



Crowsnest

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Chief of the Maritime Staff

CANADIAN
NAVY



Practising the art of **RESCUE**

Sailors take a simulated casualty to HMCS Montréal during a recent SMASHEX. For the story, see page 8.

Photo: Cpl Robert LeBlanc

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

HMCS St. John's
delivers essential
aid to Haiti

PAGE 2



New submarine
trainer saves
valuable sea time

PAGE 10



HMCS *St. John's* delivers essential aid to Haiti

While it may not be something routinely associated with navies, one of the roles Canada's Navy is often called upon to play is one of humanitarian assistance. Over the years this has taken many forms, from delivering much-needed supplies after natural disasters such as hurricanes and floods, to rescuing victims of shipwrecks, piracy and even volcanic eruptions.

Another example of this vital role occurred in September, when HMCS *St. John's* spent nearly two weeks supporting the UN's World Food Programme by hauling sacks of rice, corn-soya meal, bottled water and other aid supplies to areas of Haiti's southwest peninsula devastated by four separate hurricanes. Thousands of people were left homeless, without basic supplies and cut off from help.

"It was readily apparent that we represented a unique capacity to meet the need that was otherwise going to go undone," says Commander Brian Costello, *St. John's* commanding officer. "Each day our efforts directly resulted in someone eating who would otherwise have gone hungry."

Loading *St. John's* with supplies was not easy – she's a frigate, not a freighter – but it got easier with practice. The food arrived in bulk at the jetty in Port-au-Prince, where it was bagged and loaded into trucks in the streamlined fashion typical of modern port operations.

The first load of 95.3 metric tons was brought aboard almost entirely by hand, with the ship's company and local residents lined up across the jetty and up the side of the ship, passing sacks. Flight deck, fo'c'sle, breezeways, hangar – every accessible flat space, nook and cranny was soon packed with food.

Subsequent loads still required plenty of manual labour, but cranes took over the task of heaving the sacks off the jetty and onto *St. John's* deck.

The ship then started her delivery round, visiting communities along Haiti's south shore. At each destination,



Photo: MCpl Eduardo Mora Pineda

Members of the community of Tiburon, Haiti, look on with curiosity as a Sea King helicopter from HMCS St. John's delivers food.

St. John's anchored about three miles off-shore while the ship's air detachment prepared the embarked CH-124 Sea King helicopter to shuttle sling-loads of supplies to the stricken areas.

In four trips from Sept. 14-25, *St. John's* loaded a total of 547 metric tons of humanitarian aid supplies and made deliveries to nine communities.



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For the PDF version of this publication and for more information about the Canadian Navy, visit www.navy.forces.gc.ca

Banner photo, page 1: Leading Seaman Sean Vaillancourt keeps watch as HMCS *Ville de Québec* transits the Suez Canal. Photo by Cpl Dany Veillette
All articles written by Darlene Blakeley, except where otherwise noted.

Cdr Costello says helping Haiti was “a duty of neighbours” and the ship’s company of *St. John’s* was delighted to help. “Many of the crew returned to Halifax already convinced that the effort, and the teamwork that underpinned it, would stand out as the most rewarding of their careers because of this direct individual sense of ownership and the immediate effects achieved.”

With files from Charmion Chaplin-Thomas



Photo: MCpl Eduardo Mora Pineda

Children of the community of Chardonniere, Haiti, await supplies.



Photo: MCpl Eduardo Mora Pineda

HMCS St. John's is loaded with supplies in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Ships arrive home from Arabian Sea

Over 1,000 sailors deployed on Canada’s second largest military mission after Afghanistan returned to Canada in late October after six months of maritime security operations in the Arabian Sea.

HMCS *Iroquois* returned to Halifax on Oct. 23, while *Calgary* and *Protecteur* sailed into Esquimalt, B.C., on Oct. 24.

The three ships, one of Canada’s largest contributions to the war on terrorism since 9/11, conducted operations overseas with Combined Task Force (CTF) 150, a naval coalition that typically includes ships from nations such as France, Germany, Pakistan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the U.S.

