



**SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:**

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Remembering Charles "Chuck" Rolfe



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# FRONT COVER

## Charles ROLFE

### Obituary



ROLFE, Charles V.W. Suddenly on Friday, February 26, 2016, Charles V.W. Rolfe, CPO1 (Ret'd) Royal Canadian Navy, at the age of 81. He is survived by his companion Huguette Collins; his children Richard, Scott, Robert and

Britt Taylor; brothers Gordon (Myrna) and Andrew (Sharon) and his sister Carol (Guy). He was predeceased by his parents George Rolfe and Ada Curry, brothers William and James and sisters Grace, Catherine and Genevieve. A graveside service with military honours will be held on Friday, May 13, 2016 at 2 p.m. at the Beechwood National Military Cemetery of the Canadian Forces, 280 Beechwood Avenue, Ottawa. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Heart and Stroke Institute would be appreciated.



## VINTAGE DIVING ARTICLES



*The Cover*—Here is a glimpse into the eerie world of the diver. Exploring the bottom of Esquimalt Harbour is Lt.-Cdr. Ben Ackerman, officer-in-charge of the operational diving unit at Esquimalt. He was not alone. Lt. John Turner, Command Photographic Officer, was down there taking pictures. (E-52376)

## CLEARANCE DIVERS GO NORTH

A TEAM of nine RCN clearance divers headed north in late June to carry out underwater demolitions, pipe-laying and salvage missions for the United States Navy's Military Sea Transportation Service. The assignments will continue until freeze-up in the fall.

The team, headed by Lt. Arthur W. Rowse, embarked in the USS *Opportunity*, a USN auxiliary rescue salvage vessel, which called at Halifax June 18-21.

The other frogmen were CPO Peter Nicholson, PO Francis MacArthur, and Leading Seamen James Poidevin, Glendon Frausel, Nelson Eisener, Stanley J. Stephenson, Roy Everets and Kenneth Whitney.

This is the third year of Arctic operations for PO MacArthur, the second for Ldg. Sea. Stephenson. The others went North for the first time.

In other years, RCN divers surveyed and cleared underwater obstructions from the various beaches used by the Military Sea Transportation Service for the annual landing of supplies for the Distant Early Warning Line and other northern military posts. Last year these and extra assignments earned praise for the Canadians from the highest quarters.

The forthcoming operations will not involve beachwork. There are four main missions, for one of which the Canadians equipped themselves with an initial supply of 30 tons of explosives.

The channel into the harbour of Goose Bay, Labrador, is obstructed by a solid rock some 5,000 cubic yards in volume which hitherto has prevented tankers and supply ships from going all the way into port. The Canadians are attempting to demolish this East Coast version of Ripple Rock. The Americans figure the rock has cost them \$900,000 so far by making it necessary to off-load ships in the outer reaches of the harbour. There is only 25 feet of water over the position of the rock, 41 feet of water elsewhere in the channel.

For this experiment, expected to take a fortnight, the Canadians are drawing on explosive stocks including, among other things, 60 depth charges and 1,000 feet of TNT "hose".



Nine RCN clearance divers who are assisting the USN in the eastern Arctic this summer are shown here. On the deck of the diving tender, left to right, are Lt. Arthur W. Rowse, PO Francis MacArthur, CPO Peter J. Nicholson and Ldg. Sea. Stanley J. Stephenson. In the foreground are Leading Seamen Roy Everts, Kenneth Whitney, James Poidevin, Nelson Eisner and Glendon Frausel. One of the rubber boats they are using in the north is shown. (HS-57798)

Also at Goose Bay, the Canadian frogmen will labour for four weeks to lay two ten-inch pipelines, partly of special steel and partly flexible and totalling some thousands of feet, along the harbour bottom so that ships can take on fuel without having to come alongside a jetty. Once the system is completed, it is expected that 800,000 barrels of aviation gasoline, diesel and heating fuels will be pumped into the tank farm through the piping this season for use as required.

