

# Crowsnest



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Chief of the Maritime Staff

CANADIAN  
**NAVY**



## THE NAVY IN HAITI

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Leading Seaman Rex Chapman from HMCS Athabaskan helps a casualty in Léogâne, Haiti. Photo: Cpl Johanle Maheu

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# Out of the RUBBLE

***Sailors bring essential supplies, medical attention, an improvement in sanitary conditions, new construction and friendship to the people of Haiti***

By Lieutenant (Navy) Al Blondin

LÉOGÂNE, Haiti – As the news reports began to file in, the Government of Canada was already responding to the desperate needs of Haitians who lost everything following the devastating Jan. 12 earthquake. The first group on the ground was the Canadian Forces Disaster Assistance Relief Team based out of Trenton, Ont., but within days, the destroyer HMCS *Athabaskan*, the frigate HMCS

*Halifax* and the naval task group's Sea King helicopter arrived on the scene with some 500 sailors, airmen and airwomen to help in humanitarian relief efforts, more than doubling the CF strength in Haiti.

*Top left: Able Seaman Jory O'Brien from HMCS Athabaskan plays with a child at a Haitian orphanage.*

*Left: Lieutenant (Navy) Kate Wiand from HMCS Athabaskan takes the temperature of a little girl in Léogâne, Haiti.*

*Bottom: Able Seaman Everett Dollimount from HMCS Athabaskan talks with children on the streets of Léogâne, Haiti.*





"I was extremely impressed with the dedication and commitment of our sailors and the whole of our defence team in Halifax. Together, we got our ships and crews ready for sea in record time," said Captain (Navy) Art McDonald, maritime component commander of Operation Hestia. "Equally impressive was the fact that while we sailed as a naval task group, only five days later we began having a significant effect on the ground in delivering sea-based humanitarian assistance and disaster relief as a maritime component of a CF Joint Task Force – part of the one team contributing to one mission with unity of thought and unity of action."



Captain Ryan Lawrence of HMCS Athabaskan's air detachment helps clear rubble in Haiti.

Warships such as *Athabaskan* and *Halifax* are not designed as platforms to transport large quantities of humanitarian goods, but their uniquely trained crews and the assets they bring in terms of equipment and skills in communications, electrical, mechanical and structural engineering, combined with competent leadership in crisis management and a whole

range of other abilities, make them uniquely suited to provide immediate humanitarian support assistance. They also bring a helicopter and air detachment that can quickly move goods and personnel where most needed, while avoiding airports that can easily become bottle-necked in times of crisis.

"Sailors have great skills, learned through the navy, from previous occupations and personal interests," said Commander Peter Crain, *Athabaskan's* commanding officer. "So we went out to communities to find where we could make a difference. We built shelters, fixed solar panels, provided medical assistance, got generators running and restored water purification systems. In addition, our Sea King helicopter, *Big Dawg*, has flown every day, conducting medical evacuations and moving field hospitals, medical equipment, water, soldiers and various critical supplies all over our area of operation."

By late February the CF mission in Haiti began to wind down as Canada's relief mission begins to focus on more long-term stability in the country. *Halifax* left Haiti Feb. 20, with *Athabaskan* expected to follow by mid-March. When he announced the return of *Halifax*,



The Sea King helicopter from HMCS Athabaskan drops off water for the population of Léogâne, Haiti.

Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lawrence Cannon, stated that the decision to begin withdrawing certain elements of the CF from Haiti is part of a coordinated Government of Canada transition plan that reflects the growing ability of the Government of Haiti, the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations to play a leadership role in the development of emergency relief.

As the mission draws towards completion, members of Operation Hestia's maritime component will return home with a great sense of accomplishment. For most, it will have been a highlight of their career – with the smiles and songs of Haitian children entrenched in their memories and received as gratitude for a job well done.

"*Halifax's* mission in Haiti has truly been a unique experience," said Cdr Josée Kurtz, commanding officer of *Halifax*. "While there is still much to do, I hope, through the efforts and generosity of the ship's company, to have given some assurance of a meaningful change and of a brighter future for Haiti."



Able Seaman Jamie Jennings, left, and Leading Seaman Dan Harris from HMCS Halifax help build latrines in Jacmel, Haiti.

