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Dramatic portrait busts reflect RCN history and heritage

By Darlene Blakeley

What do the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) and a world renowned artist and sculptor have in common? The desire to keep naval history and heritage alive for future generations through dramatic works of art.

Starting in 2010, Canadian artist Christian Corbet began what has become an annual tradition of creating and donating portrait busts of important naval figures to the RCN. His first donation, in celebration of the RCN's centennial, was a bust of Admiral Sir Charles Edmund Kingsmill, the first commander and father of Canada's navy.

"The Sculptor-in-Residence (SiR) program was developed in appreciation of Mr. Corbet's extraordinary contribution to the preservation of the RCN's legacy and in recognition of the importance of continuing a tradition that celebrates the navy and reminds Canadians of its exceptional achievements," explains Sean Sutton, the RCN's Heritage Officer.

The SiR program stipulates that an artist be named every seven years as Sculptor-in-Residence for the RCN. This artist, chosen by the RCN, must have specialist qualifications, including a comprehensive knowledge of art and art history, and experience in various mediums but especially sculpture, dealing largely in portraiture.

The sculptor must make an annual donation of at least one portrait bust or other sculpture of a significant Canadian naval figure that will be identified in consultation with the RCN. Donated busts are usually unveiled in Ottawa and kept at the Naval Museum of Halifax (Maritime Command Museum). Members of the public can visit the museum to view the busts, and the busts may be shown in other communities as part of a future exhibit.

"Art is one of the most public ways of validating a history



Photos provided by Christian Corbet

A portrait bust of Vice-Admiral Ralph Hennessy in progress.

and a culture, and portrait busts are one of the highest forms of recognition," says Mr. Sutton. "For an artist of Mr. Corbet's renown to create and donate such enduring works that recognize important figures in our history not only honours our navy and its members, but brings visibility and recognition to the RCN."

Mr. Corbet is widely recognized as one of Canada's pre-eminent artists, practising in various mediums but especially painting and sculpture. He co-founded and was the first President of the Canadian Portrait Academy, and has been commissioned to undertake works on subjects including Her Majesty the Queen Mother, Sir Winston Churchill, Margaret Atwood and Jack Layton. Through his interest in forensic art facial reconstruction he was also engaged by the Department of National Defence to



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Cover page: HMCS *Halifax* sails with allied ships during Exercise Trident Juncture. Photo: LS Peter Frew

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establish the identity of fallen soldiers of the First World War.

Mr. Corbet, who is also the Regimental Sculptor of the Royal Canadian Regiment and Forensic Artist-in-Residence for the University of Western Ontario, has so far created six busts for the RCN, all of them notable but often forgotten naval personages, five of which have been officially unveiled. Along with Admiral Sir Charles Kingsmill, there are also busts of Chief Petty Officer Max Bernays (one of only two members of the RCN to receive the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal from the British Admiralty during the Second World War); Commander Adelaide Sinclair, Director, Women's Royal Canadian Navy Service; Vice-Admiral Ralph Hennessy (awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for the sinking of *U-210* in August 1942); and Midshipman William Palmer (one of the first Canadian military casualties of the First World War).

In the spring of 2016 a bust of Able Seaman Leander Green, the first Newfoundlander to be awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, will be unveiled. Mr. Corbet has also begun work on a seventh bust, Dr. Margaret Brooke, who was named a Member (Military Division) of the Order of the British Empire during the Second World War for her heroic acts following the torpedoing and subsequent sinking of the *SS Caribou* on October 13, 1942 in the Cabot Strait off Newfoundland. Dr. Brooke passed away in Victoria on January 9, 2016 at the age of 100.

"I feel that the visual arts have and continue to play a vital role in helping us see and understand our history and heritage," says Mr. Corbet. "In my position I am to re-create such important people in the RCN's history and not just in a way that is to copy a photographic image but also, and more importantly, to imbue some of their personality and character into the work of art. Because I sculpt portrait busts, which is not all that common in Canada, I feel I am a good fit for the role and one I feel honoured to have."

Mr. Sutton also feels strongly that by celebrating important figures in the RCN's history, the SiR program honours past sacrifice and achievements, while reminding the public of the vital contribution the RCN has made, in war and peace times, to protecting our borders and trade routes – lifelines for the Canadian economy.

