



FRIENDS OF HMCS HAIDA
Gathering, Preserving, And Promoting The Legacy
www.hmcshaida.com

Up Spirits



Volume 25, Number 1 April 2015

PAST-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ken Lloyd C.D., M.A. Past-President, The Friends of HMCS Haida

A warm breeze across the Bay heralds spring and a Change of Leadership for the Friends of HMCS HAIDA. Since 2010 my role as the point person for such an amazing ship as HMCS HAIDA has been a privilege and honour. For our cultural understanding it's worth sharing how we came to be who we are.

From 2010 the Board of Directors agreed to move from a Board of Governance to a working Board focused on project management and our organization has never looked back. Andy Barber brought the HMCS HAIDA Association into the Friends and the combined efforts have produced a vibrant Schools Education programme run by Mike Vencel and an ever expanding Visual Signalling Team which with the Hamilton Signals Association is giving displays before HRH The Princess Anne; performing in the Hamilton Tattoo; at the RCMI Band concert; for the Belgium Consul; the Toronto Garrison Ball; the MediChair Veterans' luncheons; Oshawa Tank Museum; The Joint Signal Regiment; as well as the Canadian National Exhibition (The Ex); 'It's your Festival' in Gage Park Hamilton and Legion Week on the Danforth.

Our volunteers and Veterans were recognized last year with 8 Diamond Jubilee medals for their volunteer service. Bill Thomas succeeded in preparing brass "Tribal" pins to identify all our volunteers and the Board authorized a new uniform issue including new Autumn

Windbreakers and this year having available new cold weather jackets.

In 2013 the Directors partnered with local artist Paul Elia who produced an outstandingly poignant artwork of HMCS HAIDA finally coming home to rest in Hamilton, a truly moving piece. In Burlington, Board members assisted in arranging for RADM Jennifer Bennett to rename the promenade at the Canadian Naval Ships memorial, the "Naval Veterans Promenade". Following a "Lakes Tour" visit to HMCS HAIDA, the Royal Canadian Navy instituted the new "Excellence in Gunnery Trophy" which is named after HMCS HAIDA. All these happenings have been created or assisted by the members of your Board as well as the pleasurable day to day routine of publishing "Up Spirits"; Volunteer rosters; rewriting the Constitution to comply with the new Charities Act; fund raising; gathering artifacts; membership; running the gift store and a myriad of other tasks your Board does so well. My time with you has been a lot of fun, thank you for being so supportive.

We are very fortunate to have Walt Dermott come aboard. Walt brings a Navy background from HMCS STAR and the past Commanding Officer of Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps IRON DUKE and multiple contacts and resources from within the training cadre in Borden and Kingston. Walt has the confidence of the Board and myself, and I am really looking forward to the new directions and enterprise Walt will bring.

YOURS AYE - (the meaning of)
Major Ken Lloyd

I only know its usage.

It's similar as 'Your ever obedient servant' if it was an official letter. I remember it being, "I am Sir, your obedient servant". Less formally it may be used as "Your friend forever," It got shortened to "Your'e ever etc", then to "Yours ever".

Naturally, the manly Scots and their tendency to proliferate with Gaelic gutturals create the "Yours aye" to end a letter.

That's about all I know from experience. The "Yours aye" is far more common over here than in England.

UP SPIRITS (the meaning of)
Various opinions

In the Navy, the rum ration was highly valued. Our Ralph Frayne interview describes the trading of rum for cigarettes with the Americans in Murmansk.

There came a time when The Friends Of Haida was down in the mouth, peniless, and the cry of Up Spirits was used to rally the members!

This succeeded, and here we are in 2015. We are enrolling and intriguing the second and third generaton of HMCS Haida supporters!

CROSSING THE BAR

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1889

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.
Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness or farewell,
When I embark;
For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

Don McCartney
Don Merritt
Bill Kiser
H.M. (Mac) Upton



FRIENDS of HMCS HAIDA

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Up Spirits is the Newsletter of
Friends of HMCS HAIDA
Newsletter Editor: Steve Jackson

THE FIGHTING TENTH

There are specks on the horizon
As familiar as can be
D10 with his flotilla
Proceeding in from the sea.

Battle ensigns at all mastheads
An impressive sight to see
The Tartar with the tenth D.F.
Come in triumphantly.

The pendants now come visible,
Four-three, Five-one, Two-four,
Tartar, Ashanti, Huron
Astern there loom five more.

Blyskawica, Haida, Javelin
Piorun, Eskimo,
Buntings on the signal bridge
The stokers down below.

Passing through the gate at last
They move more cautiously
The same old signal flying
Act Independently.

We hope we'll always see you thus
With ensigns flying free
For the fighting tenth's a lovely sight
When coming in from sea.

The WRENS of the long room Signal Station, hull composed this poem entitled the "The Fighting Tenth" as a tribute to The 10th Destroyer Flotilla during the summer of 1944. The 10th operated in the English Channel and Western Approaches - November 1943 to November 1944 and was based at Devonport.



SHIP KEEPER'S FIRST WINTER
RON SEAGER first sailed on HMCS Haida in 1958 when he visited his father's workplace ... yes, *HARDOVER* turns!

TREASURER'S REPORT Herb Holst

As I sit here on an overcast day on the Ides of March, I can't help but feel that spring is just around the corner. Winter has been overly long and cold in this neck of the woods and everyone you talk to is ready to put it behind them. That being said, the sun is getting stronger and the days are getting longer. At least we are starting to see consistent above freezing temperatures. For the Friends of HMCS Haida, it means that open season for the ship is getting closer. Not that we are in hibernation. Things keep on happening all year long and it is business as usual.

In terms of ongoing treasury business, at this time of year we are still taking care of bills that continue all year long as well as taking care of money coming in and going out. Things get a whole lot busier as the ship and the gift shop open up. As usual, we are grateful to our members for membership renewals and donations. These make all the rest of this happen.

It was COLD!

The bubblers worked well, and the ice never got closer than 5 metres to the hull. Snow drifted to 50 cm depth.

Ron was previously a long-haul trucker, so he is used to the solitary life.

Looking forward to opening May 17!

2015 HOURS OF OPERATION

May 17 to June 30, 2015

Open 10 am to 5 pm, Thursday to Sunday

Closed: Mon, Tues, Wed

July 1 to September 1

Open 10 am to 5 pm, seven days a week

September 2 to October 11

Open 10 am to 5 pm, weekends only

Closed: Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri

As far as the treasury goes, we are still in good shape as our funds are good and stable. The big thing in our immediate future is fiscal yearend which occurs on March 31. Once that date has passed, the books are reconciled and then sent to our accountant for tax filing with Canada Revenue Agency. This occurs each and every year just like our own personal taxes.

A board such ours for the Friends of HMCS Haida is always in flux. Board members come and go for any number of reasons.

Regardless, the business of the Friends is in good hands with an inspiring mixture of seasoned veterans and "new blood". I would personally like to thank board members, and volunteers, for their efforts both past, present and for the future. Many hands make for lighter work and we are blessed in this regard. One event coming up in the very near future is the annual gala. Keep your eyes open for news on this event. We hope many of you will be able to make it this year. I look forward to seeing you there... and at the ship. Stay well and stay safe.

A BIG GREEN ONE

This video is from HMCS HAIDA's good friend Tim Lewin in England. "Fine bit of filming, and some rather good seakeeping qualities of the destroyer".

<http://www.yachtsinternational.com/videos/destroyer/>



PO2 Sears

The Lead picture of this site is of the Canadian Frigate HMCS HALIFAX. I know this because I painted its gun shield in 2007. The other warships are of the French frigate Latouche. These films are not touched up, played with or modified. I have personally been in storms worse than these off the coast of Norway where the waves would crash over the pilotage and it was normal to walk on the bulkheads from focsle to stern to your quarters. Real enough.

Al Hines

We experienced those seas on a MED return to the States October 68 – Wooden Ships – Iron Men – Mine Sweeper USS ADROIT 509. – Did some praying and “Spliced the Main Brace” as soon as we hit the beach. Great times, great crew, and too young to care. Miss it sometimes.

R. Barry Sorrells, MD Lt. Cdr. (Ret.)

I had the pleasure (?) of serving aboard USCG Cutter Spencer in Jan 1963 stationed in the North Atlantic off the coast of Greenland. We functioned as a seagoing VOR navigation station for transatlantic aircraft. Therefore we only ran engines about one hour out of twenty four to correct our drift. During the 45 degree rolls and 50 ft seas we walked the ward room walls which if timed well were like the deck. As ship's medical officer the main medical complaint was (surprise?) seasickness among the crew. A job for only young men.

Robert Masten

What a glorious sight to see that Destroyer do its thing. Makes me proud to have spent 26 years in the Navy.

