents apart. Upon his departure for Canada, his wife presented to Walter 2 large, heavy brass portlights. In those days, settlers and their effects travelled by ship, so the portlights presented no weight problem. Sometimes in late 1960's, Walter fetched up on a small island in the gulf island of Georgia, which is located between Vancouver and Vancouver Island. It was called Pender Island, and it was sparsely populated and consisted mainly of forests, vacant rural land, small farms, and a sprinkling of summer cottages. It

was not quite Walter's dream wilderness, but it was close enough.

Here Walter lived his dream in a tiny summer cottage. He kept a few chickens, and the nearby sea provided an abundance of seafood. He lived as a hermit and never owned a car or bicycle because he never went anywhere.

In 1979 as I was approaching the end of my career, I found my dream retirement home on Pender Island. Our daughter, Anne, finished schooling in the island system and married her school chum Mike. Mike was a commercial fisherman. He dove for Geoduck Clams. One day, Mike needed fitting for his boat and dispatched his wife to Sidney on Vancouver Island, where there was a huge old barn of a chandlery.

While searching for the fitting, she came upon a large, heavy brass portlight. Paperwork attached stating that it originated in HMS Ark Royal II. So, she purchased it to display in her home as a maritime artifact.

One of my recreational activities was beachcombing in a small rowing skiff. One day I happened upon the transom of a substantial motor yacht. Nothing else left of the hull nor the transom to identify it. The planking was solid mahogany, and although highly weathered, it was very salvageable. I towed it with my skiff to my foreshore and placed it into my workshop stock.

One day as I was visiting with Mike and Anne, I noticed the portlight with the mahogany transom in mind.

I asked if they would like me to make a coffee table incorporating the portlight in the design. They readily agreed.

A couple of years ago, Walter Kuchmeister passed away. His wife was now obliged to come to Pender Island to settle the estate. The cottage was a known knockdown and required attention.

A nearby neighbour named Marty offered her assistance. When not at sea, Mike, my son-in-law, operated a small mixed farm. One of his machines is a backhoe, which he's used to assist Marty with the cleanup of the estate, and Mrs. Kuchmeister was about to return to Scotland. By way of thank you, she presented to Marty a large, very heavy portlight.

Marty is a retired blaster and not a man of the sea. He, therefore, as a thank you, presented the port light to Mike. During his lifetime of work along the coast of BC, Mike had accumulated several marine artifacts he had set up as Garden art.

The centrepiece was the butt of a large tree with a growth that formulated a natural bowl. In this bowl, he places a collection of glass balls. These balls support Japanese fishnets and occasionally work loose and drift ashore along the West coast of BC. They vary in shape and size and are quite collectable. To the one side of this presentation, he has placed an old wooden east coast lobster trap.

To balance this off on the other side, he has set his very large, very heavy portlight. One day I was visiting Mike, and I saw the portlight. Knowing this was a second one, I asked if I could have it, and he readily agreed. I subsequently produced a coffee table that incorporated the portlight.

The two portlights are similar except for the latch dogs, which are different in design. I cannot confirm it, but the second portlight could be from HMS Illustrious. However, the odds of my reconnecting with a piece of that ship after 68 years and separated by roughly 9000 nautical miles seem exceptionally high. However, having a rough outline of their travels and following the timeline, I am convinced it is so.

This is my story, and I am sticking with it!



Cheque \$1510. for The Stalker Memorial Fund was raised in Oct 2022 Stalker Fun Run

In that photo from left to right we have Capt Peterson, MCpl O'Donnell, Karen McHarg, LCol Fraser and CWO Dunfield



John Kinross (Jake) Kennedy  
March 12, 1928 – April 26, 2021

Jake Kennedy entered the Delta on April 26, 2021. He was an intriguing man, the source of many stories – some of which might even have been true – and one of Shearwater's last connections to the heady days of fighter operations in the Royal Canadian Navy's Air Branch.

Jake was of a previous generation and it was not until the Shearwater 100 historical workshop, held in August 2018, that I came to know much about Jake at all. He stood in for a former Banshee pilot and gave a presentation on fighter ops in the RCN. (Jake flew both the Hawker Sea Fury and the McDonnell Banshee.)

His presentation turned into a master class on embarked operations with both aircraft. The Sea Fury was Jake's favourite and he was superb at throwing shade on the Banshee – "a great fighter for a photo op" was only one of his lines. The Q & A was, needless to say, rather animated as the Banshee drivers lined up to take shots at Jake and his calumnies. The barbs flowed back and forth and then Jake shut it all down when he reminded the Banshee Boys of the day in the Caribbean that they refused to take-off because of the high density-altitude and the inability of the carrier to generate enough wind-over-the-deck to permit the Banshees to

launch. This was simply a matter of physics and not a matter of opinion, but it neatly ended Jake's presentation.

Did I mention that Jake flew from Santa Monica to Shearwater, unescorted, at 90 years of age? And he illustrated his talk with 35 mm slides rather than PowerPoint!

He was a unique character in an organization that seemed to groom characters like him.

Bravo Zulu Jake!



FACIAL HAIR  
By Joe Paquette

A wise Greek:

*“There are two kinds of people in this world that go around beardless – boys and women – and I am neither one.”*

A wiser Afghan:

*“A woman with a beard looks like a man. A man without a beard looks like a woman.”*

John Swallow, friend and pilot extraordinaire:

*“Why would anyone cultivate on his chin that which freely grown on his nether regions.”*

Colonel Chuck Parent, Base Commander, CFB Summerside.

*“Major, that beard will be gone in the morning!”*

When I stepped off that bus at HMCS VENTURE, September 2, 1959 to begin my 31 plus year “Navy” career the concept of facial hair was the farthest thing from my mind. I was 16 going on 17 and my pale cheeks were naturally as smooth as a baby’s bum. This situation hadn’t changed when, when at some point in my Junior year, a Senior Cadet informed me that I needed to shave. He definitely saw something I didn’t.

Nevertheless, it was off to the store and I was now in possession of the adult accoutrements I used to watch my father use. I am sure that there must have come a day when I needed a razor for my “beard” but this was not it ... but that was to change.

My posting after “Wings” was to VS-880 Squadron flying TRACKERS and, eventually, flying off the BONNIE, the flagship and only aircraft carrier in the Royal Canadian Navy (circa 1965).

Challenging, scary, fulfilling ... all these words fit life on the BONNIE but they aren’t germane to my story. This story is about Facial Hair and there I was, as soon as we left port on my second cruise, trying to produce a beard on my baby cheeks ... I was just 22.