"We have a duty to remind the public of our storied past and continuing role," he says. "With most Canadians living many miles from our coasts, it's easy for the people we serve and protect to lose sight of the navy's importance and value."

The SiR is renewable every seven years, but Mr. Sutton says it may not remain a Sculptor-in-Residence program specifically, as the navy may consider other forms of art. "As this is a new program, all possibilities will be explored in shaping what we hope will be an enduring program to the benefit of the RCN, Canadian artists, and ultimately, all Canadians," he explains.



Top: Artist Christian Corbet works on a sculpture of Captain James Cook for the Royal Navy.

Left: Portrait bust of Admiral Sir Charles Kingsmill

Above: Portrait bust of Chief Petty Officer Max Bernays

Building trust with international partners



Photo: LS Peter Frew

Naval vessels from Spain, Portugal, Germany and Turkey seen from HMCS Halifax sail together during Exercise Trident Juncture.

By Darlene Blakeley

Operating as a coalition with a group of like-minded nations has become the norm in today's military operations. As a result, training together in large-scale, multinational exercises has become increasingly important to ensure seamless interoperability in times of crisis.

In October and November, more than 800 Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) sailors took part in Exercise Trident Juncture, the largest NATO maritime exercise in more than 20 years. Canadians worked alongside armed forces members from 34 nations, with over 60 warships and 120 military aircraft.

Exercises such as these serve to enhance the combat readiness of units, improve interoperability and

confirm operational mission preparedness. They also enhance Canada's ability to operate with NATO allies and contribute to solutions for an evolving and challenging global security environment.

"When we train together with our allies in exercises like Trident Juncture, we see first-hand how each other works – our common procedures – and we develop a trust and a confidence that should the need arise, we would be ready to respond quickly and to seamlessly operate together in a combat or humanitarian mission anywhere in the world," explains Vice-Admiral Mark Norman, Commander RCN. "I am proud to say that ship for ship, sailor for sailor, the RCN consistently delivers excellence at sea in these large-scale, multinational exercises."

Trident Juncture tested multiple

warfare disciplines at sea including amphibious landings in four locations, special operations forces activities, maritime patrol aircraft sorties, submarine warfare and coastal training events.

During the exercise, HMCS *Halifax* demonstrated excellence at sea as the command platform, a ship that has the capability and enables the direction, coordination and control of a task group or fleet, for the duration of the exercise. This marked a first for ships coming out of the Halifax Class Modernization Program.

HMC Ships *Athabaskan*, *Halifax*, *Montréal*, *Goose Bay* and *Summerside*, HMC Submarine *Windsor*, and HMCS *Winnipeg*, seconded from duties on Operation Reassurance, also took part in the exercise.

"It was a privilege to work with the

Royal Canadian Navy during Trident Juncture,” says Rear-Admiral Tony Radakin, Commander United Kingdom Maritime Forces. “This included a Canadian Navy task group commanded by Commodore Craig Baines, who was my Force Anti-Submarine Warfare Commander. Throughout the exercise the task group was to the fore at finding, tracking and attacking enemy submarines and defending my other task groups, as well as having submarines in direct support and shaping the battle space for several amphibious assaults. I also had RCN officers and sailors in my flagship, HMS *Ocean*, who provided excellent support whether as chefs, logisticians, battle watch and operations room staff, or merchant shipping liaison. I look forward to working with such professional and enthusiastic people again.”

Windsor was the last RCN vessel to return home following the exercise, arriving in Halifax in mid-December after a record setting 101 days away from home port in Western European waters. The submarine participated with allied navies in the multinational Exercise Joint Warrior, as well as Trident Juncture.

“This deployment marked a significant milestone for the Canadian Submarine Force,” says VAdm Norman. “HMCS *Windsor* successfully completed the longest Victoria-class submarine deployment ever. It showcased Canada’s support of



Photo: LS Peter Frew

A rigid-hulled inflatable boat departs HMCS Athabaskan during Exercise Trident Juncture.