"I WILL NEVER FORGET THE SOUND OF THOSE ENGINES GOING AWAY"

A Re-examination into the Sinking of HMCS Athabaskan, 29 April 1944

Peter A. Dixon CD, MA

Director of History Friends of HMCS HAIDA

On the morning of 29 April 1944 the Canadian Tribal Class Destroyer HMCS Athabaskan was sunk in the English Channel after an engagement with the German Elbing Class Destroyers T-24 and T-27. The official explanation from the "inquiry into the Loss of HMCS Athabaskan" claimed that Athabaskan sank because of two explosions, the first at 0417, and the second at 0427 [1]. The first explosion was attributed to a torpedo from T-24.[2] The second explosion was believed to have occurred when fuel fires, caused by the first explosion, ignited the 4-inch magazine.[3]

While this may seem simple and complete, an examination of the source material reveals that there is much confusion as to the actual chain of events. This confusion is focused on the cause of the second explosion. Eyewitness accounts have Athabaskan being torpedoed twice on the port side. This explanation seems to have been discounted by the Board. Then there are Athabaskan and Haida's reports of "three echoes" being seen on the radar and Commander DeWolf's assertion that German E-boats were involved. This assertion became the basis for Len Burrow and Emile Beaudoin's book *Unlucky Lady: The Life and Death of HMCS Athabaskan*. Yet this book raises more questions than it answers. The E-boat mystery has been put to rest by Michael Whitby, in his article "Fooling Around The French Coast": *RCN Tribal Class Destroyers in Action, April 1944*. He cites the German record of the action and states that the only German vessels involved were T-24 and T-27. This has resulted in the British inquiry being deemed officially correct, with credit for the sinking being attributed to T-24. Yet this confusion is compounded by the statement in the inquiry's report that the members of the board: "did not consider [whether] any other ships were

present." [4] This is a curious statement. It is quite likely that another ship was indeed present. Unfortunately, it may have been the British Motor Torpedo Boat (MTB) 677 (commanded by Lieutenant A. Clayton, RNVR). [5]

All reconstructions of the action on 29 April 1944 have centred on the movements of Haida and Athabaskan beginning at 0400. Yet the actions of all of the other participants must be reviewed to fully understand the situation. The movements of the other forces have, to date, been ignored. When the positions of the Tribals, the minelayers and the MTB's are plotted together, the inferences become astounding.

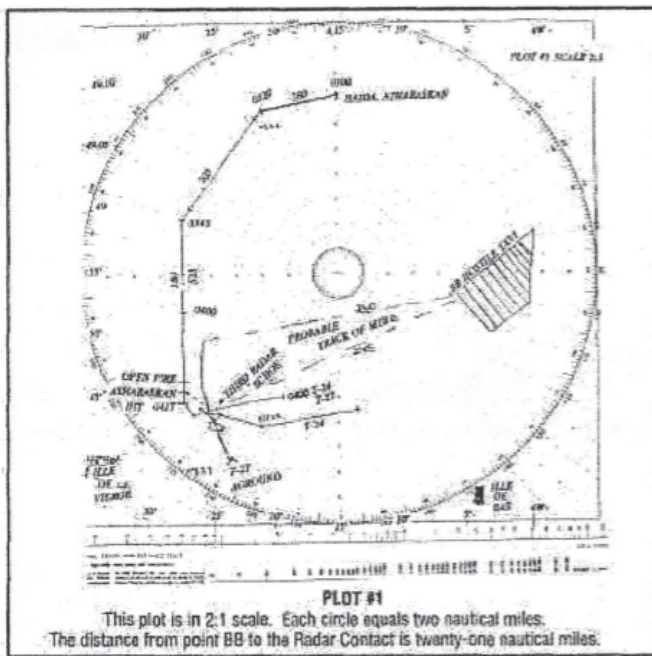
It was a very tense time for the Plymouth Command. Men and material were pouring into British ports for the upcoming invasion. German destroyers and E-boats still posed a threat to this activity. During the morning of 26 April, Force 26, consisting of the British cruiser HMS Black Prince, and the destroyers HMS Tartar, HMS Ashanti, with the Canadian Tribals HMCS Athabaskan, HMCS Haida, and HMCS Huron engaged the German Elbing class destroyers T-29, T-27, T-24. T-29 was sunk by Haida and Huron while T-27 and T-24 escaped with damage. This engagement was regarded as "very successful" [6] and served to affirm the tactics of the 10th Destroyer Flotilla. The unfortunate consequence for Athabaskan was that during this action HMS Tartar sustained damage, while HMS Ashanti and HMCS Huron were involved in a minor collision that put them out of action, requiring drydocking. Haida and Athabaskan remained the only ships available for operations.

Success was short lived as disaster struck the Allied forces on the night of April 27. Nine German E—boats from the 9th Torpedo Flotilla attacked a convoy of Lyme Bay sinking LST 507 and LST 537 and torpedoing LST 289 with a loss of 197 sailors and 441 soldiers. [7]

The fact that the destroyer force sent to intercept them missed and allowed them to escape unscathed must have been bitter to Plymouth Command.

"Operation Hostile XXVI" was scheduled for the night of 28-29 April. Hostile Operations were British minelaying missions as part of operation Neptune and the Normandy invasion. Hostile XXVI was to be conducted by the 10th Minelaying Flotilla consisting of eight minelayers which were to be screened by MTB 677 (Senior Officer) and MTB 717 of the 52 MTB Flotilla.[8] Haida and Athabaskan were to be the "Support Force." [9]

This aspect of the engagement has until now been totally ignored by historians. Yet the position of the minefield and its proximity to the subsequent destroyer engagement is crucial to understand events. (See Plot 1)



The minefield was an eight-mile pentagon with point BB being 16.7 miles northeast of Ile de Bas. Haida and Athabaskan were to the west of this point, patrolling a box from 49 10'N to 49 5'N and from 04'W to 4 10'W. This deployment would allow the two Tribals to intercept any threat heading north. The minelaying was to be completed by 0330 and Haida and Athabaskan were to return to Plymouth at 0345 at 20 knots. They were not expected to meet the enemy. The two Tribals

arrived at their patrol position at 0200, went to "Action Stations" and began "snaking" the patrol line at 16 knots." [10]

Meanwhile, the German Destroyers T-24 and T-27 had left St. Malo and were attempting to reach Brest to effect repairs from the action of 26 April. They were skirting the coast as T-27's speed was down to 24 knots. The commander of T-27 had issued instructions to "head for the coast and avoid combat" if the enemy were encountered. They were detected by radar in Plymouth, and Commander-in-Chief Plymouth sent the signal "unidentified vessel 2050 Start Point 6"[11] at 0136. Nine minutes later C-in-C Plymouth signalled "course estimated west speed 20 knots."

Plymouth plotted the developing situation and at 0307 signalled "Support Force to Steer SW at Full Speed for 20 miles." [12] This message was received in Haida's plot at 0322. Haida altered course to 225 and went to 28 knots.[13] At 0332 course was altered to 205 then at 0343 course was altered to 180. Commander DeWolfs intention was to "prevent the enemy from getting past to the westward." [14] By intercepting them off Ile de Vierge, the Tribals had a good chance of engaging the Germans before daylight.

At 0359 Athabaskan obtained a radar contact bearing 133 degrees at 14 miles. This was confirmed by Haida at 0402. Course was altered to the east to close. Haida's "Plot" established that the Germans were steering 280 degrees at 24 knots. At 0411 Athabaskan reported "3 echoes" which Haida's 271Q radar confirmed with the third echo being smaller.[15] Commander Dewolf gave the order to engage the enemy at 0412 and both Haida and Athabaskan opened fire with star shell at a range of 7,300 yards. Two minutes later Commander DeWolf signalled Plymouth "2 Enemy Destroyers bearing 115 distance 4 miles course 260 speed unknown bearing 014 Ile de Vierge 6 miles." [16]

When they were illuminated by the star shells, the two German destroyers were completely taken by surprise. They reacted quickly, however, and began to turn away to the South, in keeping with their instructions. The German tactics were to turn and fire torpedoes upon being engaged, which they did. T-27 fired six torpedoes on the wrong bearing, actually at T-24, which had to take evasive action.[17] T-24's after torpedoes were fired on the wrong bearing. The three from the forward mounting were fired on the correct bearing. [18] (See Plot 2).

At 0417 Commander DeWolf ordered a 30 degree turn to port to avoid the expected torpedo tracks. Haida did so. Athabaskan was 400 yards astern. As they commenced the turn, torpedo number three from the forward mounting of T-24 struck Athabaskan at an oblique angle on the port side in the 4-inch magazine and the Wardroom. T-24's other two torpedoes missed astern.