The Navy regulations were quite specific concerning beards: First, you had to seek permission to “discontinue the use of a razor” and second, you were not allowed in public until the beard was deemed acceptable.



Discussing the “second” first, it was hard to remain out of the public eye when you were shore based so the first weeks at sea were the perfect time to grow facial hair while not appearing in public. I started on by stopping shaving on “Day one” and decided to get my head shaved as well. It was a carefree but different look but, facing three weeks before the first port call, who cared. Unfortunately, I hadn’t counted on having to fly the ship’s dentist back to Shearwater for a family emergency three days into the cruise. After landing at Shearwater, we only had about 90 minutes to run home, have a second, unexpected, “goodbye ceremony” and get back to the airport. Joan was treated to a face with the same length of stubble from chin to crown on her gallant flyer.

## FIRST BEARD

In spite of my wife’s shock, I was quite happy with my slow growing facial hair and so it was through UNIFICATION and INTEGRATION.

Mr. Hellyer’s experiment meant big changes for the aircrew in Canada’s Naval Air community. I remember lining up at the Wardroom bar with my fellow Navy aircrew to declare that my new speciality was “32A” ie

“Aircrew, Pilot”. With that statement I was no longer in the “Sea” element and would never serve at sea as a Naval Officer. It was momentous but to many of us it meant that the challenges of all those Air Force flying jobs were open to us. Soon Ben Oxholm and Wally Sloan were off to Germany to fly the CF-104. They were soon followed by Larry O’Brian and Don Monk. Some of my course mates headed to TUDORs as Jet Instructors (Larry Lott and Tom Byrne) and NEPTUNES in Maritime Air (Ross Hawkes) ... it was exciting times.

My “air force” career was not to begin until 1970 when I was posted from Shearwater to Winnipeg and the prestigious Instrument Check Pilot School to fly the DAKOTA twin-engine transport aircraft. Six years after UNIFICATION and two years after INTEGRATION I was off to an air force job clinging to my “Navy pilot” identity by continuing to wear my navy-blue uniform and my navy beard rather than my newly issued CF “Greens”.

It was a strange time as everyone was stalling on obtaining and wearing the new Canadian Forces “green” uniform, especially the RCAF personnel who mostly manned the former RCAF Station Winnipeg. In addition, the adults weren’t sure what the rules were regarding “former” naval personnel and their beards. The Base Commander decided to take things in hand and ordered a Base Parade and stated that everyone was to wear their new CF Green uniform. There was a mad scramble as many of the young pilots in the hangar from which we operated wore only flying suits and had never gone to get their new green uniform.

The parade was held and I appeared, along with all the former RCAF personnel, in my spanking new uniform and you could not tell the former service of any of the hundreds fallen in ... except for this fellow with the beard.



BEARDS GO WELL WITH GREEN

My unit commander had a talk with me about the facial hair but admitted that he and the remainder of the adults didn’t want to challenge the system by ordering it off ... but would I consider removing it. It was the last shred I had of my identity as a “Navy Pilot” and I just couldn’t do it.

One of the exciting things about the ICP School was that we operated the DAKOTA twin engine transport and the T-33 jet trainer as our teaching vehicles and, after some snivelling, I got some dual instruction and was scheduled for my first jet solo flight on February 4, 1971. I was finally to become a “jet” pilot and I was excited. I figured the whole base must be



excited when the phone rang and it was the Commander of Training Command, General William Carr calling to congratulate me on my forthcoming first jet solo flight. I was thrilled with the attention until he continued, “You know that you can’t fly solo in the jet with a beard due to the fact that you have to wear an oxygen mask.” Well, I’d wanted to be a “jet” pilot since I started flying so there was little hesitation. After we hung up and the kids went to bed, I got at it and soon my chin was hanging out there all pink, shiny and smooth ... well actually it looked a little obscene. What I should not have done was spring out from under the covers in the morning when the kids (our three girls) came bounding into the room to say “Good morning”. They all screamed and ran into the bathroom and closed the door. My wife Joan was not impressed with my “cute” reveal.

THE NEW DAD

I behaved, more or less, for the next six years through tours in Training Command and NDHQ until I was selected to finish off the last year of my degree at the University of Ottawa. NDHQ is a strange place where people have significant

responsibility and no one else really knows who you work for. With this in mind, and knowing that soon I would be a student just around the corner at the University of Ottawa in long hair and denim, I decided to grow a beard during a two week camping vacation. My intention was to bluff it out for the four last weeks at work and start my new life with a beard. It worked! The only comment I heard concerning my facial hair during the month transition was when a pilot whom knew the bearded me in Winnipeg but had never recognized me in a year of meeting in the elevator at 101 Colonel Bye, finally said” Hallo Joe! When did you get to Ottawa?”

After a wonderful year of learning (???) my career manager (who never mentioned my beard) informed me that they needed my back in the Naval Air environment and I was to be posted to 423 Squadron on SEAKING helicopters. This was an exciting outcome and I headed for the KIOWA helicopter course at Portage La Prairie.

My bearded look was assured now with a SEAKING (Navy) posting imminent and I was excited to get back to full time flying. I arrived in Portage to find out that I was not the only bearded candidate on the KIOWA course, John Orr was also there on his way back to SEAKINGs after an overseas swan.

We were feeling pretty smug until we got word to stay out of the Base Commander’s way as he was really upset with our appearance and was investigating whether or not he had the authority to order our facial hair removed. Apparently, he did not (which upset him even more) and we now feared that if he saw us too often he wouldn’t care about the regulations (if in fact there were any). It was a long month but John and I reported to Shearwater beards intact.

Three years later I am now off to Staff College in Toronto. This was another of those areas where no one knew or cared about your facial hair. There were students from many countries and various branches of the service and keeping track of rules on facial hair was not on the agenda. My beard was safe.

Staff College was followed by my dream posting, flying the CH-113 LABRADOR helicopter in Search and Rescue with 413 Transport & Rescue Squadron at CFB Summerside. My Mom and Dad came from



Charlottetown PEI and stories of the Island and its people were part of our growing up. While I had never been there until this posting, I felt that I belonged. In fact, we went to the island with the intent to buy a home and to eventually retire there. It is with this optimism and enthusiasm that I reported to the Base Commander, Colonel Chuck Parent’s office for my “Welcome” brief. It went really well with me sharing my Island background and delight in being in the land of my ancestors when he concluded “And Major that will be gone tomorrow, I run a clean-shaven base.”

Well, I had snuck ashore to canoodle wearing my first beard, held out until my jet flying was threatened with my second, avoided confrontation at Portage and was ignored at Staff College but I had no intention in picking a fight with my new Base Commander ... so once more into the bathroom with a razor ... well with a small exception.

