

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- Paddle Board Divers
Part 2
- Ships Divers Training
- MV KURDISTAN
- Medal of Bravery

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2015 Reunion Edition (Guests of Honour)



Dr. Dereck “Piet or Pete” Kidd with Wife Patricia

This is just a clarification by Red Larsen of how Dr. Dereck Kidd came to be known to us and others as “Pete” Kidd. His wife Patricia supplied the explanation via an email to myself (when I got home) after reading a copy of my presentation (which I gave her that night) of his bio at the banquet. It goes like this: While growing up with his pals in England they used to play “sea captains” much like us in Canada played “cowboys and Indians”. Apparently Dr. Kidd always played “Piet Hein” the great Dutch admiral and hero during the 17th century. Upon joining the Royal Navy along with his buddies they thought it was a great joke to continue calling him “Piet” and apparently it has stuck with him ever since. According to Patricia she always calls him “Piet” even if she’s cross! On checking with a Dutch born legionnaire regarding how to pronounce “Piet” he immediately said “Pete”. So there we have the background of why Dr Dereck Kidd came to be called Dr. Pete Kidd in our lingo!

Red Larsen gave a very informative speech on Dr Kidd’s great contributions to Navy Diving in Canada which is now posted at: <http://navydiver.ca/Reunion.htm>

Disclaimer: All articles and stories submitted or included by members in this and future editions are published in good faith as being mere recollections of those submitting the articles. The CNDA does not check or warrant the details of all stories and recollections submitted. As with many tales from days gone by, stories are often recalled differently by people having differing perspectives. Please bear this in mind.

2015 Reunion Meet & Greet Gentlemen

Group Photos



Meet & Greet Ladies & Gentlemen



Note: Names of Diver attendees will be posted at: <http://navydiver.ca/Reunion.htm>

2015 Reunion Gentlemen



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2015 Reunion Ladies



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Note: Names of Diver attendees will be posted at: <http://navydiver.ca/>

PADDLE BOARD DIVERS – Part 2

Continued from Dippers Digest Issue #91

By Chuck Rolfe 30 October 2014

Rod Petty and Bill Lawrence, those two intrepid Bermudian Divers, wrote in their story/saga (see DIPPERS DIGEST #8, 15 December 1991), that they were drafted to Diving Tender #3(DT #3), and after that to Lawlor's Island with many other DV's. It was there that they underwent extensive physical training, with much new gear arriving. They also had a visitor, Mr. Emile Gagnan (he had moved to Montreal from France after the War), the French Engineer who technically developed the SCUBA Regulator – he was a great boost and morale builder to all the Divers at the Unit. That summer, Rod and Bill, together with LCdr's Tommy Thompson and Bill McAlpine then travelled to the Ammunition Depot in Renous, New Brunswick to deactivate 3 R.I.A. (Russian mines of the Korean War era), after which they returned to Lawlor's Island. With the Korean War Armistice bringing the fighting to a close in Korea in 1953 (they had originally joined the RCN to go fight in that war), and they did not see any action in it, they decided to purchase the remainder of the term they had signed up for, which gave them an Honourable Discharge, and returned to that sunny Isle down south. Bill Lawrence became the prime contractor for underwater and land construction in Bermuda, and Rod Petty ended up with both hip joints replaced, and in a recovery home.

Chuck Rolfe informs us that the photographs given to him by Dave Pilot, showing the guys at Lawlor's Island going through the Assault Course and Paddle Board training in the early 1950's, can be viewed on our website navydiver.ca in the DIVERS SCRAPBOOK site. One photo can be seen by going to CNDA ALBUM 1, and it is photo 19 of 27 (5th row down & first on the left – called Lawlor Island aquaplaning on Paddle Board). The main group of photos can be seen by going to VINTAGE PHOTO ALBUM from Chuck Rolfe, and they are photos # 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 71 and 72 of 72. Also photo 26 of 72 is another one. As the word gets around to all our retired members concerning the use of Paddle Boards in the RCN, it will be expected to get some responses about what they may now recall of the Boards – just what we are looking for!

