



THE NEWSLETTER



Of The UNTD Association of Canada

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SHIPYARD CADET

-Bob Middlemiss was an apprentice at Canadian Vickers Shipyard in Montreal from 1956 – 1959. During that time he worked on the construction of hull # 257 HMCS Restigouche shown above in Halifax dockyard c. 1962. He left Vickers to attend Sir George Williams University (Concordia) 1959 – 63 and joined the UNTD at HMCS Donnacona. He saw service in Stadacona, Cornwallis and HMCS La Hullose. He writes of his shipyard experiences, which are featured in this issue of the UNTD Newsletter.

Photo courtesy Bob Middlemiss



*The Rendezvous Ottawa Organizing Committee
requests the pleasure of your company at*

UNT D

Rendezvous Ottawa - 2006

*-- a "Dine the Ladies" Evening --
in the historic Railway Committee Room,
Centre Block, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa,
on Saturday, twenty-eighth of October,
commencing at half past six o'clock*

Bring your spouse, partner or friend, or come stag

Program

- **1830** Reception — Senate Foyer
- Open Bar & Hors d'oeuvres
- **1930** Up Spirits
- **2000** Dinner — Railway
Committee Room
- Tales from the past & other
amusements
- Speaker: The Hon. Bill Rompkey,
P.C., M.A., LL.D, Senator for
Newfoundland & Labrador (North
West River); Cadet Captain, UNTD;
Lieutenant, RCNR (Ret'd)
- Sing-a-long with grand piano
- Reception Music: Band of
RCSCC FALKLAND
- Souvenir song book

Menu

- Consommé Brunoise
- Coquilles Saint-Jacques
- Caesar Salad
- Prime Rib of Beef au jus
- Duchess Potatoes
- Green Beans Almandine
- Stuffed Tomatoes
- Rolls & Butter
- Torte Grand Marnier
- Tea or Coffee
- Mints & Cheese Boards
- Wines
- Port

- **Dress** — *any Naval uniform, black tie, blazer & flannels.*
Ladies: suitable equivalent.
- **Seating** — *a limited number of seats are available; requests for seats will be filled "first come, first served." The seating plan will be displayed in the foyer & dining room.*
- **Tariff** — *\$95.00 per person*
- **RSVP** — *please call or e-mail Bob Duncombe (tel. 613-851-1645; email: bobduncombe@gmail.com.)*
- **Payment** — *please make payment by cheque payable to: "Robert Duncombe" and write "UNTD Rendezvous Ottawa" on the cheque memo line.*

- **Due Date** — September 20.
Please mail your cheque, and if needed, a note on any dietary requirements, to:

Bob Duncombe
312 - 99 Fifth Ave.
Ottawa ON K1S 5P5

before September 20.

- **Parking** — *no public parking on Parliament Hill; use nearby parking facilities; e.g., World Exchange Plaza (corner of Albert & Metcalfe) or the Chateau Laurier.*
- **Entrance** — *enter the Centre Block by the Senate Entrance (to the right of the Peace Tower)*

Note: *We suggest that you take advantage of this occasion to visit the new Canadian War Museum. We guarantee that it will be a memorable experience. Information about the museum can be found on the museum's web site: www.warmuseum.ca. For information on guided tours, press the 'Plan Your Visit' button on the left side of the website's home page, then scroll down the 'Plan Your Visit' page and enter the box entitled 'Guided Tours.' For more information, call: (819) 776-8600 or 1-800-555-5621; email: info@warmuseum.ca. Don't miss the Memorial Hall with the headstone of the Unknown Soldier and, weather permitting, the hike over the Museum's wild-grass roof.*

**Rendezvous Ottawa
Organizing Committee
(The "Old Oars")**

Bob Duncombe
Bill Rompkey
W. Grant Thompson
Peter Milsom
Bob Wootton
Jim Maxwell



UNTD Sunset Ceremony, Victoria, B.C., Summer of 1956

SHIPYARD CADET

by Bob Middlemiss

Part I

It was August 1956, I was eighteen, and it was the first day of my marine engineer training at Canadian Vickers Shipyard in Montreal. It was to be a five-year apprenticeship, with summer courses in thermodynamics and naval architecture, ending with a fourth engineer's certificate and a career with the Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) as a chief engineer. I was one of ten young men who applied and were selected from across Canada for a pilot project "to meet the anticipated need for trained marine engineers for Canada's expanding DOT fleet of icebreakers and hydrographic survey ships."