From aboard *Iroquois*, Commodore Bob Davidson commanded the task force from June 3 to Sept. 15 – the first time a Canadian has ever held the position. During his tenure, 32 ships from seven countries followed his leadership.

Now that the ships are safely home, Cmdre Davidson says the mission was a great success. “We set out with four main objectives: maritime security operations (making the area safer); theatre security

cooperation (building regional cooperation with locals and with regional nations’ militaries and coast guards); building maritime influence for Canada by leading the mission and advancing diplomatic objectives; and finally, a public affairs effort to enable all the other objectives. We had excellent results in all four areas.”

Continued on page 9



Photo: Ed Dixon

From left: Rear-Admiral Tyrone Pile, Commander Maritime Forces Pacific; General Walt Natynczyk, Chief of the Defence Staff; and Vice-Admiral Drew Robertson, Chief of the Maritime Staff; wave as HMCS Protecteur passes into Esquimalt Harbour.

Sea time adds authenticity to academic's writings

Academics and sailors may seem like strange bedfellows, but after spending 10 weeks at sea with Canadian warships in the Gulf of Aden recently, Patrick Lennox came away with a deep appreciation for Canada's Navy.

Mr. Lennox, a postdoctoral fellow with the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary, was invited by the Department of National Defence's Security and Defence Forum to travel to the Gulf region in order to foster a greater understanding of naval task groups and how the Canadian Navy operates in this region. During his visit, Her Majesty's Canadian Ships *Iroquois*, *Calgary* and *Protecteur* were in the area on Canada's fourth rotation of Operation Altair, the maritime component of the international war against terrorism. The ships were operating with NATO's Combined Task Force (CTF) 150, a coalition task force made up of vessels from countries such as the United States, France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Germany. For several months CTF 150 was commanded by Canadian Commodore Bob Davidson, carrying out surveillance patrols and maritime interdiction operations in the Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, the Arabian Sea, Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

Against this dramatic and complex backdrop, with a total of three days experience at sea, Mr. Lennox

exchanged the comfort of his university office for the deck of a warship in the midst of a critical mission. "I'd never travelled significant distances by sea or come alongside in a foreign port before," he admits. "This was all very new indeed."

Mr. Lennox had a compelling reason for wanting to see Canada's navy in action: he's writing a book about it. "I couldn't write that book without having some sea time under my belt. So the more time I spent on the water sponging up material, the better," he says. "Very few academics actually get out and do that which they research and write about. So I've been out there now on the high seas with the navy and I can talk and write about it with a degree of clarity and authority that I otherwise would not have been able to bring to the table."

Since his return, Mr. Lennox has written a number of articles about the deployment and has given three lectures on the subject at venues in Halifax, Ottawa and Calgary. He also plans to write a more academic article on CTF 150 itself. He admits that he will draw from his experience many times over during the course of his career at the front of a university classroom. At the core of his relationship with Canada's sailors is his firm belief that the academic community and the navy should understand each other. "People who study Canadian foreign and defence policy need to be aware of what



Patrick Lennox, right, with Commander Yves Germain, executive officer of HMCS Protecteur.

the navy can and cannot accomplish,” he says. “They need to understand its strengths and weaknesses and how those translate into Canada’s strengths and weaknesses on the world stage.”

Most of his time aboard ship was spent on the destroyer *Iroquois*, which was Cmdre Davidson’s flagship, and the supply vessel *Protecteur*. He sat in on daily intelligence briefings and spent time observing the sailors and learning about their jobs. “Sitting in on these meetings with the commodore’s staff provided me with a great deal of insight into the nature of a number of the issues we were dealing with out in the Arabian Sea, such as the piracy problem in the Gulf of Aden, and the illegal flow of narcotics along the Hash Highway that runs from the Makran coast into Yemen,” he explains. “But more than this, it gave me an appreciation of the magnitude of the operation the staff was running, and what a professional and skilled job they were doing at it.”