Next the Canadian team will move on to Thule harbour, Greenland, to haul up the polynia system installed by RCN divers last year and replace it with a permanent installation, fanning out to cover more of the harbour. The polynia

system involves the laying of perforated pipes through which compressed air is ejected. The bubbling water carries warmer water to the surface, prevents freeze-up and resultant damage to harbour installations.

The final major assignment of the Canadians will be to clear ammunition from a portion of the bottom at Harmon Field, St. George Bay, Nfld. During the Second World War a lighter bearing 150 tons of naval ammunition sank in the harbour. Recently, some of it has been washed ashore in storms.

The team, all of whom are volunteers, took 6,000 pounds of equipment for their northern sojourn. The working day is expected to be around 16 hours long, seven days of the week.

## DIVERS RETURN HOME

A VOLUNTEER team of nine Royal Canadian Navy clearance divers has wound up operations—one of them “next to impossible”—in the eastern Canadian Arctic and Greenland for the Military Sea Transportation Service of the United States Navy. It has been warmly applauded for its efforts up North this summer.

Rear-Admiral D. T. Eller, USN, who is in overall charge of the annual re-supply of eastern Arctic military installations, has sent the following in a message to Rear-Admiral H. F. Pullen, Flag Officer Atlantic Coast, from whose command the frogmen came:

“The RCN clearance divers have successfully completed all assigned missions. They have contributed materially to the overall success of Military Sea Transportation Service’s Arctic Operation East. I was most impressed with their professional, seamanlike approach to new problems, together with their enthusiastic drive and energy. My sincere appreciation and thanks to the RCN for the loan of their clearance divers for this operation.”

The divers, headed by Lt. Arthur W. Rowse, arrived in mid-September at Harmon, Newfoundland, to finish clearing RCN Second World War ammunition from the bottom of St. George Bay. They were due back in Halifax in October.

Admiral Eller also sent a message to the team itself, code-named “UDU Bravo”:

“Again UDU has lived up to its fine reputation in contributing significantly to MSTS Arctic Operation, East, 1959. The Royal Canadian Naval Clearance Diver (team) under the leadership of Lt. Rowse, has accomplished next to the

impossible by deeping the Sandy Point channel as well as the excellent work in installing the new submarine pipeline at Goose Bay and then the fine work of installing the new polynia system alongside the deLong Pier, Thule. The clearance divers can be proud of their splendid achievements and are a credit to the RCN. I wish to highly commend UDU Bravo on a job well done.”

The team accomplished the following:

1. Blasted a deep channel into the anchorage of Goose Bay, Labrador, thereby enabling the passage through of deep-draught ships. The “Ripple Rock” they demolished was some 5,000 cubic feet in volume and had hampered off-loading of supply ships to the extent of \$900,000 worth of time and effort hitherto.

2. Laid an elaborate pipe line system some thousands of feet in total length at Goose Bay so that tankers could pump various fuel oils into a “tank farm” and ships could draw on it with relative ease throughout the short re-supply shipping season.

3. Laid a bigger polynia system in the harbour at Thule Air Force Base, Greenland, so that the bubble-producing pipes could keep the harbour free of ice throughout the winter.

In addition to Lt. Rowse, the team includes CPO Peter Nicholson, PO Francis MacArthur, Leading Seamen James Poidevin, Glendon Frausel, Nelson Eisener, Stanley J. Stephenson, Roy Everts, and Kenneth Whitney.

This was the third year of Arctic operations for PO MacArthur, the second for Ldg. Sea. Stephenson. The others went North for the first time.



When a naval officer's wife was carried in her station wagon over the edge of the fuelling jetty at Esquimalt into 35 feet of chill water, it was her good fortune that Lt. Robert Duston happened to see the accident. He plunged into the harbour and brought her to safety. Naval divers later assisted in raising the car. Inset is Lt. Duston's picture. (E-53095; E-53096)

### *Officer's Wife Saved from Sea*

The wife of a Victoria naval officer narrowly escaped death on the late afternoon of November 18 when a late model station wagon she was driving plunged off the Esquimalt harbour naval fuelling jetty into 35 feet of icy water.

Good luck, combined with fast thinking and action by a naval officer, saved the life of Mrs. Harry Locke, wife of Lt.-Cdr. Maurice M. Locke, engineer officer in the *Margaree*.