Photos by Cpl Johanie Maheu



# The navy's Olympic legacy

*Below left: RCMP high-speed catamaran, Inkster, and the navy's Orca-class patrol vessel, Raven, sail in Vancouver Harbour during the Olympics.*

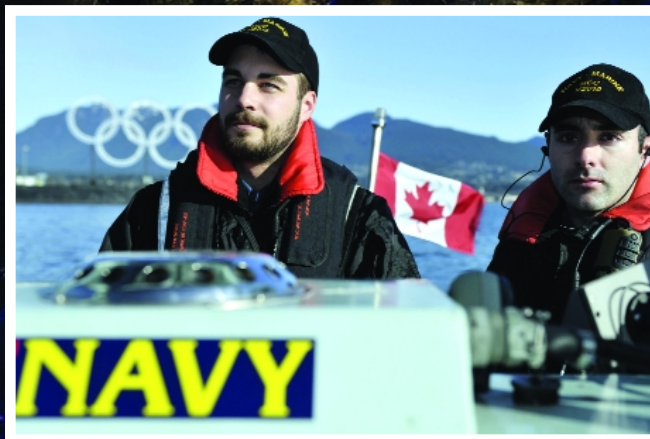


Photo: Sgt Paz Quille

*Left: Leading Seaman Benjamin Neil, left, and Ordinary Seaman Dustin Burdett, conduct a security patrol aboard a rigid-hulled inflatable boat during the Olympics.*

*Below: Ordinary Seaman Aaricka Winlaw stands guard to ensure the safety of personnel in the vicinity of the helicopter landing pad at HMCS Discovery.*



Photo: Cpl Roderick Hopp



Photo: MCpl Chris Ward



By Lieutenant (Navy) Peggy Kulmala

Canadian Navy ships are back to regular duties, rigid-hulled inflatable boats are being shipped back to their places of origin across Canada, and hundreds of sailors are regaling their friends and families back home with details of their “Olympic experience” during what some say is the largest integrated domestic security operation in Canadian history.

“The Canadian Navy continuously has ships and sailors at sea conducting a variety of activities such as support to domestic law enforcement, sovereignty patrols, force generation exercises and overseas deployments,” said Captain (Navy) Gilles Couturier, commander of Joint Task Force Game’s Maritime Component. “Our tasks during Vancouver 2010 were all in a day’s work for us. What was unique was that we worked in unprecedented scale and proximity with sailors from across Canada, Regular Force and Reserve, and our regular partners in domestic maritime security to get the job done.”

The navy’s support to RCMP-led marine security operations during the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics was carried out in increasingly concentric circles focussed on securing waterside Olympic venues and key locations. Canadian Navy, U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Navy vessels patrolled their respective waters as part of their existing partnership in cross-border information-sharing and law enforcement.

During Operation Podium (the Canadian Forces’ contribution to the overall security of the Olympics), there was a Canadian frigate or destroyer in the Strait of Georgia, two Kingston-class coastal defence vessels in the approaches to Vancouver Harbour,



Photo: MCpl Chris Ward

Master Seaman Bijo Emilcar was one of three members of the Canadian Forces chosen to raise the Canadian flag during the Opening Ceremonies of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics. MS Emilcar is an electrician aboard HMCS Iroquois, based in Halifax.

and two Orca-class patrol vessels in Vancouver’s Inner Harbour. These ships were part of coordinated maritime surveillance patrols which, along with CH-124 Sea King helicopters and CP-140 Aurora patrol aircraft overhead, provided electronic inputs to build the vital picture of who was on the water, and – in collaboration with our partners in maritime security – what their intentions were.

Within the harbour itself, the port security unit (PSU), comprised of specifically trained naval reservists from across Canada, was on the water with embarked law enforcement officers to provide an on-scene law enforcement capability, patrolling RCMP-designated marine security zones.

“Working as an integrated team with the RCMP provided the PSU with unique experience in this complex domestic security environment,” said Lieutenant-Commander Doug Martin, PSU commanding officer. “The same naval reservists who led the PSU effort will now pass their experience on to others. The Naval Reserve – which has a mandate for port security – is already putting this experience to good use with a large proportion of PSU personnel moving on to support the upcoming Naval Centennial Fleet Reviews in Victoria and Halifax.”