Lieutenant R.B. Hayward, RCN, was Athabaskan's Navigating Officer during this action. In a report he wrote on 3 May 1945 he recalled that:

There were two definite explosions, one light, one heavy, almost simultaneously. The explosion caused the propeller shafts to snap, the Pom Pom to be thrown into the air and the whole of the after - superstructure to be set on fire. The only survivor from "Y" gun reports the stem broke off between "Y" gun ammunition hoists and the Wardroom hatch." [19]

This blast wrecked "X" gun (the twin 4-inch mounting) and "Y" gun (the after 4.7-inch mounting), killing most of the guns' crews. Athabaskan sheered off to port and began to slow. At 0417 Athabaskan signalled Haida "Hit aft." At 0419 Haida altered course 90 degrees to port and began to lay a protective smokescreen around Athabaskan.[20]

Even while Haida was maneuvering to lay

smoke, her guns kept firing, scoring their first hit on T-24 at 0418, and another at 0420. At 0422 T-27 was observed broad on Haida starboard bow and fire was shifted to her. T-24 disappeared into smoke to the east. Haida altered course to keep T-24 ahead and T-27 on the starboard bow. Haida's gunnery was superb as hit after hit was observed. T-27 attempted to head inshore to evade. Hit repeatedly by Haida, a large fire broke out behind her forward gun making it difficult for her Captain to conn the ship. Blinded and ablaze, T-27 ran hard ashore. The crew abandoned ship while still being hit by Haida's salvoes.[21]

Stopped and on fire, Athabaskan had only minutes to live. The torpedo from T-24 had crippled her, but the damage was not fatal. She began to settle by the stern and preparations were made to rig for tow by Haida. The 70-ton pump was being maneuvered aft to control the flooding. As the flooding increased, Athabaskan's Captain, Lieutenant Commander John Stubbs, DSO, ordered "Stand by to Abandon Ship." Athabaskan's Radar Officer, Lieutenant Commander Dunn Lantier requested permission to clear "B" Gun of star shell. Permission was granted. After Athabaskan fired her last round, "B" Gun was raked by small arms fire, killing Able Seaman Hubert J. Peart.[22] Seconds later, at the break of the foc'sle on the port side, a second torpedo struck. As the Canadian Naval Mission Overseas narrative states: "If there had been any doubt among survivors as to the nature of the first hit there could be no difference of opinions in their minds that this was a torpedo." [23] Lieutenant Hayward recalled:

The Captain said that he was going down to his cabin for a moment. On his way back, he looked into the Chart house where Paymaster Lieutenant T.J. Brandson was putting C.B.'s [Confidential Books] and charts into weighted bags.

Returning to the bridge on the port side, he asked who was still on the bridge. Lieutenant J.B. Scott replied that Lieutenant H.B. Hayward, himself and Leading Signaller Thrasher, when the torpedo struck the ship between Nos. 1 and 2 Boiler Rooms on the port side. This caused a terrific explosion throwing half of the boiler rooms into the air. A blanket of oil followed the debris of red-hot shrapnel falling everywhere and put out all the fires except for a small one on the midship Oerlikon gun deck. The after half of the ship sank immediately while the forward half rolled slowly over to port and as soon as the mast touched the water, the after end commenced to sink, the bows lifted into the air and she sank in a vertical position. Almost all those on the port side were instantly killed, while those on the starboard side were badly burnt or blown over the side.[24]

This then is the disputed second explosion. Its effect was fatal. Athabaskan assumed a "sprout position" and sank at 0427. This was sadly recorded in Haida's Ship's Log.[25]

The source of this second torpedo is the mystery. The official record is not clear as to whether or not it was from an E-boat, or from one of the German destroyers. The War Diary of the 4th Torpedo Boat Flotilla states that T-27 and T-24 were the only German units in that area. There were no E-boats operating that night. Therefore, the second torpedo could not have come from an E-boat.

Could the second torpedo have come from one of the German destroyers? Twelve torpedoes were fired at 0415. Of those, nine were fired on the wrong bearing, two missed astern, and the last hit. At the time of the second torpedo hit, T-27 was on fire and aground, and T-24 was eight and a half miles to the east (and therefore five and a half miles outside torpedo range).

However, the actions of MTB 677 and MTB

717 have not been considered. If they copied the reports from C-in-C Plymouth they would have been preparing for action. Knowing that there were only the two Tribals, it would have been tactically prudent to attempt an interception.[26] The minelayers completed their operation at 0315, which would have put the MTBs at the northwest corner of the minefield.[27] This area is exactly 28 miles from the engagement area, which is a 55 minute run at 30 knots. If MTB 677 closed on the engagement area at 0307, it arrived exactly on time to be picked up as the third radar contact at 0411. (See Plot 3).

The MTB would be steering between south southwest and southwest anywhere from 260 to 245 degrees, the same relative direction the Germans did. Athabaskan had this contact as being off their port quarter, bearing 350 degrees at a range of 3,000 to 4,000 yards.[28] When the gunfire commenced at 0411, the MTB had no way of knowing who was shooting at whom. He either slowed, or swung north to get out of the line of fire. The flash of T-24's torpedo hitting Athabaskan acted as a beacon and MTB 677 closed cautiously while attempting to identify the target.

Just what the MTB might have seen on its arrival is but another tragic element in the history of Athabaskan. The excellence of the Western Approaches "Special Forces" Camouflage pattern probably resulted in a misidentification. It is ironic that this camouflage pattern was designed by a British MTB captain.[29] The blend of duck egg blue, off-white and green was designed to make the entire vessel blend into the horizon at night. The MTB never saw Athabaskan's foredeck. As the "split foc'sle" pattern could not be seen and the after end was completely ablaze, identification as a Tribal Class destroyer was impossible. Athabaskan would have looked more like a "flush decked" Elbing.

The effect of this camouflage can also be seen by the German account of the action. When they illuminated, "a number of targets" were detected, none of which were positively identified as destroyers.[30]

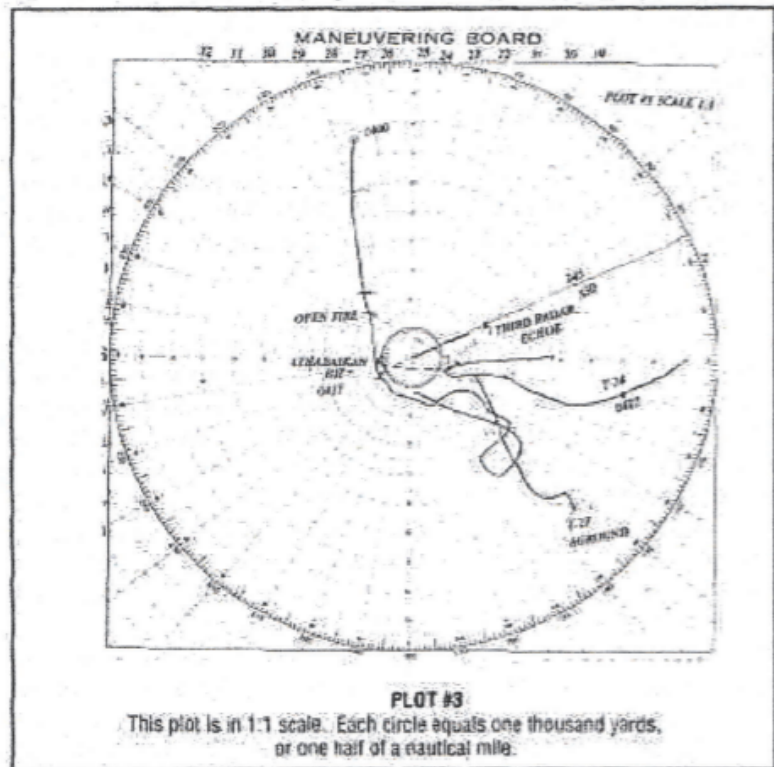
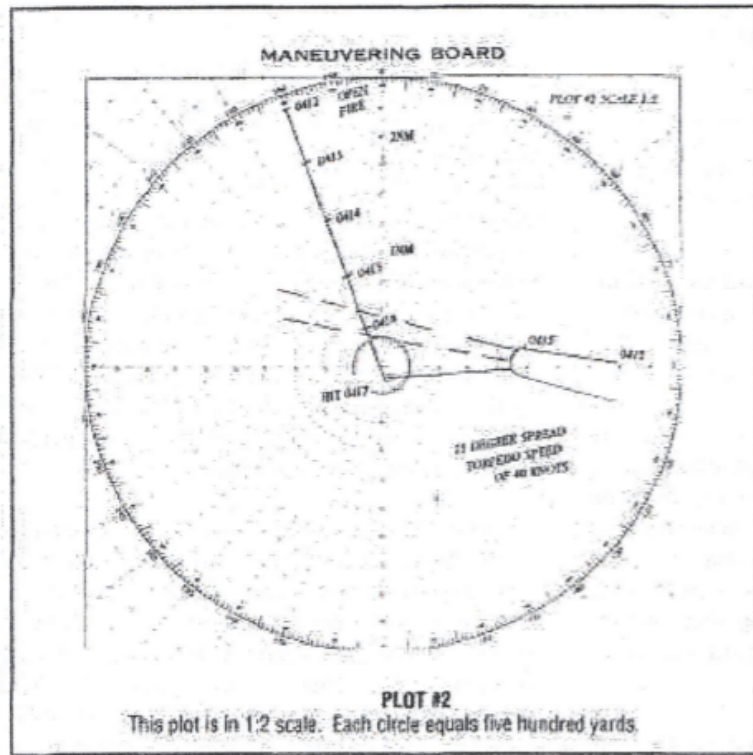
During the action, only Athabaskan was targeted as the Germans could see her gun flashes. (Haida was using flashless cordite having changed over from flash cordite on the morning of the 28th).[31] As Haida could not be seen that led the Germans into thinking that they had been engaged by much larger cruisers.[32] It also had a tragic effect later when Haida returned to the area to pick up survivors. "Some thought at first it was a German ship and were keeping off. They did not know how the battle had fared and feared Haida had been sunk."[33]

As MTB 677 approached the sinking Athabaskan, permission was given to clear "B" Gun of star shell. The flash of gun fire would have appeared to have come from nowhere, as well as expressing hostile intent. MTB 677 would have replied with machine gun fire down the bearing of the flash. This resulted in the raking of "B" Gun and the death of Able Seaman Peart. Athabaskan survivor George Parsons has repeatedly stated that: "I saw the son of a bitch go across the bow like a banshee.