#### PUSHING THE MUSTACHE REGULATIONS

And that is the way it stayed for my remaining eight years in SAR and in the Canadian Forces. I can’t say I resented the efforts to make me lose the facial hair as “on” or “off” or trying to grow it or trying to keep it, it was a reminder to me, and maybe to everyone, that “**I was a carrier pilot!**” By the way, at the first mess function when I introduced my wife to the Base Commander as follows: “Joan, I would like you to meet the Barber of Saville!”. And Chuck Parent, gentleman that he was, let me have my moment without resentment, and remained a wonderful mentor during our time together in Summerside.

## TURKEY TRAUMA

Flying military aeroplanes, even in peacetime, can be hazardous to your health. Thankfully, comparatively few peace-time wild-blue adventures turn out to be serious *misadventures*. We present here a selection of photos that illustrate annoying but non-fatal incidents and accidents featuring Royal Canadian Navy Avenger aircraft (aka “Turkeys”) that were the mainstay of the RCN’s airborne anti-submarine warfare effort during the first half of the 1950s decade.



“Dearly Beloved: We are gathered here today ... .” DND/RCN photos.



Ahhh ... Nothing like a nice cool dip on a warm spring day in the Bermuda Triangle.  
DND/RCN photo.



Not a great place to lose a contact lens. DND/RCN photo via the Library and Archives Canada (LAC).



Here's what happens when your oleos have a bad case of arthritis. DND/RCN photo.



“Ruth Amidst the Alien Corn.” DND/RCN photo, via LAC.



Q. -- What happens when a carrier-borne Turkey has a disagreement with the island? A. -- The Turkey loses. DND/RCN photo, via LAC.



Rough sledding, or, “ 🎵 Crashing Through the Snow ... 🎵 ” (with apologies to James Lord Pierpont, composer of “Jingle Bells”). DND/RCN photo, via LAC.



NO RIGHT TURN. DND/RCN photo, via Patrick Martin.



## Swordfish – A Strike in the Stern

Ernest Cable, SAM Historian

One of the classic sea battles during the Battle of the Atlantic in the Second World War was the gun duel between the Royal Navy's mighty battle cruiser, *HMS Hood* and the newly commissioned German battleship, *Bismarck*. With her low freeboard the 48,000-ton *Hood* was long lean and fast, she was the pride of the Royal Navy and the symbol of British supremacy at sea. The 50,000-ton *Bismarck*, the flagship of German Kriegsmarine, was superior in firing and staying power to any single ship of the British navy. The *Bismarck's* sinking of the *Hood* in, May 1941, is well documented in the annals of naval history, as is the British pursuit of *Bismarck* to avenge the loss of the mighty *Hood*. Less well known is the pivotal role played by a small number of obsolescent Fairey Swordfish biplanes in preventing *Bismarck's* escape and leading to her ultimate demise.



German Battleship Bismarck

### Germany Attacks Convoys

By the autumn of 1940 the fate of Great Britain looked very dim. Nazi Germany had defeated and occupied all of Western Europe including Norway. The German invasion of Britain was stemmed only by the Royal Air Force's (RAF) razor thin defeat of the German Luftwaffe in the epic Battle of Britain in the summer of 1940. For its survival Britain depended on the American Lend-Lease program. Every bullet, gun, tank, truck and fighter plane that went to Britain under the Lend-Lease program had to go by sea. So did the cheese, beef, bacon, flour, oil and gasoline that kept the British people fed, warm, and healthy. These cargoes were shipped in huge convoys of freighters and tankers from the east coast of Canada and the United States.

Germany's strategy was to block the flow of goods that permitted the British to carry on the fight. The Kriegsmarine's fleet of submarines (U-boats) using "wolf pack"

tactics was the first line of attack dedicated to stemming of the flow of shipping to Britain. The Royal Navy and the smaller Royal Canadian Navy were hard pressed to defend the convoys against the growing U-boat fleet. In all of 1940, the U-boats sank 520 ships amounting to more than two million tons of shipping. By May 1941, U-boats had sunk another 215 merchant ships with a loss of more than one million tons of shipping. The U-boats were ably aided by the Luftwaffe's long-range Focke-Wulf Condor bombers flying from bases in France and Norway that accounted for the loss of hundreds of ships and thousands of tons of shipping.

The Kriegsmarine's small but very modern surface fleet was the third threat to Allied convoys. The Royal Navy was reasonably successful in keeping the German surface combatants bottled up in French, German and Norwegian ports, however, the cruiser, *Hipper*, the pocket battleship, *Admiral Scheer*, and the battleships, *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, penetrated the blockade in succession between September 1940 and March 1941 to destroy a quarter million tons of Allied shipping. Although, not as effective as the U-boats in sinking Allied ships, the German warship threat tied up dozens of Royal Navy battleships, cruisers and aircraft carriers for months at a time. However, the greatest surface threats were the battleships, *Bismarck* and *Tirpitz*, nearing completion in German shipyards.

### **Bismarck Sails**

In April 1941, German Grand Admiral Raeder laid out a plan known as "Rhine Exercise" in which *Bismarck* in concert with other battleships were to raid the North Atlantic Sea lanes, destroying merchantmen and their naval escorts alike. The battleship *Gneisenau* was originally to accompany *Bismarck* but she was heavily damaged during a RAF torpedo attack in Brest harbour and the smaller battle cruiser, *Prinz Eugen*, was substituted in her place. On 18 May, *Prinz Eugen* followed by *Bismarck* quietly slipped out of the harbour at Gotenhafen (Gdynia, Poland) into the Baltic Sea. Their course took them through the Kattegat, Skagerrak and around the southern tip of Norway and then northward into the Norwegian Sea. The two German ships were spotted from shore while passing Kristiansand, Norway and the information that the two German warships were at sea was passed to British intelligence; the secrecy of their attempt to break out into the Atlantic was blown! *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* next put into Grimstadfjord near Bergen, Norway to top up *Prinz Eugen's* smaller fuel tanks, where they were spotted by a RAF reconnaissance Spitfire. The British were alarmed that the *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* had broken out into the open sea to raid the Atlantic convoy routes. Admiral Lutjens, in command of the German task force aboard *Bismarck*, decided that he could evade further detection by sailing north of Iceland then turning south through the Denmark Strait to enter his Atlantic operating area about 900 miles (1,500 km) west of Ireland.

