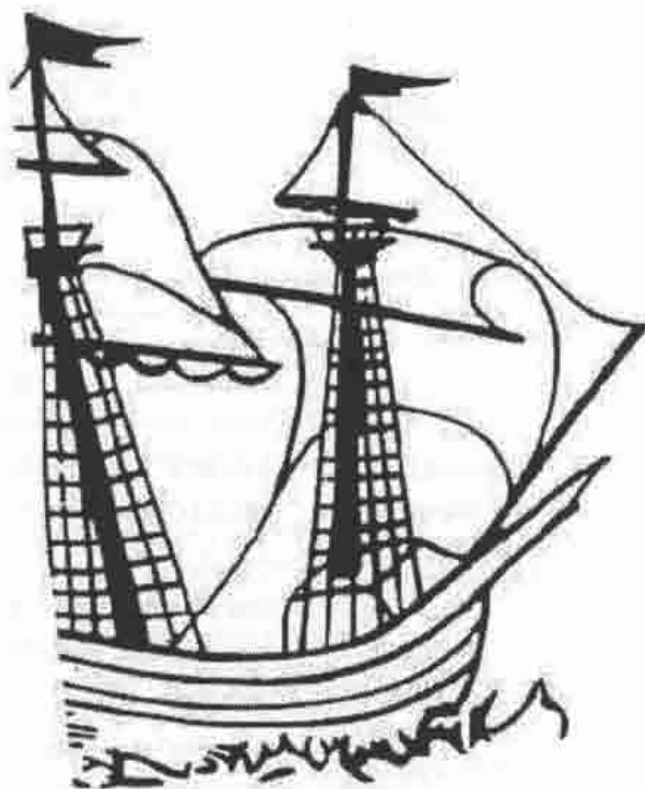


ARGONAUTA

The Newsletter of



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Editorial

Our own *Northern Mariner*, *The International Journal of Maritime History*, *Mariners Mirror* - there are others, they are all academically creditable journals that exemplify high standards of scholarship. Certainly one of the reasons we are all members of the CNRS is that it gives us an opportunity to support authors and their best work. But there is a 'second bench' of publications that provide an opportunity for up-and-comers as well as 'old timers.' These are publications that have responded to a maturing audience. This is not to be taken as a euphemism for simply older. These "magazines" are now beginning to adopt some of the apparatus of their learned brethren, even footnotes and as a result are attracting serious work.

In the current issue of *Maritime Life and Traditions* there is an essay by Basil Greenhill, "After Sixty Years, Thoughts on History and the Sea." Dr. Greenhill started writing marine

history before World War 2 and between 1967 and 1983 served as the Director of the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. As might be expected, he makes a point about "the worker in maritime studies" needing "a broad historical and cultural background" and what we would all like to hear, "world history cannot be correctly described or understood if the maritime dimensions are not integrated with the whole." He goes on of course, and here are only a few more quotes. "The study of boat development is, indeed closely linked with ethnography" and finally, "seafarer (is) not a heterogeneous product, but was, rather, comprised of diverse influence from very different economic, social and cultural environments, that shared a commonality of isolation and absorption in shipping." A little on the weighty side, but to the point.

Another magazine that is responding to a more literate and demanding audience is *Wooden Boat*. They have moved well beyond

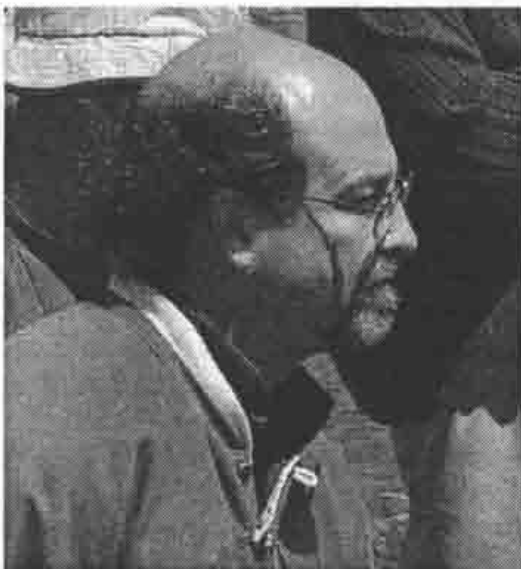
the workshop hints and tips level and are now publishing work that touches on what Basil Greenhill says about boats and ethnography.

So, what is the point? As I see it these publications demonstrate there is an audience for good marine history in unexpected places and that eventually some of the readers will come home to the CNRS.

MDS

Erratum

One discerning reader has pointed out that the Roman numerals on the cover of the January and April issues were wrong, even though mathematically accurate: they should of course read XIX. The editor responsible is a tad red-faced, considering the statement in the previous issue – but he does, after all, spend much more time working in hexadecimal (when Volume 19 would be '0x13').



The naval expression "well done" describes perfectly the work of Richard Gimblet who organized the Halifax 2002 Conference.

President's Corner

The Halifax Conference, held at the Dartmouth Holiday Inn from 20 to 22 June, was a resounding success. Many thanks go to Rich Gimblet, our new First Vice President, who organized an excellent programme. Peter Haydon assisted him with the local arrangements. The stimulating sessions dealt with topics in Canadian maritime history from the early eighteenth to the twenty-first century. Researchers met each other for the first time, discussed subjects of common interest and, thus, fulfilled one of the key objectives of our meeting. A significant addition was a programme of afternoon events that included a special tour of the fortifications of Georges Island guided by the knowledgeable Roger Sarty of the Canadian War Museum, a visit to the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia where John Harbron gave an illustrated lecture on Arthur Lismer as Halifax War Artist, 1917-1919, and a "Behind the Scenes" tour of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic conducted by Curator of Marine History Dan Conlin. Involving local institutions and personnel in our conference was an inspired decision. Congratulations Rich.

Another of the Society's aims is to promote scholarship, research and writing among its members. A special feature at Halifax was the reception and launch on board HMCS *Sackville* of not one but three new books written by members: John Armstrong, *The Halifax Explosion and the Royal Canadian Navy: Inquiry and Intrigue*, (Vancouver: UBC Press 2002), Charles Maginley and Bernard Collin, *The Ships of Canada's Marine Services*, (Vanwell, 2002) and Christopher McKee, *Sober Men and True; Sailors Lives in the Royal Navy, 1900-1945*, (London & Cambridge, MA:

Harvard University Press 2002). I congratulate the authors and encourage readers of *Argonauta* to acquire their own copies of these excellent books.



There were opportunities for new scholars to present their work - Richard Mayne (L) and Richard Goette both read strong papers on the history of the Canadian Navy.

