

ROUTP MARS IV 1973

Glenn Davidson (ROUTP '71) has these recollections of his early training:

I have virtually no photos of my early (1971/1972) ROUTP training, as I don't believe I had a camera during those years. I was however given a lovely camera when I graduated from university in 1973 and so could document some bits of that year's MARS IV (R) training and the subsequent summer contact training.

1973 was not a stellar training year for my ROUTP MARS IV (R) class. After the classroom training in Esquimalt, there was no room in the DDEs (or anywhere else) for us to get some at sea experience, so we were sent off to gate vessels and coast guard ships for sea time and contact training. I went to Halifax and joined the PORTE ST JEAN for a month or so almost entirely alongside, then to the Coast Guard icebreaker CCGS JOHN A MACDONALD which sailed for the Arctic in mid-August up the Labrador coast to Resolute Bay and beyond. My ROUTP shipmate Dave Turton (CATARAQUI) and I disembarked in Resolute Bay and hitched a ride to Ottawa in a Hercules, then back to Halifax. Fascinating time in the ice, glorious scenery and good experience in using one's initiative to get accommodation and transport back from the Arctic (a greater challenge almost 50 years ago than it is today). More limited value in most other areas however.

I have found a few photos of this period. The first 3 are from the PORTE ST JEAN. I was appointed 'gunnery officer' in the absence of a more meaningful role, so organized a grapefruit gun with close range 'live firing' against a towed target from alongside in Halifax Dockyard. It was great fun, and got the whole crew engaged.



This picture shows the weapon itself, with the future Admiral in the striped hat.



Here is the gun in action.



These are the participants from the crew.... quite a collection of uniforms even in 1973. Just to note, I subsequently specialized in Navigation!

The following set of photos is from our sea time in the JOHN A MACDONALD.



The first is the MACDONALD in Resolute Bay.... from the ship's helicopter taking us ashore to find our way back.

Here we are breaking ice (in August) along the coast of Baffin Island.



This shot was taken late in the late evening of an iceberg in Baffin Bay. Great memories and lots of fun.



This was my last active period with the Reserves. I spent the fall travelling in Europe with 3 ROUTP buds (Steve O'Keefe YORK, Bill Parsons UNICORN and Dave Hawkins SCOTIAN, like myself) then went to sea with the offshore industry for the winter, servicing oil rigs off Sable Island, and joined the Regular Force in April 1974... where I happily remained for the next 34 odd years. I'd do it all over again.

Glenn Davidson (ROUTP '71)

(If you participated in any of these activities, let us know and we will update this document to reflect your experience. – Ed.)