



**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- Sadly we say goodbye to three more divers
- Patrick F. Connelly: A Brief History

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Passing On

Sadly, again the CNDA mourns the unexpected loss of three of our own since the last issue. The CNDA wishes to pass on our deepest sympathies to the families and friends of :

*Don "Donnie" Downs
James Jacob "Jim" Poidevin
Andrew Eric "Andy" Walsh*

This has prompted the editor's decision to retain the black borders of our digest this one more issue as a sign of respect for these three former Navy Divers. Five bells passed and received.

Divers have completed their work!

SIMCOE FESTIVAL HONOURS CRAIG BLAKE

Our members Jack & Sandy Lewis informed everyone about the Simcoe, Ontario Rotary Friendship Festival on 31 July to 2 August would be honouring their native son, the late Petty Officer Craig Blake and the 100th Anniversary of the Royal Canadian Navy. All Navy personnel, Veterans and friends of Craig were welcome to attend this event , with FDU(A) sending Petty Officer Jim Leith and Leading Seaman Doug Woodrow as their representatives. Jack and Sandy Lewis, representing the CNDA, attended Saturday's events and were really overwhelmed by the honours bestowed as a memorial to PO Blake. They met his Mother and relayed our condolences for the irreparable loss of her late son. All of Craig's family were the Honourary Parade Marshalls, and the theme of the Festival was "REMEMBERING A SAILOR, A SON, A HERO—PO2 CRAIG BLAKE". There was even an area called "CRAIG'S CORNER" where his chums and acquaintances from earlier days could sit down for a TV interview (for all 3 days) to share their memories of Craig. In the Parade there was a Naval vehicle towing a Navy Zodiac, followed by a white uniformed contingent of the local Navy Units. The day ended quickly for Jack and Sandy, and they headed home at dusk; our thanks to them for being our CNDA representatives.

Petawawa Afghanistan Memorial

Photos kindly provided by Art Mulack



Email:

Subject: Baby Boy in Pittsburgh, PA

Andy: Good day to you and Marie. Sorry we missed the IFR but other things popped up. Please pass on to the troops in the CNDA that Betty and I finally have our first grandchild. born in Pittsburgh on 24th of June to our son David and wife Tracey. A boy, 8lbs 3oz and 21 inches LOA. I thought this would never happen since I turned 70 on 17th June and told my son that I am 70 yrs and 7 days older than my grandson. The baby boy was named after a Pittsburgh Penguins hockey player Bill Guerin (not Sidney or Crosby). The baby's name: Guerin Alexander Semple. Seems like a good idea since I was a fair hockey player myself with the famous "Granby Grommets". I think I will call him " Billy " or " Frank James " after Knobby Walsh !

All the best to all Naval Divers present and past
Sam and Betty Semple



**RECEIVE PAY
• on CAPS •**

A tradition of the British Navy is that enlisted men receive their pay on their cap tops. This was originally done so that all could see the amount paid, and any errors could be readily rectified.

Interesting Enough

When Chuck Rolfe joined the RCN on 4 May 1951, he recalls getting his (miniscule) pay every 2 weeks by all hands putting their caps on the table and the Pay Bob counting out his pay on the top of the hat. Also in those days, we worked every Saturday morning as part of the work week. Does anyone remember this? Are there any other peculiarities you recall like these? If so write or email Tim Flath to put your memories in print. His contact information can be found on the CNDA web site as the web master or on the back page of this digest.

Updates by Chuck Rolfe

CNDA PERSONNEL DATABASE FORMS

The National Office continues to have the CNDA Personnel Database forms trickle in from ex Navy Divers, which we condense to write a concise article about that person for inclusion in the DIPPERS DIGEST. If you haven't done so already, please obtain the form from the website navydiver.ca to complete and forward to the CNDA National Office, Chuck Rolfe, 3670 Diamondview Road, RR2, Kinburn ON KOA 2H0. These forms are held in confidence and retained in the National Office.