In and around the busy Vancouver waterfront, the combined operational dive team (CODT), totalling more than 30 clearance and port inspection divers from across Canada, worked in collaboration with RCMP dive teams to complete underwater security sweeps of Olympic venues and other key locations in Vancouver Harbour and False Creek – the waters off the Olympic Athletes’ Village.

“I am very proud of my team, and the legacy we each bring home with us,” said LCdr Todd Dupuis,

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Photo: MCpl Chris Ward

Leading Seaman David Leigh, a member of the Combined Operational Dive Team, uses an underwater propulsion device during a security sweep of Canada Place in Vancouver Harbour during Operation Podium.



## The navy's Olympic legacy

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commanding officer of the CODT. "The nature of integrated operations provided us [with] an enhanced understanding of each team's procedures and equipment."

And at the epicentre was HMCS *Discovery*, Vancouver's Naval Reserve Division, the heart of Vancouver 2010 Olympic marine security operations. With *Discovery's* secure command and control capability, the RCMP-led Olympic Marine Operations Centre – manned by the RCMP, navy and other partners in 2010 Olympic marine security and safety – had the required capability to coordinate on-water marine assets.

Located at Deadman Island in Vancouver's Stanley Park, *Discovery* also provided critical infrastructure to support the hundreds of people working out of Deadman Island. For example, its galley fed large numbers of people around the clock, and its logistics team provided adminis-



Photo: Sgt Paz Quille

RCMP Sergeant Lyne Baril, left, Lieutenant-Commander Derek McCiggott, centre, Maritime Component command liaison officer, and RCMP Sergeant Mike Lariviere discuss operations at the Olympic Marine Operations Centre.

trative, transport and supply support to hundreds, adeptly managing the complexities of moving people and equipment from across Canada to and from Vancouver.

"Although keeping watch over the ocean approaches to Canada and its harbours is what the navy does every day, each individual's experience during Operation Podium provides a collective breadth of experience that will support Canada's domestic security well into the future," concludes Capt(N) Couturier. "Our contribution to maritime security for the Vancouver 2010 Olympics is something all members of the Maritime Component should be proud of. We achieved our aim, allowing our athletes to do their best, bringing back an historic 14 gold medals."

Photo: MCpl Chris Ward



Leading Seaman Viridiana Simard Beaulieu, a cook from HMCS Radisson in Trois-Rivières, Que., prepares a meal for the hundreds working out of HMCS *Discovery* during Op Podium.

Photo: MCpl Chris Ward



HMCS *Calgary*, a Halifax-class frigate, HMCS *Whitehorse*, a Kingston-class maritime coastal defence vessel (on *Calgary's* right), *Caribou*, an Orca-class patrol vessel (on *Calgary's* left), U.S. Coast Guard Cutter (USCGC) *Midgett*, a high-endurance cutter (astern of *Calgary*), USCGC *Cuttyhunk*, a patrol boat (astern of *Midgett*), as well as smaller USCG response boats and integrated border enforcement team vessels sail together in the Strait of Georgia March 1 before returning to their respective home ports.



## HUNTING TERRORISTS AT SEA

***HMCS Fredericton's commanding officer, Commander Steve Waddell, discusses pirates, terrorism and the Canadian Navy's international role in maritime security***

**N**ow in the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman region, HMCS *Fredericton* has gone from fighting piracy to disrupting terrorist activity. The Halifax-based frigate joined the multinational coalition fleet Combined Task Force (CTF) 150 Feb. 19 in the second phase of her deployment under Operation Saiph.

CTF 150 conducts maritime security operations in the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Currently under the command of Commodore Richard Menhinick of the Royal Australian Navy, CTF 150 is comprised of warships from several nations, including Australia, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Portugal, Spain and the U.S.

Leaving behind her counter-piracy mission in the Gulf of Aden was not easy for the ship according to her commanding officer, Commander Steve Waddell, and he admits they would like to have stayed longer. "It was clear to me the scope of the piracy problem is immense and there will be a requirement for navies to assure maritime security in this area of the world

for some time to come. What NATO and our coalition partners have done is come together and make a dramatic impact in deterring acts of piracy."