After receiving special ULTRA intelligence that confirmed Admiral Lutjens' intention to raid the North Atlantic convoy routes, Vice Admiral Tovey, the British Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet, ordered Vice Admiral Holland to search for the German raiders in the Iceland-Faeroes gap. Holland's Battle Cruiser Force consisted of the battle cruiser *HMS Hood* and the battleship *HMS Prince of Wales*. On receiving a report from a Fleet Air Arm Glen Martin Maryland patrol bomber that the German task

force was no longer in the Bergen area, Tovey instructed the heavy cruiser, *HMS Suffolk* to join the heavy cruiser *HMS Norfolk* already on patrol in the Denmark Strait to search for the *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen*. To cover the southern route south of Iceland, Vice Admiral Tovey sortied from Scapa Flow in Northern Scotland in his flagship, the battleship *HMS King George V*, accompanied by the aircraft carrier, *HMS Victorious*.



HMS Hood

### **Hood Attacks Bismarck**

On 23 May at 1922 hours, *Suffolk* radioed an enemy contact report; “One battleship, one cruiser in sight at 20°. Range seven nautical miles, course 240°.” Rear Admiral Wake-Walker embarked in *Norfolk* ordered Captain Phillips in *Norfolk* and Captain Ellis in *Suffolk* to shadow the German warships from a safe distance. *Suffolk* with her new Type 284 radar could track of *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* from a range of 13 miles (21 km); *Norfolk* with her earlier Type 286M radar had a detection range of only a few miles. *Suffolk*'s and *Norfolk*'s 8-inch guns were no match for *Bismarck*'s 15-inch guns so if either cruiser found itself within effective range of *Bismarck*'s guns for more than a minute or so, disaster would be swift. *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* took up station on *Bismarck*'s port and starboard quarters respectively at ranges of 10-14 miles (16-23 km).

From *Suffolk*'s position reports, Vice Admiral Holland in *Hood* now knew that *Bismarck* was only 300 miles (500 km) north northeast of his position and steered a course to intercept. Holland had the advantage of knowing *Bismarck*'s position and course whereas *Bismarck* knew nothing of *Hood*'s whereabouts. Meanwhile, back in London the Admiralty saw from *Suffolk*'s reports where *Bismarck* and her consort would enter the Atlantic and realized the severe threat posed to eleven convoys. The Admiralty ordered Vice Admiral Somerville's Force H in Gibraltar to sea immediately to protect the convoys lurking into danger. Force H consisted of Somerville's flagship the battle cruiser, *HMS Renown*, the aircraft carrier, *HMS Ark Royal*, the light cruiser, *HMS Sheffield*, and the heavy cruiser, *HMS Dorsetshire*.

On 24 May at 0535, *Prince of Wales* sighted the enemy's mastheads on the horizon. Holland made the first of several tactical errors; *Hood* led the charge towards *Bismarck*. But, as the lead ship she would be the first to be fired upon and her thin deck armour made her dreadfully vulnerable to *Bismarck*'s plunging fire. Also, Holland didn't allow *Prince of Wales* freedom to manoeuvre independently and gave strict instructions

to follow *Hood's* every move. After several changes in course *Hood* approached *Bismarck* bow on. This limited *Hood* to firing only her four forward 15-inch guns and *Prince of Wales* to her six forward 14-inch guns; the aft turrets on each of the British ships were unable to engage the targets; the advantage was that *Hood* and *Prince of Wales* presented smaller targets. *Hood* fired first; her first salvo unleashed from 27,000 yards; no hits. Admiral Lutjens brilliantly manoeuvred *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* to “cross the T” of the British so that their full broadsides, all eight of *Bismarck's* 15-inch guns and all eight of *Prinz Eugen's* 8-inch guns, could bear on the British ships. After *Prinz Eugen* had fired several salvos at the *Hood*, a rapidly spreading red-orange fire was observed; two of *Prinz Eugen's* shells stuck the ready-use locker for *Hood's* port after 4-inch gun. Both *Hood* and *Prince of Wales* were notoriously “wet” with their low forecastles; on their current course mountains of green water crashed over their forward turrets and optical range finders, making it difficult for the British gunners to find the range to the German ships. In mid-battle, Holland realized his precarious situation and changed tactics, altering to a course parallel to *Bismarck's* to bring all of the British forward and aft turrets into play and slug it out with the German ships broadside to broadside. At 0600, *Bismarck* fired her fifth broadside at the *Hood*, one or more of her armour-piercing 1,764-pound (800 kg) shells penetrated *Hood's* thin deck armour and exploded in her magazine. The mighty *Hood* quickly split in two and sank; all but three of her 1,416-man crew perished.

### **The Pursuit**

Heavily out gunned, *Prince of Wales* made a hasty retreat with *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* in full pursuit. In the ensuing sea battle *Prince of Wales* was pounded. *Bismarck's* first 15-inch shell struck her bridge, a second shell slammed into her superstructure, a third shell blew both wings off her catapult aircraft, and a fourth shell penetrated *Prince of Wales's* hull below the waterline but failed to explode. Two 8-inch shells from *Prinz Eugen* struck *Prince of Wales* at the waterline near the stern causing her to take on 400 tons of water. A third shell penetrated an ammunition handling room where it whizzed around several times before coming to rest; one of the crew carried the shell to the railing and tossed it into the sea. Throughout the terrible pounding, *Prince of Wales* gunners scored three hits on *Bismarck*. The first 14-inch shell crashed through *Bismarck's* forecastle above the waterline but below the bow wave, entering the port side and exiting through the starboard side. En route the shell ruptured two fuel tanks and caused *Bismarck* to take on 4,000 tons of seawater in her forecastle. *Prince of Wales's* second shell struck *Bismarck's* port side below the waterline but did not penetrate the heavy armour; however, it seriously damaged a generator room and boiler room behind the hull plates and ruptured several fuel storage tanks in the ship's double bottom. *Bismarck* was now leaving a telltale streak of oil in her wake. The third 14-inch shell blew away the service boat and the catapult for the ship's floatplane. The *Prince of Wales* escaped to the southeast under a dense cloud of smoke and *Prinz Eugen* abandoned the chase to assist *Bismarck*.

Admiral Lutjens was forced to abandon “Rhine Exercise” and ordered *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* to steer southeasterly for the French port at St. Nazaire. *Prince of Wales* joined *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* which continued to shadow *Bismarck* from her stern quarters.

Emotions ran high in the Admiralty Operations Centre; the *Hood* had been more than just another large warship; she was the pride of the Royal Navy which *Bismarck* had sunk in less than 10 minutes. Every available capital ship in the British Navy had to be concentrated to hunt down the *Bismarck*.