At the Society's Annual General Meeting held on Saturday afternoon, 22 June, members voted to approve the revised by-laws. These were introduced at the previous AGM at Kingston by a Notice of Motion and published in *Argonauta*, Vol. XVIII, no. 3 (July, 2001), pp. 18-27. The Executive Council for the current year was elected. Skip Fischer stepped down from his position as Councillor; his place was filled by newcomer Chris Madsen who hails from Toronto. Thanks to Skip for his long years of service and welcome aboard Chris. Rich Gimblett has moved to First Vice President. The office of Second Vice President was left vacant for the coming year. Under the new by-laws, Faye Kert, a hard working past president of the Society, joins Council as Membership Secretary. Without the good will,

energy and enthusiasm of all Council members and the editors of our journal and newsletter, respectively, the Society's work could not go forward. On your behalf, I offer all of them thanks for a job well done.

Members also approved a ten dollar increase in individual and institutional membership fees. The student fee will remain at \$35. For more on the fee increase – please see elsewhere in this issue. The Society now stands on its own two feet, but it needs your support. Gregg Hannah, our Treasurer, continues to wrestle with our financial books as we move along the learning curve discovering the true costs of producing, printing and mailing both *The Northern Marine/Le marin du nord* and *Argonauta*. Bill Glover's exceptional efforts have gone far to get TNM/LMN back on its publication track. The first number of the 2002 issue accompanies this issue of *Argonauta*. Bill has been wearing two hats during past year, but that does not appear to have slowed him down. On becoming Past President, Bill has agreed to organize the programme for the 2003 meeting at Vancouver whose theme will be: "Ships: Their Lives, Work and People."

Where are we going from here? During the next twelve months, I plan to focus my attention on increasing our individual and institutional membership base. At present, Faye, Rich and I are designing a new bilingual membership application form. We hope to have both English and French versions of the form mounted on their respective web sites before summer's end. I hope all members will download this form and use it to recruit new members. More about membership in the next issue.

Finally, it is my happy duty to report that members, at the AGM, voted unanimously

to approve Council's recommendation that Dr. W.A.B. "Alec" Douglas be granted Honorary Membership in the Society. Honorary Membership is a special mark of recognition for an extraordinary contribution of the Society and/or to the field of nautical research. Alec's scholarship is internationally recognized, and his mentoring of young scholars is well known and deeply appreciated. His untiring efforts to found the CNRS, recruit members, establish its journal, *The Northern Mariner* and support the Society's goals make him a very worthy recipient. Honorary Membership is for life. An Honorary Member receives the Society's publications, possesses both voice and vote at all future Annual General Meetings and may attend, but not vote, all meetings of the Executive Council.

James Pritchard
President, CNRS



William Flayhart (L) presented a paper, "The Disaster to the White Star Liner *Atlantic*, April 1st 1873." The next day he visited the S.S. *Atlantic* Heritage Interpretation Park in Terence Bay. While on the way down to the newly-renovated cemetery and memorial, he met Mr. Dan Slaunwhite, the grandson of one of the rescuers.

Membership Fees Increased

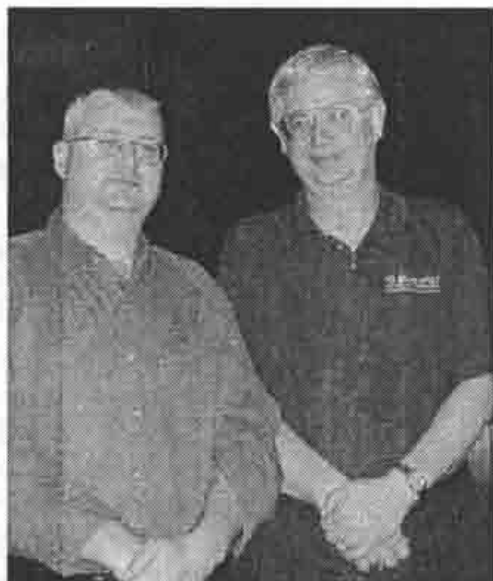
On June 22, 2002 at the Annual General Meeting, members of the Society voted to increase the annual membership fees by \$10 for individuals and institutions. This is the first fee increase since the annual general meeting at Corner Brook, Newfoundland in August, 1999.

Several reasons led Council to recommend and the AGM to approve the new fees. The increase is the first in three years during which cost increases and inflation eroded our position somewhat. Second, during the past two years, the CNRS has been cut loose from its former home at Memorial University. New editors assumed responsibility for *The Northern Mariner/Le marin du nord*, and the Executive Council began to learn, for the first time, the full costs of producing, printing and mailing the Society's publications. It is still learning.

For the first time, our journal, *The Northern Mariner/Le marin du nord* and the newsletter, *Argonauta*, are sailing independently, without subsidies, in the seas of academe and avocational maritime publication. Their hulls are sound, but your memberships are their sole support. We are exploring the acquisition of advertising revenue to help out. Few societies offer so much for so little: two publications to its members. We remain committed to publishing both periodicals. Finally, federal postal rates have annually increased during the past three years until nearly one-quarter of your membership fees goes towards mailing rather than publishing and printing costs. Costs have also been inflated because we are publishing more than four issues of TNM/LMN annually in order to get the journal back on track: our aim is to publish

the July 2003 issue on time. I sincerely hope that this explanation of our need for fee increases answers your questions and that you will continue to support CNRS. Any comments either critical or constructive are welcome.

James Pritchard
President, CNRS



Financial support from the CNRS is given to a new scholar each year to present a paper and subsequent publication in the *Northern Mariner*. The recipient for 2002 was William Miles (L) from Memorial University seen here with his academic supervisor, Olaf Janzen.

This photograph, like all the others from the 2002 CNRS conference, are courtesy of Maurice D. Smith.

CNRS Awards Committee Report

by Faye Kert

Following the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Nautical Research Society (CNRS) in Halifax, members of CNRS approved the recipients of the three annual awards offered by the society.

The Keith Matthews Awards, named after a renowned maritime historian at Memorial University and one of the founders of the CNRS, are presented for the best book and best article published in the previous year on either a Canadian maritime subject, or by a Canadian on a Canadian or foreign marine subject. The 2002 recipients were:

Best Book: *Martin Frobisher: Elizabethan Privateer* by James McDermott, published by Yale University Press (2001).

Best Article: 'The Halifax Naval Yard and Mast Contractors, 1775-1815' by Julian Gwyn, *Northern Mariner/Le marin du nord*, Vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 1-25.

The Gerry Panting New Scholar's Award (named for another CNRS founder and former member of Memorial University's maritime history group) is a financial award of not more than \$500 to assist a new scholar in the field of nautical research to present a paper at the CNRS annual conference. The person selected as a New Scholar should be in the early stages of his or her career in the field of maritime research. The recipient was **William Miles**, a student at Memorial University of Newfoundland. His paper, entitled "Some Aspects of Squadron Deployment to North America, 1689-1713" was presented at the Halifax conference.

Finally, the CNRS Merit Award is a discretionary award by which the society acknowledges excellence. It is applicable to individuals or institutions such as museums, archives or educational organizations. This year's award recognizes the editorial contribution of **Professor Lewis R. "Skip" Fischer**, who co-founded and served as editor of the CNRS journal, *The Northern Mariner/Le Marin du nord* from its first issue in January 1991 to January 2001. A second Merit Award recognizes the work of **Dr. Olaf U. Janzen**, a founding co-editor of our journal and Book Review Editor from 1991 to 2000.

