

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- New CNDA Editor
- New CNDA Web site at : NAVYDIVER.CA
- In Memoriam

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NEW CNDA DIPPERS DIGEST EDITOR

Hello everyone!

Please allow me to introduce myself: My name is Tim Flath and I recently got volunteered to take on the duties as the new editor of the Dippers Digest at the last Annual General Meeting (AGM) here in Victoria, BC. I say this very tongue in cheek since I find it a great honour to serve the association in this manner. It was also unanimously decided at the AGM that I would continue to be the volunteer Webmaster for the CNDA. Hopefully I can "partially" fill the shoes of those who have done great work before me and set the high standard we have come to appreciate.

Where did this guy come from, you ask?

A little over a year and a half ago (September 2008), I retired from the navy as a Clearance Diving Officer (CLDO) just shy of 22 years of service. During my time in the mob, I was extremely fortunate to fall into a career path that lead me to becoming a CLDO early on and ultimately found myself amongst the likes of

you, the great people of the Naval Diving Branch both serving and retired. As a young MARS snorter, back in 1989 and at the urging of my then CO in HMCS Annapolis, I got



Editor in U.S. Mark 16 UBA while on Exchange at Indian Head, MD

volun-told (are you noticing a trend here?) to attend Ships Team Diver Course 8903 and from there on my fascination with naval diving took off. Soon after I tackled the dreaded "Prelim" and joined course CLDO 9201 and graduated in spring 1993. From there I went on to FDU(P) where I served from 1993 to 1998 in

a variety of operational positions at the unit. I was then posted to NAVEODTECHDIV at Indian Head, Maryland from 1998 to 2001. After that stint I found myself back at FDU (P) from 2001 to 2002 as Operations Officer and was promoted to Lieutenant Commander and sent off to purgatory in Ottawa as the senior Diving Officer for the Navy within Chief of Maritime Staff/DMPOR from 2002 to 2005. There I got to experience the power of the pen as a Senior Staff Officer for Diving, EOD and Mine Warfare. After marking time there I was sent back out to my beloved west coast where I finished my CF service as the "Diver Guy" in MARPACHQ, whereupon I took my aforementioned release and now work for Defence Construction Canada supporting the DND Unexploded Explosive Ordnance (UXO) & Legacy Sites Program as an Environmental Program Manager for Underwater UXO. I invite all to contribute articles and look forward to serving the CNDA readership and hope to make this an enjoyable digest for all. Strength in Depth!

Tim Flath

CNDA WEB SITE

The new web site for the CNDA is at <http://navydiver.ca> or simply www.navydiver.ca

It has been up and running now for several months now. While it's still very much a work in progress it hosts a lot of information and interesting dits to keep anyone busy for hours. Much thanks goes out to the contributions of the many people who are sending me memorabilia

which I promptly try to scan, post and return to sender. We are starting to capture a lot of memories both old and new that can now be shared right across the country through the marvels of the internet. My goal is to establish a site where memories are captured in an online scrapbook format similar to those you find in hard copy at the diving units yet can be shared from coast

to coast. As the web master I would like to take this opportunity to invite the CNDA membership to visit regularly since I strive to add something new at least weekly (more frequently if time allows). It is the hope of the CNDA executive that this will provide a useful medium to keep a dialogue within the membership alive.

Web Master

Tall Tales: Diver's Bad Day at Work



"To catch the reader's attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here."

The next time you have a bad day at work or on the golf course...think of this guy. Rob is a commercial saturation diver for Global Divers in Louisiana. He performs underwater repairs on offshore drilling rigs. Below is an e-mail he sent to his sister. She then sent it to Laughline, who was sponsoring a "worst job experience" contest. Needless to say, she won. "Just another note from your bottom-dwelling brother... Last week I had bad day at the office. I know you've been feeling down lately at work, so I thought I would share my experience with you to make you realize it's not so bad after all. "Before I can tell you what happened to me, I first must bore you with a few technicalities of my job. As you know, my office lies at the bottom of the sea. I wear a suit to the office. It's a wetsuit. This time of year, the water is quite cool. So what we do to keep warm is this: We have a diesel powered industrial water heater. This \$20,000 piece of shit

sucks the water out of the sea. It heats it to a delightful temperature. It then pumps it down to the diver through a garden hose, which is taped to the air hose. "Now this sounds like a damn good plan, and I've used it several times with no complaints. What I do, when I get to the bottom and start working, is I take the hose and stuff it down the back of my wetsuit. This floods my whole suit with warm water. It's like working in a Jacuzzi.