At 1800, *Prinz Eugen* separated from *Bismarck* by turning on a southerly course; her orders were to refuel from two pre-positioned tankers and continue her search for the convoys en route from Halifax. Lutjens hoped to evade his shadowers by making undetected turns in the rain squalls and fog banks of the approaching gale.

### **Swordfish Attack from Victorious**

In late afternoon, Admiral Tovey ordered the aircraft carrier *Victorious* and four cruisers to detach from the main body of the Home Fleet and race to about 100 miles (160 km) of *Bismarck's* position and launch an air strike. At 2215, in appalling conditions of high foaming seas, low scudding cloud and a heavily pitching flight deck, *Victorious* launched nine Swordfish torpedo bombers from 825 Squadron under command of LCdr Esmonde. Making barely 85 knots in the face of the gale, Esmonde planned to find *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* then home in on *Bismarck* 15 miles (26 km) ahead. On spotting the *Bismarck* through the clouds, Esmonde commenced the attack from a steep dive of 180 knots; with open cockpits their faces were fully exposed to the wind and prop wash. The eight Swordfish (one aircraft lost its way in the clouds) began their pullout about a mile back from the target and levelled out at 100 feet (30 meters) above the sea, reduced speed to 90 knots, then descended to 60 feet (20 meters) above the ocean swell. The Swordfish formation then split into three flights. The first flight attacked from *Bismarck's* port beam as the second attacked from her port bow; the third flight flew across her bow and banked sharply to attack from starboard. The pilots had to hold a steady aiming course in a slightly nose-up attitude so that the torpedo would enter the water at the correct angle and run true. *Bismarck* zigzagged violently to avoid the torpedoes, her pom-poms and Oerlikon anti-aircraft guns threw up a hail of fire at the torpedo bombers. Miraculously, none of the nine Swordfish was fatally damaged.



Swordfish carrying 18-inch Torpedo

During the attack run Sub-Lieutenant Thompson, flying Swordfish C, witnessed a hit on LCdr Esmonde's aircraft and lost sight of him as his leader climbed into the cloud. The second aircraft in the flight, Swordfish B, flown by Lieutenant MacLean, also

disappeared into the cloud. Thompson bore in on the *Bismarck* alone. At 500 yards, he released his torpedo; the Swordfish suddenly climbed without the weight of the torpedo. Thompson, his observer and gunner saw their torpedo strike the *Bismarck* on the port side causing a large belch of black smoke from her funnel. The only torpedo from the attack to hit *Bismarck* struck the armour belt around her hull. The hull remained intact and the blast from the 300-pound (120 kg) warhead caused only superficial damage, but the internal shock killed one sailor and injured another five. The nine Swordfish returned to *Victorious*, many of the pilots making their first night deck landing.

### **Bismarck Evades**

*Bismarck* barely had enough fuel, 5,100 tons, to shape course from the mid-Atlantic to a port in western France. German destroyers, reconnaissance aircraft and bombers were being readied to escort *Bismarck* into either St. Nazaire or Brest. Admiral Donitz ordered six U-boats to take up position along *Bismarck's* track. Donitz also ordered four U-boats to take up station in the Bay of Biscay as a second trap for *Bismarck's* pursuers.

Admiral Tovey in *HMS King George V* accompanied by the battle cruiser *HMS Repulse* decided to close *Bismarck* from the southeast. However, their fuel was running low as was the carrier *Victorious*. There was also concern that Vice Admiral Somerville's Force H high-speed steaming from Gibraltar would also be low on fuel.

Rear Admiral Wake-Walker in *Norfolk* accompanied by *Suffolk* and *Prince of Wales* continued to shadow *Bismarck* and in doing so drove the *Bismarck* toward Tovey. The three ships were positioned to detect a possible *Bismarck* turn to port toward the French coast with *Suffolk* taking position off *Bismarck's* port beam. The three ships zigzagged 30 degrees off their base course to confuse any stalking U-boats. *Suffolk* steamed for ten minutes outward from her base course, then for the same length of time inward. *Bismarck* was always out of *Suffolk's* radar range when she reached the last few miles of the outward leg of her zigzag but quickly reappeared on the inward leg. At 0300 25 May, Lutjens ordered *Bismarck* to steer west, then northwest and finally to the north. The *Bismarck* began to turn just as *Suffolk* reached the outward limit of her port zigzag. *Suffolk* expected *Bismarck* to reappear on its radar as she swung back to her base course. But she was gone! Lutjens had unwittingly cut back across the track of his pursuers before resuming his southeastly course to St. Nazaire.

Rear Admiral Wake-Walker directed *Suffolk*, *Norfolk* and *Prince of Wales* to search from *Bismarck's* last known position by fanning out in an arc from west to south in fear that *Bismarck* intended to resume her hunt for convoys in the western Atlantic. The aircraft carrier *Victorious* was dispatched to *Bismarck's* last known position so that her Swordfish could join the search. Vice Admiral Somerville was diverted from meeting a highly valued troop convoy carrying thousands of soldiers and ordered to head for the eastern Atlantic due west of the Bay of Biscay. The aircraft carrier, *HMS Ark Royal*, was part of Somerville's Force H and the only other carrier available. She had a compliment of 60 Fulmar fighters and Swordfish.

The only person in the pursuit who did not know that the *Bismarck* was “lost” was Lutjens himself. He was convinced that the British were still on his tail because *Bismarck*’s radar detection set picked up the telltale “dete” of *Suffolk*’s radar, not knowing that *Suffolk* was 22 miles (37 km) astern, too far away to receive the radar returns. Lutjens was a compulsive radio signaler, having already sent more than 20 messages, he advised Naval Group Command that he was still being shadowed by one battleship and two cruisers, followed by a half hour situation report. High frequency radio direction finding stations in England, Greenland, Iceland, and Ireland plotted the bearings and passed them to the Admiralty’s Operation Intelligence Centre. The bearings gave a good indication of *Bismarck*’s latitude but not longitude. Still, they provided hard evidence that *Bismarck* was to the east of Tovey and not to the west as believed. Tovey had overshot *Bismarck*’s estimated position and had to retrace his course, at the cost of increased fuel consumption and time which may allow *Bismarck* to reach a safe haven before the British could intercept. Tovey altered course to the northeast, speed 27 knots. Ships of Tovey’s Home Fleet had one by one dropped out of the pursuit to refuel in the nearest port. Soon, Tovey’s flagship, *King George V*, would be the only ship left that had set sail from Scapa Flow, and her fuel was critically low.