WOLF DAMS – EOD DIVISION OF NOTRA

Wolf Dams, Project Leader, EOD Division of NOTRA Inc. Informs us that his bomb crew includes Stormr Olsen, Aubrey Ferrie, Jim Larder, Henry Wolf and Dale Silvester, who were hired last year and this year, all of whom were Borden Divers! Wolf stated "It's almost like a Reunion!" The Divers outnumber the regular crew just now, and are still doing bomb stuff – it seems like there always is room for one more.

GARY 'Animal' SCHONEKESS – REUNIONS

Gary Schonekess, our Member from Thorsby, Alberta says he is pleased to get the Newsletter via the internet website, and that he enjoys all the information of his former buddies from the RCN days, and really likes seeing the many photographs installed in the Scrapbook file. He suggests that CNDA might want to look at taking the official Reunion Photo on Saturday, the second day of the Reunion, rather than on the Friday Meet & Greet. CNDA did take the 1991 & 2003 Victoria Reunion photographs on the second day, when everyone attending the Dinner/Dance were all dressed in their finery, but that all other Reunions were taken at the Friday's Meet & Greet because not all people attending on Friday will attend the Saturday's events. Gary was informed that this situation could be discussed at the 2012 Halifax Reunion, when the CNDA Board of Directors have their triennial meeting.

DIPPERS DIGEST VIA THE INTERNET

Tom & Laine Sawyer in Oakville, Ontario contacted the National Office about getting the DIPPERS DIGEST via the internet, to let us know that the URL should read <http://navydiver.ca/Library.htm> using a capital "L" rather than the small "l" as URL,s(other than domain names)are case sensitive &-). Mea culpa from Chuck Rolfe. Just a note:- I usually just go to the website navydiver.ca and click on CNDA Library file as it is much simpler all round to get the current DIPPERS DIGEST that way.

FOUND! 3 ORIGINAL ISSUES OF DIPPER'S DIGESTS

Chuck Rolfe has dug up 3 original Issues from 1966, 1967 & 1971 who's Editors were Alan Sagar and Fred Watts. They will be published on the website navydiver.ca as soon as they arrive for Tim Flath to do so. It makes for interesting reading. Should anyone hold copies similar to these, please forward to either Tim Flath in Victoria, or to Chuck Rolfe at the National Office.



Email:
I'm forwarding
this photo of Jack
Lewis and Doug
Hughes - perhaps
you would
include the photo
of them in the
next DIPPERS
DIGEST since
many of Dougie's
pals would really
like to know & see how he's doing, and this one appears to be
the best one to do so.



I would hope that the guys always cc: you whenever they have information or photographs of them to share with everyone else in the future. This way, it all gets disseminated to all our buddies, who now know that <http://navydiver.ca> is the best way to get all the information about our select group of Canadian Navy Divers.

I am personally very happy to see how Doug is looking great!

Best regards.
Chuck Rolfe, CNDA Sec/Treas.

Chuck
Can you please pass on to those concerned that we have an address change for the Submariners Association of Canada
This is for the Dippers Digest.
Thanks

Submariners Association of Canada
PO Box 44061
541 Montreal Rd
Ottawa, ON
K1K 2N0



The Press and Journal

Saturday 18 September 2010

Wartime Mine Blown Up After Being Washed Ashore

CANADIAN NAVAL OFFICER GETS THE TASK OF SAFELY DISPOSING OF LETHAL DEVICE ON ISLAY
Published: 03/08/2010

GENTLY DOES IT: Lieutenant John Keenan, of the Royal Canadian Navy, examines the wartime mine which was washed up at Gruinart Bay, Islay.

A LETHAL World War II mine was washed up on a remote beach on the Inner Hebridean island of Islay.

The mine, which appeared in Gruinart Bay on the north west of the island, was blown up by a member of the Royal Canadian Navy, on exchange with the Royal Navy.

The 500lb mine was identified as being a British Mk 17 – still live – although it was deceptively sea-weedy, as it might well be after 70 years in the sea.

Lieutenant John Keenan, of the Royal Canadian Navy, was given the task of safely disposing of the still lethal device. His commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander Jason White, of the Northern Diving Group based at HM Naval Base Clyde, said: “The beach was a remote one so John waited until high water and then blew the mine up.