"Everything was going well until all of a sudden, my ass started to itch. So, of course, I scratched it. This only made things worse. Within a few seconds my ass started to burn. I pulled the hose out from my back, but the damage was done. In agony, I realized what had happened. The hot water machine had sucked up a jellyfish and pumped it into my suit. Now since I don't have any hair on my back, the jellyfish couldn't stick to it. However, the crack of my ass was not as fortunate. When I scratched what I thought was

an itch, I was actually grinding the jellyfish into my ass. "I informed the dive supervisor of my problem over the communicator. His instructions were unclear due to the fact that he, along with 5 other divers, were all laughing hysterically. Needless to say I aborted the dive. I was instructed to make 3 agonizing in-water decompression stops totaling 35 minutes before I could reach the surface to begin my chamber dry decompression. "When I arrived at the surface, I was wearing nothing but my brass helmet. As I climbed out of the water, the medic, with tears of laughter running down his face, handed me a tube of cream and told me to rub it on my ass as soon as I got in the chamber. The cream put the fire out, but I couldn't shit for 2 days because my asshole was swollen shut." So, next time you're having a bad day at work, or on the golf course, think about how much worse it would be if you had a jellyfish shoved up your butt.



Texan buys Cormorant for Deep-Sea Research



By BEVERLEY WARE South Shore Bureau
Tue. Sep 22 - 4:46 AM

BRIDGEWATER — A Texas businessman has bought the retired navy diving support ship that has been under arrest at the Port of Bridgewater for several years. The former owner of the Cormorant is also a Texas company, but there is not believed to be any connection between the two. The vessel has been the subject of court orders since before it was towed up the LaHave River to the Port of Bridgewater in 2002. But its owner finally paid bills that had accumulated while the ship was tied up in Shelburne, freeing the ship to be moved to Bridgewater seven years ago. But unpaid bills and court judgments stacked up again. A number of court papers outlining claims against the former owners, Dominion Shipping, are taped to an inside window of the ship. The Artificial Reef Society, which owns the Port of Bridgewater, pursued its case in Federal

Court and received permission in July to sell the ship through a sheriff's sale. Halifax lawyer Bill MacInnes was appointed sheriff. He said in an interview Monday five bids came in by the close of auction at 4 p.m., Sept. 2. "The highest bidder couldn't come up with the deposit in time," he said. But the second bidder did. Neil Hjelle came in with a bid of \$199,000 and handed over the 25 per cent deposit in time. Mr. MacInnes didn't know Mr. Hjelle's exact plans, but said he is expected to set up a company and use the Cormorant on a research contract. Mr. Hjelle is having a new ship built to do the work, but will refurbish the Cormorant and use her until the new ship is ready. Rick Welsford, chairman of the Artificial Reef Society, said he met Mr. Hjelle at the end of August when he came to inspect the ship. "He said during the inspection that he was interested in using the vessel for deep-sea research and was focused on a specific contract which involved work nearby to the Mediterranean. That's fun because that's where the ship came from." The 2,131-tonne former navy diving support ship started life in Italy in 1965 as the trawler Aspa Quarto. The ship was sold to the Canadian navy in 1975 and converted to a diving support vessel. The Cormorant was the first Canadian navy ship to have female personnel and one of her last missions before being put out of

service in 1997 was to retrieve the bell of the Edmund Fitzgerald from the Great Lakes. Though there is still quite a bit of paperwork to do, including the filing of more court documents, "we are targeting Oct. 1 for the closing," Mr. MacInnes said. The sale price will satisfy most of the claims against Dominion Shipping. The biggest has been filed by the Artificial Reef Society. It says it is owed about \$175,000 in unpaid wharfage fees and is also out court costs involved in getting permission to sell the ship, getting an appraisal and inspection and securing it against hurricane Bill. All creditors were to have filed their claims against the ship by Aug. 30. Mr. Welsford said the vessel was abandoned once the ship's former agent Bill Kenny, who had lived on board the vessel for a year, left Canada last year. Mr. Welsford claims the ship was left unattended, partially locked and improperly tied. "Just before it was abandoned we had to ask the Bridgewater police to investigate what turned out to be blow dart attacks on other vessels located at the port. "No charges were laid. Mr. Hjelle has spoken with some contractors in Bridgewater and Lunenburg about having some work completed here before the ship sails, though it is not known if contractors have been selected. Mr. Welsford said he is thrilled a historic Canadian navy ship may have found a new life back at sea.