I saw the white track go into the port side."[34] The resultant explosion of the boilers caused a "large mushroom of white smoke" which was reported as having been seen from 30 miles away.[35]

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CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT ISSUE



HAROLD (BRYCE) DIXON
Commissioning Crewmember, 1943

Minooka, Illinois, USA

HD – Harold Dixon

SJ – Steve Jackson, Friends Of Haida

SJ How old were you in August 1943 when Haida was commissioned?

HD I was just turning 20 when HAIDA was commissioned. I'm 91 now.

SJ What did you do before the war?

HD I was working at Ottawa Car and Aircraft assembling trainer planes that were sent over during the war. The hangar was at Lansdown Field. I used to ride a bike I had to work when I ended up in an accident when a car ran into me. After I came out of the hospital and went back to my job and found all my tools had been stolen. So I walked out and joined the Navy. I still was only 17 at that time but I got in right away as I told them I was an amateur radio operator. I had been since I was 15 when I lived in Chicago.

SJ What was your opinion of Captain DeWolf?

HD He was the greatest and I am sure every other crew member felt the same.

SJ Did you know that he was sea-sick and had to sleep sitting up?

HD Yes I saw that by accident which I never mentioned to anyone. As far as being sea sick I did not know that.

SJ Did you see the notches on the bridge rail? Where were they located?

HD This is new to me although my action stations were far from the bridge. The radio room kept the receiver on frequency and the transmitter on frequency. I could work both cw and voice from my location (I think that Jack

Rein was the other operator that always did that.)

SJ How did you fare in the Murmansk runs?

HD It was 0800 that the Scharnhorst had been sighted and heading for our convoy and all of a sudden it turned tail and headed for home. We tailed the battleship staying about 7 miles back and the Duke of York was firing star shells no sooner did they we fire them the Duke let loose and got the first shot. We could not do anything more and the Duke and his two escorts closed in and I can't recall which one first fired their fish. The rest is History.

SJ How was the food?

HD Oh, back at Plymouth our home base the crew got a little mad. We used to get bread from shore and it was lousy. So like good Irish we opened the port holes and threw all the loaves overboard. They was a lot of hell about it, but it was settled I guess by the Captain. We received our own flour and whatever and our cooks baked the bread.

SJ Were you ever in the Wardroom?

HD That was when I saw Captain DeWolf sitting up. I went to the wardroom by the como Officer.

SJ When Haida steered Hardover, what happened to the radio operators chairs?

HD I don't know I was at action stations on the Bridge and off came my head phones and I got thrown into my cubbyhole where I operated from. [Headache space? - Ed]

SJ What was your opinion of the Officers?

HD Gee, I don't know too much about all the Officers and really I had contact with the Communications Officer.



Our decorated mascot THUMPER at his Action Station with Jock MacGregor after sinking U-971, June 25, 1944.

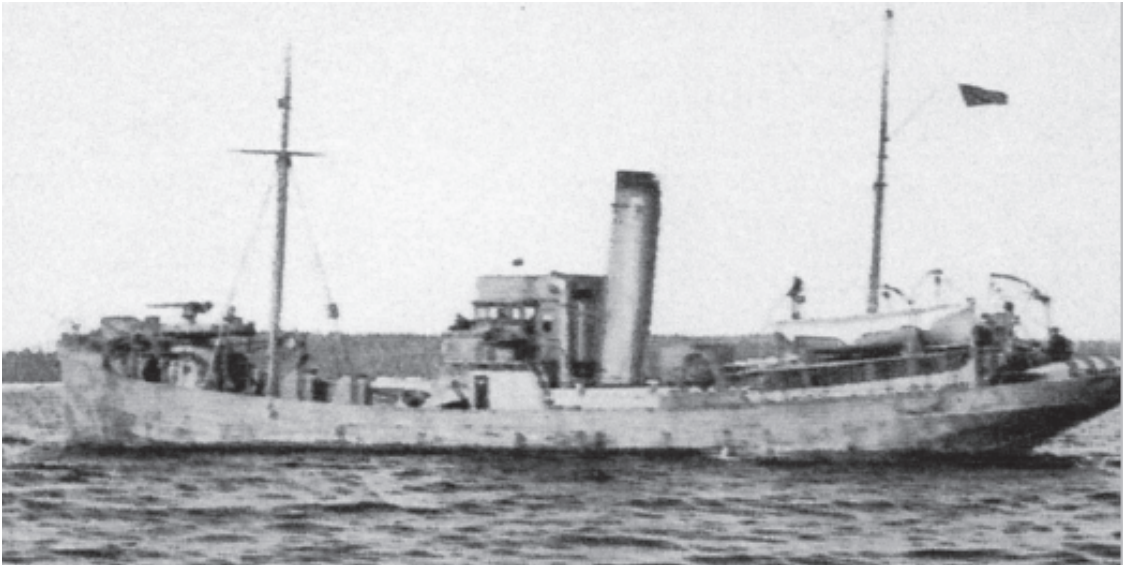
Thanks to Peter Dixon



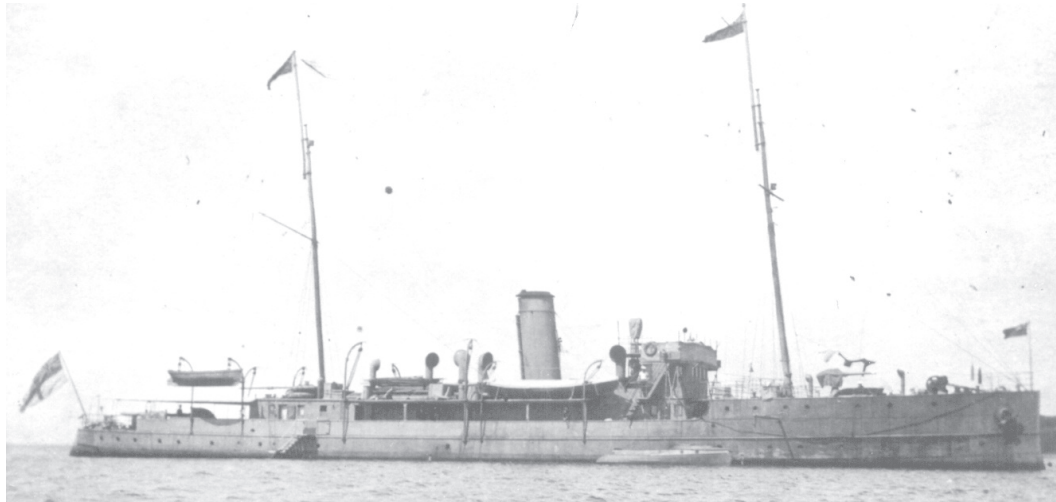
THE CAT OF HMS BELFAST

War? Is there a War? What War is that?