Notes of Interest

Ken Macpherson Honoured

In June, it was announced that the Canadian Forces have awarded the Maritime Command Commendation to Ken Macpherson: the modern equivalent of a "Mention in Dispatches." Anyone interested in Canadian naval history knows Ken's work, in particular *The Ships of Canada's Naval Forces*, co-authored with John Burgess – which the navy will be putting up on the web as part of "Project Pride" (www.navy.dnd.ca/pride_html/).



Ken Macpherson (Maurice D. Smith)

The Travails of *Gatineau*

It seems that plans to scuttle the former HMCS *Gatineau* have been blocked by a wall of red tape. The original target of Waterfront Alliance Kingston would have had the ship docked in Kingston in the spring of 2002 and sunk as a diving attraction in June of 2003, somewhere in the Kingston/Gananoque area. According to the *Kingston Whig Standard* (14 June, 2002):

Provincial policy holds the sinkers of a ship forever liable for maintaining it while providing free access to the public, even though once the ship is sunk, it belongs to the province.

"There's no way of recouping costs, so no municipality is willing to entertain that type of arrangement without the promise of assuming ownership of the assets"...

The fates of *Gatineau* and *Terra Nova* have not yet been determined, so it is not impossible that at least one will remain available for divers to explore in the years to come.

Canada Has Been Found

In February 2002, it was reported that the wreck of the *Queen of Nassau* has been found off Islamorada, in over 200 feet of water. She was originally named *Canada*, ordered in 1904 for the Fisheries Protection Service from Vickers at Barrow-in-Furness in the UK. During the Great War, she would be commissioned into the RCN. She was sold in 1924 and lost on the 2nd of July, 1926. More information can be found on the website of the Association of Underwater Explorers:

<http://www.mikey.net/ae/>

John Lyman Book Awards

At its annual meeting held recently in Honolulu, the North American Society for Oceanic History announced the recipients of its John Lyman Book Awards which recognize outstanding books dealing with the maritime and naval history of North America. The following books published during 2001 received prizes:

Canadian Naval and Maritime History

Robert Malcomson, *Warships of the Great Lakes, 1754-1834* (UK: Chatham Publishing/US: Naval Institute Press)

U.S. Maritime History

Nicholas Dean, *Snow Squall: The Last American Clipper Ship* (Tilbury House, Publishers and Maine Maritime Museum)

U.S. Naval History

Kathleen Broome Williams, *Improbable Warriors: Women Scientists and the U.S. Navy in World War II* (Naval Institute Press)

Science and Technology

Gary E. Weir, *An Ocean in Common: American Naval Officers, Scientists, and the Ocean Environment* (Texas A&M University Press)

Biography and Autobiography

John H. Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry: Antebellum Sailor and Diplomat* (Naval Institute Press)

The John Lyman Book Prize Committee members were: James C. Bradford, Texas A&M University; James P. Delgado, Vancouver Maritime Museum; James Morris, Christopher Newport University; and Richard Turk, Allegheny College.

Maritime Provinces Steam Passenger Vessels

By Robin H. Wyllie

T.S. S. *Deerhound / Lady Evelyn*

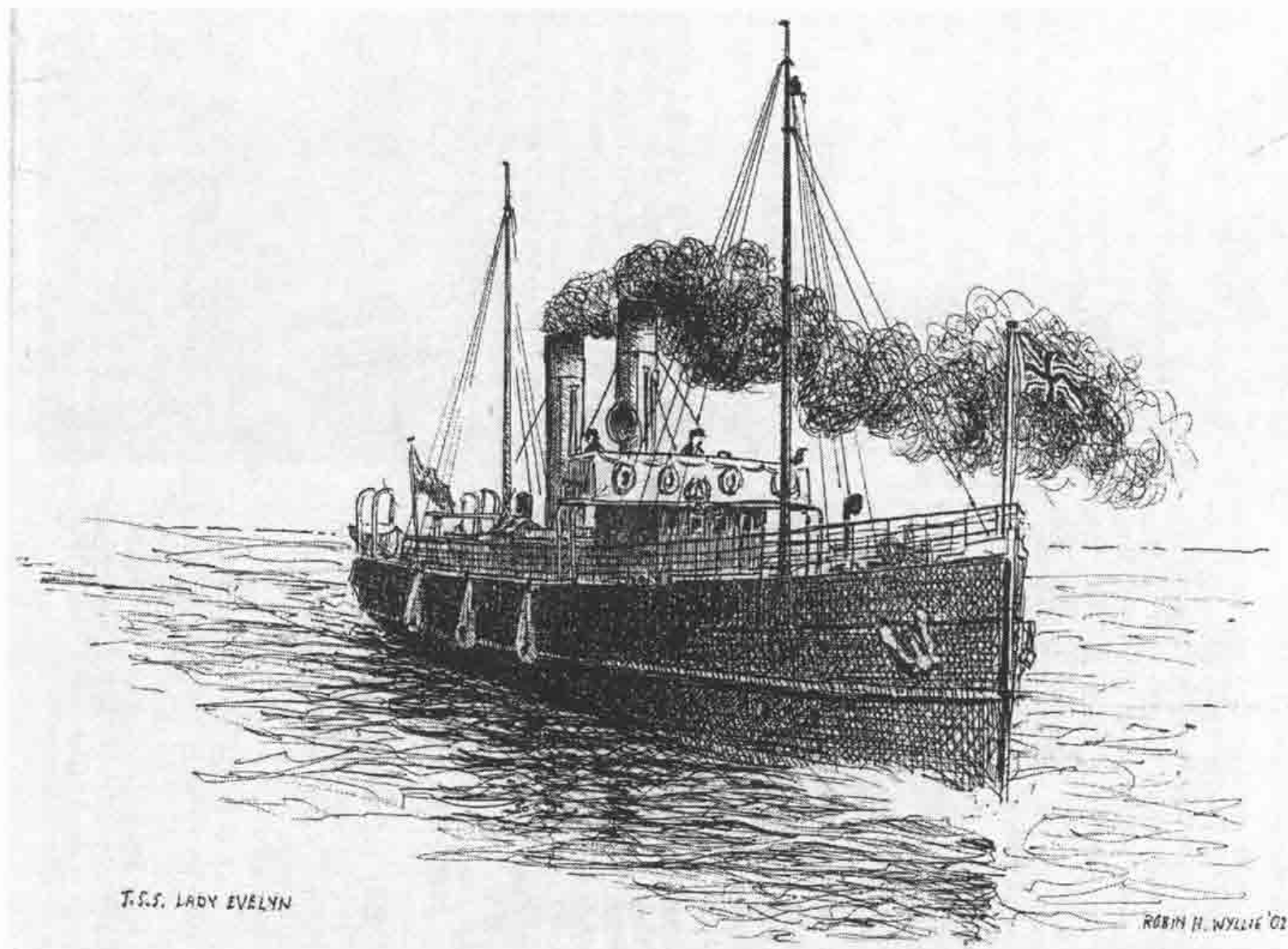
Specifications:

