

# Class of 65 Newsletter

## Bulletin d'Information—Classe de 65

Number/Numéro 121



July/juillet 2019

*Disclaimer: This Newsletter is produced for members of the RMC Class of 1965 and is based primarily on inputs from members of the Class of 65. It is not an official publication of the Royal Military College nor does it purport to represent the views or opinions of all members of the Class. Unfortunately, the Editorial staff lacks the linguistic skills to produce a bilingual version. Items are published in the official language in which they are received.*

### Editor's Corner/Coin du rédacteur

It just seems like yesterday since I sent out Edition 120, however, I am pleased to report that I received numerous inputs to prompt an early July issue. Included in this version is a survey regarding next year's RMC Reunion week that celebrates the Class of 65's fifty fifth anniversary of graduation. Terry Colfer has reported on the 2019 Ottawa Branch Golf Tournament; Andy Nellestyn has contributed two interesting articles—one marking the 75th Anniversary of RCEME; and, the other, some research into the naming of a Canadian Navy League Corps. John Bardsley has picked up on Gary Running's motorcycle adventures with a rendition of his own. Last but not least, an update on last issue's Rowing Club story. But first it is my sad duty to report the passing of another classmate.

### Obituary— 6551 Jon Evan McLaren

#### McLAREN, Jon Evan

Passed away at the age of 77 on June 19, 2019 at the Trillium Hospital in Mississauga following a courageous battle with heart disease. Jon was born on January 13, 1942 in Toronto. He lived a full life with multiple careers and many interests. Jon graduated from The Royal Military College of Canada and became a naval officer. He earned a Master's of English at Dalhousie University and earned his law degree at Queen's University. He went on to become a corporate lawyer and practiced law in Canada and the Cayman Islands. He had many interests including amateur astronomy, telescope-making, and computer programming. He was an avid tennis player and long- distance bike rider, and was a member of multiple Burlington tennis clubs. Jon was a loving father to Halley and Virgil McLaren, and he will be fondly remembered by his spouse Susan Hoicka. After cremation, a private family celebration of Jon's life will be held in the summer. If desired, donations may be made to the Hamilton Food Share in Jon's memory.



*Notes: This obituary was provided to Doug Cope by Jon's daughter Halley and has since been republished in e-veritas. Doug has also provided a couple of photos of Jon that are reproduced on the next page.*

The Class of 1965 extends its condolences to Susan and the entire McLaren family.



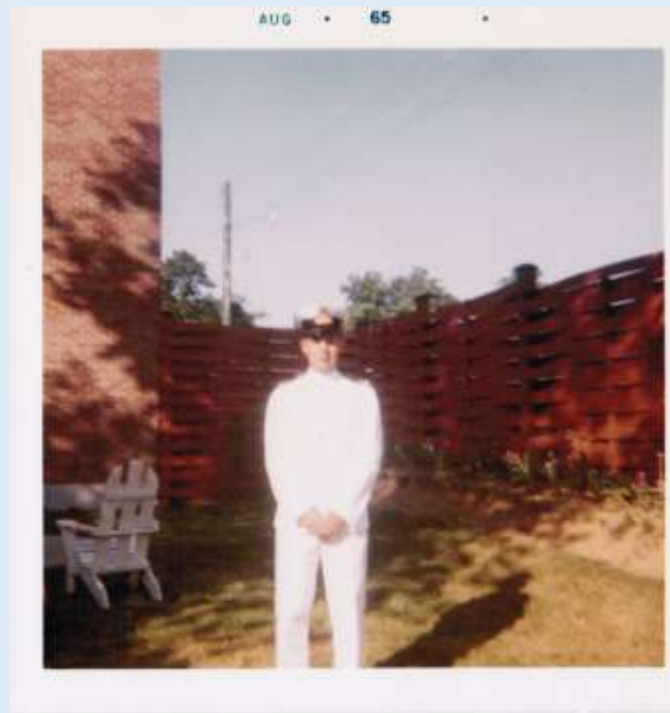
# Numéro 121

## July/juillet 2019

Page 2

### Jon McLaren Remembered

**Doug Cope** has provided the following photos in remembrance of **Jon McLaren**. The first is of naval cadets Carruthers, Cope and McLaren in Hawaii in 1963 and the second is newly commissioned Sub-Lieutenant McLaren in HMCS Stadacona in 1965.