“We don’t have pictures of the explosion because obviously the team were keeping their heads down but it was an impressive bang, considering the condition of the mine and the explosives inside.

“And when we went back at low water there was nothing left – nothing that anyone could ever identify as being part of a mine – and the tide had taken care of the crater.

“All in all, it was the perfect job, mission successfully completed, no fuss – and the chance for our Canadian visitor to blow up 500lb of high explosives for fun. I wish every job went so smoothly.”

He cautioned: “There is still ordnance in the sea dating back as far as World War I, and, of course, more from World War II. We are careful not to worry people but they shouldn’t poke at things if they don’t know what they are.”



GENTLY DOES IT: Lieutenant John Keenan, of the Royal Canadian Navy, examines the wartime mine which was washed up at Gruinart Bay, Islay



Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) contacted CNDA National Office to confirm the email, phone numbers and addresses of our Association on 10 June 2010, and our contact persons. The National Office provided this data, plus information about our three chapters, and information about our website <http://navydiver.ca> as well as Tim Flath our Web Master. We requested from “Canada Remembers Correspondence Unit” as to how all our CNDA Members could be given free issues of the 100th Anniversary of the Navy lapel pins, and they said we should contact NDHQ’s Canadian Naval Centennial people, which we did. NDHQ came back to us saying these lapel pins were only for Serving Members, and that we should contact VAC to possibly supply numbers of these pins for our Veterans. Talk about a bureaucratic run around, this is it!! Needless to say, we were unable to get any lapel pins.
Chuck Rolfe



Patrick F. Connelly: A Brief History

Born in Kingston Ont. July 02, 1938.

Joined R.C.N. in Kingston and attached to H.M.C.S. Catarauqui for several days prior to leaving for basic training in H.M.C.S. Cornwallis.

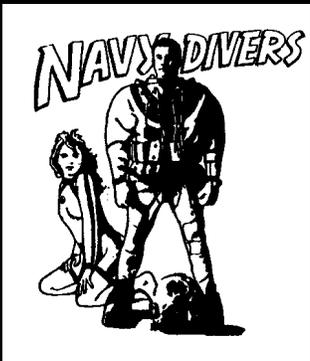
It was a dark and stormy early morning (0313 Nov. 1955) when a young seventeen year old recruit boarded a train, after saying his farewells to his tear streaked mom (tears of Joy?).

Finally he had broken the bonds of “mom-don” and was on his way to a great adventure! Left from H.M.C.S. Donaconna to Dorval and flew to Greenwood in a blizzard (Nov. 23) from Greenwood to H.M.C.S. Cornwallis via bus. Left Cornwallis for 2 week leave in Kingston, then headed off to H.M.C.S. Shearwater for training as an aircraft controller (note: I shouldda taken anger & liquor controller course instead). After Training I was flown out to the HMCS Magnificent via helicopter and that evening, we were “at flying stations” nothing like running around on a carrier deck at night, no lights and props everywhere! Somewhat intimidating! Quite an experience, several crashes (prangs) and a ditching. Lucky, no casualties.

Back to “Shearwater” for another while as crash crew and also some shore time also as “crash crew”. While on course, I volunteered for air crewman in a Utility Helicopter . It was during this period that I was informed I required a Ships Diver Course at “H.M.C.S. Granby”. For God’s sake man, it’s February and there’s ice in the G.D. harbour!” Brrr, it was quite chilly to say the least. As I had suffered an ear squeeze in the 3 rd week, I took the next course and I ended up with a seven week S/D course! I still think Doc. Fortin owes me a tot or at least a “Tall Americano”. P2 Tom Cowan was the instructor then. As an airdale I’m sure I received some “special “ attention...

In April 21, 1964 while taking off from Shearwater the aircraft I was in suffered a Catastrophic Transmission Failure and down we went from 330m. After passing through some hydro wires and bouncing at least once, we came to rest in what I believe was the “aircraft accident investigator’s” back yard. I believe I survived, as well as the two pilots and the other crewman. There were later ramifications.