The personnel manager walked me over to Engine Shop # 3, but I stopped walking, staring at what lay before me – two navy warships, one brightly painted in a distinctive blue-grey; the other, drab with redlead and primer coats and still under construction. These were our latest Destroyer Escorts and according to official sources, the best in the world.

"Ottawa gets commissioned in a few weeks," the personnel man said. "Still a long way to go on *Restigouche*."

I stared at the spanking new *Ottawa*, some cheery bunting at her halyards, a naval rating checking things out. Yard workers were touching up paint. Her ship's crest gleamed in the morning sun. *Restigouche* was dark with the work and noise of her building: oxyacetylene torches, wires, ropes and hoses snaking across her unfinished decks, wooden ladders poking out of hatches, men bending to their tasks, walking down gangplanks, a hand reaching out a glassless window on the bridge. No crest.

As a boy I had pictures of navy ships on my bedroom walls, including the first *Restigouche* moving through heavy seas. I resolved to get on board her namesake.

In Engine Shop # 3 I was handed over to the foreman and my day began - hard hat, blue coverall and steel-toed boots. A toolbox was provided by the DOT with hammers, screwdrivers, wrenches and some rags to clean up with. Later would come the chipping gun, buffers and grinders; later still the micrometers, feeler gauges, vernier calipers, J-blocks and surface gauges.

Over that first year I learned the shipyard culture and got to know the men. Paul escaped from Poland in 1939 and was a gifted journeyman who made the brass fittings for RCN ships, including the admiral's ladder. Bernard was a former spotter pilot on a German cruiser. He was shot down by Russian fighters in the Baltic. He survived by cutting off gangrenous toes with a penknife. Heinrich, a feldwebel, shared one pair of boots during winter on the Russian front. One lunch hour, Heinrich performed an impromptu goose-step, the air wafting with salami, oranges and diesel oil. "You have to bounce or you won't move forward", he said.

There were the rules, none of them written down. Steal from the company if you want, but never touch a man's tools. There were many dangers – a rigger slipping, going through the ice, dragged down by his tool belt; a man blinded by brass particles caught in an air hose blast; a man losing his leg when a crankshaft came loose. There was the insidious danger of asbestos; the interior spaces of ships white with it as it got sucked into your lungs.

Then came the day in 1958 – "Bob, we're putting you on 257 for sea trials". Hull 257, *Restigouche*.

Restigouche maneuvered out of the dock basin, almost two years to the day from when I had arrived at the yard. Now she was heading out for five weeks of trials, her Vickers shipyard captain quietly giving orders while an assistant wrote down every word on a clipboard.

Restigouche was resplendent in her paintwork, just as *Ottawa* before her. Unlike *Ottawa*, she was the first of a new class, mounting an enclosed 3.75-inch twin turret capable of firing 120 rounds per minute. But like *Ottawa* there were quiet eyed CPOs and POs attending to weapons and electronics. They and the RCN officers kept to themselves.

I had been assigned to *Restigouche* when she was still a powerless hull: working ten feet below the ice covered waterline, sitting on a piece of wood to ward off rheumatism as we worked on cold steel frames and fittings. Now as she left the dock basin the deck throbbed beneath my feet - precision parts under pressure turning over. She carried that musk of new paint, hot wiring, oil and plastic. She was alive.