Mark Simonsen said it is good to have Haydn iuchi-suton's official history facts, but that doesn't always cover the unofficial and real stories the guys back then can tell. As Haydn points out, officially we didn't have this capability, but we all know that these little experiments never get the glory/recognitions they deserve sometimes, and it is always nice to get the real stories from the guys that were there. As for stories from DIPPERS DIGEST's, I will take all those worth printing and framing, and will mount them around the PADDLE BOARD exhibit here in FDU(A), together with any of the good/interesting photos that have been identified as being located in our websites DIVERS SCRAPBOOK. Any stories the guys can recount will be good, and then we can vet all the information into something worth adding to the display. I think it is good to get the members juices flowing again, as one old story can usually trigger memories other guys have that may otherwise have been forgotten. The trigger is usually followed by the words "Oh yaaa – I remember that now!", or "Yes, now that you mention, I remember.....". So I think it's all good to get. Much the same as when Gary Reddy mentioned KP McNamara and my little SABEX

Who knows, years from now, no one officially may know of the Clearance Divers role in the Maritime Amphibious Unit (MAU) that was set up in October 2005. It was also experimental, and we did a proof of concept Exercise in November 2006 down in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. I went with LCdr Darrin Hopkie in October 2005 to Coronado, California and did an Amphibious Exercise with their Special Beach Clearance Team One, followed by going down to Perth, Australia with AUSDET 4, and observed how they did Beach Operations, etc. General Rick Hillier wanted a “Big Honkin Ship” to carry around his Tanks & Trucks, etc, and land them on the beach. Since the Army didn’t want to commit troops for a security section to be attached to us, the OIC, Commodore Paul Maddison said “Fine, I’ll make my own SEAL Team (Sea, Air & Land)” and that’s how we got our marching orders.

Myself and Yves Clement used our experiences and knowledge from our postings (by this time it was no longer drafts!) with JTF2 (Joint Task Force 2), and exchanges with SEAL Team 6 in Virginia, and made our own training course for Covert Swimming, Underwater Navigation, OTB (Over The Beach) SOP’s (Standard Operating Procedures). I did the 3 week Lead Diver Course with SEAL Team 6 in Key West, Florida also, which was very helpful with our new role. Our guys did over 100 freefall parachute jumps within 6 weeks, 50+ up in Arnprior, Ontario (near Ottawa), and 50+ in Daytona Beach, Florida, with 1 hour in a wind tunnel complex in Daytona, on top of that. I remember one of the US Army Pathfinders, who was part of the MAU exclaiming...”Holy #####! It took me 12 years to get in over 100 jumps!!!”

Due to the pressures of the war in Afghanistan, the cost of the Submarine Program, and the Arctic Ops priority, the MAU was shut down in April 2007, just as we were scheduling Small Arms, Patrol & Field Craft, plus Escape and Evasion Courses. If it had gone through, we were looking at possibly adding up to 30 more billets in the Divers Trade. The Trade now stands at about 150 NCM’s (Non Commissioned Members) and 30 Officers – not counting Purple, or out of Trade billets. Another story about the MAU, at the “Proof of Concept” Exercise in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina in November 2006, part of the Beach Reconnaissance process, along with beach characteristics, width/length, slope, depths, sand/rock/gravel, obstacles natural/manmade, defenses, etc., involves an environmental assessment, which includes wind conditions, speed, direction and also a wave index. Wave index counts frequency, how many waves come in during a 3 minute period, and you divide by 3. Along with that, you include height of waves, direction, type – rollers or breakers, etc. and other information, which all goes into this formula that indicates whether the beach is “good to go” as a landing place, or look for another place. Part way into the opening days of the Exercise, a big storm front came barreling through, and we had to shut down Diving Operations until it had passed. We still went out on the stormy beach to take the wind & wave readings, etc. because this gave us a little bit to do, besides Classroom Briefs and Lesson Plans. At the same time we were doing the Beach Recce’s, a bunch of Canadian Army troops from CFB VALCARTIER (near Quebec City) had unloaded their APC’s (Armoured Personnel Carriers) onto the LSD (Amphibious Landing Ship) USS GUNSTON HALL at CFB SHEARWAER, Nova Scotia, and were sailing down to Camp Lejeune to land on the beaches. This ship’s Well Deck holds some Landing Craft capable of landing 2 main battle tanks each, along with all the troops, etc. As soon as the Ship left Maugher’s Beach, just outside the mouth of Halifax Harbour, just about all the rough, tough Army troops were soon throwing up everywhere, and into everything, and that was just normal ocean weather conditions! When the Americans in the Operation Room on board read our beach reports, they basically said “We were out to lunch and didn’t know what we were doing. It never gets that rough at Camp Lejeune, and all our readings must have been wrong”. Well, a couple of days later, as the storm had moved up the coast to meet the ship coming down, sure enough, they hadn’t secured for sea properly.