NATO and the significant capability and readiness of Canada’s Submarine Force to support the Canadian Armed Forces and all our international partners.”

Highlighting benefits of modernized frigates

In particular, exercises such as Trident Juncture highlight the benefits of the new command and control and air defence capabilities introduced by the Halifax Class Modernization Program.

“With the eventual return to the fleet of all 12 of our Halifax-class frigates,

Canada will have more flexibility for missions around the world – exercises, forward deployments, or even unforeseen occurrences the government decides to respond to,” says VAdm Norman.

Today, with seven of the frigates now operational and out of their mid-life refit and modernization, the end of the program is in sight. “The entire project remains on budget and on schedule to be completed by early 2018, thanks to the efforts of teams of people from a number of government departments and from industry, including hundreds of highly skilled

HMCS Windsor returns from Exercise Trident Juncture after setting a new record for the longest deployment of a Victoria-class submarine.



Photo: LS Dan Bard

technical and trades people,” says VAdm Norman. “I can’t praise the work of everyone enough – all of the men and women who have been training so hard on these brand new, complex systems in order to put these ships through their paces.”

Maintaining strong international relationships

Large-scale multinational exercises are also part of a larger Canadian focus on maintaining strong international relationships with other nations.

“These exercises allow our sailors to develop their skills as mariners and war fighters, and to better operate with our allies,” says VAdm Norman. “But we’ve also found that they can lead to even more meaningful connections and opportunities with our partners down the line.”

VAdm Norman uses Chile as an example. “We had formed a productive partnership with them by working together in multinational exercises such as Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) in 2014. Later, we identified a need that the Chilean Navy could help us with, and we began bilateral discussions that eventually led to an agreement on the temporary use of a Chilean replenishment ship, the *Almirante Montt*, to fill a gap we had for the resupply of our fleet at sea. This was a relatively new relationship for us, but you never know where or when you might need your allies, and in this case Chile really helped us out.”

He adds that by building that expertise and interoperability in advance with Chile, a connection was already established when the

need arose.

“It’s extremely important for the RCN to have the platforms and people available to continue to participate in these exercises – to strengthen our existing relationships and to forge new ones,” VAdm Norman stresses.

Large-scale exercises such as Trident Juncture demonstrate NATO’s new increased level of ambition in joint modern warfare and showcase a capable, forward-leading Alliance equipped with the appropriate capability and capacity to meet present and future security challenges. “The RCN will continue to pull its weight with our allies going forward,” says VAdm Norman. “Our sailors, airmen and airwomen are second-to-none as they prepare for any missions that come their way – they truly are Ready Aye Ready.”



Photo: LS Ogle Henry

HMCS Winnipeg conducts a replenishment-at-sea with French Ship Somme in the Eastern Atlantic Ocean during Exercise Trident Juncture.

TRIAL WILL BETTER PROTECT RCN DIVERS FROM UNDERWATER EXPLOSIONS

By Karen Shewbridge

Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) scientists and technologists recently collaborated on a series of international underwater trials in the Bedford Basin in Halifax that provided important data which could save the lives of Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) divers and ensure they remain at a safe distance from underwater explosives.

“It’s critical that divers be able to operate safely, notwithstanding inherently dangerous combat and operational environments,” said Rear-Admiral John Newton, Commander of Maritime Forces Atlantic and Joint Task Force Atlantic. “Refining our knowledge of safe stand-off from underwater explosions influences operational planning, tactical development and training doctrine. This is part of our ongoing modernization of operational capabilities that must be adjusted to keep pace with the evolution of maritime operations.”

The international trials collected underwater acoustic sound and blast pressure data using low-weight explosive charges in a coastal



Photo: DRDC

An underwater explosion in Bedford Basin, Halifax, triggered by DRDC scientists and technologists as part of a series of international underwater trials.

environment close to the shoreline. The collaborative experiment drew upon the expertise of DRDC research teams and specialized diagnostic instrumentation from DRDC Research Centres across Canada.

“The Bedford Basin offers near perfect conditions for researchers to carry out trials like these,” said Dale Reding, DRDC Director General Science and Technology Air Force and Navy. “We collected critical data about how underwater explosions close to

shore can impact the human body and how far divers should be from an explosive device for safe diving operations.”