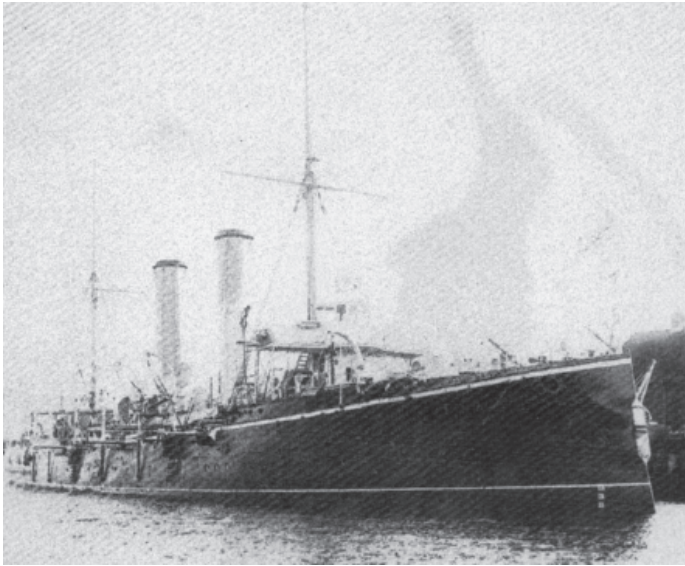
Thanks to Ken Lloyd



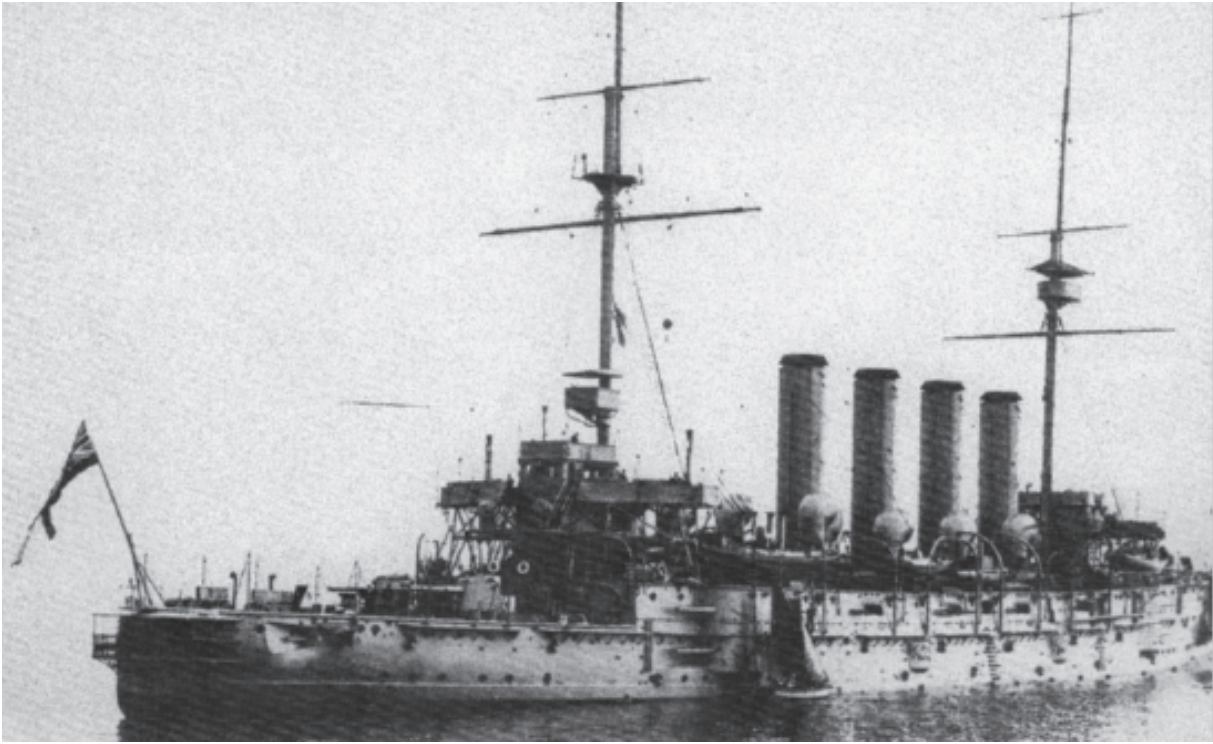
SHIP A



SHIP B



SHIP C



SHIP D



SHIP E

ANSWERS - See the last page.

FAUX PAS WITH HAIDA'S WHITE ENSIGN

Andy Barber - Vice-President FOH

This incident took place in October 1954. There is a Naval tradition of merchant ships saluting a "Man of War" whenever they approach each other or are in visual proximity. It entails the merchant ship showing respect by lowering her national flag that's flying on the back (stern) of the ship. The warship, in this case the Haida, replies by lowering (dipping) her White Ensign and returning it back up to the set position thus acknowledging the salute from the merchant ship. We were traversing the Suez Canal on our way home to Halifax. I was given the task to ensure that this protocol was carried out whenever it occurred. The Suez Canal is a major waterway and there was a huge amount of traffic that day. Ships passed each other mere yards apart in some instances.

So hour after hour I performed this time honoured tradition dating back in time before Admiral Nelson at Trafalgar. The British Empire at that time laid claim to all of the seas and oceans in the world as a superpower.

Therefore all vessels were compelled to dip their national flag in recognition of a British warship. Failure to do so would have very serious circumstances. This is not the case in the current era. Presently merchant ships can opt out of doing this, especially if they're from an unfriendly country.

Anyhow, after several hours of doing this I was becoming a bit buggy eyed. I came upon a merchant ship that I thought was dutifully dipping her flag and as mentioned, I replied by dipping our White Ensign. I kept my eye on that ship and noticed that he hadn't returned his ensign to the set position on the flag staff. I thought that this was kind of strange so I peered through my binoculars only to find that he had another line close to his flag that he was hanging his pants on to dry. Much to my embarrassment I discovered that I had dipped our White Ensign to **A PAIR OF PANTS**.

I glanced up at the bridge and didn't see or hear any negative reactions to my doing this. Unfortunately one of my fellow signalmen was standing nearby. Needless to say I took an unmerciful ribbing for the next few days.



ANDREW BARBER



+ **60 YEARS** = ANDREW BARBER

HMCS HAIDA — THE ONLY SURVIVING TRIBAL

[This wonderful historical article was sent to us by Phyllis Kidd. - Ed.]

By Peter Ward

In summer of 1963, HMCS Haida made a farewell tour of the Great Lakes to say goodbye after more than 20 years of service in the RCN. Her record as Canada's most fighting warship was secure. She was a veteran of those grueling deadly Murmansk convoys to Russia, a familiar actor in dashing actions in the English Channel, were she was in on the sinking 18 German warships, including a submarine, and proud wearer of battle credits earned during two tours of duty off Korea during that war.

She was scheduled to be scrapped in 1964, after an illustrious career, to end up as concrete reinforcing rods, or razor blades. It simply wasn't fitting.

When Haida visited Toronto that summer of 1963, she took civilians and reservists on short cruises of Lake Ontario. Among those who sailed with Haida's last crew on those short trips were Neil Bruce, Air Canada pilot and naval enthusiast, Alan Howard, curator of Toronto's Maritime Museum, David Kidd, public relations executive and Navy lover, Norm Simpson, Toronto lawyer and former Naval officer, and me, Peter Ward, reserve naval officer at Toronto's HMCS York, military editor of the Toronto Telegram, and son of an officer who was killed on HMCS Athabaskan when she was sunk while in company with Haida, April 29, 1944, in the English Channel. We got our heads together and deplored Haida's imminent destruction. Neil Bruce thought something might be done about it, and he was the driving force in forming Haida, Inc., an organization to try and save Haida.

Neil made a trip to Bermuda to see Haida's former CO, retired Admiral Harry DeWolfe to get his views. We all sought help from other senior naval types. Neil also made several trips to Ottawa to meet with defence and naval officials. We lobbied with politicians, federally to stop the scrapping of Haida and sell her to us, and we lobbied locally, so we'd have someplace to park the ship, if we succeeded in getting her.

The then Defence Minister Paul Hellyer was a Toronto Liberal MP, and he proved to be sympathetic. Neil Bruce met with Mr. Hellyer and a dozen MPs in Ottawa to explain the proposal. In July, 1964, Neil signed the proposal for Haida Inc. to buy the ship. Phil Givens was mayor of Toronto, and he liked the idea of having Haida in his city. Mr. Hellyer arranged that we get the ship for \$20,000, to be paid over 10 years, with no interest, and the first payment deferred a year. Mr. Givens fixed it so that we could moor Haida at the foot of York St., facing the city. All we had to do now was arrange how to pick up the ship, pay for getting her to Toronto, and set up some kind of staff to watch over the ship until she could be made ready for her new career as a floating museum.

Neil Bruce became our president, lobbying fiercely for Haida's survival and for donations to help the cause. Norm Simpson did all our legal work, incorporating the organization and getting us charitable status so donations could be deductible for income tax purposes. We were advised that we could pick up the ship at Sorel, Quebec, in late summer of 1964, but it would be our responsibility to get her to Toronto.

We contacted MacAllister Towing in Montreal, and they agreed to tow the ship to Toronto from Sorel, for about \$6,500, and the company said they would donate \$1,000 of that back to Haida Inc.

That still left us with substantial expenses, plus insurance and arrangements for a watch keeping crew on Haida when she arrived in Toronto. To cover expenses, we five marched to the Toronto Dominion Bank, and with Norm Simpson acting as our lawyer, we signed pledges on our houses to guarantee a \$20,000 line of credit. Some wives were more enthusiastic about this than others.

At HMCS York a call went out for volunteers to man Haida as she was towed through the Seaway from Sorel to Toronto. York's executive officer then Lieutenant Commander Bill Wilson, was to be in command. Lieutenant Commander Jack McQuarrie was to be our electrical officer, Lieutenants Bob Ellis and Peter Ward were to be Fo'csle Officer and Quarterdeck Officer respectively. We planned to go to Montreal from Toronto by train.

and then the Navy had agreed to pick us up in a bus for the trip to Sorel.

Jack McQuarrie did some interesting advance planning. I recall he figured out a way to light the ship once were on board, although Haida would have no power. Jack planned to take a 110 volt gas generator with us, then hook up the ship's emergency wiring so we would have power. Warships run on 220 volt power, so with our 110 volt generator, we'd have to get new light bulbs, except for fluorescent bulbs, which would work on the different voltage. When we checked in for the train, there was some difficulty convincing the porters that our generator was hand baggage, but in the end, they went along with things, although it made the over night sleeper crowded, with the generator stuffed under a berth.

The Navy bus picked us up in Montreal, then drove us to Sorel, on the south side of the St. Lawrence River. Naval authorities were there to hand over the ship, and as a member of Haida Inc., I signed for the ship. Two tugs from MacAllister were waiting to start the trip to Toronto, but first we had a few things to do. We dispatched a couple of hands to the local super market to buy several dozen 110 volt

light bulbs. Jack McQuarrie supervised hooking up the emergency wiring, and we lashed the generator down behind B gun. McQuarrie had also brought with him some Motorola walkie—talkies which we planned to use for communications between Haida and the tugs.

It was almost noon by the time we left Sorel under tow, with one tug ahead and one hooked on behind to control the ship in the current of the river. LCDR Wilson sounded very professional as he used the walkie—talkies ~ "Warship Haida calling tug MacAllister. Come in MacAllister." Well those French Canadian tug masters put up with us for perhaps an hour, and then they turned off their radios, having had quite enough of amateur radio games. We proceeded up river to the Lachine Locks, without further contact. We had three or four Coleman stoves to cook our rations, which we'd brought with us, and considering conditions, we ate rather well. Not only that, one of our enterprising number had brought along some dark rum — close as we could get to issue Pusser's rum, and we had an "up spirits" in Haida's wardroom for all hands.