When I finished my time with HU 21 as rescue diver and crewman, I requested to be considered for Clearance Diver. I was accepted for Clearance Diver training and left for the west coast in June of ’66. After some controversy I finished the course and returned to F.O.W. & HMCS Granby to begin one of the most rewarding experiences of all (insert buddies, friends and partners here). I.E. after diver party, jail overnite and possible release from course! End of the world!! Instructors all stood up for me and I’ll NEVER forget that, as well as the FDU(P) calling FDU(A) CO!



While on the “Maggie” I also managed to get to go to “Port Said” in 1957 with troops for NATO support. Upon our return, we were tasked to pick up 60 Sabre Jets in Scotland and Return to Canada. What a trip!! Talk about Hairy, at one point we travelled 9 miles astern in 24 hrs. BUT we got a B.Z. from Cr. in C.

After that it was off to decommission the good ‘ole Maggie. Three months in Plymouth, England. Another story, when finished the decommissioning, we proceeded to Belfast, Ireland for the “NEW” HMCS Bonaventure. A Great Place, Belfast, my introduction to ”Teddy Boys” and The Plaza Ballroom ended up in a scrap and was tossed out! (of the Plaza Ballroom)

Another episode, though kinda personal, coming back from a job in Nanaimo, Nanoose Bay, and was enjoying a few “wets” along the way. Two of us were on our motorcycles returning to FDU (P). I was supposedly “off” booze. The other rider with me was Bob McKay. I knew he had a bottle with him and I asked him to open it. He replied ”No way” you’re almost to Victoria! (He knew I was supposed to be staying sober and was trying to help.) I told him, “No sweat, I’ll have a couple at the “Unit”. When we got there, I proceeded in and towards the bar. As I was crossing the floor LCDR Coren turned from the bar and came towards me saying “Congratulations, M/S Connelly, I hear you’re off the booze. My reply was “Yes sir” and that was my LAST close call. B.Z. LCDR Coren. I was lucky enough to thank him in person when I completed my three’s course.

During 150/15 MK 5 dive in Bedford Basin, I managed to stumble head first into a hole, probably 10’ deep. Called top side and mumbled I might need the stand by. Luckily, it was garbled and when asked to “Say again” I had figured out how to get out of my situation. Training and reason came to my rescue.

During a scuba dive off Puerto Rico, Vezquia Island or some such name, I was working with the “Rosie Roads” EOD Team. We were placing Bangalore Torpedo’s for blasting corral to lay telephone cable. I was washed off the “Dock” by surf surge, lost mask, flippers and was submerged in rough surf among the corral. Remember thinking to myself “So, this is what it’s like to drown”. The U.S. navy type threw me a line at that moment, which was about 5 ft too short. It was about that time, after having swallowed enough salt water, that I recalled a great survival technique! Roll on my back and my double hose regulator will be above me. It was!! Saved! I swam ashore to enjoy a smoke. Along came a civilian walking up the beach, asking “Do these belong to any of you?” He had both my flippers and my mask! They have managed to go about ¼ mile down the beach! I went back in and finished the job, as would any Canadian Clearance Diver! Believe it or not, the US Navy EOD folks were impressed.

1974(?) actual bomb under car in Victoria. ¾ inch steel plate, 6 – 8 sticks 20% forcite, commercial detonator, battery and pull switch located under driver side of car. About 2300 hours that particular night, I was the Operator, P1 Fred Olkovich was duty officer and assistant tech I cannot recall...

(Stay tuned to later issues:
There is more!)

“These are the stories each one of us have in their memories, why not send yours in to be published?”



SNIPPETS



Email:

Here are the pictures of the Jacket in the mess. It is in a china cabinet for now but only temporarily. It will eventually go into a display box similar to the one that holds the CORMORANT Jacket and the GRANBY Boxing "warm up" smock of Darby Matthew's. We have 2 China Cabinets full of Old Souvenirs and the third, of which the Jacket is in, is only partially filled.