DRDC’s battery-powered data acquisition system (DAQ) is specially designed to gather blast data autonomously. The DAQ continuously monitored its GPS time and location and communicated wirelessly with the scientists.

Highly sensitive underwater sensors measured underwater explosions in a “real” environment. The gauges and autonomous data recording devices included a synthetic human head, which was suspended beneath the boat and exposed to the blast wave. The data from the synthetic head provides insight into a diver’s susceptibility to head injuries and the biological effects of underwater blasts on the body.

The data from this unique trial will be used to validate computer models and ensure a better understanding of underwater blast effects on humans, and will also generate more accurate standoff ranges for divers who perform underwater operations in the vicinity of explosive devices.

DRDC trials provide important data which could save the lives of navy divers.



Photo: DND



Danielle Smith

A balancing act: Environmental stewardship and maritime security priorities

By Darlene Blakeley

The career plans of Danielle Smith did not include working for the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN). In fact, she would have placed “a significant wager” on the fact that this would never happen. However, life has a way of throwing surprises our way and she has now been working as an environment officer for Maritime Forces Pacific (MARPAAC) at Esquimalt, B.C., for almost 13 years.

“I saw myself working with a non-government organization or, at a stretch, for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) or Environment Canada,” she says. “I could not have predicted this path, nor the personal satisfaction that it would bring.”

Ms. Smith is originally from Vanderhoof in northern British

Columbia, an hour west of Prince George. Most of her high school was completed in the United States, but she returned to Canada for her post-secondary education, where she graduated from the Environmental Technologist program at Camosun College and then completed a degree at Royal Roads University in Victoria. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science.

After graduation she was employed by an environmental firm from Washington State where she conducted biological surveys, mostly in Washington, Oregon and California for a number of species including small mammals, birds and gastropods (snails and slugs). She also worked for the Royal British Columbia Museum in their mammal collection, for the National Park Service out of Cape Cod, Mass., and as an

ecotourism guide in Victoria.

An unexpected turn

It was then that her career took an unexpected turn as she took a job with MARPAAC at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Esquimalt. “What I didn’t understand was that by working with an organization whose primary mandate was not related to the environment, I would be afforded real opportunities to make a difference,” Ms. Smith explains. “I have had the privilege of representing the Department of National Defence (DND) in the protection of species at risk and designation of marine protected areas, and the pleasure of working with folks in uniform who are dedicated to the task of environmental protection.”

Her current job as a MARPAAC environment officer includes myriad

diverse roles such as supporting fleet operations by ensuring current environmental legislation and policy is known, understood and integrated; advising senior staff when friction points arise between the environment and activities that support the fleet's mandate; providing environmental briefings to ship and shore staff for exercises and pre-deployment, as well as on topics such as marine mammal identification; liaising with other government departments such as DFO, Environment Canada and local First Nations in support of fleet operations and exercises; overseeing fleet-related environmental projects such as sonar and demotion studies; developing policy specific to the West Coast that speaks to a unique environment and protected areas; building environmental awareness within the Pacific Fleet that promotes sustainable operations integration into decision making and day-to-day business; and representing DND on species at risk recovery teams.

Ms. Smith is the first to admit that working within the unique environment of the West Coast has had its challenges. "As with most things though, the greatest challenges bring the greatest rewards," she says. "We are living in a time where the environmental landscape is changing both from a legal and public perception perspective. Often we find that the average person living on the West Coast is highly invested in the health of the environment and its protection. It's just part of life here."

She adds that as stewards of land and sea spaces, a way to integrate these expectations and legal requirements into day-to-day business must be found, while still providing military personnel with the training and operational experience that will allow them to safely and successfully fulfill domestic obligations and Canada's mandate abroad.

"The job we ask of our personnel is inherently dangerous and my job is to find a way to allow crucial training and operations to occur without comprising our commitment to the environment," Ms. Smith explains. "It's all about balance. Finding that balance requires concentrated evaluation of where, when and how we conduct our

"The job we ask of our personnel is inherently dangerous and my job is to find a way to allow crucial training and operations to occur without compromising our commitment to the environment."

business. Sometimes little changes can make all the difference."