# Numéro 121

## July/juillet 2019

Page 3

### The 2020 RMC Reunion Weekend - A Survey

Perhaps you have not give much thought yet to the 2020 Reunion weekend even though it represents a major milestone for our class—55 years since graduation. Some preliminary thoughts are being bandied about and two schools of thought are emerging. The first, given the significance of the event, is to do it up in a form fitting the occasion, making it something memorable, given that for many of us it might be our last. The other, is to tone down our participation and to economise.

It would, therefore, be very helpful to get some sense of the wishes of a broader cross-section of the Class. The following, rather unscientific survey is intended to guide the planners as they start to make arrangements, an activity that needs to start very soon. You are therefore requested to forward your responses to the following questions to me as soon as possible.

- A. **Do you intend to attend the 2020 Reunion?** (If yes, please respond to the remaining questions)
- B. **Will you attend the Thursday, 17 Sep, Legacy Dinner?**
- C. **Will you attend the Friday recruit obstacle race and a Class Meet and Greet in the evening?**
- D. **Would you attend a Class Lunch in the SSM following the Recruit Badging Parade on Saturday?**
- E. **Would you attend the Old Brigade Dinner on Saturday evening?**
- F. **Would you participate in the ex-Cadet parade on Sunday morning and the Old Brigade luncheon following the parade?**

I know it may seem like a long time off, but your early best estimates to these questions will greatly assist the planning efforts. Thank you.

### Letters

From **6440 Tony Goode**, *“Mike: So sorry to hear about your leg injuries that have evidently limited your mobility. Best wishes for an early recovery that will allow you to get back to driving again. I am very remiss in not making a contribution to the newsletter. No excuses except that I have not yet retired, which limits my spare time to work on an article. I started something about my time in West Africa back in the ‘70’s that I need to finish. Will see what I can do over the next few months. I have also just found my old Midshipmen’s journal that could provide the kernel of more stories about our first summer cruise in Cap de la Madeleine. All the best”*

From **6540 John Hilton**, *“Mike - best wishes for a speedy recovery! I too am banned from driving for a while. I just had a right hip replacement. It has been quite painful for the past few months but that doesn't get you any sympathy in the medical world as it is not life-threatening. In any event I am slowly recovering so please slow down when passing any old farts hobbling with cane on the side of the road. “*



# Numéro 121

## July/juillet 2019

Page 4

### Letters (Continued)

From **6536 Quiller Graham**, *Hi Mike – Thought I should drop you a note in response to Doug Cope’s report regarding my stint in hospital. All is good – see attached (“Wow – I didn’t get around to reading Doug Cope’s letter until about a week ago. After that stint in hospital (that was, at the outset, a bit of a drama) I’m happy to report that I am fully recovered, back living at home and, after a relatively short period during which my driver’s license was temporarily suspended “for medical reasons”, I am enjoying my Z3/3.0 L again – without restriction! ) I hope your Achilles issue is not causing you too much grief. I know what it’s like to not be able to drive .”*

From **6715 Yvan Gagnon**, *“Thanks for all the news. I do not have anything significant to add...Just for your info, I will get both my knees redone, for the third time!!!, next Tuesday. Alice and I intend to go to Europe in August and I hope to be quite mobile by then. Good luck with your foot.”*

From **6559 Gerry Mueller**, *“Here’s hoping that your surgeon visit on June 14 gives you the best possible mobility result, although it sounds like even that will keep you out of the driver’s seat for most of the Summer. Coincidentally, I too have a family doctor appointment the same day (to discuss a spinal x-ray that I’m having tomorrow, June 10) and am also hoping to be given a date on which I can drive again, in my case probably sooner than you.*

*My disability was self-inflicted. On May 5<sup>th</sup>, which was one of the very few nice Spring days we had, I was putting our patio furniture out, and as a final step ran our patio awning out for the first time of the year, which promptly jammed up, me having forgotten that it was bungee-corded at one end to stop it rattling in the wind. Running it back in locked it in place about a third of the way extended at one end, and almost closed at the bungee-cord end. The solution was obvious; a step ladder and a utility knife, quickly implemented with me reaching up at arms length to cut the bungee cord. The engineer should have taken another 30 seconds or so to consider the geometry, statics, and dynamics of the situation. That end of the awning dropped about 3 feet and simultaneously extended to about 6 feet from the wall, catapulting me off the ladder, which remained standing. Time slowed, and I distinctly remember thinking, “Crap; this is going to hurt!” It did!*