Somerville’s Force H was steaming into a gale. *Ark Royal* was pitching fiercely; it was slow and dangerous just to bring her 20 Swordfish up from the hangar deck to the flight deck and arm them; indeed, it would be near impossible to conduct flight operations. Somerville knew that he had to slow down to make life and fighting less difficult for his sailors, but he knew every knot lost improved *Bismarck*’s chances of reaching a safe port. Indeed, a frenzied increase in German radio traffic along the French coast was a good indicator that *Bismarck* was headed for France. The Admiralty ordered Somerville’s Force H to search for the *Bismarck* on the assumption that she was headed for Brest.

### **Bismarck Found**

At 0345 on 26 May, two Royal Air Force (RAF) PBY Catalinas took off from Lough Erne, Northern Ireland to search an area that *Bismarck* would likely steam through on her way to Brest or St. Nazaire. Flying Officer Dennis Briggs, the captain of Catalina Z from 209 Squadron, descended to 500 feet after crossing the Irish coast; the weather for a visual search, even for a large 50,000-ton battleship, was atrocious. Briggs’ co-pilot was U.S. Navy Ensign Leonard Smith. The second Catalina, M from 240 Squadron, had a crew with an even more international flavour; U.S. Navy Lieutenant (jg) Johnson was the aircraft captain and the navigator was Royal Canadian Air Force Sergeant Gaynor Williams. As officers from a neutral country neither Smith nor Johnson should have been involved in the *Bismarck* pursuit, but the situation was so urgent that diplomatic correctness was ignored. Smith and Johnson were among 16 American volunteers who had agreed to accompany the first of the new American Lend-Lease Catalinas to England and train the RAF in their use.

At 1000, about 15 minutes after arriving in their search area Smith saw something off his port bow about eight miles away. Then there it was, a very large warship steaming at high speed to the southeast! Smith banked toward the ship and climbed into the cloud

deck at 800 feet. He hoped to drop out of the overcast far enough away to shadow the ship without getting into anti-aircraft gun range. When Smith broke out the cloud he was right on top of the ship and the sky erupted with anti-aircraft fire. Catalina Z/209 was badly holed but managed to transmit, “One battleship bearing 240 degrees 5 miles, course 150 degrees, my position 49° 33’ north 21° 47’ west. Time 1030 26 (May)”. After assessing the extensive damage to their Catalina in the cloud cover, Briggs and Smith resumed the search but could not regain contact with the warship. The second Catalina, M/240, left its search area to join in the search and despite the low cloud and rain squalls managed to locate the *Bismarck*. Catalina Z/209 eventually flew alongside M/240 and on learning that the *Bismarck* had been re-located returned to base. Following the Catalina’s initial contact report one of *Ark Royal’s* Swordfish was dispatched to the area and about an hour later spotted the *Bismarck*. Between the two Catalinas and *Ark Royal’s* Swordfish the *Bismarck* was never lost again. The two Catalinas returned safely at Lough Erne after being airborne more than 20 hours.

### **Ark Royal’s Swordfish Attack**

Receiving the Catalina’s contact report, Somerville was spurred to also dispatch the light cruiser, *HMS Sheffield*, from Force H with orders to close and shadow the enemy. Somerville thought the signal flags hoisted to his flagship’s yardarm would announce to all that *Sheffield* was being sent ahead. But the chief yeoman of signals signalled *Sheffield* with a signal light instead, resulting in *Ark Royal* being unaware that *Sheffield* was being dispatched to trail *Bismarck*. This later led to near disastrous results.



Swordfish over HMS Ark Royal

The Royal Navy now knew the *Bismarck’s* location and where she was headed. At *Bismarck’s* speed of about 20 knots the British pursuers had only about 18 hours before *Bismarck* would have air cover from swarms of Luftwaffe aircraft based in France. *Bismarck* had to be slowed down. Somerville ordered *Ark Royal* to attack with her Swordfish. He knew the Swordfish’s small 18-inch aerial torpedoes could not sink *Bismarck* but they may slow her down. There was a strong northwest wind blowing creating 10-foot (3 meter) waves; the *Ark Royal’s* stern was rising and falling 56 feet (18 meters) at times. The flight deck was slippery with sea spray making it difficult to manhandle the Swordfish on the hangar and flight decks. At 1450, the first strike of 15 Swordfish struggled into the air.



The observer in the first aircraft in the No. 4 subflight gained ASV radar contact and visually signalled the rest of the squadron the change in course to the contact. As the pilots took up attack position and dove through the clouds, the strike leader, LCdr Stewart-Moore and his pilot, Lieutenant Hunter recognized the twin-funnel target as the *Sheffield*! (Bismarck had three funnels.) The Swordfish were not equipped with air-to-air radios and could not talk to one another. Unaware that *Sheffield* had been sent ahead and would be in the area, many of the Swordfish crews did not question the ship's identity and one by one attacked the *Sheffield* as Stewart-Moore and Hunter looked on in horror. Miraculously, all but a few of the torpedoes exploded on hitting the water and *Sheffield* was able to dodge the rest. The cause of the torpedo malfunctions was unknown, perhaps faulty pistols or tired and seasick sailors who set them improperly.

At 1720, the first strike returned to *Ark Royal* and was refueled and checked for damage on the open sea-swept flight deck. For the second strike the Swordfish were rearmed with torpedoes with contact pistols vice the magnetic pistols that had failed so miserably in the errant attack on the *Sheffield*. By 1910, the second strike of 15 Swordfish, this time led by LCdr Tim Coode with LCdr Stewart-Moore second in command, launched from *Ark Royal* and headed for *Sheffield* as a reference point from which to attack *Bismarck*. After a 45-minute flight the *Sheffield* was spotted and signaled *Bismarck's* position ahead. At 2030, the Swordfish, in six subflights of two to three aircraft each, let down through the rain squalls and heavy clouds and attacked *Bismarck* from all directions. *Bismarck* responded with an intense barrage of anti-aircraft fire and zigzagged violently to throw off the pilots' aim.

LCdr Coode led the three Swordfish of No. 1 subflight in first; they were accidentally joined by a fourth aircraft from No. 3 subflight. All four torpedoes missed but Coode hung around some time in the low cloud and rain, saw no other attacks, and assumed they were the only ones to find the *Bismarck*. He signalled *Ark Royal* "Estimate no hits". But the three Swordfish of No. 2 subflight, led by Lt. "Feather" Godfrey-Faussett (so called because of his bulk), in an attempt to get clear of cloud commenced their diving attack on a radar contact from 9,000 feet (3,000 meters). When Godfrey-Faussett broke out of cloud he was on *Bismarck's* starboard beam and found that only Sub-Lieutenant Kenneth Pattisson was with him, the third aircraft flown by Sub-Lieutenant Beale was nowhere to be seen. Godfrey-Faussett and Pattisson pressed home the attack. *Bismarck* attempted to comb their torpedoes by turning hard to port, but the attackers thought they saw a hit.