Part II of Shipyard Cadet will appear in the next issue.

SOURCE OF UNTD SONG FOUND!

In the last issue of this newsletter we printed the words to a UNTD Song that Cal Annis (UNTD U 1905), manager of the Alberta Naval Museum in Calgary, found in his archives. Background to the song was a complete mystery to him. It consisted of seven verses that gave a true appreciation of life in Stadacona, Halifax and summer cruises. He wanted to know more.

Dave Freeman, djfreeman@shaw.ca provided the information to help solve the mystery of the origins of the UNTD Song. As a first year cadet, he was present in the gunroom of HMCS NONSUCH (Edmonton) in the early winter of 1961 when **Cadet Captain Bill Griswold** and other third year cadets wrote the song.

After tracking down Bill Griswold in Victoria, BC, we got the rest of the story about the other cadets who were involved. Jim Foster from Red Deer, Alberta, became Attorney General for the Province of Alberta under Peter Lougheed's government. Lawrence Decore (now deceased), became Mayor of Edmonton and Leader of the Liberal Party in opposition. Two other cadets, Wally Strum and Graham Bradley, both engineers, were also involved. Dudley Evans, an ROTP cadet in the gunroom, became a criminal lawyer in Calgary. It was Evans who played the piano and provided the musical expertise for the song. It is sung to the tune of *Gaudeamus Igitur* from the opera, *The Student Prince*. It was the unofficial anthem of rowdy students protesting German police authority. It has become and is easily recognized as a popular fraternity hymn.



Here we are U N T Ds, Chipping rust upon our knees.
Red lead's thick on dungarees, Cause the Buf-fer must be pleased.



Miles of deck are still be fore us,
Join us in our mourn ful chor us.



I should ne ver have come to sea
Send me back to the lone prairie

For Bill Griswold's story, see "Where Are They Now?" p.7

THE LAST SERVING UNTD!

In updating the history of HMCS HUNTER, Andy McCullough wants to know if his unit has the last serving UNTD? Their XO-designate, Ken Stephens, U-2689, Class of 1968, has been able to remain in uniform because of the extension of compulsory retirement age (CRA) to sixty.

Captain (N) Bob Duncombe, ex-UNTD, former Commanding Officer of HMCS Carleton and the last Officer-in-Charge of First Summer UNTD Training at HMCS Cornwallis in 1967, has provided his assessment of who is the last UNTD. After the completion of UNTD Training in the summer of 1968, the integrated and unified Reserve Officer University Training Program (ROUTP) replaced the UNTD.

However, with the election of the Mulroney Conservatives in 1984, the navy was re-uniformed from the unification green colour into a distinctly Canadian navy blue uniform. The term "Navy" was brought back into general use but not the adjective "Royal". The traditional naval board started to meet again after a lapse of seventeen years and traditional naval ranks were restored.

A year later, in 1985, the navy celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the Naval Service Act of 1910. That prompted a series of UNTD Reunions. The first was held at HMCS STAR in Hamilton on April 27, 1985. A national reunion followed in Halifax in early July and a western reunion in Victoria in August. The Chief of Reserves, Rear Admiral Tom Smith, ex-UNTD, first announced at the 200-seat UNTD Reunion in Hamilton that the name UNTD, as a navy officer-training plan was to be reactivated. He noted that it was most appropriate that this announcement was made at the Naval Division where the very first UNTD was formed in 1943.

However, the University Naval Training Division system, as a separate and distinct Naval Reserve program was not restored to its pre-1968 status. It was a descriptive term only and fell out of use just two years later in 1987. Nevertheless, these "Mulroney UNTDs" (Duncombe's term) are still around. At the UNTD Reunion Mess Dinner on Parliament Hill last October, several Mulroney UNTDs were present. Two are 40 year-old CDRs still on active service.

bobduncombe@hotmail.com

AWARD FOR UNTD/NOAC REUNION

We all know what a success the 2005 UNTD/NOAC Reunion was in Hamilton. Now that city's tourist bureau has recognized the efforts of Gil Hutton and his committee by presenting him with the CONVENTION AMBASSADOR AWARD. It is presented to a local individual for effectively promoting the City of Hamilton by playing a significant role in securing and coordinating a conference that generally is held in a different destination each year.