Mrs. Locke had driven her husband to the jetty where he boarded his ship. She then proceeded to leave the scene.

"I started the car, and suddenly . . . I don't know what happened . . . it skidded or something, and went over the side." Mrs. Locke explained later.

The vehicle mounted a 10-by-10-inch guard timber and dropped 12 feet to the water.

Mrs. Locke said the door on her side was flung open as she hit the water. She was able to get out as the station wagon started to sink.

Only witness to the accident was Lt. Robert Duston, on duty at the brow of

the *Margaree* at the time. He immediately ran down the gangway, sprinted some 150 feet (shedding his jacket as he ran) and plunged into the water to rescue Mrs. Locke. The two managed to get to a fender log, and within minutes were picked up by a harbour craft which had raced to the scene.

A team of naval divers had been hurried to the jetty, and within 40 minutes the sunken vehicle had been reclaimed. Divers taking part were PO Jim Connolly, PO William Fenn and AB Mervyn MacDonald.

Mrs. Locke was taken by a naval ambulance to Victoria's Royal Jubilee Hospital where she underwent a check-up in the emergency ward. Soon after she was released to her home. She suffered a few minor bruises and shock.

Congratulatory messages to all concerned in the rescue operations were dispatched by Rear-Admiral H. S. Rayner, Flag Officer Pacific Coast.

In the "very well done" message to Lt. Duston, it was noted "his action was in the best traditions of the service."

28 March 1946



### Even Canada Gets Them

When enemy mines are cast up on British or European coasts it is taken for granted, but here is a 500-pound Japanese mine which was found lying in a cove at Cape Cook on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Around it are four members of a mine disposal squad of the Royal Canadian Navy before it was blown up with a single .303 rifle shot at 150 yards by Petty Officer W. Easton, R.C.N., of Cobble Hill, B.C. (third from left). Others from left to right are Lieut. Fred Barber, R.C.N. (R), of Prince Rupert, B.C., who was in charge of the party; WO. B. Hiron, R.C.N., of Victoria, and AB. Gordon Mitchell, R.C.N. (R), of Calgary. The explosion of the mine was felt aboard a fishing vessel four miles away and heard aboard a naval vessel 5 1/4 miles away.

1952 Fatality - West Coast

### IN MEMORIAM

AUG 52

On Wednesday, June 11, 1952, on Bonilla Island, 90 miles from Prince Rupert, a naval officer died violently while in the service of his country.

Ordnance Lieut.-Cdr. Edward Borradaile, RCN, "Ted" to his brother officers, was fatally injured when a beached mine which he was endeavouring to destroy exploded. This tragedy deprived us not only of an expert famous for his work in the field of explosives demolition, but of a man admired and esteemed by all who knew him.

The regard in which he was held was well demonstrated by the numbers who attended his funeral. Lieut.-Cdr. Borradaile was escorted to his rest by 400 officers and men of the navy. We will not soon forget that occasion, its sadness and the feeling of deep loss felt by us all.

This death was not in vain. In the way of his dying, Lieut.-Cdr. Borradaile set us an excellent example. Calmly, precisely and carefully he faced great danger, as he had faced it so many times. None knew better than he the risk he ran, but he did his full duty in spite of it. May his example of calmness and fortitude inspire and strengthen us all.

THE STAFF, HMC ORDNANCE SCHOOL.



#### Editor's Note:

Ordnance Lieut.-Cdr. Edward L. Borradaile was born October 30, 1908, at Ganges Harbour, Salt Spring Island, B.C.

He entered the RCNVR in September 1940 as an acting lieutenant and trained in the United Kingdom, remaining there for the next two years on mine disposal duties.

He returned to Naden in 1942 as bomb disposal officer and later that year went to Chilliwack, B.C., for duty with the Bomb Disposal School.

He served at Naval Headquarters from 1943 to the end of the war and was demobilized in 1945. He kept up his connections with the Navy after the war, training annually at HMCS Naden.

He transferred to the RCN in June, 1951, and was appointed to the Ordnance School at Naden.