Going through the Seaway locks, we hardly scraped a fender, which says quite a bit for MacAllister seamanship. It seemed as though Haida was eager to take up her new role in Toronto. As we hit the upper St. Lawrence, a dense fog settled over us. It was so bad that we lost sight of the towing tugs, which had anchored just off Brockville, to wait for the weather to clear. We had no idea where we were, and our towing tugs were still not answering the radio. All we had for "navigation" was an Esso roadmap of Ontario. Picture the surprise of passing pleasure boats to find a Tribal Class destroyer anchored off their marina, with a uniformed lieutenant commander leaning over rail with an Esso roadmap, and asking: "Where are we."

As Bill Wilson was leaning over the rail searching for directions, the bowl of his trademark pipe fell into the river. Great consternation as the pipe floated with the current down the ship's side. One enterprising hand ran to the quarterdeck rail with a bucket on a heaving line, and managed to rescue Bill's pipe. After the trip, we swiped the pipe and had it mounted on a lovely piece of wood, stem attached to the mouthpiece with a silver chain, for a presentation to Bill.

One of the MacAllister tugs left us just before we hit Lake Ontario. As we met the mild swells of the lake, the ship gently pitched, coming alive. All this while, Jack McQuarrie had been working on Haida's big search lights and signal lamps. He wanted them operating when we hit Toronto. Just before dusk we saw the lights of Toronto. Haida and her tug anchored off shore, so that then arrival could be a daylight celebration. As we waited at anchor, the fireworks display of the Canadian National Exhibition lit up the sky, which we took as a welcome.

Next morning we were towed through the Western Gap into Toronto Harbour. We sailed through an armada of sail boats, power boats, and outboards — capped off by Toronto's fireboat, playing all hoses to the heavens, and like the other vessels, blaring a welcome with a siren, accompanied by a variety of horns and bells. The tug nudged us into a berth at the foot of York St., facing the city.

That evening, Defence Minister Hellyer was joined by three former Haida commanding officers - Admiral DeWolfe, Rear Admiral R.P. Welland, and Commodore J. Charles - for the official turnover. There was quite a crowd, including Mayor Givens.

Before turning Haida over to us, the Navy had been advised to make sure the guns could not be used, and that no deadly weapons would be included. In fact, spot welds had been put in the breech of each gun. The Navy, however, had slathered the breech with grease before the welds were applied, so it was a simple

matter to smack the weld with a chisel and it would pop out. The Navy had also loaded down the ship with things that might be useful in Haida's new role as a museum. We discovered a selection of old naval uniforms, foul weather gear, hat boxes, hammocks, and even a cut-away torpedo to display for visitors. There was plenty of work to do before the ship could be opened to the public, meanwhile she had to be manned with a watchman 24 hours a day. That autumn and winter were spent making Haida ready for the public. At times, it was pretty traumatic. Haida was not meant to spend the winter in fresh water, without power. There a multitude of pipes and openings in a ship, for everything from small waste exhaust openings, to the huge condenser intakes for the boilers. If water in any of these openings froze, it could crack the hull and sink the ship. That meant we had to maintain a slow trickle of water through each of these openings all winter, and have pumps running steadily to keep the interior water level under control. We all had nightmares about Haida sinking at her moorings, and we five being responsible for damages. Many of us received emergency calls during that season's cold winter nights because water in the engine room was getting too deep. The staff would have to be turned out to handle the crisis.

That autumn Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip visited Canada to honor the centennial of the Charlottetown meeting which was the prelude to Confederation. I was one of the Toronto Telegram reporter/photographers assigned to cover the visit. In Quebec City, the press group was invited to a reception with the Queen and Prince Philip on board the royal yacht Britannia. I made a bee line for Prince Philip. His love of things naval is well known, so I knew he would be interested. I told him about our efforts to save Haida and asked him if he would become our patron. Philip looked outraged. He reared back from me and said: "You have no business asking me something like that."

There are proper and complex channels for such a request.” Then his expression took on a conspiratorial look and he continued: “Here’s how you do it.”

He gave me chapter and verse of how to make the official request, and once back in Toronto, I followed his instructions to the letter. Within a month Philip had become our official patron.

When Philip came to Toronto in 1966, he was annoyed that no visit to the Haida had been included in his schedule. He insisted that time for a Haida visit be allowed. They gave him 15 minutes. We were thrilled at the prospect of playing host to our august patron, even if it was to be so brief. In fact, he came, toured the ship, went to the wardroom for a drink, and stayed for nearly 90 minutes, throwing the day’s schedule into a cocked hat. Several times since then I’ve met Philip in the course of duties as a reporter. Each time, he took me aside and asked for a detailed report on Haida’s progress.

Haida wasn’t ready for the public until July 9, 1965. By that time we had hired retired LCDR Frank Barlow as Haida’s master. From that date until October, 1970, Haida was visited by 315,027 people. We decided early on that there would be no fee charged for school children or sea cadets, and slowly finances began to improve. Haida’s chief expeditor, Dave Kidd, was instrumental in raising

\$40,000. Donations were offered ranging from piggy bank change, to sizeable cheques from commercial companies.

In 1969 we actually had enough to have Haida towed to Port Weller to have all her hull openings welded shut, get her sandblasted, and tidied up with a coat of below the waterline paint. Port Weller gave us a rock bottom price, and even at, the dockyard crew took up a collection for Haida.

In 1970, Haida Inc. turned the ship over to the province of Ontario, and she was to be parked at the Canadian National Exhibition, very close to the spot were World War II artillery guns, a tank, and a retired Lancaster Bomber were on display as a tribute to veterans.

It was at Ontario place where Haida really shone again, particularly during the summer concerts when the band played the 1812 Overture. Remember how those welds meant to disable Haida’s guns had popped out so easily? Well, at the crucial moment of the 1812 Overture, those guns were regularly fired — only with blanks, but here she was being a warship again.

Personally I was sorry to see Haida go from Toronto to Hamilton, home of Sheila Copps, then Minister of Parks and Recreation. But the government of Ontario wasn’t taking care of the ship, and she was in grave danger. If Parks Canada didn’t take the ship, and spend considerable money on her, she might well have died at her moorings. If she had to go to Hamilton to live, then so be it.

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658 Catharine Street North, Hamilton ON L8L 4V7 OR visit www.hmcshaida.com to join, volunteer or donate.

Tax receipts are issued at the end of each month.

*Redeemable with membership card in our Gift Shop at time of visit only.

This space for my message to you has shrunk, and shrunk again, due to the excellent contributions that we have received! Up Spirits is capped at 32 pages due to our postal tariff.

If you have a memory to share, please do send it to me at: **hmcshaida@bellnet.ca**

If you are receiving our print edition, and would prefer the (full colour!) electronic version, then **please send me your e-mail address**. Truthfully, we would rather purchase paint for Haida than postage stamps.

Please plan to visit your favourite Tribal Destroyer next month. But be warned that **HMCS HAIDA IS ADDICTIVE!** If you get too close, she will capture your heart, for life!

TASSIE'S BOOT Tim Lewin, England

In 1943 when Ashanti was ploughing the Russian furrow with Haida & Huron, Ashanti had in her wardroom an Australian Lieutenant called Alan "Tassie" Richmond (he was from Tasmania).

While escorting a convoy, they ran into such foul weather that the ship, light through lack of oil by then, was rolling ferociously, well past 45 degrees.

Preparing to go on watch, Tassie prised himself out of his wardroom chair (which was bolted to the deck), and as he stood up the ship rolled away from him forcing him to run down the slope, up the bulkhead and stop himself by planting his black rubber-soled seaboot firmly on the deckhead.

Very quickly, someone put a picture frame round the boot print, and they dined out long and hard on the tale of Tassie's boot. "It was so rough, we were walking on the ceiling!"

GREYHOUNDS OF THE FLEET

A truly memorable site to visit having served with the Navy in the UK it was also nostalgic.... Known as the "Greyhounds of the fleet" with their speed and agility these ships served with much notoriety & distinction. To give them their speed as much weight as possible such as armour plating was reduced leaving them vulnerable to attack but nimble to evade such attacks.

A little known fact in this weight control is that a ship of this size if given one extra coat of paint would **add over 40 tons to her weight !!** Hence diligent control during construction was exercised.

A great ship to visit & walkabout to see for example the "open bridge with little or no protection from the elements when crossing the Atlantic in winter storms!! Enjoy Cheers !

<http://www.tripadvisor.ca/members-citypage/ELTAURUS/g154990>

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We hope you enjoyed this edition of "Up spirits"

INTERVIEW WITH RALPH FRAYNE

Oct 19, 2014

EDITOR'S NOTE:

This interview is not for everyone. If you know the Tribals well, then you will be able to follow Mr. Frayne's memories. I have made just a few mild edits. This is the second and last installment.

RF – Ralph Frayne

SJ – Steve Jackson, Friends Of Haida

SJ You say that you got word that Athabaskan had been hit. Now you were a gunner on B Gun. How did you learn that? Were there rumours all over the ship, so everybody knew?