*Thanks to a quick-thinking neighbor who just by luck saw this, and almost instant response to a 911 call, I was in the local trauma centre within 30 minutes, was almost instantly assessed, and had x-rays, a CT scan, and ultra-sound of the chest and abdomen in short order. The final score, 7 staples in my head to close a cut, 9 stiches in a finger to sew a large flap of skin back on, nothing to be done about my tongue which I had bit through on one side, a compression fracture of the T12 vertebrae, and a concussion. And, I could go home, which made the trauma nurse’s day; apparently I was only her 3<sup>rd</sup> patient ever who left the trauma centre under their own power. The final word from the emergency physician was that I would hurt worse over the next few days than I did right then, to see my own doctor in 10 days to have the staples and stiches out and for further instructions, meanwhile follow the concussion protocol, and here’s a prescription for Tylenol 3. It turns out that I’m one of a small number of people that doesn’t metabolize codeine well, so hurting worse it did.*



# Numéro 121

## July/juillet 2019

Page 5

### Letters (Concluded)

*It took 4 weeks for me to getting back to what I evaluate as about 90% of normal; I still have some lower back pain, and tire more quickly than I like. Screen time is one of the things that saps energy, hence holding up on dealing with email. My family doctor insisted on no driving for 4 to 6 weeks, mostly to allow the spinal injury to heal, and at 4 weeks made that at least 6 weeks. If the x-ray tomorrow shows good healing, I hope to be back behind the wheel on the 17<sup>th</sup>, but it will be for short trips only, because sitting for significant time still ends up being painful. Thus our Summer holiday plans, which were a driving westward Canadian trip, are on hold, and might become an a few days at a time exploration of Ontario. But, all in all, looking at how this might have ended, I was very lucky!*

*Again, here's hoping that you recover as quickly as possible, and that by the time the TEA lecture roll around in later October, we can meet up again in Kingston."*

### 2019 Ottawa Branch Golf Tournament by 6523 Terry Colfer

Below is a pic of some of the class golf gang taken yesterday at Greensmere G&CC. It was a challenging but enjoyable day for all participants. With temps hovering around 40C and full humidity, a main focus seemed to be staying hydrated. Last year one of the '65 teams won the 'most honest' commendation (aka placed last) but we have now improved. Pictured from left to right are: Adams, Corbett, Carruthers, Colfer and Emond. Archer, Clarkson and Cooke also participated but were not available for the pic.





# Numéro 121

## July/juillet 2019

Page 6

### **RCEME Museum marks Corps' 75th Anniversary**

By 6560 Andrew Nellestyn

The new RCEME Museum, located at CFK Kingston, celebrated the Corps' 75th Anniversary by inducting the first five Corps **RCEME Trailblazers** and unveiling the Museum's Leadership Board on 8 June 2019. The guest of Honour was Brigadier-General Sebastien Bouchard, RMCC Commandant and a RCEME officer. The Royal Canadian Corps Of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RCEME) was established 15 May 1944 and took part in the invasion of Normandy. The Museum is co-located with the Electronics and Communications Museum at CFB Kingston and enjoys some 12,000 visitors annually. It is intended to build a RCEME stand-alone museum which will form part of a Museums of Military Technology Park. The RCEME Corps Trailblazer designation recognizes those who have made exemplary contributions to Canada, the Army and the Corps. H3550 Colonel (Ret'd) Murray Johnston, former RCEME Colonel Commandant and past RMMC President, was among the first five Corps members so named. Activities also included the unveiling of the Museum's *Leadership Board*. The RCEME Museum Committee functions as a BOD responsible for the direction, exhibits, finances and operation of the museum. The four of its five members are RMC graduates: Colonels (Ret'd) Andrew Nellestyn, Honorary Chair; Yves Turgeon, Chair and CO; Tom Temple, Co-Chair; and Gilles Nappert, Secretary. A guided tour of the museum and a social completed a most notable and enjoyable 75th Anniversary celebration of both D-Day and the Corps of RCEME formation. Arte et Marte (by skill and by fighting). TDV.