The International Recommended Transit Corridor in the Gulf of Aden is 500 nautical miles long, and there

are anywhere from four to 10 warships along its stretch any given day, explains Cdr Waddell. "It's challenging to protect all areas at all times. But what was evident was that NATO, the European Union and other like-minded nations were able to successfully coordinate patrol sectors to ensure the best coverage possible with the available resources."

Even with several warships on-station, however, for the period of *Fredericton's* counter-piracy mission – Nov. 23 to Feb. 10 – there were 28 attacks in the Gulf of Aden and Somali Basin, of which 14 led to successful piratings, though the most successful



Commander Steve Waddell

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# Hunting terrorists at sea

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occurred in the much larger Somali Basin.

"[During our mission] we approached several vessels based on suspicious indicators, but rarely were there blatant signs that said 'we're pirates'," explains Cdr Waddell. "We reassured ships that were spooked by vessels they thought [held] pirates, and we even chased down spurious unlit skiffs at night, but to no avail. We were five miles from a Somali pirate camp – and their several captured vessels with hostage crews – when pirates jumped ship and we escorted the vessel to safety just minutes after its release."

In the Gulf of Aden, despite an increase in pirate attacks overall in 2009, the success rate of those attacks was significantly reduced owing to the increased presence of warships like *Fredericton*, says Cdr Waddell. Three separate task forces, along with warships from India, Russia, China, Japan and others all work together to provide maritime security. "It is difficult to quantify success, but when you take into account the significant drop in pirate attacks and pirated vessels from just a year ago, *Fredericton*, alongside our NATO allies, has contributed to making the Gulf of Aden safer for legitimate mariners. As many as 70 merchant vessels ply these waters daily, and I know from interacting with many of the vessels that the civilian shipping appreciated our presence."

Now the focus of *Fredericton's* six-month deployment has turned to fighting terrorism in the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman region – a role with which the Canadian Navy is familiar. It sent ship after ship to the Arabian Sea following 9/11, all of them focused on boarding operations designed to locate and disrupt terrorists and insurgents who use the maritime environment for illicit means.

"*Fredericton's* current employment is consistent with those previous missions," says Cdr Waddell, "and we are now working with coalition partners such as Australia, the U.S., the United Kingdom and Pakistan to achieve a stable and secure maritime environment free from terrorism and related activities as part of the continuing U.S.-led coalition campaign against terror known as Operation Enduring Freedom. We board smaller regional vessels, normally dhows, looking for information or illicit cargo such as narcotics or weapons that are used to fund or support terrorist activities around the world, including Afghanistan."

Integrating into the command structure of CTF 150



Photo: Cpl Peter Reed

*The naval boarding party from HMCS Fredericton approaches a suspicious skiff in the Gulf of Aden.*

has not been an issue. "We were prepared up front to make the transition in command structure, communications and procedures from a NATO counter-piracy mission to a combined maritime forces counter-terror mission. For a warship, and certainly a Canadian one, our inherent flexibility allows us to 're-role' into any mission. If the Government were to tell me to drop my current mission and start a new one tomorrow in any part of the world, it would be a simple matter of us turning the helm and changing course. Within hours we could have a completely new command and control arrangement in place."

Cdr Waddell is proud of what his crew has been able to accomplish since leaving Canada in October, and he credits extensive pre-deployment training and high morale for their success overseas. "This is a new and challenging environment, where several nations who are unaccustomed to working with each other were brought together into partnerships, coordination and de-confliction of patrol assignments. With all parties in the area for a common purpose, the inherent flexibility of navies allowed us to collectively achieve results."

*Fredericton*, expected to return home later this spring, carries her responsibility as a Canadian warship deployed abroad seriously. "We are a prosperous nation and have international obligations. For the Canadian Navy, we have proven ourselves by making regular, sustained contributions to international missions that promote and enhance maritime security. Generating and deploying a navy takes serious commitment and resources, but if navies don't deploy to the world's hot spots, what happens to the security of the innocents?"