The Landing Craft cut loose, and were banging into everything below, causing significant damage along with all the other unsecured equipment in the cargo holds, and such. Some Army troops who had started to get their “sea legs” after a couple of days out of Halifax, all went back to “Barf Mode”, making it a pretty miserable place to be. The Americans, who only a couple of ways before were bad-mouthing our rookie Canuck Diver Beach Reports, were then heard to say” I guess those Wave indexes were correct after all!”. It was a good validation process for us, and multiple big learning curves which everyone was doing exceptionally well at. When we met up with our Commodore, Paul Maddison on the beach, he was all smiles, couldn’t stop praising us about how well everything had turned out, and the excellent work we had done. In the end, I think those poor Army troops had more respect for sailors, and were sure glad to get on dry land again!

NEW CNDA WESTERN CHAPTER

The CNDA National Board of Directors, at the recent 2015 Reunion held in Victoria BC, discussed how best to bring the Association up to present day standards in order to better represent our membership, and to provide improved communications to everyone.

It was resolved that all members from the Provinces of Ontario to British Columbia would now become members of a new CNDA Western Chapter, with all members from the Provinces of Quebec to Newfoundland & Labrador would be members of the Eastern Chapter, effective from 1 January 2015. This means that the Eastern Chapter remains as is, while the Ottawa Chapter will amalgamate with, and become the Western Chapter. Any Diver from anywhere in Canada may still become a member of either Chapter, should they so desire, as was the previous case.

The new Western Chapter Executive are now as follows:

Arthur "Wally" Green, President
82 Pattermead Crescent
Ottawa ON K1V 0G2
Phone: 613-521-3315
Email: rowall@rogers.com

Gary Schonekess, Vice President
Site 3, Box 6, RR2
Thorsby AB T9C 2P0
Phone: 780-389-4185
Email: tovisch@gmail.com

Walter Dubeau, Western Representative
Chairman
3346 Hazelwood Road
Victoria BC V9C 0G9
Phone: 250-478-5610
Email: walterdubeau@gmail.com

Chuck Rolfe, Sec/Treas. & Membership
3670 Diamondview Road, RR2
Kinburn ON K0A 2H0
Phone: 613-832-1165
Email: maman84@gmail.com

Full details of the administrative functions of the newly amalgamated Western Chapter are now being reviewed, with amalgamation to become effective on 1 January 2016. Please be advised that new and renewing memberships will now be directed to Chuck Rolfe as of the present date. Chuck will also be sending Group Email List communications as soon as this List is completed.