RF NO, it was not rumour! We were constantly kept up to snuff of any news from the Bridge. All the things that were taking place would go down, would be repeated by our A Gunner. There was A Gunner and B Gunner. A Gunner was the one on the right hand side, B gun was on the left. The A Gun man had communication with the Bridge. So everything would come down to him within a second. Every crew member would know.

SJ OK

RF It was a good ship. Aah the Athabaskan was a good ship too.

SJ It was the sister ship.

RF Yup. Remember that's the one where the woman didn't break the bottle.

SJ Well the name was changed too, wasn't it?

RF Yup. That's right. They did that, too.

SJ And that's bad luck.

RF We thought that's bad luck. Now sailors are very superstitious. And we just didn't like how that came about. Which was probably stupid on our part, because it could happen on any boat.

SJ You were in harm's way. I got photos of the Magazine last week.

RF On the Haida?

SJ Yes. There's a lever that holds every shell in. You have to pull the lever up to release the shell.

RF I always felt sorry for the poor man down in the bottom, because he wouldn't know what was really happening. He would be just pushing shells. Knowing damn right well that if we got hit, he wouldn't make it. Whereas up on B Gun, we figured we'll make it one way or another.

SJ You could jump! Well, the engine room and the boiler room, they're sealed in there too, aren't they?

RF Yes.

SJ Now, the engines made a whine, did they? Was that the sound you remember?

RF I couldn't answer you on that, I don't know. We weren't allowed, they were sealed in. When action started, they were locked in.

SJ You needed permission to open any hatch?

RF Yes.

SJ I'm told it can be cold in the boiler room because it's just ambient air coming in, to feed the boilers, right? In the Arctic, it's Arctic air in the boiler room.

RF Well we had these air vents that go down. And the air would go right straight down so yes it could be cold. I was never down there during that time. It was quite the adventure!

SJ Yes. And what did you do after the war?

RF I went back to school. I said this is crazy. I had only grade 10. I went back to high school. I'm not quite sure of the time periods. I got my Grade 11, 12 and 13 in I think it was 4 months. And then I went to University because I had to have a BA to go in for Law. By that stage I'd made up my mind that I was going in for Law. So I did 3 years of University in 2. A short 2 – probably about 18 months. And then I went into Law itself.

SJ You were a good student.

RF We worked, God we worked. We really did – I'm not just making that up. It was morning, noon and night. We worked. And you can do it if you want to try hard enough. So I was happy! That's the story of my life.

SJ Well done!



http://www.forposterityssake.ca/RCN-SHIPS-COMPANY/HMCS_HAIDA_G63-01.htm



SEAMAN RALPH FRAYNE
Above the Captain's right shoulder.



CONTRARIAN SEAMAN

Ralph Frayne wore his cap *sloping down to his LEFT SHOULDER.*

**THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY
THOUGHT OTHERWISE!**

RF And that's the sum and substance of my life. I was a St. Catharines boy. Went to Grantham Public School out on Queenston Street just before the Cemetery property.

SJ What effect did Haida have on the crew members? How were their lives changed because they served on Haida?

RF I couldn't answer on that. I can't even answer you for myself, how my life was changed.

SJ Taught you discipline.

RF Oh, we had lots of discipline! There was no screwing around.

I was the only seaman who served a watch in the crow's nest. A ship had come up and I didn't report it. It wasn't DeWolf. DeWolf pulled me out of it. The Officer who was mad at me for not reporting the ship put me up in the crow's nest. Understand I was only up there about an hour and a half. And when the skipper came up and saw me up there he said "Get him down. Give him extra work, but get him down."

SJ How often was DeWolf on the Bridge? Half the time, or ...

RF All the time. He had a cabin up there as well. He slept up there. I can remember him sitting, sort of slumped over in a chair, sound asleep. You just can't go indefinitely. But he was up there at any time.

I can remember when walking from the stern up to the bow, outside on the deck there was a lifeline and it had lines that you could hold onto and walk along. I can remember my feet hanging out in the air, holding onto the line for dear life. We would go up waves and come down and sometimes the bow of the ship would disappear, but always come back up again.

SJ Sailors speak of the big green wave

and it's as high as the mast?

RF No. No, I think they make that story up. When we came back from overseas, that was the worst storm that we ever hit. It was just off Newfoundland. And yes that was the day I held onto that rope walking from one end of the ship to the other holding onto that rope for all I was worth!

RF A rather funny thing happened. This was in Scapa Flow, northern Scotland. It was a beautiful night, very, very warm so I decided I was going to sleep out on the deck. So I took my hammock out and slung it up on the deck. I of course peeled all my clothes off. That was a rule we did, and got in the hammock. Come morning, a beautiful morning like looking out here. And a group of English WRENs, they were delivering something. They came up and they saw me there. And they knew that I'd have to get up, and they wouldn't go away. They stayed on that dock and you could hear them laughing. So I finally did something that I've only done twice in my life. I said alright, darnit, you want to have fun, I jumped quickly out of my bed and I had no clothes on, mooned them, and then I grabbed my pants. You could hear them just a-howling!

SJ The second Captain was Welland, Robert Welland?

RF I don't know. I think you're right.

SJ He was only 25. His mother wrote him a letter saying "Bobby, aren't you too young at 25 to be Captain of a Destroyer?"

RF I think he would be, yes.

SJ Squids or depth charges?

RF We had depth charges, 16 on deck ready to fire. Our #3 Gun could fire over the Bridge. It could be used for AA. I had a wonderful time!

FORDES	JAMES W.			
Frayne	Ralph	A.B.	V-386	Mother, Stella Father, George D.

SJ Were you ever in the Wardroom?

RF Sure! Cleaning it. Yes. And, we could be nasty. We had one officer, he was a snotty, you know what a snotty is?

SJ Yes, a young English Officer with a runny nose.

RF They're not really commissioned yet, but they're headed for a commission. We had a snotty who was a bit of a prick, so we would make his bed up for him – he slept in a hammock as well. Making his bed up for him and making it ready that was one of our jobs. Then one night I thought screw you, I hung it up all right, but I knew that after a very short while it was gonna come down. And it did!

SJ There's a way to tie that knot, is there? And what did that earn you?

RF No, I wasn't blamed. Either they didn't figure out who had done it or what, I don't know. But nobody said anything about it. We knew that he hadn't been hurt, but we knew that the hammock had tumbled down! I think the Officers themselves laughed as much as we did.

SJ Can you tell me about the Rum ration?

RF You had to be, if you didn't want to take the rum you would receive six cents. So everybody I knew of took the rum. Or, you could save the rum up. It was not pure rum so it would only keep for about four days. But you could save it up, bottle it and trade it, particularly to the Americans. Now the Americans got cigarettes and we didn't have cigarettes so they were only too glad to provide us with lots of cigarettes and we'd pass up this rum.

SJ Their ships were dry?

RF No alcohol on American ships. They were dry, dry.

I remember it was up in Russia, I think, the first time we started trading with the Americans. Boy they were just about jumping over the side to get hold of the rum. And we were grabbing their cigarettes.

SJ Now they had better food, didn't they?

RF I do not know about that. I think

probably pretty well standard. I don't know – I never ate on an American ship so I couldn't say.

SJ And how was your food.

RF Oh, it was fine. It was good. We had standards in our mess and we had set days that you were, it was your responsibility. The table would be set and one man would go down and would get the food, bring it up and dish it out to the ten people waiting. And we tried to, tried to keep manners. We tried to not be a bunch of pigs. We had rules about it. Everybody didn't have to be sitting down when it came, but you weren't to be "eat and run" or anything of that nature. So we just tried to be legitimate. That's how that worked.

SJ How does one carry the food tray down to the lower mess, without spilling it?

RF Food tray? Well you gotta remember that the men slept up on what you might class as D Deck. You didn't take food down below. The engineers, oh yeah, the engineers slept below.

SJ They did not spill food while going down through the hatch, even while the ship was rolling?

RF No, that did not come up. I never saw anything like that.

SJ I think the best job would be the helmsman in the wheelhouse - he's warm and dry down there.

RF The helmsman is not down there. When you refer to the helmsman – the man who is actually spining the wheel, or?

SJ Yes.

RF Oh, he's up on the bridge. He's not down below.

SJ If you go to the ASDIC station and then crawl in.

RF OK, the ASDIC station is up on the top. When you come out of the ASDIC Station and walk around to your left or right then you come to the bridge. There was also a ladder, a walkway down the middle of the ship that you could use too.

It was dangerous. You had to use a guideline to hold onto. When we got into really bad weather they had a guideline even down on the lower deck, where it would not be quite a crazy movement. I used that guideline more than once just to be safe.

I got the advice: "Always look busy. They won't bother you if you look busy." Anyway, I always tried to look busy. When I first went on the Haida I got hold of a clipboard and I walked up and down the ship with that clipboard and a pencil on my ear. I'd go down to the back, visit for awhile, walk like Hell, really stride along! Up to the bow, then back again and I did that for two days. And finally the Warrant Officer said, "Frayne! What are you doing?" I said, "I'm looking for a job." He said "You've GOT one!" So I worked thereafter.

SJ Thank you very much, Mr. Frayne!

RF OK. It was a lot of fun. I should not consider it as fun. It was a war. It's just that I was not the best - don't quote me that way - I was not the best seaman in the world. I did my job, I always looked busy.