Back-Issues of Dippers Digest

Thanks to the generous efforts of Chuck Rolfe, the CNDA has taken steps to electronically archive all of the back-issues of Dippers Digest dating back to April 1990. They are all now available via the "Google Docs" web site at : <http://docs.google.com>

This is a free online (web) document archive service that anyone can sign up for free. Accessing the Dippers Digest archive is a new CNDA members service that requires access granted by the web master "Tim Flath" or anyone on the Executive. All members of the CNDA who wish to view, ac-

cess or download these back issues of "Dippers Digest" simply contact Tim by email at: navydiver@bigfoot.com

In order to have access you online you must have a valid email address. The web master can also provide individual copies by email upon request.



Back-Issues of Dippers Digest Now Available Online!

MND Thanks

From: Minister of National Defence
Date: Fri, 9 Oct 2009 11:59:48
To: danieljawhittle
Cc: moeco
Subject: RE: Canadian Naval Divers Association AGM & Reunion, September 11th - 13th

Dear Mr. Whittle:

Thank you for your e-mail concerning the Annual General Meeting and Reunion of the Canadian Naval Divers Association held in Victoria from September 11 to 13, 2009. Please accept my apology for this delay in responding.

Throughout the military community, it is well known that it requires a special breed to become a navy diver. Divers often work under extreme conditions that require extraordinary levels of courage, tenacity, nerve, and skill-in other words, grace under pressure.

I trust that the reunion was a success, a special occasion to celebrate the unparalleled esprit de corps that brings you together in a community of past and present members of the Canadian Forces.

Thank you again for writing. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your years of service in defence of Canada.

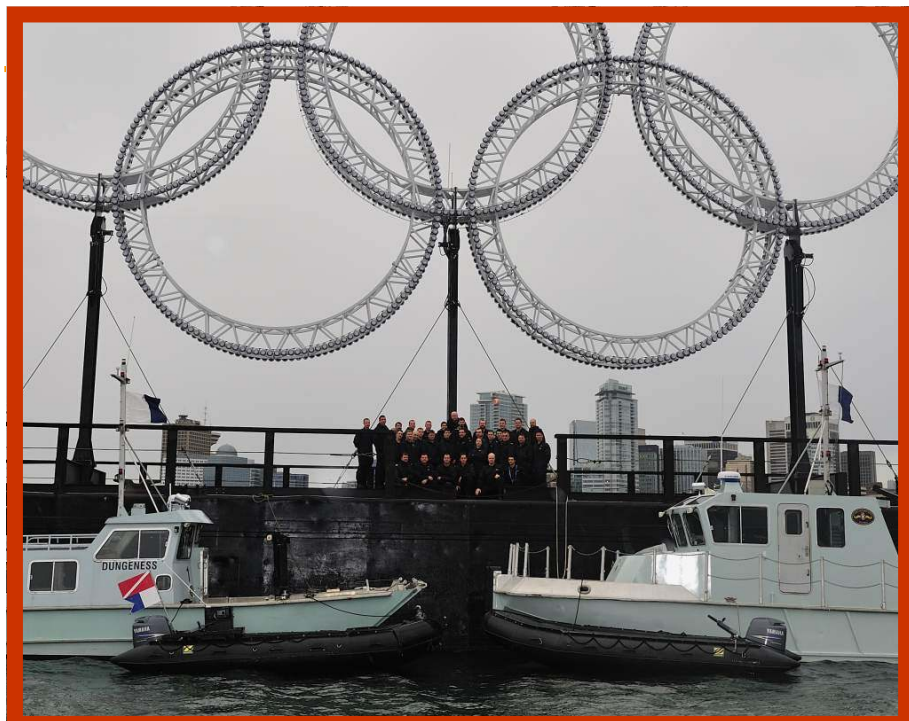
Sincerely,

Peter G. MacKay
Minister of National Defence

*"I would also
like to take
this
opportunity to
thank you for
your years of
service in
defence of
Canada."*

*Minister of
National
Defence thanks
the CNDA
Membership for
their years of
service to Canada!*

**OPERATION
PODIUM
2010 OLYMPICS
SECURITY DIVERS
PHOTO**



Coming Events

The CNDA Eastern Chapter Executives met at noon on 2 March 2010 with the FDU (A) CO and Coxswain to plan their Centennial celebrations . The following festivities were proposed:

Friday June 25, FDU (A) "PIG ROAST" at FDU (A)

Saturday June 26, CNDA "BBQ" at FDU (A) .Fleet boat tours may be available.