While life at sea aboard a warship can be daunting for civilians, Mr. Lennox took it all in stride. “The racks were comfortable, the food was pleasant, and the company could not have been better!” Members of the ships’ companies, he says, were very good at making sure he was involved with each day’s activities. He returned from his visit with a deep respect for Canadian sailors. “I came away with the impression that some of the finest Canadians I’ve ever met work on this nation’s warships. I think the navy is a wonderful institution with rich traditions that every Canadian should be proud of and support.”

Combining his multi-faceted academic research into

foreign and defence policy with the briny smell and feel of saltwater in one of the hot spots of the world, Mr. Lennox can now lend a truly authentic feel to his writings and lectures. “Having this sea time to my credit

lends a certain gravity to the talks I’ve given since returning from the deployment in early October,” he says. “Having actually been in the Gulf of Aden on anti-piracy patrols makes people at home perk up a bit when you start talking about strategies to deal with this problem in an academic forum. I think the same goes for a lot of what I’ll be writing and speaking about in the coming year.”

*HMCS Protecteur replenishes
HMCS Iroquois in the Arabian Sea.*



*The flagship HMCS Iroquois
sails in the Arabian Sea.*

Photo: MCpl Robin Mugridge



Photo: MCpl Robin Mugridge



Commander Chris Dickinson

Captain's Log

(Editor's Note: The following article is the second installment of "Captain's Log", written by Commander Chris Dickinson, commanding officer of the Halifax-based frigate HMCS *Ville de Québec*. [The first appeared in the Fall 2008 issue of *Crowsnest*.] Since writing this in late October, Cdr Dickinson and *Ville de Québec* have returned to duties with Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 in the Mediterranean Sea. The ship is expected home just before Christmas.)

"There are a lot of blind people walking around here, they just don't realize it," said 16-year-old Edouard, who grew up on the streets of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. These words struck home as HMCS *Ville de Québec* began her last trip from Mombasa, Kenya to Mogadishu, Somalia. For the 253 Canadian sailors, soldiers and airmen of my ship's company, our assignment to support the World Food Programme (WFP) has been an eye-opening experience in a region that gets barely any visibility back home.

This, my second article from East African waters, is a tribute to my crew. I believe they have made a difference in this region through their efforts, while being themselves changed for the better by their experiences here.

On Aug. 6, we were officially reassigned from an anti-terrorist mission in the Mediterranean Sea with Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 and ordered to proceed through the Suez Canal. Everyone aboard sensed we were about to embark on a good mission, but I don't think any of us suspected what our shared experiences during that mission would mean to us.

As we rounded the Horn of Africa and approached the coast of Puntland, a region in northeastern Somalia, we saw the first clear signs of piracy: blips on our radar screens representing merchant vessels held for ransom. That told us we weren't in Kansas anymore, Toto. Pirates seizing merchant vessels within sight of land – that was well outside our experience. In North American or European waters, piracy would elicit a swift response from police or Special Forces, but in this lawless, violent place it was part of daily life.

As the mission got into full swing in late August with the escort of the freighter *Abdul Rahman*, I sensed that the crew was taking pride in our important mission. There we were, two miles off Mogadishu, protecting vital food aid provided by an organization to which Canada is the third biggest contributor. In fact, we weren't just keeping the sea lanes open for Canadian foreign aid; we were also exporting Canadian values. Boy, did that ever feel good. I was particularly proud of my crew as they "stood to" for hours at Underway Force Protection State Red to ensure that *Abdul Rahman* got safely alongside.

Our voyage to Mogadishu with *Abdul Rahman* was followed by 10 more trips escorting WFP vessels. On each trip, *Ville de Québec* went north to Mogadishu with a loaded ship and returned to Mombasa with a ship in ballast. In total, we escorted more than 36 million kilograms of food aid to Somalia, enough to keep about 400,000 people fed for six months.

HMCS *Ville de Québec*
escorts a ship in the
Indian Ocean.