The award, a stunning clear-glass egg-shaped artwork with injected, spun colours of blue and gold, was presented on Thursday, April 6, 2006 at the Liuna Station Banquet Centre, a venue for part of the NOAC/UNTD reunion program.

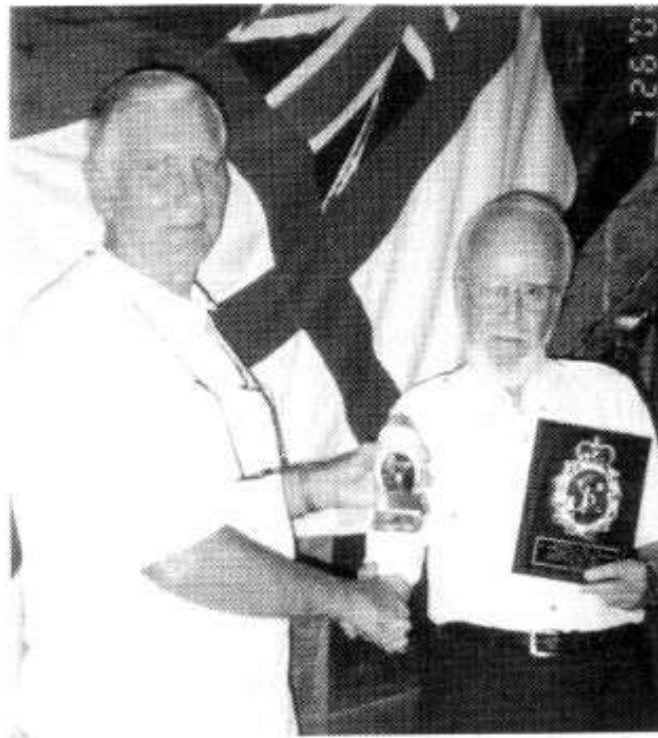
The successful nomination of Gil Hutton for this award was greatly enhanced by the powerful supporting testimonials written by former UNTDs: Mike Cooper, Bob Duncombe, Doug Hain, Ron Harrison, Bob Morris, Bill Thomas, Bob Willson and Bob Williamson.

The Hamilton/Niagara subsidiary group of the Toronto Branch of NOAC further recognized the indomitable Gil Hutton, at a luncheon in Navy Hall at Niagara-on-the-Lake. The affair, organized by Bob Waugh was held on Wednesday, July 26, 2006. Gil was recognized for the 20 years of work that he has put into organizing monthly lunches and special dinners for the group. As a result of his efforts, the camaraderie and social activities of the NOAC/UNTD members and their wives in the Hamilton/Niagara region have flourished.