Official Number:	109680
Builder:	J. Jones and Sons, Birkenhead, England
Date Built:	1901
Gross Tonnage:	483
Overall Length:	189.0 feet
Breadth:	26.1 feet
Draught:	9.5 feet
Engines:	twin 3 cylinder 16" - 24" - 38", 141 hp
Propulsion:	twin screw

*I chose Lady Evelyn for a number of reasons: I have always had a passion for U.K. excursion steamers. My Grandfather Wyllie was Chief Engineer on the Williamson boats on the Clyde and, from my early childhood, the steamers were an integral part of our summer vacations. Secondly, she has been virtually ignored as far as Canada's maritime history is concerned. For example, Appleton, in his *Usque ad Mare* thought she was a cable ship and Newell and Williamson, whose Pacific Coastal Liners is regarded as the "bible" on West Coast shipping companies does not even mention her.*

History:

In 1901, the North Pier Steamship Company of Blackpool, a major Lancashire holiday resort, received delivery of a fast, twin-screw steel steamer from Jones and Sons' shipyard in Birkenhead at the mouth of the River Mersey.



T.S.S. LADY EVELYN

ROBIN H. WYLLIE '02

S.S. *Lady Evelyn*. A composite drawing from photographs in the collections of the Musée Maritime Bernier, Mrs Dorothy Goodwin and the National Archives of Canada.

Designed specifically to handle day-excursion traffic, *Deerhound* was placed in service alongside the company's older vessel, the fast Clyde-built paddler *Greyhound*. For the next three seasons, the ships shared the North Pier Company pleasure sailings from Blackpool to Douglas on the Isle of Man. They were also used on excursions from Preston to Llandudno and the Menai Straits; and, on Sundays, from Manchester to Blackpool, when the mills and factories had closed down for the annual Fair holidays.

After the 1903 season, the North Pier Company was taken over by its rival, the Blackpool Passenger Steamboat Co. Ltd. and *Deerhound*, which had considerably less passenger capacity than its paddle-driven running mate, was declared surplus and put up for sale.

In 1905, *Deerhound* was purchased by the West Cornwall Steamship Co. as a replacement for their old paddle steamer *Lady of the Isles*. The major portion of the company's business came from the transportation of cut flowers, destined for Covent Garden Market in London, from the temperate Isles of Scilly, to the Great Western Railway wharf at Penzance. Apart from her speed, time being of the essence in shipping flowers, *Deerhound* turned out to be quite unsuited for year-round work off the wild Cornish coast and, in 1907, she was again put up for sale.

At some time prior to 1907, by which time marine radio communication had become fairly routine, a bright spark in the Postmaster General's Department had the brilliant idea that, during the open season on the St. Lawrence River, incoming ocean mail for all parts of Canada could be expedited by

transferring it from the mail steamer to the Intercolonial Railway at Rimouski. A general sorting office could then be established on the wharf, from which the mail could be loaded into railway post office cars for additional sorting en route to destinations along the way. All the Department needed was a suitable vessel.

Enquiries were made and, in May 1907, the Department purchased the *Deerhound*. Fast and manoeuvrable, with an open promenade deck stretching from the bow almost to her stern, the heavy duty rubbing strake and built-in fenders, so typical of U.K. excursion steamers, she was just the ship the Post Office Department was looking for. Of course, in keeping with the then current Dominion Government practice of naming its vessels after the wives of governors and other important personages, her name was changed to *Lady Evelyn*.

The plan was that incoming mail steamers would radio ahead to the Pilot Station at Father Point (Pointe au Père), and they, in turn, would telegraph Rimouski. The *Lady Evelyn*, which was kept in a state of readiness with a crew on standby, could then have steam up by the time the ship came into the St. Lawrence. The mail tender would then rush out to run alongside the liner, while the mail bags were thrown down onto her aft deck. Even under the best of conditions, this must have been an extremely difficult task, and one can but admire the skill of *Lady Evelyn's* alternating captains, for whom it was obviously just part of the day's work.

Lady Evelyn's constant state of readiness turned out to be a godsend in the early hours of May 29th, 1914, when the Norwegian collier *Storstad*, with a full load of

Cape Breton coal, rammed and sank the *Empress of Ireland*. 1,012 lives were lost, but the death toll would have been much higher, had not the pilot cutter *Eureka*, which had been on standby at Father Point, and the *Lady Evelyn* been able to get under way in little or no time and rush to the scene of the disaster.

Two months later, on August 4th, Britain declared war on Germany and *Lady Evelyn* was transferred to the navy. She served throughout the conflict as an escort vessel in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.* After the war, the Government declared *Lady Evelyn* surplus, and, in 1919, she was sold to Halifax shipowners J. B. Farquhar & Co. for their Gulf of St. Lawrence Shipping and Trading Company, which, no doubt coincidentally, had just been awarded a \$24,000 per annum contract for the carriage of mails between Pictou and the Magdalen Islands.

Her new owners registered *Lady Evelyn* in Quebec and placed her on the semi-weekly mail run between Pictou and the Magdalen Islands via Souris in Prince Edward Island. The vessel left Pictou every Monday and Thursday upon the arrival of the daily express from Halifax.

In 1921, the Liberals, under MacKenzie King, roundly defeated Sir Robert Borden's Conservative Government. In the general reallocation of government favours which followed, the Gulf of St. Lawrence Shipping and Trading Company lost its lucrative mail contract to the hurriedly-formed Magdalen Transports Ltd. The new contractor leased the 479-ton wooden cargo steamer *R. W. Hendry* for the run. Even although she was brand spanking new, the *Hendry* could hardly be considered in the same class as *Lady Evelyn*. However, politics

are politics and, once again, *Lady Evelyn* was put up for sale.

Following World War I, the management of The Union Steamship Company of Vancouver decided to get into the promising short haul day excursion business. First, they purchased the All Red Line, which operated a two-vessel service between Vancouver and Powell River, via Selma Park, a popular excursion destination. Three years later, they purchased the Terminal Steam Navigation Company, which owned the popular Bowen Island resort.

Lady Evelyn was purchased by the company's agent Robert T. Dinahan in 1921. The following year, she was brought round to the West Coast via the Panama Canal, was re-registered in Vancouver and became the first purpose-built excursion steamer in the Union fleet. In 1923, no doubt in consideration of the rather damp West Coast climate, some covered passenger accommodation was added on the main promenade deck, raising her tonnage to 582 gross tons.

In 1924, the first of the Union's "Lady" vessels was joined by the much larger *Lady Alexandra* and, in 1925, by the converted minesweepers *Lady Cecilia* (ex HMS *Swindon*) and *Lady Cynthia* (ex HMS *Barnstaple*).