We knew our presence was crucial to the WFP. Pirate attacks off Somalia accelerated throughout August and September, and as many as a dozen ships were held for ransom at a time. This growth in piracy led to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1838 of Oct. 7, calling on member nations to provide naval assets to protect international shipping – specifically WFP deliveries – in Somali waters. As a result, in late October HMCS *Ville de Québec* handed over her duties to ships from Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, and left the region.

At Thanksgiving, *Ville de Québec* took an operational pause in Dar es Salaam for some essential maintenance. While several departments stayed aboard and worked, other members of the crew took part in strategic communications events with local diplomatic representatives, and a community relations project at the Dogodogo Centre. This is where we met Edouard.

Our Coxswain, Chief Petty Officer First Class Keith Davidson, had his own significant conversation with Edouard. “Why do you come here to look after us, when there are lots of people right here in Dar es Salaam who could?” the boy asked him. The answer to that question lies at the heart of this mission, and explains why I am so proud of HMCS *Ville de Québec*’s ship’s company. We are here because we were sent by the generous, caring people of Canada, the people my crew and I have the honour to represent on this deployment – and every deployment.

As we leave East Africa to return to our NATO mission, I keep Edouard and what Canada now means to him in my thoughts.



HMCS Ville de Québec shows the flag as she departs Mogadishu, Somalia.

Photo: Cpl Dany Veillette

HMCS *Ville de Québec* honoured with commendation

The captain and crew of HMCS *Ville de Québec* were honoured with a Canadian Forces Unit Commendation during a visit to the ship in the Mediterranean Sea by General Walt Natynczyk, Chief of the Defence Staff, on Nov. 21. The commendation, which includes a gold-embossed scroll along with the symbols of the honour, a special commemorative flag and a gold medallion, is awarded to a unit that has performed a deed or activity considered beyond the demands of normal duty.

The citation for *Ville de Québec*’s commendation reads: “Responding to an urgent request from the United Nations World Food Programme, Her Majesty’s Canadian Ship *Ville de Québec* deployed to the Somali coast from August to October 2008. Tasked with providing anti-piracy support to merchant vessels, the crew worked tirelessly to ensure the safe delivery of much needed food through pirate-laden waters. With remarkable motivation, amazing flexibility and dedicated effort, they overcame the challenge of simultaneously providing merchant vessels with onboard security and naval escort. The individual dedication of each crew member to this humanitarian mission brought hope to a quarter of a million people and highlighted Canadian leadership on the world stage.”



Commander Chris Dickinson, left, accepts a commemorative flag from General Walt Natynczyk, Chief of the Defence Staff.

Photo: Cpl Dany Veillette

SMASHEX

Working together to save lives



A simulated casualty wearing life-saving equipment is pulled into one of the navy's inflatable boats during a SMASHEX.

Photo: MCpl Blake Rodgers

Speed is of the essence when it comes to a submarine emergency, and lives can be saved if a coordinated rescue effort is carried out effectively. Like most things, the best way to ensure that something goes according to plan is to practise, practise, practise!

Such is the case with submarine search and rescue exercises carried out every year on both the east and west coasts of Canada. Called by the NATO term "SMASHEX", the exercises allow the navy to coordinate a plan, ensure that all constituent parts work effectively, and identify any shortcomings.

"A submarine emergency engages the highest levels of government," says Lieutenant-Commander Tim McDermott, Senior Staff Officer Underwater Warfare and Submarine Escape and Rescue at Maritime Forces Atlantic (MARLANT) Headquarters in Halifax. "In a case where lives are at stake, all levels of government – federal, provincial and even municipal – could be called upon to assist."

This "all of government" approach to a submarine

emergency gives the navy an opportunity to work together with other government departments to ensure that its response is fast, efficient and effective. In recent MARLANT exercises, Canadian military participants have included Canada Command; Canadian Operational Support Command; 1 Canadian Air Division; Strategic Joint Staff; 4 Health Services Group; and Land Forces Atlantic Area.