He leaves his wife, Mrs. Doris Borradaile, 1013 Tillicum Road, Victoria.

# Divers become creatures of observation

By Lookout on Jan 25, 2016



FDU divers PO1 Giles Pease (top) and LS Ryan Burrell (bottom) dive in the Pacific Canada Pavilion at the Vancouver Aquarium. PO1 Pease is diving with CABA (SCUBA) dive gear and LS Burrell is diving the CCDA rebreather.

**Rachel Lallouz**, Staff Writer

Five clearance divers plunged beneath the surface in an unusual environment a week ago.

The members from Fleet Diving Unit Pacific (FDU(P)) donned wet suits and rebreathers over the Jan. 16 weekend and slipped into the Pacific Canada Pavilion tank at the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre.

Surrounded by halibut and sturgeon, and under the watch of visitors, the divers carried out demonstrations to showcase their navy work. Interactive displays were also set up inside the aquarium.

“People don’t know what we do, typically,” said Lieutenant (Navy) Greg Oickle, FDU (P) Executive Officer. “So there was a lot of contact with the public and it gave us the opportunity to talk to others about our jobs doing clearance diving or port inspections.”

Lt(N) Oickle and PO1 Giles Pease teamed up to give a special presentation on diving opportunities within the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) on Saturday afternoon. More than 30 people listened raptly as they discussed training, career paths in military diving, and basic diving tasks.

“They send divers down to diffuse explosives, risking their lives, and the extent of what they do is amazing,” said Nerina Black, a seminar audience member. “I had no idea they do so much. They truly save lives.” The Aquarian’s annual Divers’ Weekend, now in its 17th year, focused on the Arctic, with seminar topics ranging from the impacts of climate change to exploring shipwrecks in the waters off Cambridge Bay, NU.

During the clearance diver presentation, Lt(N) Oickle talked about diving under the Arctic ice last spring following the discovery of the HMS Erebus wreckage, one of the ships that sank on the journey to find the North West Passage during the 1845 Franklin Expedition.

Leading Seaman Marc-Andre Ouimet, LS Ryan Burrell, and Petty Officer First Class John Wood were also on hand to carry out two morning and two afternoon diving demonstrations. “Two divers would suit up in either a wet suit or dry suit and head to the tank, where they were counted down to enter the water by the narrator as the crowd watched through the underground viewing glass,” says Lt(N) Oickle. “Once underwater, divers swam around, gave high fives and waved to the kids.”

Divers then demonstrated the difference between regular scuba diving gear and rebreather diving gear. With rebreather diving gear, carbon dioxide is filtered from the air through a closed system, meaning no streams of bubbles form in the water as the diver breathes. This is used primarily during underwater bomb disposal so as not to disrupt the device.

“We all really enjoyed getting to be behind the scenes at the aquarium,” said Lt(N) Oickle. “Just getting to be where the general public isn’t allowed was something really special. The whole experience was definitely a once in a lifetime opportunity, not only for us but for the audience as well.”

## Local divers chill out in northern B.C.

By Lookout on Mar 16, 2016

Katelyn Moores, MARPAC Public Affairs



Photos by PO2 Bibeau, FDU(P)

The Operational Dive Team poses for a picture during the ice dive exercise on Lac Des Roches in Lone Butte, B.C.

An icy dip in Canada's northern waters is not something most people would look forward to, but for Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific) (FDU(P)), diving in frigid and isolated conditions is an excellent opportunity to hone a unique and important skill set. Last month, 16 divers from the Operational Dive Team, consisting of six Reserve Port Inspection Divers and 10 Clearance Divers, deployed to Lac Des Roches in Lone Butte, B.C., for a five-day ice dive exercise to ensure they are prepared to operate in Canada's Arctic.