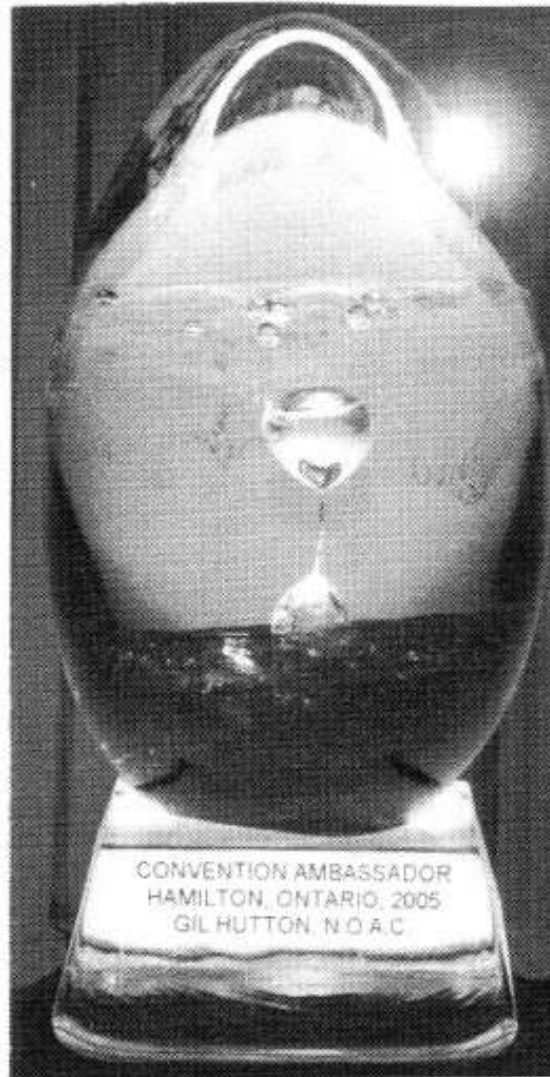
Reif Estates Winery provided a free wine tasting before the luncheon, giving some spirit to the occasion and the sixty attendees. Several Toronto branch members sailed across Lake Ontario from Port Credit in Andy Irwin's boat to attend the luncheon, making it a truly nautical affair.

A profile of Gil's life shows that he has been actively involved in many committees that have made a difference to society and those around him. When asked when it was that he started to become such a leader and organizer, Gil said that he was appointed president of his bible missionary class at the age of six because he had so much to say and has never looked back.

Editor



The UNTD Newsletter editor congratulates Gil Hutton for his NOAC Appreciation Plaque and Convention Ambassador Award at Navy Hall. *Photo by Mrs. E. Williamson*



THE UN-OBITUARY

The children's book "Alice in Wonderland" introduced us to the term "un-birthday" through the ravings of the Mad Hatter. Now, thanks to Gil Hutton, the UNTD Newsletter can familiarize readers with the term Un-Obituary.

Gil had heard rumors that Bob McRae, CD, MID, RCNVR, RCN(R) Ret'd, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at the University of Toronto, had passed away. McRae was the Commanding Officer of the UNTD at HMCS YORK from 1947 to 1953 and revived the program after the War. Gil knew that McRae had been in failing health for several years and did a phone check to McRae's residence. He discovered that the phone was disconnected. Further investigation showed that the home was vacant and for sale.

The indomitable Gil, who had served with LCDR McRae as a UNTD Training Officer at York and known him for 55 years, began writing an In Memoriam for the UNTD Newsletter.

However, his research led him to the discovery that the "reports of McRae's demise were greatly exaggerated". McRae, now well into his 90s and somewhat frail, is alive and well, living in a senior's apartment at 52 McMurrich St., Apt. 308, Toronto, ON. M5R 3T3. Phone (416) 961-4755.

Thus Gil is happy to report this un-obituary to our association members, particularly McRae's former UNTD cadets: Ron McKinlay, Terry Doran, Bob Willson, Derek and David Bate, who were about to mourn the loss of a significant member of the UNTD family.

Post Script: The editor disclaims any intent to draw a similarity between the Mad Hatter and Gil Hutton.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Bill Griswold: The following is an abbreviated naval biography of ex-UNTD Cadet, former Cadet Captain and **song writer**, W.A. Griswold, MD, FRCS(C), 204 - 2020 Richmond Avenue, Victoria, BC. V8R 6R5.

Bill Griswold joined the RCNR as a UNTD Cadet in 1958 at HMCS NONSUCH. He was commissioned as an Acting Sub-Lieutenant in his fourth year and transferred to Continuous

Naval Duty on HMCS BUCKINGHAM just after the Cuban Missile Crisis. He received a regular force BWK on completion of this one-year appointment and returned to Edmonton for his final year at university.