"In short, any and every organization within the Canadian Forces that could be required is called upon and exercised when possible," says LCdr McDermott.

Other government departments that have participated in SMASHEX include Public Safety Canada; Health Canada; the Canadian Coast Guard; Transport Canada; the RCMP; provincial emergency measures organizations for Nova Scotia and Newfoundland; port authorities in Sydney, N.S., and St. John's; airport authorities; and provincial health authorities in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. In addition, recent exercises have included the U.S. Navy Deep Submergence Unit (home of the U.S. Navy Submarine Diving and

Recompression Rescue System), the United Kingdom Submarine Escape and Rescue Organization, and the International Submarine Escape and Rescue Liaison Office.

According to LCdr McDermott, the inclusion of so many military partners and civilian government departments and agencies reflects the reality of such an operation, and also allows them to practise working together to resolve an emergency.

"In submarine rescue, speed is crucial," explains LCdr McDermott. "Submarines generally carry enough emergency supplies to sustain life onboard for at least seven days. Logistics plays a huge part in submarine rescue, and it requires many resources that the navy simply does not have. We need to be able to move resources, personnel and specialized equipment as quickly and efficiently as possible in order to ensure that a rescue operation is effective."

To further enhance its skills, the navy also participates in international submarine escape and rescue exercises such as NATO's BOLD MONARCH exercises in the Atlantic, and PACIFIC REACH exercises in the Pacific.

"After each SMASHEX, we analyse how we did against what we set out to do in our exercise objectives," says LCdr McDermott. "Feedback from participants allows us to fine-tune our plan."



Photo: Cpl Robert LeBlanc

A Cormorant helicopter flies over the flight deck of HMCS Montréal during a SMASHEX.

LCdr McDermott says the lessons learned from a SMASHEX can also be applied to just about any other major disaster, such as a fire on a cruise ship or a downed airliner. "In the end, we all learn to be better prepared to work together to save lives and protect property," he says.

Ships arrive home

Continued from page 3

While the ships were overseas, they visited 22 nations to improve diplomatic ties and work with regional navies, and also visited (with other allied ships) 200 vessels to build cooperation with local mariners. As well, the ships supported *Ville de Québec* in the delivery of thousands of metric tons of food to Somalia and deterred numerous piracy attacks.

Vice-Admiral Drew Robertson, Chief of the Maritime Staff, greeted the ships as they arrived home and congratulated them on a successful mission. "Your deployment, so skillfully executed by yourselves and so capably supported by the defence team throughout



Family and friends welcome home crew members of HMCS Iroquois.

Photo: Pte Rick Ayer



A crowd greets sailors of HMCS Iroquois.

Photo: Pte Martin Roy

Canada, brought Canadian leadership to an important theatre, dealing with all major maritime challenges across the theatre, including counter terrorism, piracy, narcotics and proliferation. You did this all while building maritime security that serves the coastal states and all mariners in the region, including those who maintain the vital flow of world trade. You have all set the example for other navies to follow."

As for future deployments to the area, Cmdre Davidson says that Canada's contribution and level of effort in the Arabian Sea will be studied based on this mission's success, and in consideration of other commitments and the level of contribution desired by government.

New submarine trainer saves valuable sea time

A major milestone in the Canadian Navy's submarine program was marked this fall with the opening of the new Victoria Submarine Command Team Trainer (VSCTT) at the Canadian Forces Naval Operations School in Halifax (CFNOS).

This multimillion dollar trainer, which replaces a 20-year-old system, allows submariners at all levels to train in a far more realistic setting than ever before.

"The new trainer allows submariners to integrate the entire control room team into the training scenario instead of just a few key individuals," says Lieutenant-Commander Mike Mangin, Submarine Division Commander at CFNOS. "This means that individual operators can learn basic skills ashore, saving valuable sea time for more advanced training and operations."