While this attack was in progress five Swordfish from No. 3 and 4 subflights descended from the clouds astern of *Bismarck* and attacked from the port quarter. No hits were claimed. Meanwhile, Beale and his observer, Sub-Lieutenant Friend, had returned to *Sheffield* to get directions to the enemy ship. On finding *Bismarck*, Beale made a long, brave upwind attack at 50 feet and dropped his torpedo at 800 yards. Friend watched for signs of a hit and was rewarded by a plume of water rising on the port side amidships. The three Swordfish of No. 5 subflight and the two Swordfish of No. 6 subflight dropped their torpedoes without a hit. In a half hour the attack was over and by 2205, the first of

the Swordfish returned to *Ark Royal*. All aircraft landed on safely but three were so badly shot up they would never fly again.

### **Swordfish Damage Bismarck**

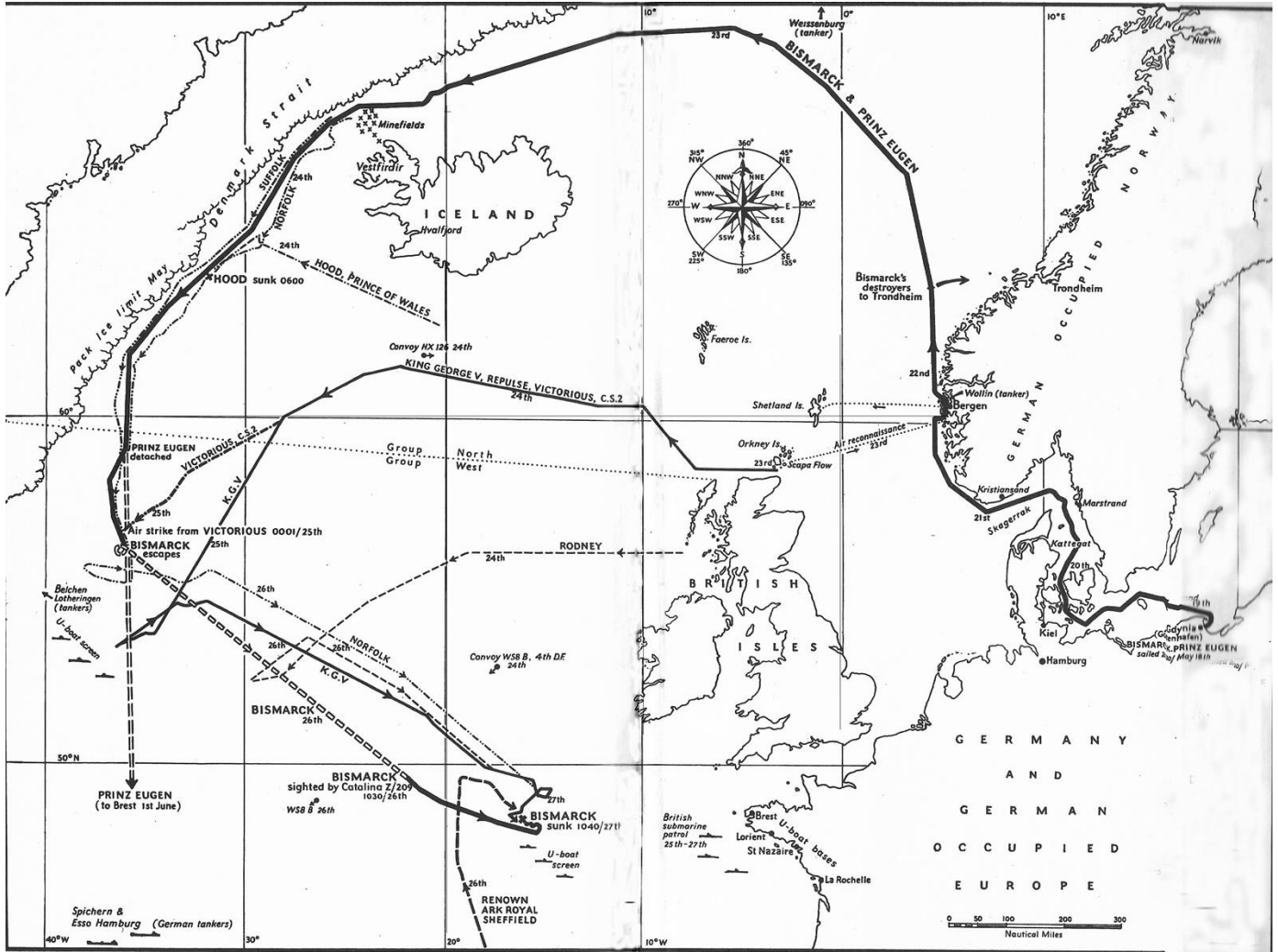
The torpedo that hit amidships on the port side exploded against the armour belt and like the one from *Victorious*' Swordfish did little damage. But the strike in the stern by either Godfrey-Faussett's or Pattisson's torpedo created chaos. Down in the *Bismarck*'s engine rooms floor plates buckled, welds split, cables stripped, and water poured in through the port shaft well. The starboard engines shut down and the ship was temporarily without power. Damage control parties reported that the hole blasted in *Bismarck*'s hull was so large that the steering rooms were flooded and had to be evacuated. Seamen standing over the steering mechanism stared down into the open sea. The twin parallel rudders were jammed 12 degrees port.

Without receiving any battle reports that *Bismarck* had been damaged or slowed, Admiral Tovey was distraught that *Bismarck* had eluded the British pursuit to avenge the sinking of the *Hood*. Then, one of the two Swordfish sent to shadow the *Bismarck* after the attack reported that her course was 090° due east. This was followed by second report that her course was now 000°; this did not make sense for ship fleeing to a safe haven to the southeast. Two minutes later the Swordfish reported enemy course 340°. Any skepticism about the reports was alleviated when *Sheffield* confirmed the unexplained course changes. Tovey concluded *Bismarck* was seriously damaged! Somerville's earlier faint hope had come true. The slow, obsolescent Swordfish had, indeed, slowed *Bismarck* preventing her from reaching the Luftwaffe's protective air cover before the Royal Navy could attack! Ignoring his critical shortage of fuel, Tovey raced for the kill.