SJ Well, you were very good on B Gun!

RF We did well on the B Gun, yes. We out-fired. We stored the contents. As soon as the gun was loaded, it was fired. We didn't spend any time in between. And it was twice that we had to get the other guns to bring us up

ammunition. We had been putting them through so fast.

SJ How did you feel about the torpedos? Haida had only four. Was it an effective weapon?

RF For us we, we had a skipper DeWolf who wouldn't waste big shells on a nothing. We had four torpedos and we never fired them. He said there was nothing there that warranted it. Now we were the decoy, if you can call it that, trying to get the Scharnhorst to come out. And he said I'll prove it to you. We'll use the torpedos on it. He radioed back "We are in position to go after the Scharnhorst". They said "Maintain your line, do not change". So we never did fire them. He'd always say they were too expensive, too big a piece of weapon to waste on anything small. It would've been nice if we could have.

SJ Well thank you very much. This is my Haida cap.

RF I see that. Good! What's the DD?

SJ DDE215 is the ship's number now.

RF Oh it is?

SJ It's the NATO designation.

RF Well I'm very glad to have met you.

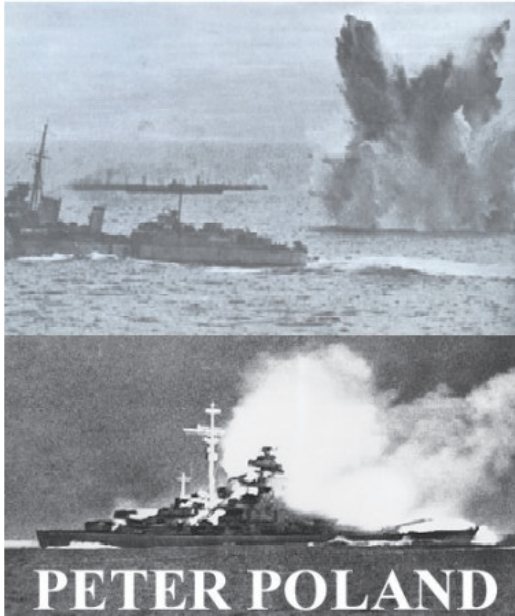
SJ Yes, I really appreciate having this recorded. It needs to be shared!

END OF PART TWO



Ralph and Alice at home at
Windwood Farms,
Beamsville, ON

HANDS TO ACTION STATIONS



BOOK REVIEW

HANDS TO ACTION STATIONS - Memoirs of a very young Naval Officer (1939 - 1945)

This book is a page-turner! I read it in three enjoyable evenings. I learned a great deal about WW2 naval warfare tactics, and the traditions of the Royal Navy. This book is only available in Kindle Edition, and it costs under three dollars. I used the Kindle Cloud Reader on a desktop PC - very comfortable to read.

- Steve Jackson

"STOP MAKING SMOKE"

Peter Poland

Dawn action stations was sounded by bugle about an hour before dawn every day, the call of the bugle being accompanied by a continual note on the alarm buzzers and the accompanying pipe of "Hands to dawn action stations".

The object of dawn action stations was to be ready for action at first light when the visibility increased from a few hundred yards to upwards of twenty miles in a matter of a few minutes, revealing any ships which would have been unseen in the dark. The only R.D.F that we had at that time was for aircraft detection and as a rangefinder for the main armament. We had no R.D.F capable of detecting surface vessels; it was possible for a darkened ship to pass as close as a mile or two by night without being sighted.

We waited anxiously while the armament was brought to the ready, receivers lined up and checked, firing circuits tested. Then binoculars raised, everyone on the bridge, the captain, the Officer of the Watch, the Navigator, the Midshipmen and the Yeoman of signals, searched the horizon in the hope of a sighting. Usually there was nothing to see, a clear horizon. The Captain, disappointed,

would then order us to revert to defense stations, watch and watch, again. We were all disappointed. At this stage of the war there were always enemy warships at sea in the Atlantic and there was always the chance that one of them could be within visibility distance.

There was one dawn when we thought that our patience had been rewarded. It was in early April. We had been sent to patrol to the south of the Denmark Strait to intercept the pocket battleship "Scheer" believed to be on passage back to Germany. The "Scheer" was a small, pocket battleship with eleven inch guns and a maximum speed of twenty six knots. She would have been easy game for us.

One morning the quiet of the dawn action stations was interrupted by shout from the port lookout.

"Ship in sight, Sir. Red 50."

"Very good," I acknowledged. There was no need for me to pass on the report; everyone on the bridge had their binoculars trained on the ship. I looked as well. There was no doubt about it, the mast, the upper structure and the top of a funnel of a ship of war and a major war vessel at that. None of us had any doubt but that we had intercepted the "Scheer."

The Captain lowered his binoculars.
"Officer of the Watch, bring the armament to the ready. And Yeoman, stand by to make the challenge."

The Officer of the Watch passed the orders to the director control tower. I watched as first the director then the two massive turrets trained round to port, the guns rising to near maximum elevation.

The Officer of the Watch received a report from the director and passed it on to the Captain.

"Main armament ready, Sir."

"Very good," the Captain turned to the Yeoman. "Make the challenge", he ordered. The challenge consisted of a three letter group which changed every four hours. The reply was also a three letter group. The Yeoman was already at the twenty inch signalling light.

He sent the signal at once then repeated it three times.

"No reply, Sir," he reported

"Give her one more go, Yeoman,"

"Still no reply, Sir."

The Captain turned to the Officer of the watch
"Full ahead," he ordered. "Bring her twenty degrees to port."

I watched as the two ponderous turrets

trained further ahead to counteract the swing to port.

I glanced at the Captain. He seemed about to give the order to open fire, an order which would unleash five one ton shells onto an unsuspecting enemy. I wondered how accurate our first salvo would be, how long it would be before we saw the flashes of return fire.

Then we all saw it at once; a signal light flashing from high up in the superstructure of our expected enemy.

"From C.S.2, Sir" reported the yeoman.

"STOP MAKING SMOKE."

The Captain turned and glared at me. One of the responsibilities of a midshipman of the watch was to warn the engine room if the boilers made smoke.

The Officer of the Watch turned to me.

"Mid, you should have noticed that. Inform the engine room at once"

So the failure of the cruiser, "Edinburgh" as she turned out to be, to keep a proper watch had resulted in my incurring the wrath of both the Captain and the Officer of the Watch.

When I subsequently came to write up my journal I got into further trouble for making a few caustic comments on Flagships that didn't keep a proper lookout.

COLE'S PROJECT



Hi Andy,

I just wanted to pass along the picture of Cole and his project. He won 3rd place and will be going on the Regional Heritage Fair on April 23 which is being hosted at Grey Roots Museum & Archives. I have some other pictures I will forward to you shortly.

Thank you for sending the information he used the new material as part of the display. We will be sure to come down and visit in the summer.

Regards,
Cathy M.



SIGNALS HERITAGE DAY. 8th March 2015

How are you feeling?
 "Cold, but really cool!" The young Cadet shivered in the snow and repeated "really cool". His Heliograph flashed its message across the icy car park, then spying an empty office its circle of light bounced off the windows and disappointingly failed to activate the light sensor alarm at which our cadet so hopefully aimed the heliograph. "Really cool".





The Visual Signals Team of the Hamilton Signals Association and the Friends of HMCS HAIDA spent the day with 1626 Army Cadet Corps in Beamsville, Ontario. The aim was to share the proud heritage of Canadian Signalling before the advent of Radios and cellphones. After a presentation giving an overview of Signalling from the Battle of Marathon to Flanders Fields, the Cadets had individual group experience with heritage equipment.

Assisted by George Stal and Jim Friend Morse keys and magneto phones were popular as many tried their hands at laying and connecting telegraph line.

Semaphore and Morse flags were practiced under the careful tutelage of Ron Kirk and Andy Barber who shared their photographs for the presentation and recounted some of the thrills of signalling on a moving ship. For those fascinated by the recent publicity about "The Enigma" mechanical cryptographic machine Ken Lloyd provided mini tutorials in the thrills of practicing the Caesar shift cipher code and the added complication of deciphering. The indoor

training culminated in the groups moving outside to put into practice their new skills. Right on cue, the sun emerged from the clouds and it was perfect weather for the Heliographs. Rick Little and Hal Buller guided the teams who sent messages to the Aldis light and Semaphore teams for their reply. Confirmation was by land line manned by the Cadets.

In the shadow of a garage and out of the wind, The Friends of HMCS HAIDA drilled Cadets into the brisk sharp movements that are the pride of today's Navy as they were before Radio.

Reminiscent of the Battle for Antwerp in 1914, the Cadets utilized Army and Navy Visual communications as part of our celebrations of Signals Heritage Day. The Cadet Corp officers Captains Stephan Bencur and Charlene McCullough were splendid hosts and generous in their thanks for the wonderful day we had the pleasure of sharing.

Ken Lloyd

President: Friends of HMCS HAIDA and Hamilton Signals Association



HMCS HAIDA
by MARTIN ANGUS

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NAME THAT SHIP ANSWERS

A= HMCS Bras d'Or, B= HMCS Canada, C= HMCS Rainbow,
D= HMCS Niobe, E= HMCS Haida