The VSCTT is light years ahead of the previous trainer, the Submarine Operations Team Trainer (SOTT), in technology and realism according to LCdr Mangin "The SOTT was limited to fire control and a periscope, along with some very basic positional information. All the other game elements were injected to the trainees by staff from behind the desk. There was no sonar information, no electronic warfare equipment, and only



Photo: MS Kevin Brown

Leading Seaman Ferris Tobin, a sonar operator aboard the submarine HMCS Corner Brook, works in the new trainer.

a few ships. The realism of the game was really based on how creative or imaginative the staff was."

Additionally, the SOTT was very limited geographically – the submarine could be put either in the open ocean, with no land around, or in a small area off the Scottish coast. With the VSCTT, submariners can manipulate the databases to simulate the seaward side of any coastline in the world.

The VSCTT is a complete simulation of the operational side of a Victoria-class submarine control room. It includes the sonars, fire control consoles, radar, navigation stations, a periscope, and eventually electronic warfare equipment. "For the first time in our trainers all this gear is connected together so that what the officer of the watch sees through the periscope is actually heard by the sonar operator and will paint on radar," says LCdr Mangin.

When the training provided in the VSCTT is combined with the training delivered in the Naval Combat Operator, Ship Control and Machinery Control Trainers, every member of a submarine crew is able to carry out almost every facet of his or her job without ever taking the submarine to sea. "Using these trainers we can start with baby steps as the sailors learn the individual parts of their jobs, then make the team progressively larger until virtually the entire submarine team is participating in the training together," says LCdr Mangin. "We can also progress the submarine's team from simple to complex scenarios such as coastal surveillance, arctic sovereignty and multi-threat warfare, better preparing them to carry out these operations at sea."



Photo: MS Kevin Brown

Lieutenant (Navy) Mike Spearman, a weapons training officer at the Canadian Forces Naval Operations School, checks out the trainer's periscope.

Interested in becoming a submariner? Visit www.forces.ca for more information on this and other naval trades.

Fleet Facts

Iroquois-class destroyers

The Iroquois-class ships of the Canadian Navy are a class of four helicopter-carrying, guided missile destroyers. Launched in the 1970s, they were originally designed for anti-submarine warfare, but a major upgrade program in the 1990s overhauled them for area-wide anti-aircraft use. The four warships in the class originally included *Huron*, *Athabaskan*, *Algonquin* and *Iroquois*. However, *Huron* was paid off in 2005 and sunk in 2007 during a live-fire exercise, leaving three ships in the class.

The Iroquois-class destroyers are fitted with state-of-the-art weapons, sensors, command-and-control systems, and propulsion equipment. Together these systems make her capable of carrying out a variety of tasks, aimed at protecting Canadian interests in the oceans adjacent to the coastline, and beyond.

These warships have a long and successful record with Canada's Navy, having seen service during the Gulf War and continued deployments to the Arabian Sea region in support of the international war against terrorism.

Fleet Status

HMCS *Iroquois*: Returned to her home port of Halifax in October after six months serving in the Arabian Sea with ships of NATO's Combined Task Force 150. *Iroquois* was the flagship of Commodore Bob Davidson, who commanded the task force from June 3 to Sept. 15.

HMCS *Algonquin*: Has just returned to dockyard in Esquimalt, B.C., after an eight-month refit program in



HMCS Algonquin fires her 76mm gun during an exercise.

Photo: MCpl Robert Bottrill

Victoria Shipyards. More work will be carried out on the ship at the Fleet Maintenance Facility in Esquimalt before sea trials begin next spring.

HMCS *Athabaskan*: For the past year the ship has been undergoing a tiered readiness program to prepare her for taking over as Canadian Fleet Atlantic flagship in 2009.

Type: Guided missile area air defence destroyer

Displacement: 5,188 tonnes (full load)

Length: 129.85 metres

Beam: 15.24 metres

Draught: 5.0 metres

Speed: 29 + knots

Complement: 300 (including air detachment)

Range: 3,500 nautical miles

Aircraft: Two CH-124 Sea King helicopters

Engines: Two shaft COGOG systems; two Allison 570-KF cruise gas turbines (producing 6,500 each shaft horsepower); and two Pratt and Whitney FT4-A2

gas turbines (producing 25,000 each shaft horsepower).