June 28 – July 02, Halifax International Fleet Review Week.

Tuesday June 29, Fleet Review by the Queen.

June 30, Halifax International Tattoo.

August 07, MARLANT Centennial Ball Halifax World Trade Convention Center.

September 11-12 Centennial Air Show at Shearwater.

All CNDA Members are invited to all festivities .

FDU (A) will sponsor the Pig Roast.

CNDA Eastern Chapter will organize the BBQ . The proposed charges to attend will be in the range of \$10. per Person .

The Tattoo tickets can be bought individually or as a group . They are on sale now and going fast .

I have no information on the tickets for the Ball or the Air Show at this time .

I will keep you informed as the plans are finalized.

If you are interested in attending any of the above , please contact:

Andre Desrochers
CNDA Eastern Chapter
73 MacLaughlin Rd.

Fred Olkovick

OLKOVICK, Frederick , CPO2

Born in Kamsack Saskatchewan
July 23, 1930 Passed away
September 27, 2009. Youngest
son of Harry and Gladys Olk-
ovick.

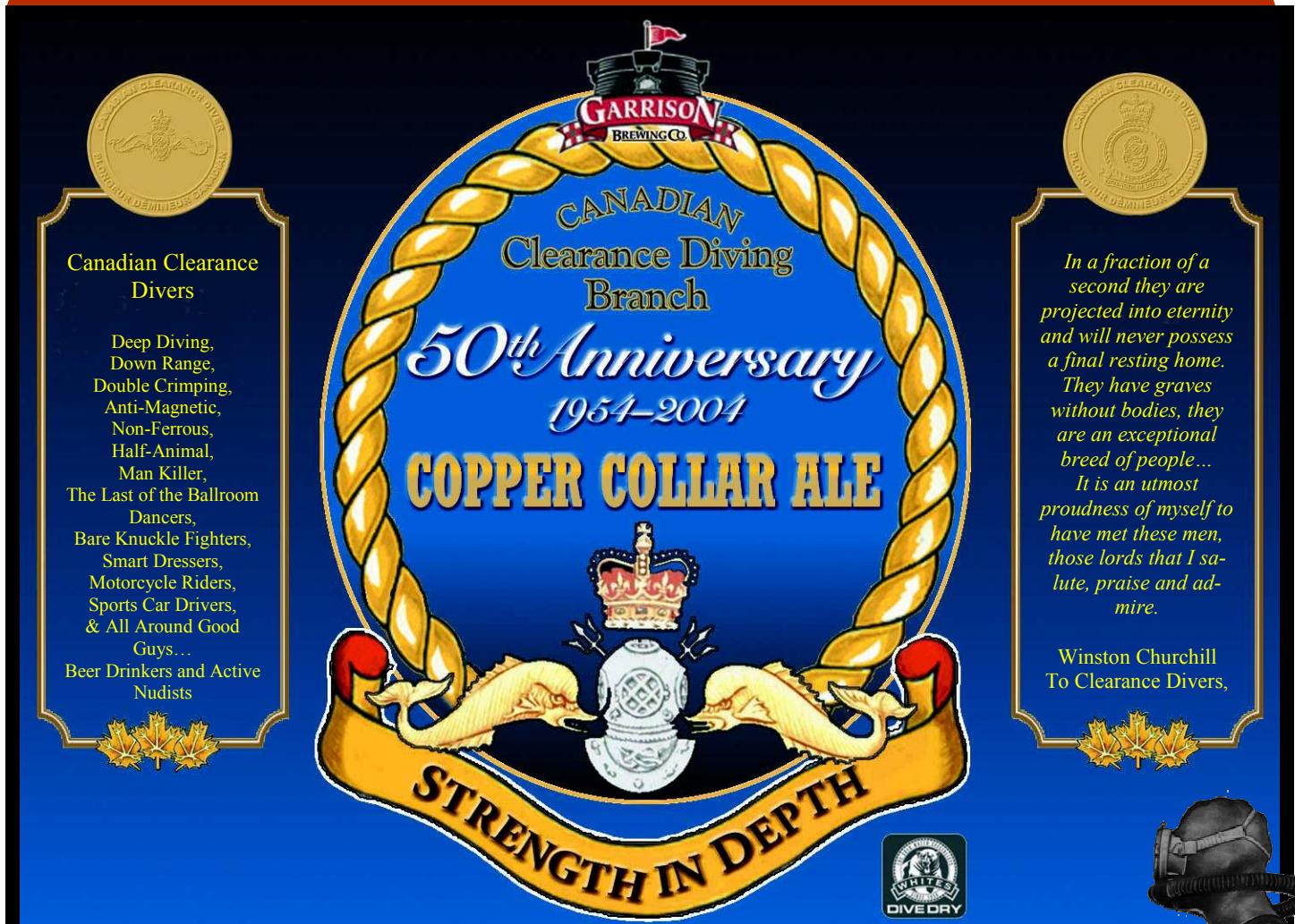
Predeceased by his parents
and sisters Marian, Mae,
Gladys, brother Harry and
Nephew Lance Olkovick.