We have 3 more China Cabinets that are in storage and awaiting any other items to be displayed in. If you bump into any of the old gang and they (or their lovely wives) want to get rid of any 'classic' Dive items - tell them to send it our way or we can arrange a pickup.



Our Dive Technicians make an annual spring run thru Quebec and Ontario to do maintenance on all the SAR Techs, Combat Divers and Reserve Units so it wouldn't be a problem for them to stop by at an address on the way to Petawawa, Trenton, Toronto, Windsor etc.

Thanks again to you (Jack) and Ralph Romans for the donation.

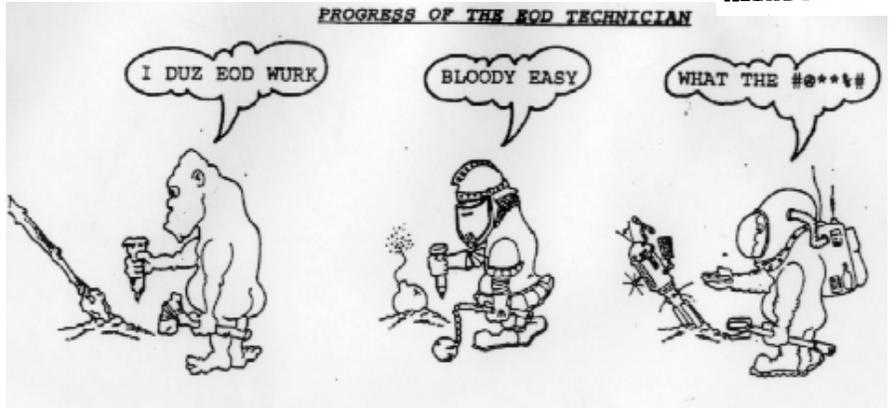
Cheers
 Mark Simonsen
 CPO1
 FDU Chief Diver
 902 720-1338



Photos on this page kindly provided by PO2 Serge Landry



NUDE SCUBA DIVING



A CLEARANCE DIVER AS SEEN BY:



CHIEF OF MARITIME STAFF (CMS)

A drunken, brawling, truck stealing, woman corrupting liar with a Rolex Watch, diving knife sharp as their tongue, black woolly hat and dishevelled combat jacket.



HIS CO

A fine specimen of a drunken, brawling, truck stealing, woman corrupting liar with a fantastically accurate watch, razor sharp diving knife, black woolly hat and properly turned out combat jacket.



SIGNIFICANT OTHER

A stinking, gross, foul-mouthed bum who arrives home every 3 or 4 months with a bag of dirty undersuits, a huge ugly watch, a filthy old hat, a bad attitude and a hard on.



HIMSELF

A smart, good looking, highly trained, professional killer and female idol who wears a tailored, non regulation combat jacket, carries a finely honed diving knife, is covered by a smart woolly hat and is always on time due to the reliability of his Rolex watch



Department of National Defence (DND)

An overpaid, overrated tax burden who is indispensable since he will go anywhere so long as he can drink, brawl, steal trucks, corrupt women, kick dogs, lie, sing dirty songs, wear dirty undersuits, unofficial combat jackets, diving knives, a Rolex watch and unauthorized hats



CNDA

Founded

HALIFAX, N.S.

1981

President: Norm Herd

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

We're on the Web!
www.navydiver.ca

Editor's 10 Foot Stop

Welcome to another edition of our Dippers Digest. I would like to first pause and send out a note of thanks to those who have contributed material and helped bring this issue to fruition. In particular I would like to say a special word of thanks to Chuck Rolfe who is a regular contributor of large amounts of information and without whom this digest would not get off the ground.

I am finding that we are reaching a much larger readership by having gone online with it. Hopefully that is a good thing. We will endeavour to continue to reach out through the regional chapters and ensure that those who are not connected to the web receive it as well.

As you have no doubt noted from page 1, we have sadly lost three more divers from the fold since our last issue. This has necessitated the digest retaining its mourning trim in black from the previous issue. It is fervently hoped that we can revert back to "normal dress" for the next issue and, perhaps naively, all further ones. I knew Andy Walsh very well and I regret having not met Jim Poidevin or Donnie Downs - Their passing sadly touches us all.