# The technical side of life in the navy

By Shelley Lipke

**A**s a naval electronics technician in HMCS Calgary, Leading Seaman Cheryl Lapointe spends her days working on and troubleshooting the ship's key communications systems. Within her trade lies a detailed network of electronics that must be in top shape for the warship to perform properly at sea.

"Without the internal communication system we couldn't sail because if there was an emergency on board we wouldn't be able to communicate. It would be chaos," she says. "We need communications for daily operations and sheer emergency purposes. If there was a fire in the forward part of the ship, the commanding officer needs to be able to let each of the departments know what action they must take, and we all rely heavily on the communications systems."

LS Lapointe spends the majority of her time at sea doing preventative and corrective maintenance on the intercom systems that connect the six depart-

ments and allow the ship to communicate with land and other ships. When a piece of equipment needs repair she is tasked to locate the problem. "Troubleshooting is a huge part of my job and I often have to try different things until it works. I like this because it provides a challenge on a daily basis."

Her military career began seven years ago when she left her small town of Reserve Mines, Cape Breton Island, N.S., to enlist as a technician. "My brother is a technician in the air force and he suggested that I look at a technician trade because the training is great and you get really good employment opportunities both within and outside of the military," she says. "I decided to listen to him and I found the training really hard. Electronics was like a brand new language to me. It was as challenging as going to shore and hearing everyone speak Spanish when you don't understand a word."

For two years she put in long hours to learn her trade and become confident in her ability. Once the academic part was over she started enjoying it. "It's a good trade; I think it's one of the best in the military. It gives me a lot of pride in myself knowing I made it through basic training and all the challenges in my electronics course, especially being a female in a male dominated trade."

Whether she's vacuuming out filters, checking cables to ensure they are in good condition or fixing equipment, she gets a lot of job satisfaction being able to keep the equipment working on the ship. "We work with the radar techs, sonar techs and naval weapons techs, and because all four trades are interlaced we need to cross-train with them so that we understand their equipment if it fails. We work closely with the stores department to put in orders for new equipment because we need to keep the system working well."

Aside from her regular duties, she also volunteers

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Photo: Shelley Lipke

*LS Cheryl Lapointe spends her days working and troubleshooting the ship's communications systems.*

Interested in becoming a naval electronics technician? Visit [www.forces.ca](http://www.forces.ca)



# Navy to celebrate 100 years of service May 4

By Lieutenant (Navy) Wendy Goulet

With the passage of the Naval Service Act in 1910, the Canadian Navy was born and on May 4, 2010 it will reach a century of service. To mark this significant occasion, Canadian Naval Centennial (CNC) teams in Halifax, Ottawa, Esquimalt, B.C., 24 Naval Reserve Divisions across the country and friends of the navy have created an exciting program of national, regional and local events with the goal of bringing the navy to Canadians.



Leading into the centennial year several events occurred that helped achieve this goal, including the consecration of the Queen's Colour in Halifax and the celebration of the 250th anniversary of HMC Dockyard in Halifax against the backdrop of the Tall Ships Nova Scotia Festival in July.

Fall of 2009 saw the launch of the centennial commemorative coffee table book and the commissioning of six original paintings which outline significant periods throughout the Canadian Navy's history.

The centennial slogan is "Commemorate, Celebrate, Commit", reflecting on 100 years of proud history, the role of the navy in a maritime nation, and its commitment to the next 100 years.

As 2010 began, celebrations got under way with the raising of the CNC flag on ships and in shore establishments.

"The flag stands as a symbol of respect that reflects the desire to honour the past, celebrate Canadian Navy achievements and recognize the navy's obligation to Canada," says Captain (Navy) (retired) John Pickford, CNC Special Advisor.

Also in January, The Royal Canadian Mint introduced a Proof Silver Dollar to honour the centennial.

With the navy's birthday fast approaching, celebrations are picking up speed.

"It has always been a challenge to overcome maritime blindness in Canada, but the extraordinary work of our sailors is helping to demonstrate the amazing capability of our service and the important role the navy plays in Canada," says Capt(N) Colin Plows, Maritime Chief of Staff.