For the next few summers he served as Executive Officer of Port St. Jean, Commanding Officer of Scatari and Commanding Officer of Port St. Jean for the Centennial Year. He was Executive Officer of Port de la Reine when she was transferred to the Pacific Fleet.

After completing his medical degree at Queens University, he moved to Victoria and became a member of HMCS MALAHAT where he was Training Officer and Sea Operations Officer.

Re-certified in Minor War Vessel Command in 1990, he acted as the Commanding Officer of Port de la Reine, Port Quebec and Port Dauphine for gate vessel weekends, Easter break deployments and two-week summer cruises on several occasions. He reached compulsory retirement age in 1995 as a Lieutenant Commander.

Since retirement from the navy and partial retirement from his civilian occupation, a highly recognized heart surgeon, Bill spends his time as part owner of a 37 foot Truant Pilothouse Sloop. He and his wife Lynne act as facilitators and factotums for two Corgis and six cats.

Alec Wright: UNTD '67 (Star and York) and former Chairman of the UNTD Association, has spent four decades in the financial services industry. He is retired from Seneca College where he was co-ordinator of the graduate programme in Forensic Accounting. He has formed his own company and continues to consult in international tax and forensic accounting from Toronto and Nassau. He has just finished consulting on a major fraud in Barbados. His experience has provided him with first-hand examples of investor dangers, which he has collected in a newly released tell-all publication for investors and compliance professionals entitled; **Demons in the Financial World and How to Spot Them**, Trafford Publishing. For more information go to <http://www.trafford.com/4dcgi/view-item?item=8347>, or alecwright@hotmail.com. Wright & Co is located at 530 St Clarens Ave. Tor. ON M6H 3W7. A 15% UNTD discount is available.

Editor

Canadian Naval Memorial Trust Update

By Charlie Gunn, UNTD York 1957-60

The Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust was held in Halifax on July 7, 2006. There were three significant items on which attendees were briefed. The first, was the status of Queens Landing, which is now the working name for the redevelopment of the approximately 14 acres of Halifax waterfront in the vicinity of the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. The project will see HMCS SACKVILLE raised from the water and placed under cover. This is tremendously positive for the future of the Trust, as it will not only facilitate SACKVILLE'S long term preservation, but will allow year round access. The concept is to include an interpretation centre, which will be designed to relate in a fitting manner the contributions made by Canada's Navy to our national heritage.

The second item of significance was the approval of changes to the Bylaws and the structure of the Board of Directors. Both of the changes are part of the process of strengthening the organization to meet the anticipated demands of the project and the ensuing expanded operation.

Finally the attendees sanctioned the hiring of a Director of Development to plan and coordinate fund raising by the Trust. It is the Board's belief that a total reliance on volunteers was no longer sufficient and if the vision of a nationally embraced naval memorial is to be attained, a more professional approach is necessary.

To achieve these goals the Trust needs your support. You are invited to become a Trustee or a Member of the Ship's Company. Whichever of these categories you choose, your annual contribution will support the work of the Trust and will result in a receipt being sent to you for income tax purposes. To make a contribution please visit the Trust's web-site:

<http://www.canadiannavalmemorial.org/>

If you wish to use mail, please request information or send a cheque made out to the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust. The mailing address is: **Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, HMCS SACKVILLE, PO Box 99000, Station Forces, Halifax, NS B3K 5X5**

REUNION MESS DINNER

Since the UNTD Association of Canada is encouraging its members to attend the Ottawa Rendezvous Mess Dinner on October 28, 2006, there will be **no Reunion Dinner in Toronto** on the 3rd Saturday in November as for the past 18 years.

Accommodation in Ottawa has been arranged through the Capital Hill Hotel & Suites at a rate of \$102.00 per night. Make a reservation under "UNTD Dine the Ladies" at 1-800-463-7705 or email info@capitalhill.com

UNTD ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE

2006

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