### **Bismarck Destroyed**

Tovey in *King George V* accompanied by the battleship *HMS Rodney* attacked *Bismarck* at 0847 the next morning. At 0902, a 16-inch shell from *Rodney*'s 16-inch guns slammed into *Bismarck*'s upper deck forward. *Bismarck* returned accurate straddling fire but scored no direct hits on her attackers. With her rudders jammed and unable to manoeuvre she was at a severe disadvantage. *Norfolk*, *Sheffield*, and *Dorsetshire* joined the fight. Another incoming shell destroyed *Bismarck*'s fire-control centre; her two remaining aft turrets fired their last shells at 0931. Then shell after shell slammed into *Bismarck*'s superstructure, black smoke and flames rose from her decks. She was heeling dangerously to port when the order was given to abandon ship. At 1036, Tovey ordered *Dorsetshire* to finish the battleship off with her torpedoes. Over 2,100 of *Bismarck*'s officers and sailors perished in her final battle. The sinking of the *Bismarck* was not only a decisive victory for the Royal Navy over an archrival, but also, it provided a much-needed boost in esprit de corps for the British people who were disheartened by the loss of the mighty *Hood* and a war that was not going well.

# Bismarck's Track and British Pursuit



## WALL OF HONOUR

### Guidelines for designing your “Wall of Honour” Tile.

The tile used is made from high quality marble which is 12 inches square. The tile can be sand blasted in various ways to suit your wishes. All lettering will be in upper case and the tile will be mounted in the diamond orientation as opposed to a square orientation. All Text will run horizontally across the tile.

The options are:

**Option A:** One half tile 12" X 12" x 17" and triangular in shape with up to 5 rows of 3/4" letters for a maximum of 60 letters and spaces. The longest row can accommodate up to 20 letters and spaces. The remaining 4 rows will decrease in length as the border/edge of the tile dictates. It should be noted that the upper half of the tile will start with a short row and the bottom half will start with a long row.

**Option B:** The full tile with up to 6 rows of 1" letters for a maximum of 55 letters and spaces. The two centre rows can accommodate up to 16 letters and spaces. The remaining rows will decrease as the edge of the tile dictates.

**Option C:** The full tile with up to 10 rows of 3/4" letters for a maximum of 120 letters and spaces. The two centre rows can accommodate 20 letters and spaces. The remaining rows will decrease as the edge of the tile dictates.

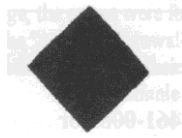
**Option D:** The “Buddy” Tile - sold only as a full tile. This tile is divided into 4 quarters - each 6" X 6". Each quarter can accommodate up to 6 rows of 1/2" letters for a maximum of 48 letters and spaces. The two centre rows can accommodate up to 12 letters and spaces with the remaining rows decreasing as the tile edge dictates.

Option A



**\$300**

Option B & C



**\$600**

Option D



**\$600**

**Wall Tiles may be purchased through monthly installments.**

Half Tiles - \$100 day of purchase - \$100 per month for the following two months.

Full Tiles - \$200 day of purchase - \$ 100 per month for the following four months.



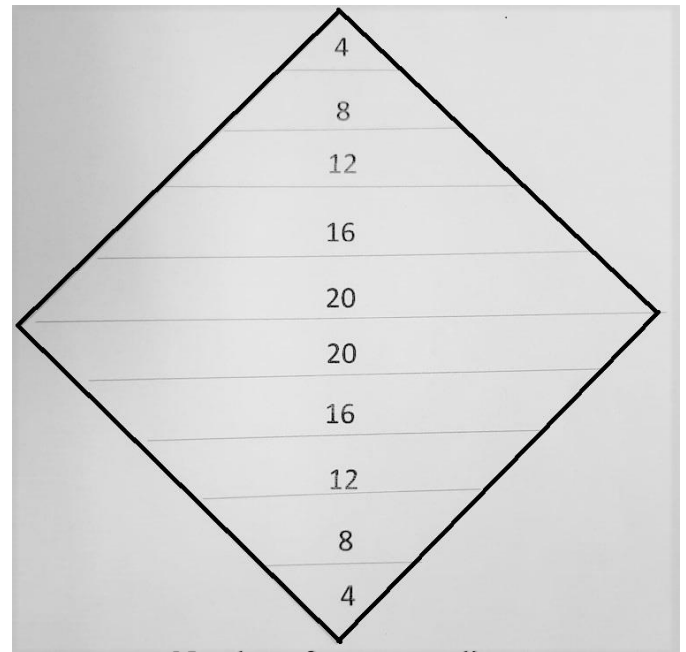
**(Wall Tiles (continued))**

**ENGRAVING REQUEST**

The colour of the tile will be 'Belmont Rose'. If the submission requires any alteration, the subscriber will be contacted by phone or email by the coordinator for further discussion. **REMEMBER TO COUNT THE SPACES!**

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Number of spaces per line

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Back cover artist

JIM RAE

Ships and aircraft have been a main part in my life. As a boy I started drawing them and like others of my generation (the dawn of the AIRFIX era) I made models of them as well. I left school and naturally to my way of thinking went to sea, first as a Cabin Boy in the Merchant Navy, and eventually I enlisted in the Royal Navy.

I continued my interest in ships and aircraft as my job in the RN was as an Aircraft Handler. This is the branch of the Navy which deals with the launching, recovery and movement of aircraft, Air Traffic Control and Crash/Fire rescue on ships and Air Stations. It was while serving in various Aircraft Carriers that I took up painting once again. I can honestly say that I ate, slept and breathed my subjects. I can still taste hot jet fuel and funnel gases.

I have never set out to be an 'artist'. The subjects I paint are really quiet specialist. Not many people want a painting of the 'Battle of the North Cape' unless grand-dad served in one of the ships taking part. I tend to concentrate on lesser-known events, and the 'little ship' rather than the battleship and great battles. I do occasional landscapes and still life, but really have little interest in doing more main stream art subjects. Although I am retired, my interest in painting gives me pleasure and has also made lots of new friends.

In 2016 my wife and I were invited to take part in 'DERVISH 75' - events celebrating the arrival of the first Arctic Convoy (code-named Dervish) to Russia. We accompanied several veterans and their carers to Arkhangelsk and Saint Petersburg, where our Russian hosts had organised visits and commemorative events. Several of my paintings were made up into an A3 book along with the personal stories of people who took part in these convoys. The books, entitled 'Arctic Echoes - 75 Years of Friendship' were presented to Museums, Schools, Colleges, veterans and diplomatic representatives of participating countries. From this visit we have gained a deeper understanding of Russia and the warmth of the people.

Jim Rae, Auchtermuchty, Fife





Artist: Jim Rae, Auchtermuchty, Fife