BLACK TOT DAY – "Up Spirits" By Chuck Rolfe - 2015

On 31 July 2015 the Royal Navy commemorated the demise 45 years ago (31 July 1970) of the by-gone tradition of a daily tot of Rum, in which 2 ½ ounces of neat Pusser Rum (Nelsons Blood) was issued to all those aboard a ship authorized to receive same at 1100 hrs every day. They are calling it "**Black Tot Day**". As we all know, the RCN ceased issuing the tot on 31 March 1972, the last Commonwealth Navy to do so. Although that is true, in the Diving Branch we knew that there were specific instances, i.e. after long cold dives on a task, the OIC of the Operation has been known to issue a small drink of Rum to those involved, in order to revive their spirits! In any case, we all should recall the good old days of the Rum Tot issue. "**Up Spirits**"

Bud Nuquist responded on 31 July 2015 from his home in Florida: Avast me hearties! I was there in Halifax at FDU(A) at the old French Cable Wharf building on 31 July 1972, and partook of that Pipe call "Up Spirits" as the Issuing Office. Probably over half the crew let me know, in no uncertain terms, if I was as much as a drop short of their issue. To my recollection, Terry Armitage raised the loudest protest, but it was Sam Semple who had the quietest yet humorously sly remark about spilling not a drop of his finale(legal) issue. This was about the time I stowed a case of Lemon Hart 151 in my cabin on YMT 12. We would still have an "Up Spirits" from time to time, during and after some of those very memorable projects we completed. CPO's Ike Eisner, Stan Stephenson, along with Ivan Cripps all seemed to be aware of the times it might be appropriate. When my family and I departed HMCS GRANBY to return to the United States, you might recall that my wife, Gloria was presented with the set of official Rum measuring cups as a gift from the "Hands". Just a few days ago, those very Rum measuring cups were returned to Canada, maybe to be displayed at FDU(A) display case in the Mess, now at SHEARWATER! Just another reminder of one of the best tours I ever enjoyed in my 25 years in the US Navy, and in EOD! Cheers to all of you up in the Great White North.

Ships Divers Training

Upon returning to Canada in March 1967, HMCS GATINEAU spent a few weeks tied up in Halifax and then operated off the coast of Nova Scotia. I took advantage of this period in home port to become a Ships Diver (SCUBA). The course lasted 6 weeks and was taken at HMCS Granby on the Dartmouth side of Halifax harbour. Over 60 sailors started the course but only 9 completed and passed the course. At least 15 to 20 sailors quit within the first week of the course because they were out of shape and could not take the physical part of the course. Many others quit when masking tape was added to cover the face mask and simulate a night dive. The final straw came for many when it was time to actually train in the harbour late at night and in the dark at the bottom of the harbour.

Each morning started with a 3 mile run and then a dive and a swim on your back in the cold water of Halifax harbour. All we had on were a suit, hood and flippers (no air bottles). The purpose of the morning swim was to train your legs to provide maximum propulsion using flippers (legs straight and no bending at the knees). We normally swam from the ship, up the harbour to Shannon Park, and then back to the ship. We used a dry suit for the first two weeks and then we switched to a wet suit for the remainder of the course. As soon as we had returned from the 3 mile run, we had only a few minutes to get ready for the swim. This did not create any problem with the wet suit but it was another matter with the dry suit because help from someone was needed to put on the neck piece which made the suit "dry". When time was up, we had to jump in the water even if the dry suit's neck piece was not in place, which meant that cold water would enter the suit and the swim would be very uncomfortable. As for the jump itself, it was made from the forecastle (fo'c'sle) of HMCS Granby. I did the jump in my own way by climbing over the railing, stepping on one of the lines tying the ship to the jetty, hanging upside down from the line and diving into the harbour head first while yelling "SCUBA". (not a good way for a diver to enter water but we did not carry any air bottles for the morning swim so it was OK to go in head first although there was a possibility to hit floating debris or floating ice if not careful).

Being a Ships Diver in the Navy is not a full time job. It is something you do in addition to your main trade which in my case was "RADIOMAN". Ships Divers were used on occasions to perform special tasks in the water or underwater. The two main tasks were the search for mines under ships and assisting in rescue missions at sea. In rescue missions, the diver would jump in the water with a horse collar attached to a rope and would swim to the victims while a boat was being launched over the side of the ship. If the diver arrived at the victim first, he would slip the horse collar over the victim's head and under the arms, and the victim would then be pulled onboard the ship.