Building understanding

Another challenge for Ms. Smith has been that she is not a member of the military, which means that she has often been required to provide direction on how sailors should perform certain aspects of their job without any military experience herself. "To achieve this, I rely heavily on our people in uniform to build my understanding of what they do and how I might provide the most value to this organization. Recognizing that we both have a piece of the puzzle in building sustainable operations is the key to success. At the end of the day, we are a team. I think that the people I work with understand we have the same goal: achieve the mission. My role is to make sure we do so in a way that is true to our departmental commitments to the environment and sustainable operations."

Ms. Smith explains that it is not

practical to expect that military personnel would also know and understand the complexity of the environmental regulatory landscape without support. "Without people like me on both coasts and at the centre building the Environmental Management System that drives our compliance, DND would fall short of our commitments in this area. We are a significant portion of the federal budget and Canadians expect that we are constantly evaluating how, when and where we do our business and how that might impact the water, air and natural systems on which we all depend. We could not make informed decisions and without the support of science and people to integrate that science into our business."

One of the more recent successes at MARPAC involves a bubble curtain at Whirl Bay near Victoria that was developed in response to fish kill associated with an underwater demolition range used by Fleet Diving Unit Pacific. Various solutions were



Photos provided by Danielle Smith

Danielle Smith works at a contaminated site remediation completed adjacent to a migratory bird sanctuary at Royal Roads University in Victoria.



Danielle Smith, left, pores over a map of the Straits of Juan de Fuca with colleagues Private Jandei Kim, Leading Seaman Nicole Hunter and Cliff Bauer.

examined and, in conjunction with DFO, it was decided that the employment of a bubble curtain could significantly reduce the impact to fish in the immediate vicinity.

The bubble curtain functions as a semi-circular barrier of air that originates from flexible hose placed under the water at the sediment level, according to Ms. Smith. The two ends of the hose meet the shore line to form a half circle. Fish are driven out of the cove using small scare charges that radiate out from the shoreline to the edge of the water space delineated by the hose. Once fish have left the area, an air compressor is used to charge the hose line and small holes in the hose emit a strong stream of air bubbles that serve as a barrier to fish attempting to re-enter the area.

“The use of this technology allows us to meet the requirements of our permit with the regulator and to exponentially decrease our training impact on fish,” says Ms. Smith.

Commitment to sustainable operations

An example of MARPAC’s commitment to sustainable operations and the spirit of Canada’s Species at

Risk Act has been sonar restriction in the resident killer whale critical habitat, she adds. “While sonar is not specifically prohibited within the critical habitat, the recovery strategy does identify it as a threat. MARPAC has assumed a precautionary approach and does not permit the use of hull-mounted sonar within this ecologically significant area.”

Also of concern is the designation of dedicated sites for the reburial of First Nation’s human remains at a number of CFB Esquimalt properties. With any ground altering activities on CFB Esquimalt properties there is a risk of uncovering human remains belonging to local First Nations people. Ground altering activities primarily occur during construction of new buildings or during efforts to remediate historical contaminated sites.

“The rich First People’s history associated with many properties currently managed by CFB Esquimalt requires a strong relationship with our local First Nations communities and neighbours,” says Ms. Smith. “The importance of mutual respect becomes especially clear when human remains are discovered. The culture and traditions of these communities often require remains

stay on the land where they were placed at the time death. In support of this spiritual practice, CFB Esquimalt has provided space at a number of properties to facilitate the ceremonial reburial of ancestors.”

Additionally, the Base Commander and other senior staff alongside local chiefs and elders take part in the ceremony of reburial as way to honour and support this important work, while demonstrating CFB Esquimalt’s commitment to further strengthening the relationship with its First Nations neighbours.

Despite her initial personal wager that she would not find her career path with the military, Ms. Smith finds her job as MARPAC’s environment officer challenging, exciting and rewarding. “From the top of this organization to the bottom, I see people who are engaged and eager to make a difference,” she says. “I am always amazed at the level of environmental commitment demonstrated by senior staff and command teams, and how the men and women under them rise to the challenges that come their way. Without this strong leadership, we would not have seen such true integration of the environment into our daily business.”