In Ottawa, upcoming centennial celebrations include the Gala Ball, Battle of Atlantic parade, Tulip Festival and unveiling of Canada Post's CNC stamps. May 4 is the groundbreaking for the national naval monument and a presentation of a ship's bell to the people of Canada through Parliament.

Nationally, hundreds of events are taking place in communities across the country. Three major projects include:

**Namesake community presentations:** In the past 100 years, more than 300 ships were named after Canadian communities. Framed prints of the ships' histories will be presented throughout the centennial year to connect communities with their namesake ships.

**Travelling musical road show:** The Stadacona Band of Maritime Forces Atlantic and Naden Band of Maritime Forces Pacific will tour to more than 50 locations beginning in April, with a road show entitled "Sailors and Songs - A Musical Tribute to 100 Years of Naval Service to Canada".

**International Fleet Reviews:** Sailors will visit Victoria June 9-14 and Halifax June 28-July 2 for the International Fleet Reviews, with more than 35 ships from around the globe participating.

Help commemorate the past, celebrate the present, and make a commitment to the future by participating in navy centennial activities taking place near you.



Photo: Cpl Chelsey Hutson

## Centennial ice sculpture

An ice replica of Second World War corvette HMCS Sackville was illuminated in Ottawa Feb. 11 to honour the navy's centennial. Sackville is the last remaining Flower-class corvette of more than 120 built in Canada during the war. The ice sculpture, which has since succumbed to warmer temperatures, was designed to honour the past, recognize the ongoing achievements of the present navy, and provide a commitment by the navy to the country and the future.



# For whom the bell tolls

By Second-Lieutenant Cameron Hillier

**T**housands of spirits will share the company of their corporeal counterparts in Ottawa this May to commemorate a century of service to Canada, to celebrate their accomplishments, and to commit to the next 100 years of service.

On May 4, 1910, the Government of Canada signed the Naval Service Act, thereby giving birth to the Canadian Navy. This significant moment will be celebrated during a special ceremony when the navy will present its Naval Centennial Bell to the people of Canada on Parliament Hill.

"Bells have always been significant to the navy," said Commander Max Harvey, Project Manager NAVRES 2010. "The Centennial Bell Project touches on many of the themes of the centennial, as well as its slogan 'commemorate, celebrate, commit'."

The centennial bell was cast from hundreds of artifacts that represent the navy through its 100 years of service. Included amongst the relics are navigation tools, cap badges, shell casings, uniform buttons, boatswains call, ship's fittings and equipment, and even flammable items such as pieces of uniform, letters and photographs that will vaporize and add essence with the metal items. The artifacts represent ships, submarines, naval air, and the men and women of the entire period from 1910 to 2010.

"The bell represents the people who have served and those who continue to serve Canada's navy,"



Photo: Cpl Alex Croskery

*The Canadian Naval Centennial Bell, shown here just after casting, will be presented to the Parliament of Canada on May 4, marking 100 years of naval service to Canada.*

said Captain (Navy) (retired) John Pickford, Special Advisor to the Canadian Naval Centennial. "It links our past to our present and symbolizes the navy as a whole."

There is a special bond between sailors and the ships they serve in and nothing signifies a ship more than its bell. For centuries bells have been used by navies around the world. There is a long tradition of functional and ceremonial use which has made them a symbol of considerable meaning to mariners. The bell is a powerful link to the ship's history, heritage and accomplishments.

"A centennial bell symbolizes our look back to the past 100 years and our look ahead to the next 100 years," stated Cdr Harvey. "It is a special and meaningful way to mark our centennial."

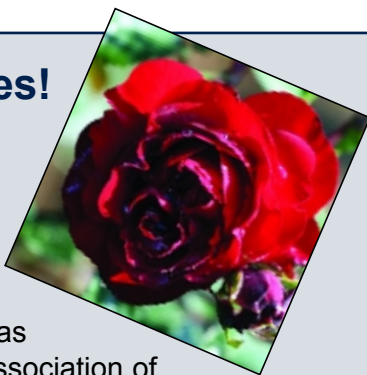
Perhaps the most important use of the bell was to mark the passage of time. Timekeeping has been an integral part of shipboard life since the earliest days of sailing. Before the chronometer, time at sea was measured by a half-hour sandglass. A duty watch on deck turned the glass when the sand ran out and struck the bell to signal the glass had been turned. This evolved to the tradition of striking the bell once at the end of the first half-hour, twice after the first hour, and so on, until eight bells marked the end of the four-hour watch and the crew would shift.