# Numéro 121

## July/juillet 2019

Page 7

### Pirate Unmasked as Decorated Royal Canadian Navy Commander by Colonel (Retd) Andrew Nellestyn OStJ KCStG CD PhD PEng

It all began quite innocently with a photograph of the [Order of St George \(OStG\)](#) Cascadia Commanderie Commander Steven Mohns', KCStG, participation as the Reviewing Officer at the June 9, 2019 #15 [Navy League Cadet Corps \(NLCC\) Captain Rankin](#) Annual Ceremonial Review. As Past President of the [Organization of Military Museums of Canada \(OMMC\)](#), I was naturally curious as to the corps' history and the provenance of the person whose name honours this exemplary youth organization which focuses on citizenship, civics, team work and leadership development.

Little did I anticipate the astonishing coast to coast chain of events which followed when I enquired about Captain Rankin! His identity was all but unknown. Some posited that he was a pirate who, with predatory intent, sailed the high seas flying the Jolly Roger skull and crossbones. Not unreasonable as the cadet corps parades at [HMCS Discovery](#) on [Dead Man's Island](#), Stanley Park, Vancouver.

Thus, as Sherlock Holmes would say, *The Game Is On*, and so was launched a countrywide investigation as to Captain Rankin's persona which involved the [Canadian War Museum](#), [The Military Museums of Calgary](#), the [OMMC](#), my [Royal Military College \(RMC\)](#) 1965 classmates who served in the [Royal Canadian Navy \(RCN\)](#) and a legion of others in the investigatory evidence chain. All proved to be unproductive.

But as often happens in the search for the unknown and mysterious, serendipity, fate, unexpectedly intervenes. *Ripley's Believe It or Not* in the guise of a *YouTube* video [Moments in Time](#) produced by Deborah Morrow, DStG, proved to be the secret map to the treasure chest. This excellent video details the history, mission and activities of #15 NLCC Captain Rankin. And that was not the end of the mystical, mysterious trail!

It so happened that a descendant of the deceased Captain Rankin was searching his family tree for his elusive and illustrious ancestor and found reference to our pirate on YouTube. *Shivers me timbers!* The pirate turned out to be a distinguished WWII Royal Canadian Navy Commander by name of *Angus Hetherington Rankin*, who, among other vessels, commanded the corvette **HMCS Sackville**, and whose contributions to the war effort and distinguished naval career, were uncovered by Captain (N)(Retd) Michael Braham and Lt(N)(Retd) Melanie Graham, DStG.

Thus, and all things must end happily, the cadet corps can now celebrate and proclaim its renowned namesake and plans to do so formally at an event jointly sponsored by the [OStG Cascadia Commanderie](#) and the [NLCC](#), attended by Navy, local and municipal dignitaries, at the historical HMCS Discovery on, *yes*, Dead Man's Island, Stanley Park, Vancouver. How eventually all comes, felicitously, full circle! Destiny prevails!



# Numéro 121

## July/juillet 2019

Page 8

### Pirate Unmasked (Concluded)

#### Commander Angus Hetherington Rankin

Born 10 December 1914, Angus Rankin joined the Royal Canadian Navy Voluntary Reserve as an Acting Sub-Lieutenant in 1936. He was mobilised for World War II service in August 1939. During the war he commanded the armed yachts *Husky* and *Ambler*, the minesweepers, *Port Hope*, *Chignecto* and *Kapusksing*, and the corvette, HMCS *Sackville*. In 1945 he transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy and led a distinguished career ashore and at sea, including command of the minesweeper *Portage*, and his final posting in command of the Fleet Maintenance Ship *HMCS Cape Scott*. He retired from the RCN in the rank of Commander on 10 December 1964. He passed away on 8 December 1993. This biographical information and the accompanying photograph are reproduced from The [Nauticapedia](#) web site.



It should be noted that *HMCS Sackville* is Canada's oldest warship and is the last of Canada's 123 corvettes. She has been restored to her war configuration and is home to exhibits and artefacts dedicated to the legacy of those who served at sea during the Battle of the Atlantic.

Although Angus Rankin retired in the rank of Commander, the title of Captain is applied as an honorific signifying his command of several warships both during WWII and post-war.

### My Motorcycling Days by 6516 John Bardsley

Reading Gary Running's piece on his motorcycling days got me thinking about my own biking days and the amount of pleasure that it gave me.