Connecting with Canadians while deployed overseas

HMCS Winnipeg

By Sub-Lieutenant Jamie Tobin

As a public affairs officer in HMCS *Winnipeg* currently deployed overseas, it is my job to communicate with as many Canadians as possible about the ship's contribution to Operation Reassurance (Canada's contribution to NATO assurance measures in Central and Eastern Europe).

Being deployed on a ship at sea can make it difficult to communicate, but it is part of my job to overcome these challenges.

For members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), it is especially important to connect with Canadians during Veteran's Week. During November's campaign, I was asked to deliver a speech via video chat to the Prairie Valley School Division and the students at Edenwold School in central Saskatchewan. It was an opportunity I did not want to pass up.

"Our goal was to connect our Remembrance Day service in a



Photos: LS Ogle Henry

Sub-Lieutenant Jamie Tobin aboard HMCS Winnipeg.

meaningful way to a deployed CAF member in an interactive manner," said Lyle Stecyk, Superintendent of Special Projects for the Prairie Valley School Division.

While I am comfortable speaking to audiences, there were a few hurdles I

had to overcome based on my transient working environment.

First, we needed to be alongside to connect with the school division, but luckily we docked the night before my address. Second, we needed to establish a wireless internet

connection and test it before the event.

To mitigate these issues, I travelled into the unfamiliar city of Lisbon, Portugal to find a SIM card and set up my own wireless network. While I was able to find a mobile phone store and buy a SIM card, I suddenly realized how uninformed I was about wireless technology. Luckily, one of the ship's hull technicians, Leading Seaman Colin Lyon, saved the day by setting up a wireless hotspot with his personal cell phone. Without his self-taught technical expertise, this unique opportunity would have failed at the last minute.

With only 90 minutes to spare before my big speech, I was finally able to test our video chat connection with the team at Edenwold School. Thankfully, the connection was great because there was no time to troubleshoot.

After getting dressed into my formal navy uniform, I realized my final challenge right before show time. I was speaking to a group of adult school board executives, as well as a group of elementary school students. How was I going to keep the attention of both groups for 15 minutes I asked myself?

When the time came to speak, I was overwhelmed by the power of modern technology. Despite being more than 7,000 kilometres and six time zones away, I felt like I was in the classroom with the students.

"SLt Tobin did a great job of balancing his message between adults and kids," said Kelly Ireland, Principal of Edenwold School. "We'll have lots to talk about over the next while!"

I took the opportunity to speak about the significance of Remembrance Day, past CAF missions, current CAF operations and HMCS *Winnipeg's* mission on Operation Reassurance. The ship departed from Esquimalt, B.C., in mid-June and has been conducting operations with Standing NATO Maritime Groups since early July.

The speech gave me a unique opportunity to represent the ship's company of more than 250 sailors, soldiers and air force personnel deployed with HMCS *Winnipeg*, who are proudly serving Canada. I did not



Sub-Lieutenant Jamie Tobin speaks via video chat to students in Edenwold School in central Saskatchewan.

take this responsibility lightly and it was truly an honour to share our experiences with my audience.

"The presentation by SLt Tobin was well thought out, meaningful and relevant," said Ben Grebinski, CEO/Director, Prairie Valley School Division. "His comments regarding Canadian naval history, the need to remember those who have served and are currently sacrificing in order to protect our country, and the role HMCS *Winnipeg* is currently playing in supporting Operation Reassurance was very informative and educational."

After my speaking part, the students asked me some questions about life on board a naval ship and what it is like to serve on an overseas CAF mission. I was impressed by their questions and answered them to the best of my ability.

Despite the challenges that needed to be overcome to facilitate this speech, I would do it all over again in a heartbeat. The opportunity to share my own account of this deployment and the story of HMCS *Winnipeg* with an attentive audience was an incredible experience, and the smiles on the faces of the students made it all worthwhile.



Photo: Cpl Stuart MacNeil

During a video chat with Sub-Lieutenant Jamie Tobin, students at Edenwold School in central Saskatchewan were able to learn about HMCS Winnipeg and its current overseas deployment. Here, the ship arrives in Funchal, Madeira.