On May 4, 2010, the spirits of those who served and are encapsulated within the centennial bell will stand with those who serve. Together they will commemorate their deeds and celebrate their accomplishments. Together they will hear the bell toll to close out the watch, and commit the incoming crew to another century of service to Canada.

## Coming up roses!

This spring will be marked by the arrival of the new Canadian Naval Centennial rose at greenhouses across the country. The rose was selected by the Wren Association of Toronto and named "Navy Lady" to recognize thousands of Canadian women who served in the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service – nicknamed "Wrens" – after the similar British auxiliary. The rose bush is grown exclusively by J.C. Bakker Nurseries in St Catharines, Ont., and will be distributed by nurseries across the country.

For more information on where you can buy the rose, visit [www.thewrens.com](http://www.thewrens.com) for a list of distributors.





## When the navy takes you away from the sea

When thinking about sailors in the Canadian Navy, most people naturally envision them in ships at sea, or alongside in creosote-perfumed dockyards on the coasts. However, it's becoming more common to see certain highly specialized sailors far from their normal milieu in places such as Afghanistan, Israel, Kosovo, the Sudan and the Golan Heights.

Some of the sailors deployed to these foreign countries are naval logistics officers who have left their ships behind to support missions abroad. Unlike the army and the air force, the navy trains its logisticians in both finance and supply, and they become "all-singing, all-dancing" support officers, according to Captain (Navy) Mark Watson, Director of Maritime Materiel Operational Support at National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) in Ottawa.

"As a result, their skill sets are constantly in demand," he says.

In their usual jobs aboard ship, they are responsible for all aspects of logistics support to a naval vessel: supply, finance, food services and administrative support. Essentially, they are responsible for all non-engineering related support to the ship's operations.

"As the only logistics officer on board, you are the advisor on all aspects of logistics to the ship's commanding officer," says Lieutenant-Commander Mark Lewis, a naval logistics officer currently working with the Logistics Integrator Branch at NDHQ. "The nice thing is that when you and your department do your job well, you can have a very positive effect on the

operation of the ship, as well as morale as a whole."

Things like pay or the availability of money for foreign port visits, the provision of food for healthy meals, the supply of urgent spare parts, or just having the crew's favourite flavour of gum or candy bar available in the ship's canteen can make a huge difference, says LCdr Lewis.

When posted abroad, naval log officers are continually filling jobs in the support realm. These might include those similar to their shipboard duties such as contracting and budgeting, but also more non-traditional roles such as military observers, chiefs of staffs to various missions and intelligence officers. These deployed officers typically volunteer or are selected by committee for posts of up to one year.

LCdr Lewis has a broad range of experience in both traditional naval logistics jobs (serving aboard HMC Ships *Huron* and *Ottawa*), and those land-based jobs that have seen him deployed to Bosnia, Haiti, the United Arab Emirates and Afghanistan. Recently he served as the first naval operations officer at 3 Canadian Support Unit (3CSU) in Montréal, a unit responsible for providing logistics support to operations outside of Canada.

"Since the unit primarily supported army ops, there was a clear army flavour in how it was run," LCdr Lewis says. "The difficult part was to learn the lingo, the expressions and attitudes. Once you had this figured out, things went very well."

While at 3CSU, he ran the day-to-day operations of the unit, supporting overseas missions, coordinating



*Leading Seaman Ronald MacAdam guides a pallet being loaded onto HMCS Fredericton at the port of Haifa, Israel, in November. Naval logisticians are usually responsible for all aspects of logistics support to a naval vessel, but can also be deployed out-of-trade around the world.*



future missions, and dealing with myriad issues that come from constantly supporting international operations, especially missions as large as Afghanistan.

At present, there are eight naval logisticians posted on missions outside Canada. “Most are in Afghanistan, but also in Jerusalem and Kosovo,” says Capt(N) Watson. “Another eight will be leaving in the next four months to those areas, as well as to the Golan Heights.”