It all started when I got home from high school in 1959 and saw a 1947 BSA 350 cc single in the driveway. I thought that my dad must have a friend over and went inside to find out. No-one was there except him, and he said, "Let's go and have a look". So we went outside and he said, "You mean this one? Well that's yours." Needless to say I was not only surprised, but dumbfounded and very happy. However, I did not know at that time, but soon found out, that my mother knew nothing about it. What ensued was not pretty, but I got to keep the Beezer. Motorcycling is like owning a boat in that bigger and newer is better. Thus I graduated from my 350 to a BSA 650 Super Rocket and hung onto that until I left for RMC. My Dad later sold it for me, but I've regretted that ever since.





# Numéro 121

## July/juillet 2019

Page 9

### My Motorcycling Days (Continued)

I still remember evenings and weekends during spring and fall at the College when the guys and their bikes used to congregate on Fort Henry Hill. Longing would be an understatement of my emotions at the time. The next bike that I rode was during training in the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps when we were obliged to drive all of the Corps' vehicles, including their 500 Triumph twins. Brief, but nice.

The joys of motorcycling left me during my early military career in the RCASC and when I left the service to return to university to finish my BA. Later I was busy with graduate studies in biology and medicine, and particularly with my wife and two sons, so there was little time to continue with my passion.

Many years elapsed, the boys grew up, my career in the CFMS was over, and I retired from my second career with the Vancouver Health Department and BC Workers Compensation Board, so I had time on my hands and some free money to spend. My wife, Anne and I went down to a local motorcycle shop and she bought me a new Yamaha Virago V-twin cruiser for my birthday. I then took the Canada Safety Council courses and ended up being an instructor.

I initially hung out with a group of guys who called themselves "The Geritols", and for good reason. Thus started a whole new series of touring adventures, mostly in BC. I got to know a bunch of fellows, some of whom turned into good friends. Danny, a mechanic by trade, got me into restoring bikes, and he helped me with several restorations: a 1960s Triumph T100C Trophy 500, a 1972 BMW R75 boxer, a 1969 Moto Guzzi Ambassador former police bike, a 1974 Yamaha 175 off-road bike, among others. The BMW ended up being featured in the May, 1977 issue of BMW Owner's News Magazine. Restoring was fun and rewarding, but rather expensive. I also found out that one never recuperates one's investment. At one point I had seven bikes in my collector bike stable, but eventually whittled my way down to none.

The restorations took quite a physical toll, especially on my hands, so I had to stop. After I did so, my wife noticed that I was looking for something to do, so she bought me a plastic motorcycle kit of the Yamaha Virago. Given my inherited penchant for collecting, that one model quickly turned into 250. Most them were plastic and I became very acquainted with Tamiya and other model companies. I also branched out into die-cast models, a much more precise and less forgiving pursuit. Soon my basement became a mini-museum of model bikes. The model-making became rather widely known, and Cycle Canada sent an editor and photographer for a piece called Model Citizen that they published in the February, 2001 edition.

I did carry on riding with the Geritol group. The members owned many brands of bikes, and I have as well, including a Suzuki with an automatic transmission. However, the BMW riders got me hooked on Beemers. I cannot remember how many BMWs that I have owned, but there were many, old and new.

Although my touring days started with the Yamaha, the advent of my BMW craze drove it to new heights. I have done many interesting trips, but some stand out more than others. I did several trips with my oldest son Jeff, and they gave rise to some fond father-son memories. After I bought a new F650GS at John Valk BMW in Vancouver I was invited to go on trips that he scheduled every year. One of those trips went down through the western states, to Las Vegas, across the desert to the coast, and up the coastal highway to Monterey. While in Monterey we visited it's world famous aquarium, partook of its annual motorcycle rally (much like Sturgis but smaller in scale) and attended the Laguna Seca motorcycle races. The trip home took me across the Golden Gate bridge and up the California-Oregon-Washington coastal highway to the Anacortes ferry and home to Sidney.