Lastly I would like to issue an appeal to those of you with interesting stories and other tidbits including imagery that you would like to share and see it immortalized in print. I am here to make that happen so please take some time to send me some new material to keep this digest interesting.



CNDA Eastern Chapter News

The Canadian Navy and former RCN Centennial was celebrated on the east coast by our chapter with five special events. A "Pig Roast", a BBQ, the Fleet Review, the Halifax International Tattoo and the Marland Centennial Ball.

The first event was the FDU(A) Pig Roast.

It took place on the evening of Friday, June 25. It was well attended and they had enough food to feed an army. The "liquid refreshment was free flowing and the best variety that I have seen in a long time. The weather cooperated with the festivities and the "live band" kept us hopping all night long. The only draw back to the evening was the lack of our CNDA members. Only about half a dozen showed up. I was told that the party went on until the wee hours. Earlier in the day FDU(A) held a special presentation to Mona Hamm the widow of our dear friend Charley that we tragically lost in the old "Granby Days".

The next day we held our Centennial CNDA BBQ at FDU.

We had a few light showers but did not dampen the festive mood, once again I was disappointed with the turnout as only around forty members and guests attended. We had plenty of food and "liquid refreshment". Chef Joe Paquin did an excellent job providing his "French Touch" and Marie and I did the prep work. Lots of stories and lies were told and everyone had a very good time. I would like to name a few "Notable" attendees. Bill Hilton, Glen Frauzel, Wayne Catchpaugh, Gerry Baskette, Pat Connelly (from the west coast), Doug Ross and John McEwen (from Ontario), Dan McLeod, Nick Serbu, Chuck Wilson, Jules Verharghe, Eric Carlson, Ken Whitney, Ann Marie Newman, Bruce Zwicker and Roger Boucher to name a few, excuse me if I missed you. Once again if you did not show up you missed a good one and I am not planning the next Centennial.

On Tuesday June 29, we had the Fleet Review by our Majesty the Queen. FDU(A) had invited CNDA members to be their guests for this very special function. For some unknown reasons to me only five of us attended, Norm Herd, Bruce and Daralyn Zwicker, Marie and I. The weather was perfect and we sailed on the diving tender "Sechelt". We sailed from Shearwater to Halifax to pick up the "Press". There were more than fifty News reporters, Photographers, TV Cameras Etc. from all over and many Security Staff. Being the "Press Ship" we had the best possible view of all activities. After sailing we went to Bedford Institute to meet HMCS St. Johns the Queen reviewing ship. We tied up across the jetty only a few feet from the Queens arrival and dignitaries line, the Prime Minister, Nova Scotia Premier, Chief of Defense, Admirals, Ministers etc.. You could not have paid for a better seat, After the Queen's arrival we sailed next to the Reviewing Ship to Bedford Basin that had a fleet of twenty two ships. We then proceeded to the harbor to see the rest of the larger ships. After the review we went back to Halifax to debark the Press and then proceeded back to Shearwater. It was a trip of a lifetime!! Once again a BIG THANK YOU to FDU(A) for inviting us.

On the week of July 1st, the Halifax International Tattoo was held and of course this year they had a "Naval Theme". Many Regular forces and Reserve Sailors were highlighted. They put in a great show that all sailors would be proud of.

The Marland Centennial Ball will take place At the Halifax Trade and Convention Center, I was told that there were no more tickets available at this time,

Andre (Andy) Desrochers

OUR BALTIC CRUISE

ANDY and MARIE DESROCHERS

Marie and I had a wonderful two weeks "Baltic Cruise" on the Holland America Line ship "Eurodam".

On Friday May 28 we flew from Halifax to London Gatwick airport. After checking in our hotel we traveled to central London to visit the town. We took the "Deluxe Sightseeing Tour" by a Double Decker Bus visiting all of the tourist sights, Buckingham Palace, St. Paul's Cathedral the Tower of London, London Eye, Westminster Abbey, London Bridge, Piccadilly Circus etc. We had "Fish and Chip wrapped in Newspaper and a few British Ales in a Pub.