Lady Evelyn was a popular vessel on Union Steamship's summer excursions and day runs out of Vancouver. However, the hard use she had seen in the open waters of the Atlantic and the Gulf of St. Lawrence had begun to affect her performance and she was eventually retired from service in 1936.

- * The editors note that *Lady Evelyn* did a fair bit of steaming during the war, even though described in *Tin-Pots & Pirate Ships* as “never handl[ing] rough seas well.” Sometimes based out of Sydney, she was patrolling the entrance to Halifax on the morning of 6 December 1917.

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Shipping registers in the Collection of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic.
Contemporary timetables, newspapers and almanacs.

Nautical Nostalgia *by William Glover*

If this issue is mailed when we hope, you will be able to read this column a little before the autumnal equinox. Summer will almost be a matter of nostalgia. As we prepare for winter, what better time is there to plan for next summer, stimulated perhaps by accounts

of summers past? I have in mind two accounts, namely Arthur Ransome's '*Racundra's*' *First Cruise*, widely acknowledged as a “classic,” and M. Wylie Blanchet's *The Curve of Time*.

Ransome is of course well known as the author of a number of children's books that involve sailing. One editor of his work has noted that Ransome learned his sailing, that made books such as *Swallows and Amazons* so strong, when he was in *Racundra*. This work was first published in 1923, thus making it a legitimate subject for a nostalgia column in its own right. Penguin brought out a reprint in 1984, that is now hard to find. Ransome began his tale with the briefest account of the frustrations of working with his boatbuilder. It is doubtless a common experience, but who else has put it so aptly? “The only boat builder who ever finished a job on time was Noah, who knew he would be drowned if he didn't.” Finally, on 12 August 1922 he was “free” of boat yards and customs officials, and setting off on a cruise of the Baltic. He had a crew of three, himself, the “Master and Owner,” the woman who two years later would become his wife but, observing the conventions of the day, for the account is known only “the Cook” and one other, a delightful character who is called “the Ancient.” And so they set off from Riga to explore the coast as far as Reval (or Tallinn as it had become by the time of the Penguin reprint) and across to Helsingfors (Helsinki) in Finland.

The voyage was completed under sail alone. Attempts to start the engine invariably failed, leading the Cook to suggest that it be thrown overboard. Ransome explored communities, villages, and towns that no longer survive. When he went ashore to buy

provisions he carried his own can for milk, and a basket for eggs. The people he met are described as wearing national dress. His tale is a delight for every sailor, clearly and easily told. Across the passage of time one might wish that he spent a bit more time discussing the ports. For example, Reval, once the easternmost port of the Hanseatic league is rich in history. How nice it would be to have an account of it that predated the Soviet takeover. When I first read the book in the 1980s, in the Penguin edition since loaned and lost, I wondered what it would be like to travel in those areas then closed to me, a serving officer, by reason of Cold War politics. Rereading the book has reminded me of that desire, and provided topics for winter planning.

The inside passage of British Columbia is almost on the other side of the world from the Gulf of Riga, and whereas the engine in *Racundra* was never used, *Caprice* was a power driven cabin cruiser. Yet "Capi" Blanchet's account of her summer cruises, published the year she died in 1961, and over thirty years since she had made them, is also a classic. In 1927 her husband died of a heart attack, and she was left with five children. Starting the next year, and over ensuing summers, she took her family to sea to explore the inside passage of British Columbia from their home near Sidney as far north as Queen Charlotte Sound. Her vessel, *Caprice*, was perhaps four feet shorter than *Racundra* but had barely half the latter's beam. Those unfamiliar with the high tides and strong currents of the region might be lulled by the name of the region, the "inside passage" into thinking that her summer voyages were easier than *Racundra*'s cruise in the Baltic. I suggest they would be mistaken. The world now lost that she explored was that

of Indian villages. The large totems and houses located by shell beaches and found emerging from the woods are described in tones that seem almost hushed. Both books are accounts of remarkable yachting achievement, under sail or power and despite the differences of propulsion and cruising region there are a number of commonalities.

The most obvious similarities are the period when the cruises were made, and the "first" qualities of them. A strong recurrent theme of both books is large quantities of fresh, wonderful food. The crew of *Caprice* always seemed to be grilling fish just caught. *Racundra* altered course for Hapsal to buy more fresh bread so her crew could continue eating the jam that the Cook had just made. And of course all the excursions ashore from *Racundra* seemed to involve purchases from the local farms. When I consider the provisioning of the small boats in which I have sailed, perhaps I should not be surprised by the tempting descriptions of meals, but readers should be advised not to attempt either of these books if they are on a diet.

The Thanksgiving weekend marks the time when inland sailors begin to make plans for winter storage, and even coastal sailors are less energetic about going on long trips. Perhaps these books can be your sailing directions for voyages in the mind as plans are made for another summer season. Whether or not you need an excuse to read them, they will afford some pleasant hours of relaxation as well as a source of nostalgic reflection. After all, they were "simply messing about in boats ... or with boats. ... In or out of 'em, it doesn't matter."

An Update on the Ancient DNA Identification of *Titanic* Victims

by Alan Ruffman and Ryan L. Parr

This is an abstract of the presentation given on June 21 at the 2002 Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Nautical Research Society.

The origin of this project came about in 1996 when a Canadian family from the Province of Ontario contacted the former City of Halifax through their clergyman. The clergyman provided family data and sought permission to inscribe the name of Catherine Jane Wallis, the family grandmother, on the gravestone of Body No. 281 in the *Titanic* plot at Fairview Lawn Cemetery in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Stephen King of the City's Parks and Grounds Department was cognizant that on September 23, 1991 the process of inscribing six new names on the gravestones of unidentified victims in the cemetery was done somewhat in haste with no formal City vetting or approval process in place. No formal report on the six identifications of the Titanic International Society Inc. was prepared for the City's cemetery files in 1991, and five years later Mr. King decided that the Ontario family's request should be formally reviewed. One name was inscribed in 1991 with a typographic error, and the evidence re the apparent identification of Frank Couch as Body No. 253 is now somewhat uncertain.

The Ontario family's case was referred to a three-person committee chaired by the senior author, with Garry Shutlak of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia and Ross MacKay of the Nova Scotia Power Corporation as the other members. In the end,

the family's proposed inscription could not be supported, although their evidence was not without real merit. In the late summer of 1998 Dr. Ryan Parr, then the Co-director of the Paleo-DNA Laboratory at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario, contacted the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Halifax to offer the services of his lab to possibly assist in identifying unidentified *Titanic* victims. He was referred to Alan Ruffman, and through him to the Ontario family's clergyman, where the possibility of using DNA techniques, that the Lakehead laboratory was well-experienced in, were discussed. In 1999 five members of the Ontario family decided to make a formal request to the Medical Officer of Health of the Capital District Health Authority, Nova Scotia Department of Health, the office which vets and rules on all such requests in Nova Scotia. The formal request however was not made until two other proposed partial exhumations involving other families were fully debated and documented. We wanted to ensure that all the partial exhumations could be done at the same time to minimize the disruption in the Fairview Lawn Cemetery.