Leaves behind his wife Dorothy,
daughters Viola Van de
Ruyt (Thom) and Sylvia Turner
(Dan) and grandchildren Marcus

& Phillip, Racheal & Roy.

Nephew Larry Olkovick (Liz &
Bill), Bob Macpherson and
niece Linda Evans (Dick). Many
cousins and relatives throughout
BC and in Portsmouth
England. He grew up in the
Vancouver area and joined the
North Vancouver Motorcycle
Club. As he loved everything
about the sea, he worked on
the Princess Mary before joining
the Navy. There he fulfilled
a childhood dream of being a

Diver. Served 27 year before
retiring from the CFB Esquimalt
Fleet Diving Unit. In retirement
he enjoyed his passion
of metal detecting in the
parks and beaches throughout
Victoria and belonged to the
local coin club. In lieu of flowers,
please consider a donation
to Prostate Cancer Research
or the Heart and Stroke Founda-
tion.



**Beer Label from the 2004 50th Anniversary
Celebration of the Branch**



Descent

by LCdr Bob Gwalchmai

Oh, I have shrugged off the noise and calamity of modern day
and floated through the depths on bubble-glistening fins.

Downward I have drifted and joined the ebb and flow
of wind-driven currents,

and done a thousand things you would never have dreamed of.

Dipping and swooping deep in the limpid pools of silent seas,

Floating... Drifting...

I've chased shimmering schools of fish,

laughed through coral-carpeted canyons,

and eased my rubber-covered body through the floorless oceans of blue.

Deeper and deeper into the bone-chilling depths

I've descended to the sand covered bottom of the universe,

with peaceful reserve, where sunshine nor rain have ever danced.

And... While with silent questioning mind,

I've slipped through the blue un-trespassed serenity of the heavenly sea,

Raised up my face

and felt the cool embrace of God.





CNDA

Founded

HALIFAX, N.S.

1981

FOUNDING MEMBERS

Glenn Adams

André Desrochers

Leo Goneau

Terry Havlik

Michael Walsh

First President: Stanley F. Watts

The mission of the Canadian Naval Divers Association (CNDA) is to keep Naval Divers, both Serving and Retired, informed and aware of what is happening within CNDA and other matters pertaining to Service Diving in Canada. It is also intended to keep everyone in touch with others of the diving community who may have been friends and diving team members from those tremendous days of service in our past.

Contact Information

Tim Flath

Editor

E-mail: navydiver@bigfoot.com



Those We Remember

A while back, someone mentioned to me that we appeared to be missing lots of people from our "In Memoriam" page of the CNDA web site. I agree that there have been many amongst the Naval Diving brethren who have come and gone who truly deserve a place of remembrance on our site. I have begun working on refining this list as the "In Memoriam" page of our new web site. The only goal is to keep the memories alive of those who have passed away having served amongst the Canadian Naval Diving Branch. The rules, which are still being defined, are intended to be very simple. Anyone who served in the Canadian Navy and was a qualified Navy Diver at any point in their career shall have a place of remembrance on the site. This would include Reserve Diver, Ships Team

Divers and Clearance Divers and of course any other iterations from the distant past to include the trying war-time years of the last century. It will also include those divers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice by passing away while under dive training but were not yet qualified. Here is the challenge though. I have started to form a comprehensive list of names and any amplifying information provided by the membership at: http://navydiver.ca/In_Memoriam.htm The list is far from complete and I urge all of you in the membership to help me out by reviewing the list, providing any new information or corrections as required. I will also look to you to provide me with additional names and reasons for inclusion on the list if I am missing anyone you feel should belong. The CNDA ex-

ecutive will be the deciding authority for inclusion. It is my greatest desire to make sure that all of our great divers who have served their country with distinction and selfless sacrifice be remembered as they should. I look forward to paying proper tribute to these men and women of honour.

T.M. Flath
Editor



In Memoriam!