

Remembering Sacrifice, Honouring Legacy

Hamilton Marks 75 Years Since Korean War Began

By Rick Bialachowski, 23 June 2025

On Sunday, June 22, members of the Hamilton and other nearby communities including United States Navy Veterans from American Post 18 gathered at HMCS *Star* adjacent to HMCS *Haida* to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the start of the Korean War. This deeply moving ceremony paid tribute to the more than 26,000 Canadians who served, including the 516 who lost their lives in service of peace.

Originally scheduled to take place under the yellow Gantry Crane at Pier 8, the ceremony was moved indoors to the Drill Deck of HMCS *Star* due to the intense heat wave being experienced. Despite the change in location, the spirit of remembrance remained front and center.



Left to Right: Reverend William Thomas, Rick Bialachowski, Ron Zabrok, and Andrew Barber

The group stands before the trilingual plaque—unveiled during the ceremony—commemorating Canada’s military contribution to the Korean War on its 75th anniversary.

A Ceremony of Honour and Reflection

The event was emceed by Sarah Quinlan Cutler, Acting Field Unit Superintendent with Parks Canada. Among the honoured guests were Youngjae Kim, Consul General of the Republic of Korea, and Hobong Han, Korean Consul. In heartfelt remarks, the Consul General expressed deep appreciation for Canada’s sacrifices during the war and reaffirmed the strong bonds between Canada and South Korea.

A poignant moment came when the names of nine Royal Canadian Navy sailors who died in the Korean War were solemnly read aloud, each name marked by the tolling of a ship’s bell:

- Able Seaman W.M. BURDEN
- Able Seaman I.T.L. TORRAVILLE
- Ordinary Seaman L.A. GAUTHIER
- Able Seaman R.J. SKAVBERG
- Able Seaman R.J. MOORE
- Able Seaman E.A. BAIKIE
- Able Seaman F.R. LAKER
- Able Seaman V. LISKA
- Lieutenant Commander J.L. QUINN

These sailors were among the more than 3,600 members of the Royal Canadian Navy who served during the conflict.

Symbolic Gestures and Future Legacy

Wreaths were laid by a variety of organizations including:

- Government of Canada
- Republic of Korea
- HMCS *Star*
- Burl-Oak Naval Veterans
- Friends of HMCS *Haida*
- Veterans Advocates of Canada

The ceremony also featured the unveiling of a trilingual plaque—in English, French, and Korean—commemorating Canada’s military contribution to the Korean War. It will remain on display at the HMCS *Haida* National Historic Site for one year before journeying to South Korea for permanent installation.

Continuing the Bond

A reception followed at the All Ranks Mess at HMCS *Star*, hosted by the Korean Consul General, the Halton Naval Veterans Association and the Veterans Advocates of Canada.

This commemorative event not only honoured lives lost, but also celebrated a lasting international friendship forged through courage and sacrifice between Canada and South Korea—one that continues to endure across generations.