# Numéro 121

## July/juillet 2019

Page 10

### My Motorcycling Days (Continued)

A friend, Grant Madill, and I routinely went on two trips a year, mostly in BC and the western states, he on his BMW RS and me on my favourite bike, a BMW R1100RT touring boxer. We visited most of the main tourist attractions such as Crater Lake, Mount Rushmore and Mount St. Helens. However, the most memorable of the trips was a return trans-Canada jaunt to see the recently-opened PEI Confederation Bridge. We left in mid-May, a tad too early as it turned out as we ran into several episodes of foul weather. Going up through the Black Hills we ran into rain and snow and when we came out in Custer Wyoming we were so cold and wet we had to stop. Fortunately we stopped right in front of a Best Western Motel. The woman who ran the place took one look at us and described us a “drowned rats”. We asked if there was a pizza place in Town and she answered affirmatively and said that she would take care of ordering one, and anything else we wanted. A knock came at our door a while later and there she was with a pizza, a case of beer, and a local paper. It turned out that the pizza place did not have delivery that day so she had gone out on her own and did all of the shopping. She absolutely refused any payment other than that for the goods. The next morning we went to the local liquor store and bought her a bottle of her favourite wine and a box of chocolates. I later wrote a letter to the Best Western HQ. That was one memorable example of the terrific hospitality that we encountered in traveling across the northern states.

We also had a memorable episode while traveling around the Gaspé Peninsula. Around noon we were famished and stopped in an inviting road-side restaurant in the middle of nowhere. It was run by a Newfoundland woman and her Quebec husband. During chit chat she asked us where we were from and going. We ordered our lunch and a bit later a plate of home-made pate and bread appeared. I said to her that we did not order it, but she smiled and said it was on the house. We finished what we had ordered, but then a plate of home-made fudge appeared, once again, on the house. Needless to say we left a big tip and expressed our gratitude at the superb hospitality. This was an example of the treatment that we routinely received in the east.

We did get to see, and ride across the Confederation Bridge, but that, although memorable, was anti-climactic in relation to all of the adventures that we experienced, and were to experience along the way.

One last trip begs relating. Two friends, Bo and Mona from Hope (whom I had met on one of the John Valk tours) went on a trip down the west coast to ride some of the celebrated Washington, Oregon, and Northern California roads and do some sight-seeing. As they had never been to Tofino on Vancouver Island we decided to make that the last stop on the way home. The rides in the south were great and the trip to the Island was enjoyable and uneventful. However, after we left Tofino in the morning and were travelling east on a newly wet highway, we approached a gentle curve. All of a sudden I was lying on my back with my feet, arms, and head in the air watching my Suzuki V-Strom 1000 skidding across the road. My first thought was, “Am I OK?” (I was.) My second, “I’d best get off the road!” I got up just in time to see a van coming up the hill. Fortunately she was going slowly and stopped. I was shaken up but the woman driving the van was almost hysterical, and I actually had to calm her down with my heart racing and hands trembling. My bike ended up just in the soft shoulder, but she was a sorry sight with her faring smashed, one pannier broken, the mirrors gone, etc. We did manage to get her back on her wheels, and she did start. I even managed to drive her safely home, cautiously mind you. My wife was pleased to see me, but not pleased with my story. The bike was written off, so afterwards I bought a couple of smaller bikes. However, riding was never the same. I was getting on in years and decided within the following year to give up motorcycling and so sold all of my gear.



# Numéro 121

## July/juillet 2019

Page 11

### My Motorcycling Days (Concluded)

In looking back, motorcycles and motorcycling were a very big part of my recreational life. I was fortunate in having a tolerant, and actually encouraging wife in spite of her fears of my riding. She was glad, and I was sad, but very appreciative at having had the opportunity to enjoy the sport. I occasionally get nostalgic, but the fond memories will have to do.

### King's Cup 2019

As reported in Edition 120, RMC was invited to participate in the King's Cup Regatta as part of the annual Royal Henley Races in England. The team, competing in this event for the first time, made a great impression on all teams with a credible showing.

The crew representing the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) was comprised of Officer Cadets, women and men, from the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC), and also a few recent graduates of the College.

The CAF crew included highly-motivated members representing all three services, and were energetic and ready to prove themselves. RMC coaches Paul Overvelde and Stephen Lutz were in charge of training the team members in advance of The King's Cup.

Details on the individual team members may be found in e-veritas edition 26/2019. A team photo is shown below:



**Well Done!**



# Numéro 121

## July/juillet 2019

Page 12

### Closing Notes

Thanks as usual, to all those who took time to contribute. All, please take a moment to respond to the survey on next year's reunion. Have a safe summer



**HMCS Sackville** is the last of 269 corvettes built by the Allies during World War II, and the last of the 123 corvettes that served in the Royal Canadian Navy. HMCS Sackville and the other Flower Class corvettes played a major role in winning the Battle of the Atlantic, the longest and most vital campaign of WWII.