Over the next year, three members of a family of the relatives of Charles Joseph Shorney in England decided to make a similar request re Body No. 240, which lay directly adjacent to Body No. 281, and two branches of the Pålsson family in Sweden made a similar decision re Body No. 4, "An Unknown [male] Child". The proposed project was screened by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board to verify that it conformed to the 1998 "Tri-Council Statement for Research Involving Humans" and to the 1999 "Ethics Procedures and Guidelines for Research Involving Humans." All three partial exhumations were approved

by Dr. Robert Strang, MD, MHSc, FRCPC, the local Medical Officer of Health for Nova Scotia, in early 2001, and these occurred on May 17 and 18, 2001 after close and careful consultation with the staff of the Halifax Regional Municipality. The site was cordoned off, with press and cameras kept at a discrete distance. A tent was used to further shield the operations. All media interviews were scheduled at the end of the day at the lower Chisholm Avenue entrance to the cemetery, well-removed from the *Titanic* plot. An off-duty police officer was posted throughout the 29-hour operation. All graves were fully filled in by 6:00 p.m. May 18th, and the new sods were placed a few days later.

Owing to the nature of the soil, and the slightly acidic drainage ground-water system at Fairview Lawn Cemetery, the remains associated with burials No. 240 and No. 281 had completely decomposed and dissolved—including all hard tissues such as bone and teeth—rendering DNA analysis impossible. Fortunately a small fragment (6 cm) of poorly-preserved bone was recovered, as well as three teeth, from burial No. 4, the “Unknown Child.” These four artefacts were the only human remains present in the burial.

The unknown male child was estimated to be about two years old when recovered from the sea very early on Sunday, April 21, 1912 by the men of the cable ship *Mackay-Bennett*. The “Coroner’s records” in Halifax and the White Star Line ‘second printed list speculates that the unknown child may be “Paulsson, (?) Baby” ([White Star Line.] 1912b). Gösta Leonard Pålsson from Bjuv, Skåne län (county) in Sweden, is known to have been born on January 3, 1910, hence

was two years, three-and-a-half months old early on April 15, 1912 when the *Titanic* sank.

Identification focuses on non-nuclear DNA known as mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), which we all inherit exclusively from our mothers. Within this molecule is written and archived a “biochemical name,” written in the simple four-letter code of the genetic alphabet. This family “name” is stable and persists in maternal family lines for many generations.

In order to attempt an identification of the unknown child as Gösta Pålsson, a maternal cousin was located for comparison to the “biochemical name” of Body No. 4 using the genealogical work of Ulla-Britt Sandén in Bjuv, Sweden. DNA recovery was attempted by four separate individuals in three different labs, to ensure accurate and verified results. One lab was unsuccessful in extracting a DNA signal from their sample of the bone fragment. The Paleo-DNA Laboratory and the Kuvim Centre for the Study of Infectious and Tropical Diseases at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel, had reasonable success in obtaining DNA information from their bone samples. These results in comparison to the results from the maternal cousin make it unlikely that the unknown child is Gösta Leonard Pålsson.

Only then in late February 2002 was attention paid to the teeth recovered. Analysis of the three teeth by two persons including a leading U.S. dental expert strongly suggested that the teeth were without roots and had not yet erupted, hence were from a child of under one year in age. This finding contrasts with the estimated age of the child made in 1912, and contrasts with the clothing the child was wearing.* The child’s body weight and length

were not recorded for Body No. 4, in contrast with almost every other body returned to Halifax for disposition or burial, so can provide no guidance as to the child's age. The teeth have now been assigned to a third investigator for a full reassessment.

On the basis of the teeth indicating a child under one year in age, a search was initiated in early April 2002 to find direct maternal descendants of the Alfred Edward Peacock child, age 7 months, in his mother's (née Nile) family tree originally from Carnkie in Cornwall, and of Gilbert Sigurd Emanuel Danbom, age 5 months, in his mother's (née Brogren) family tree originally from Långebro, Horn Parish, Kinda kommun, of Östergötland län in eastern southern Sweden. The needed maternal relatives have been found, in one case by going back to a great-great-grandmother to find a great-great-granddaughter, using the superb church records of Sweden. Again, the genealogical skills of Swedish genealogists Gun-Britt Monell of Kisa, Östergötland, and Ulla-Britt Sandén of Bjuv have proved essential. In England, members of the British Titanic Society, Geoff Whitfield and Craig Stringer, and genealogist Jennie Newman of L. & J. Research in Cardiff, Wales, have proved most valuable. A pair of relatives from both the Nile and Brogren maternal descendants have been found, and all have agreed to provide DNA samples for a comparison to that of the unknown child.

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* The clothing description ([White Star Line.] 1912a) does not suggest an infant still "in long clothes," but rather supports the "estimated age" of 2 years:

NO. 4 MALE. ESTIMATED AGE, 2.

HAIR, FAIR.

CLOTHING - Grey coat with fur on collar and cuffs; brown serge frock; petticoat; flannel garment; pink woolen[sic] singlet; brown shoes and stockings.

NO MARKS WHATEVER
PROBABLY THIRD CLASS

References

[White Star Line.] 1912a. Record of Bodies and Effects (Passengers and Crew S.S. "TITANIC") Recovered by Cable Steamer "Mackay-Bennett" Including Bodies Buried At Sea And Bodies Delivered At Morgue In Halifax, N.S. Details Compiled from Records of the "Mackay-Bennett". Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Manuscript Group 100, Volume 229, No. 3d, Accession 1976-191, circa Friday, May 3, dark purple card covers, initial page entitled, Key to accompanying List showing how Bodies have been disposed of; probably printed in Halifax, Nova Scotia, 76 pp., unpaginated, Body No. 1 to 306 inclusive; annotated in red ink below each body's data with burial permit and cemetery data, and with two extra typed pages added, following a hand-annotated page [p. 77] reading '205 permits issued 1912'. Page [78] and [79] for the *Minia, Montmagny and Algerine*; Body Nos. 307 to 324 inclusive, Nos. 326 to 329 inclusive, and No. 330, respectively, titled on p. [78] 'BODIES

PICKED UP BY C.S. MINIA.' (typed), and on p. [79] 'BODIES PICKED UP BY S.S. MONTMAGNY' (typed) and 'Body Picked up by Newfoundland Steamer Algerine' (handwritten), respectively.

[White Star Line.] 1912b. Disposition of Bodies ex Titanic Recovered up to May 13, 1912. Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Library Call No. VK T53 D63, dated Monday, May 13, card covers, probably printed in Halifax, Nova Scotia, 23 pp., unpagged; two sections, List of Bodies Identified and Disposition of Same, 9 pp., and followed by List of Bodies Unidentified and Disposition of Same, 14 pp.