A big part of the course was spent in learning the various search techniques for mines under a ship and not missing any area during the search, from the water line down to the keel and back up to the water line on the other side; and the entire length of the ship from forward to aft of the ship. Some search techniques involved multiple divers while other search techniques could be performed with only one or two divers. If there were mines, they had to be found, even in total darkness. But we also learned to work underwater and to perform many tasks in light and in darkness. I remember being asked to cut a chain at the bottom of the harbour using a chisel and a hammer; or to take a 4x4 piece of wood with a saw, to bring it to the bottom and to return to the surface with the piece of wood cut in two. The challenge was not only to cut the wood; it was also to bring the

Ships Divers (SCUBA) Training - Continued

piece of wood to the bottom and to secure it so you can cut it while preventing it from floating back to the surface. I finally succeeded in bringing the piece of wood to the bottom by putting it between my legs and pulling myself down to the bottom using a chain under the wharf. Once I had secured the piece of wood under rocks, I started cutting and all was going well until the piece let go and suddenly took off for the surface with the saw stuck in it. So I had to go up and bring everything back to the bottom so I could finish the task. Performing these tasks were important since there were possibilities that, as Ships Divers, we could be asked to participate in special operations if required.

At the end of the 6-week Ships Divers course, two of the 9 sailors who completed the course were invited to become Clearance Divers (Hard Hats) and I was one of them. I was very proud to have received this invitation but some serious thinking was required before deciding what to do. First of all, a clearance diver is a full time trade. By accepting the invitation, I would have to abandon my trade of Radioman and the exciting world of radio communications. On the other hand, becoming a clearance diver would be quite a challenge and an honour. A clearance diver is a naval specialist and a deep sea diver who regularly use explosives underwater. They can be used to remove obstructions in harbours and shipping channels as well as to perform dangerous naval underwater work such as removing unexploded ordnance or working on shipwrecks at depth exceeding 200 feet. After a few days of reflection, I finally decided to refuse the invitation and to remain a "RADIOMAN". This decision had an impact in my future since I will have spent over 45 years in the wireless and radio communication field when I retire on 28 September 2010. However, to this day, I wonder what my career would have been like if I had become a Clearance Diver back in 1967. Some of my shipmates who became Clearance Divers eventually had exciting careers in the Navy as well as in the private sector, mostly in bridge and oil rig construction.

Because scuba diving was a part-time trade, it was something we did occasionally in addition to our main trade. Ways had to be found to keep up and exercise our diving skills whenever possible. One way was to go scuba diving on weekends. If a Diving Officer accompanied us and signed our diving log, we could claim diving pay. An average dive, including time on the surface and underwater, lasted about 2 hours. So we could make some extra money while having fun !

I remember diving in Halifax Harbour where the most common things we found on the bottom were paint cans discarded by ships over the years. We could also find full sets of dishes including plates, cups, bowls, etc... The most common cup I found was the famous coffee mug from the U.S. Navy. We could also find old beer bottles going back to the 19th century and other artifacts buried among thrash on the bottom. One of our favorite diving activity was to volunteer for the inspection of yachts. I spent many weekends checking the bottom of yachts over at the Armdale Yacht Club. I also dove in many coves along the south shore and eastern shore of Nova Scotia, as well as in Pictou Harbour where we went looking for cases of rum which had been thrown overboard before a RCMP raid. The water was very muddy and visibility was nil, so we never found the rum.

But some of the best diving I had was in the water off the Bahamas, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Barbados.