The following morning we traveled to Dover to board our ship. We had a "Balcony Suite" almost as nice as "YMT 11 Boat Mess' ha ha. As repeat customers we received two bottles of champagne, fruit basket and two beautiful flower baskets on arrival. We sailed at 19:30 for Copenhagen Denmark.

Sunday was a day at sea and we took the occasion to orient ourselves around the ship. Monday May 30, we docked in Copenhagen at 7:00.

We had booked all our excursions prior to the cruise and saved us the line up at the "Excursion's Desk".

This morning we took an excursion by bus to the city and "Tivoli Gardens". Beautiful clean city with old buildings and history dating back to the 1400's. I was a bit disappointed with the Garden as it was more of an amusement park than an actual garden. As in most European city forty percent of the population travel by bikes.

Tuesday was another day at sea on our way to Estonia.

Wednesday morning we docked in Tallinn Estonia, Another even older city established in the 1200's. In spite of many wars over the years this "Wall City" has retained its "Medieval" environment. In this charming old town the "Draw Bridges" and water ways were replaced by winding cobble stone streets. The red roofs and chimneys seem to be a perfect settings for a "fairy tale story book".

The city has been preserved practically intact and as earned the town as an UNISCO World Heritage as a Living Museum. We visited a replica of the original settlement and I even had a dance with a local Ladies Folklore Show.

After leaving Tallinn we cruised through the Gulf of Finland to St. Petersburg Russia.

St. Petersburg was conceived by Peter the Great in 1760 and fashioned after his favorite European Cities. A very old city with many "Golden Dome" churches and bridges. It's been called the "Russian Venice" because the city is formed by islands connected by bridges. It is Russia's second largest city with over five millions people. On the first day we went on a "Double Decker Bus" tour of the city and visited most of the highlights, museums, palaces, churches etc. and my favorite Russian's first Steam Naval Ship, the Battle Ship IZHORA, 1826, and still commissioned to this day and serves as naval museum. St. Petersburg is the most Northern Major City in the world and at this time of year they have "White Nights" daylight for 24 hours. This evening we went to a Russian Folkloric Show featuring Cossack Dancers and the Russian Male Army Choir. It was a fantastic show of a life time. On the second day we toured more 18th century palaces, churches and fortress. We also had time for shopping for Russian souvenirs and vodka. In the evening we set sail for Finland.

Saturday morning the ship docked in Helsinki a city founded in 1550. We toured the highlights of the city, including Senate Square, Helsinki Cathedral and the Rock Church, this is one of the world's most unusual structure, carved into an enormous boulder and covered with a cooper dome, some interior walls are visual continuation of the natural stone. We also spent some time in the "Market Square" a large outdoor Flee Market / Farmer Market selling fresh fruits, vegetables, sea food, souvenirs and hand made gifts. I found this city more modern looking than the previous ports. It reminds me of most Canadian mid 50's cities downtowns. After diner we were off to our last port Stockholm.

Stockholm Sweden's 700 years old capital is one of the world most attractive. The marine approach to Stockholm passes through the stunning archipelago that lines the Swedish coast. More than 24,000 islands and inlets. The chain stretches for miles along the Swedish seaboard.

We anchored in Nynasham at 7:00 a small town one hour bus ride from Stockholm. We took the "Royal Palace and Old Town" tour. We explored the old town on foot and visited the Royal Palace, the Three Crowns Tower, the Water Front and many more highlights. Marie and I broke from our tour group and walked the very narrow cobble stone streets by ourselves. We stopped at a charming little café for food and to taste the local beer. We rejoined the group for our trip back to the ship. At 18:30 we set sail for Dover and the end of a wonderful cruise.

We spent a day in London and Gatwick where we had our last diner in an 16th century Pub. The "Six Bells" was an abbey built next to an old church to house the monks

The next morning we flew back to Halifax.

Andy And Marie



RUSSIA'S FIRST STEAM NAVAL
SHIP IZHORA (ARORA) 1826

ANDY DESROCHERS