Operation Neptune June 6, 1944

by Andrew A. Irwin

I was serving in HMCS *Algonquin* assigned to the 26th Destroyer Flotilla which was stationed with the British Home Fleet in Scapa Flow. I believe we left Scapa on May 25th 1944 and arrived off Portsmouth on May 27th and proceeded to anchor off Seaview, Isle of Wight. I had turned nineteen on the 28th. We realized there was a major operation about to take place because of the mass of all types of shipping in the area. Speculation about what may be happening was wild in the mess decks.

We carried out several night patrols in the English Channel until June 4th. On the afternoon of June 5th we learned that "Operations Neptune" the naval component of the invasion of Europe was to commence that evening. It became quite obvious when Landing Craft loaded with troops began moving out of the harbour in mid afternoon.

We weighed anchor at 1600 and proceeded to rendezvous off Cowes where we joined with HMS *Hillary* the Headquarters

Ship of Force "J" (Juno Beach). En route we passed HMCS *Prince Henry* and HMCS *Prince David*, two former passenger liners on the BC Coast. Our initial role was to escort HMS *Hillary*, which had on board Major General Keller the Commander of the 3rd Canadian Division and his staff, to the assault area off Normandy. HMS *Hillary* got underway at 1800 with HMCS *Algonquin* astern followed by a flotilla of LCI (Landing Craft Infantry) carrying Royal Marine Commandos.

As we steamed through the Solent "Clear Lower Decks" was piped and all hands gathered around the aft torpedo tubes to hear the briefing of what was to take place and *Algonquins* role from our Commanding Officer Lt. Commander. Desmond W. Piers D.S.C., CD.

The route to the beaches of Normandy was swept of mines and the Channel marked with Blue Lights. While a surface attack was possible the biggest danger was drifting mines of which two gave us a good scare during the trip. During the crossing Bridge Lookouts could see that the Commandos in the Landing Craft were having a bad time with the rolling seas. We closed up action stations at midnight and sailed in darkness until about 0500 when the sky started to brighten and it was soon daylight. What a sight! Ships of every size, landing craft and barges as far as the eye could see. It was amazing that there had been no collisions reported during the crossing.

Around 0600 the battleships and cruisers opened fire on the shore batteries and other defence positions, The noise was thunderous. I believe HMS *Rodney* was outboard on Juno Beach. It was eerie seeing

her 16 inch shells passing overhead inbound for the beaches.

Around 0630 the sky was obliterated by a huge mass of bombers inbound to blast shore positions. Then followed aircraft towing gliders loaded with troops. We could see them going in to land under heavy fire. It was unnerving to see some hit and disintegrate.

We commenced our bombardment at 0700. Our initial target was a battery of two 75mm guns. When the guns were silenced we then targeted houses and other buildings along the shoreline. We ceased fire about 0745 in preparation for H hour (landing time) for the infantry. They had been proceeding past us inbound during our bombardment and due to hit the beaches at 0800.

At about 0900 as we were slowly moving up and down the landing area when a LCI came alongside and asked us to take off casualties. A mortar had landed inside their craft killing one and injuring five. All were taken aboard and put in the Ward Room which had been transformed into a sickbay where "Doc" Dixon proceeded to provide treatment. Two of the survivors succumbed during the night and we buried all three at sea on the morning of 7th.

At about 1100 on the 6th we received a call from our Artillery Officer spotter ashore to take out three 88mm German guns holding up the advancement of our troops about 3 miles inland. Our four 4.7" guns put the first salvo short, the next a bit long, then 13 on target to demolish the position. Later I learned that it was the Le Regiment de la Chaudiere we had helped as they advanced on Bernières-Sur-Mer (at the 55th Anniversary of D-Day in 1999 I met Sgt. Jean Minville of the

Chaudiere's and we reminisced about the occasion as he introduced me to Calvados, the drink of Normandy).

Following D-Day we carried out night patrols keeping the area clear of submarines and E Boats. We had a few nervous nights when enemy aircraft were randomly dropping their bombs in the anchoring area. One bomb exploded about 50 yards off our port beam.

On Sunday June 18th, (D + 12), we escorted the battleship HMS *Rodney* from Portsmouth back to Normandy. On board we had Lieutenant General H.D.G. Crerar C.B., D.S.O. Commander First Canadian Army and his staff of 22. It was a proud moment for *Algonquin*. This was the first time a Canadian Army Commander with his Canadian Army Standard flying from the starboard yard arm had gone into battle from a Canadian warship.

At 0400 June 19th, 1944 (D + 13) we got a call for bombardment from the Army on the Eastern flank at Gonnerville where Commandos were to make a dawn attack. We received the following signal later: "The Commanding Officer and all ranks of the 45th Royal Marine Commando wish to record their appreciation of the excellent support received during the operation at 0445. Its success was largely due to your co-operation".

On Saturday June 24th, (D + 18) while returning from patrol following a night of dodging parachute mines, we were approaching Sword area to carry out bombardment when the destroyer HMS *Swift* about a half a mile ahead who had been with us on patrol hit a mine, broke in two amidships and sank within minutes. On June 28th, 1944 we departed Portsmouth to return to the Home Fleet at Scapa Flow.

Upcoming Conferences

Call For Papers

The Canadian Nautical Research Society
Annual Conference, 2003

SHIPS: THEIR LIVES, WORK AND PEOPLE

The conference will be held in Vancouver in 13-16 August, 2003
at the *Best Western Sands by the Sea Hotel* at English Bay.

The *Gerald Panting New Scholars Award* will be presented to an individual with less than five years in the field of maritime history who is giving a paper at the conference.

Authors of papers accepted for the conference are expected to give the first right of refusal for publication to *The Northern Mariner/Le marin du nord*, the refereed, quarterly journal of the Canadian Nautical Research Society.

For details, paper proposals, and Panting Award information
please contact:

Dr William Glover
e-mail: williamglover@sympatico.ca
fax: (613) 546-8428

Maritime History Conference Of the Association for the History of the Northern Seas

The Eleventh Maritime History Conference of the Association for the History of the Northern Seas will be held on August 1-4 2003 in Bremen, Germany. Contributions to the whole range of the history of Northern Seas are welcome. The proposals will be decided upon by March 1, 2003. If

participants wish to plan a special workshop this should be made known to the organizers as soon as possible.

The Association is also offering one bursary and two subsidies to scholars who otherwise would not be able to attend the conference. According to the intention of the founders of the AHNS to further the academic exchange with colleagues in the countries which, at the time, were behind the co-called

iron curtain, applications from Poland, Estonia, Lithuania or Latvia will be given a certain preference. A certain preference will also be given to applicants under the age of 35. The bursary will cover travel costs, the costs for the stay in Bremen and the conference fee (including most of the meals during the conference) up to the sum of CDN \$800. Applications must contain: a short *curriculum vitae*, including any previous publications; the proposal for a paper to be delivered at the conference; a statement that this paper has not already been published and that it will be offered to the editor of the Association yearbook, *Northern Seas*, and a statement indicating the least expensive way to travel to and from Bremen.