He adds that senior naval officers currently with Task Force Afghanistan are logisticians, and that another will be assuming the head of Task Force Sudan – the largest mission outside Afghanistan – this summer. As well, two naval logisticians were recently on the Strategic Advisory Team to Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

Out of about 250 trained officers, roughly five per cent are deployed each year to support land-based operations. “This means that about 20 per cent of the classification have been deployed to support land-based ops in the last four years,” explains Capt(N) Watson. “With the drawdown in Afghanistan, I expect this number to rise.”

Commander Luc Morin is currently deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan, where he works with officers from France, the U.S., Poland, the Czech Republic, Singapore, Pakistan and Afghanistan in the Tripartite Joint Intelligence Operation Centre at the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Headquarters. A naval logistician for nearly 30 years, he currently coordinates the exchange of information in the field of improvised explosive devices – a long way from his usual occupation.

However, he is adjusting quickly and effectively to working in an army environment. “I must say that sometimes I ask silly questions because I do not



*Commander Luc Morin, currently serving a tour in Afghanistan, stands in front of the Queen's Palace in Kabul.*

know some terminology,” he laughs. “The military likes to use acronyms, and one day I had to ask: what is IDF? Everybody stopped talking and looked at me like if I was from Mars. One colleague took the time to explain that it was indirect fire (like mortars) versus direct fire (like rifles). Sometimes, it is a bit embarrassing, but I do not let it bother me. I just make sure not to ask the same question twice!”

While Cdr Morin claims the highlight of his career was working as the commanding officer of the Naval Reserve Division HMCS *Montcalm* in Québec City during the 400th anniversary celebrations, other rewarding postings have seen him in non-naval jobs. “I was a career manager for logistics trades, comptroller at a supply depot and one of the few naval logisticians to be qualified as a traffic officer. I worked at loading/unloading cargo ships (military and civilian) when I worked with the U.S. Navy in Military Sealift Command Europe,” he explains.

These kinds of diverse skills are what make naval logisticians so sought-after in jobs other than those at sea in ships. “Almost without exception, the officers are proving themselves to be outstanding additions to any team,” says Capt(N) Watson. “Numerous accolades have been received and there is a growing desire from outside agencies to have more of them posted overseas.”

Whether they sail in ships at sea, or work on the dusty plains and rugged mountains of faraway lands, naval logisticians proudly carry their marine heritage into the unique jobs they carry out in support of Canadian Forces’ missions every day.



*Lieutenant-Commander Mark Lewis, right, and a colleague stand together during a recent tour in Haiti.*



## Freeze frame

Photo: MCpl Chris Ward



During a training exercise, a CH-124 Sea King helicopter hoists a person from HMCS Whitehorse, a Kingston-class maritime coastal defence vessel, while on a maritime surveillance patrol in the approaches to Vancouver Harbour during the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics.

## The technical side of life in the navy

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as a Military Family Resource Centre representative on the ship advising people of what services are available to their family members, helps with the United Way campaign and assists in cleaning the ship.

Along with the rest of the ship's company, she agrees that life at sea can be difficult at times. "I find lack of sleep, long hours and sometimes running around in circles while trouble-shooting, challenging. It's hard to move around the ship then sleep with 15 other people in my mess, and it's also difficult to share a bathroom with them too," she says.

LS Lapointe says her biggest challenge is being away from her husband. "He's my best friend and he

is also a communications technician for the military. It's interesting being married to somebody who does the same trade because everything I talk about he understands."

She adds that "because my hometown is such a small place it was really had to step out of my comfort zone to join the military and leave it to explore this career. But I'm very glad I did. I'm proud to be sailing all over the world and serving my country and I consider it an honour to be a sailor in the Canadian Navy."

*In January, LS Lapointe was promoted to Master Seaman and posted ashore where she now works in Base Information Services at CFB Esquimalt, B.C.*



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Banner photo, page 1: HMC Ships *Athabaskan* and *Halifax* sail to Haiti in support of Operation Hestia. Photo: SLt Mike Organ  
All articles written by Darlene Blakeley, except where otherwise noted.