Armament:

SM2 surface-to-air missiles; one 76 mm/62 OTO Melara dual-purpose gun system; one Phalanx 20mm close-in weapons system; two triple Mark-46 12.75 in (324 mm) torpedo tubes firing Mark-46 Mod 5 torpedoes; and 0.5 in (12.7 mm) machine guns.



Diver represents navy at vigil held in London

by Second-Lieutenant Ian McIntyre

The highs and lows of a career in the military can be compared to a roller coaster ride. This was certainly one of many thoughts on the mind of Petty Officer First Class Paul Walsh as he stood in the middle of Trafalgar Square at a unique Canadian war memorial in London, England in early November.

PO1 Walsh, a clearance diver with Fleet Diving Unit (Atlantic) in Halifax, was one of three military members – one per navy, army and air force – to have been selected to represent the Canadian Forces at Vigil 1914-1918. Developed by Gemini award-winning actor R.H. Thomson and lighting designer Martin Conboy, the event was held at Canada House, the Canadian High Commission in London, and was attended by Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II. Using special lighting equipment, the names of fallen soldiers from the First World War were projected on the walls of the building



Photo: OneOfCreations

Her Majesty the Queen, accompanied by James Wright, High Commissioner for Canada, approaches three Canadian Forces members representing Canada's military mission in Afghanistan at Vigil 1914-1918 in London. From left to right: Major Chris McKenna (air force), Lieutenant-Colonel Claude Fournier (army), and Petty Officer First Class Paul Walsh (navy).

one after the other, commencing Nov. 4 at 5 p.m. local time and continuing until sunrise on Nov. 11, commemorating the 68,000 Canadian soldiers who died in the First World War.

"It was a truly humbling experience," says PO1 Walsh. "There were probably thousands of people standing around Trafalgar Square. It was the proudest moment of my career in the military."

Originally from New Glasgow, N.S., PO1 Walsh has seen his share of high and low points in his career. He graduated as a clearance diver in June 1990, participated in the Swissair crash recovery efforts in 1998, and deployed with Operation MEDUSA in Afghanistan as the head of an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team in 2006.

"To take the salute for *Oh Canada* and *The Last Post* – it was an incredible feeling," says PO1 Walsh. "We weren't there as individuals, but to represent those who were lost. I wish my grandparents were alive today to have seen this."

A vigil similar to the one held in London began several hours later as night fell in Canada, starting in Atlantic Canada and moving gradually from east to west. The main Canadian display was at the National War Memorial in Ottawa adjacent to Parliament Hill, although official vigils using the same technology were also held in Fredericton, Halifax, Toronto, Regina and Edmonton.

At the ceremony in London, the Queen and Prince Phillip stopped and spoke to each of the Canadian representatives, one by one. PO1 Walsh says she greeted each of the three members and the veterans, discussing how important this event was to her and displaying a sincere respect for Canada.

Feed Back



The *Crowsnest* footnote said that comments are always welcome and I just wanted to let you know that I have enjoyed the recent publications of the *Crowsnest*. I do not have a military or navy background (I am involved with

agricultural and forestry bioproduct research in the Prairies!) but I do have an interest in Canadian naval activities and the role the navy plays in Canada and around the world. Thanks for putting the *Crowsnest* magazine together; I am finding it quite informative. Looking forward to the next issue.

Richard Gibson

I would like to report an error on page three (in the Fall 2008 issue), third picture. The caption reads "Leading Seaman Darren Cordell and Petty Officer Second Class Nathan Martell examine *Ville de Quebec's* shaft system". In fact, what they are working on is the oscillator module of the SHIELD II decoy launcher. Exposed are the barrels, recoil cylinders and anti-condensation heaters.

Petty Officer Second Class William Van Den Berge
Maritime Forces Atlantic Headquarters, Halifax

Feedback is always welcome and can be sent to blakeley.d@forces.gc.ca