By Donald Courcy

Medal of Bravery awarded to P.E.I.'s Evan Beaton

Diver saved during operation in Halifax's Bedford Basin

CBC News Posted: Jun 26, 2015 7:45 AM AT | Last Updated: Jun 26, 2015 7:20 PM AT

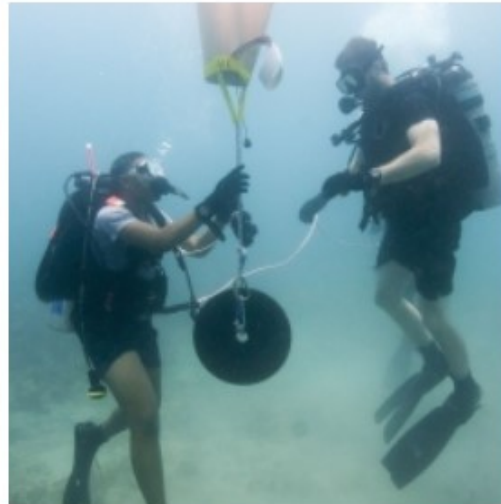
A Prince Edward Island man has been awarded the Canadian military's Medal of Bravery for saving a fellow diver while they were working in Halifax's Bedford Basin.

Leading Seaman Evan Beaton of New Haven was involved in a deep-diving operation in Bedford Basin on June 19, 2013.

His fellow diver became entangled in his lifeline and was running out of air.

Beaton had to dive quickly to reach his comrade, disregarding the normal safe rate of descent. He then had to skip his own decompression protocol, putting himself in danger, to get the diver to the surface.

Beaton received his medal from Gov. Gen. David Johnston at a ceremony in Rideau Hall in Ottawa Friday morning.



Leading Seaman Evan Beaton (right) has been awarded a Medal of Bravery by the Canadian military for rescuing a fellow diver in distress. (Government of Canada)



Leading Seaman Evan Beaton of New Haven, P.E.I. received the Medal of Bravery from Gov. Gen. David Johnston Friday. (CBC)



Cool Diver Story

Once upon a time, a Navy Diver asked a beautiful princess, "Will you marry me?"

The princess said, "No!"

And the Diver lived happily ever after and did deep dives all over the world and drove hot cars and chased skinny long-legged big-breasted diver groupies and hunted and fished and went to topless bars and dated women half his age and drank Weihenstephaner German beer and Captain Morgan Rum and never heard bitching and never paid child support or alimony and kept his house and guns and ate cold leftover meals, potato chips and beans and blew enormous farts and never got cheated on while he was at work and all his friends and family thought he was cool as hell with his Rolex Watch and K-bar knife and he had tons of money in the bank and left the toilet seat up.
The end!



Editor's 10 Foot Stop

As mentioned in the last Digest, this edition is coming a month late for good reason. The period leading up to the reunion 11—13 September was an extremely busy period as we ramped up to this year's CNDA Reunion out here in beautiful Victoria, BC. I have to admit that I was a bit worried up front as we went into the detailed planning stages earlier in the year followed by a lean spring when commitment levels were still very low and had us really concerned. I was buoyed up by some excellent feedback we garnered from previous organizers out east who said "not to worry" things always picks up in the two months prior. Sure as guns, it happened just the way they predicted it would. I suddenly went from being worried it wouldn't happen to thinking "Holy Crap" this is really going to happen! Guess we better get to work right away or it's egg on our faces if this thing flops. My hat has to go off to Tom Essery and Dave Finlay who really helped pull it all off from an organizational and execution point of view. Without them, it certainly would not have happened the way it did. My biggest regret was that Dave was unable to attend as he was posted out in the summer from XO FDU(P) to XO DRDC Toronto (formerly called DCIEM). Honourable mention goes out to Serge Vidalis who helped out where he could. Another shout out of course has to go to the folks at FDU(P) who hosted the unit activities to include the Meet & Greet and Dive Tender cruise. Our appreciation goes to the Command Team right on down to the individual volunteers that took time away from their weekends to both participate and become amazing hosts and crew for a reunion that will be remembered for a long time to come. These events were certainly highlights of a great weekend where the weather cooperated and we all had a fabulous time. Lastly I can't say thank you enough to all those who travelled from far and wide including "the Executive" who gave us the numbers we needed and allowed everyone to catch up with old friends and fellow Divers from across this great Country of ours. To cap it all off we had a truly great Guest of Honour show with his lovely wife Patricia. Bravo Zulu to you all!