Proposals for contributions to this conference, and applications for the AHNS bursary or the subsidies, should be sent by 1 February 2003 to: Prof. Dr. Heide Gerstenberger, Universität Bremen, Postfach 330440, 28340 Bremen, Germany (fax: +49 0421/218-4597; e-mail: gerstenb@uni-bremen.de).

Those who will need a hotel and want to profit from the conference discount that some hotels are offering will have to register by May 30, 2003.

A conference web page has been set up at www.fks.uni-bremen.de; as additional details and a preliminary programme become available, they will be posted here. For more information about the Association and past conferences, visit the AHNS web page at:

www.swgc.mun.ca/ahns

6th MARCOM Historical Conference

Maritime Command, MARLANT and the Directorate of History and Heritage are holding the 6th MARCOM Historical Conference at the Canadian Forces Maritime Warfare School in Halifax on 26-27 September 2002. The title of the conference is "Running the Navy" and it will focus on the Navy's senior leadership. We think we have an excellent programme. Some of our best known naval historians will present papers on the RCN's Chiefs of the Naval Staff and other distinguished leaders, while six former Commanders, Maritime Command will reflect on their time at the helm. Professor Jack Granatstein, one of Canada's most noted military historians, will close the conference with his impressions.

There is no registration fee for the conference but for base security reasons anyone interesting in attending must let me know in advance. I hope you can take advantage of this opportunity to discuss some of the outstanding officers who led our navy in times of war and peace, and it would be a pleasure to see you in Halifax this September.

Michael Whitby
Chief, Naval History Team
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NDHQ
(613)998-7045
whitby.mj@forces.ca

John Carter Brown Library Research Fellowships

The John Carter Brown Library will award approximately twenty-five short- and long-term Research Fellowships for the year June 1, 2003 - July 31, 2004. Short-term fellowships are available for periods of two to four months and carry a stipend of \$1,400 per month. These fellowships are open to foreign nationals as well as to U.S. citizens who are engaged in pre- and post-doctoral, or independent, research. Graduate students must have passed their preliminary or general examinations at the time of application and be at the dissertation-writing stage. Long-term fellowships, primarily funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, are typically for five to nine months and carry a stipend of \$3,500 per month. Recipients of long-term fellowships may not be engaged in graduate work and ordinarily must be U.S. citizens or have resided in the U.S. for the three years immediately preceding the application deadline.

It should be noted that the Library's holdings are concentrated on the history of the Western Hemisphere during the colonial period (ca. 1492 to ca. 1825), emphasizing the European discovery, exploration, settlement, and development of the Americas, the indigenous response to the European conquest, the African contribution to the development of the hemisphere, and all aspects of European relations with the New World, including the impact of the New World on the Old. Research proposed by fellowship applicants must be suited to the holdings of the Library. All fellows are expected to relocate to Providence and to be

in continuous residence at the Library for the entire term of the fellowship.

Several short-term fellowships have thematic restrictions: the Jeannette D. Black Memorial Fellowship in the history of cartography; Center for New World Comparative Studies Fellowships for research in the comparative history of the colonial Americas; the Alexander O. Viotor Memorial Fellowship in early maritime history; the Ruth and Lincoln Ekstrom Fellowship in the history of women and the family in the Americas; the William Reese Company Fellowship in bibliography and the history of printing; and the Touro National Heritage Trust Fellowship for research on some aspect of the Jewish experience in the New World before 1825. Maria Elena Cassiet Fellowships are restricted to scholars who are permanent residents of countries in Spanish America.

The application deadline for fellowships for 2003-2004 is January 15, 2003. For application forms or more information, write to:

*Director, John Carter Brown Library,
Box 1894, Providence, RI 02912. Tel.:
401-863-2725. Fax: 401-863-3477.
E-Mail: JCBL_Fellowships@brown.edu.
Web Site: <http://www.JCBL.org>*

Call for Papers // Appel de Communications

A Canadian Celebration of Hydrography

The Canadian Nautical Research Society is working with the Canadian Hydrographic Service (CHS) to plan a special conference to mark the centenary of the establishment of the CHS. The conference will be held in Ottawa in May, 2004.

It is hoped that topics covered by papers will include:

- port development and transportation infrastructure
- the science and technology of hydrographic techniques
- administrative history relating to the CHS establishment
- comparative national studies of arctic hydrography
- biographical work on prominent figures
- the politics of hydrography and national development

Simultaneous translation services will be available. The CNRS will award the Gerald Panting New Scholars Award to assist with travel expenses for travel to Ottawa to present a paper. All papers presented will be reviewed for publication in *The Northern Mariner / Le marin du nord*.

For further information, contact Dr. William Glover, conference programme chair:
williamglover@sympatico.ca

Un Siècle D'hydrographie au Canada

La Société canadienne pour la recherche nautique travaille de concert avec le Service hydrographique du Canada à l'organisation d'une conférence spéciale visant à souligner le centenaire du SHC. La conférence se tiendra à Ottawa, au mois de mai 2004. Les communications traitant des sujets suivants seront bienvenues:

- La construction des ports et de l'infrastructure des transports
- La science et la technologie des techniques en hydrographie
- Les données historiques sur l'établissement du SHC
- Études comparatives nationales sur l'hydrographie dans l'Arctique
- Biographies de personnages marquants
- L'aspect politiques de l'hydrographie et du développement national

Des services de traduction simultanée seront disponibles. La Société canadienne pour la recherche nautique décernera la bourse *Gerald Panting New Scholar's Award*, afin de payer ses frais de voyage à un conférencier et de lui permettre ainsi de venir présenter sa communication à Ottawa. Toutes les communications feront l'objet d'un examen aux fins de publications dans *The Northern Mariner/Le marin du nord*.

Pour de plus amples renseignements, n'hésitez pas à communiquer avec Dr. William Glover, président du programme de la conférence, à l'adresse:
williamglover@sympatico.ca

Conference Snaps
from the camera of Maurice D. Smith



Mark Milner (L), Serge Durlinger and Owen Cook (R) aboard HMCS *Sackville*, the restored WWII corvette. A particularly fine setting for Mark, the author of a ship's history of *Sackville*, as well as many other histories of the Canadian Naval Service.



"Anchorites," not to be confused with those who live in bricked up cells, will find a full range of anchors in the park at the naval base *Stadacona* - a remarkable and large collection.

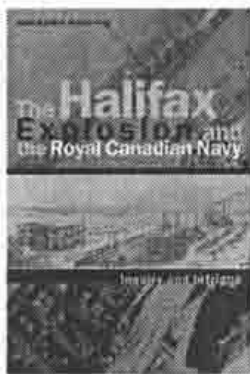


Special access to George Island in the middle of Halifax Harbour and a tour was arranged by Roger Sarty who relaxes here among other big guns.



George Island

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John Griffith Armstrong

Foreword by J.L. Granatstein

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– Michael L. Hadley, author of *Tin Pots and Pirate Ships*

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