"Clearance divers have a mandate to operate in all Canadian waterways," explained Lieutenant (Navy) Kevin Okihiro, the officer in charge of the exercise. "It's important that we stay practiced in operating in these northern areas." The exercise aimed to combine the capabilities of the divers with those of the SeaBotix Remotely Operated

Vehicle (ROV), a tethered robot controlled from land that provides real-time information on the underwater environment. Capable of traveling to a depth of 950 metres, the ROV allows the dive team to get a clear picture of what's beneath the ice while eliminating the time constraint that decompression imposes on divers. After the ROV does an initial scan of the area, objects of interest can be further investigated by the divers. Exercises like this one happen at least once a year and provide an excellent opportunity to familiarize the divers with Arctic operations in a demanding, real-world environment. The cold weather isn't the only challenge these divers faced. Lt(N) Okihiro said the main obstacle when operating in the Arctic isn't the frigid temperature, but the remote location. "The biggest challenge for us is getting there, setting up, cutting through the ice and having to operate with limited support," he said. "The diving isn't any harder, but the logistics of getting there are."

The Lac Des Roches exercise was a success, helping the team build confidence in both their procedures and abilities in isolated, cold-weather conditions. This confidence will be valuable later this month when FDU(P) divers head north once again. This time they will be participating in an exercise led by the Undersea Warfighting Development Centre's Arctic Submarine Lab on an ice floe in the Beaufort Sea, 250 nautical miles north of Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. The bilateral operation will establish an ice camp to support a U.S. submarine exercise that includes participation from a number of organizations and militaries, including the United States Navy, the Royal Navy, the Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force.

The remoteness of Canada's North combined with the lack of infrastructure requires a uniquely trained force to effectively operate in the area. By participating in exercises like these, FDU(P) divers ensure they remain trained and equipped to operate in Arctic conditions as they continue to enhance northern sovereignty in support of the Canada First Defence Strategy.



Photo by Lt(N) Joel Cormier

Leading Seaman Hector Ladron de Guevara from Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific) recently deployed on Operation Open Spirit 2016 in Lithuania.

**Captain Kirk Sullivan, CJOC Headquarters**

A Clearance Diver from Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific) recently deployed to Lithuania to help improve the safety of seafarers in the Baltic Sea. Leading Seaman Hector Ladron de Guevara participated in Operation Open Spirit 2016 in Klaipeda, Lithuania, from May 13-27. He and his fellow divers worked with their counterparts from 12 nations to remove unexploded ordnance left from the First and Second World Wars. During the operation, LS Ladron de Guevara placed explosives on a recently discovered mine. When the area around the mine was secured, the Canadian dive team conducted a controlled detonation. "It's a challenging task and we need to be careful when approaching objects that could be mines," he said. "When objects are identified as mines, we use our well-rehearsed procedures to ensure we conduct the detonation safely. We practice regularly to make sure we're ready for these real-life

situations." Originally from Villahermosa, Mexico, LS Ladron de Guevara came to Canada in 1996 and joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 2001 as Boatswain. He became a Clearance Diver in 2012 and has deployed on Exercise Dugong and Operation Nanook. "I love training for operations and appreciate the opportunities to deploy and work alongside divers from around the world," he said. During Operation Open Spirit 2016, he and the Canadian dive team exchanged tactics, techniques, and procedures with allies in order to refine explosive ordnance disposal capabilities. "It's always interesting to work with divers from other countries," he said. "During this operation, we shared practices that work well for us and picked up some good tips that may help us in the future. It was a great experience." Operation Open Spirit is an annual multinational operation that provides the CAF with an opportunity to strengthen ties with key allies in Eastern Europe. The operation is also a chance for Royal Canadian Navy Clearance Divers to develop and validate advanced conventional munitions disposal capabilities under conditions that cannot be easily replicated in Canada.

## Fleet Diving Unit in Guam for IED exercise

**Rachel Lallouz**  
Staff Writer

For the first time in Royal Canadian Navy history, Fleet Diving Unit (FDU) clearance divers will be attending Exercise Tri-Crab, an international, maritime improvised explosive devices (IED) exercise in Guam.

This will be the first time in the 10-year life of the exercise that Canadians will participate.

From May 2 to May 20, five FDU members will work in conjunction with the Singapore, Australian, New Zealand and American navies to practice disposing of IEDs on boats, jetties, piers, and in the surrounding water using special disruptors.

"This is a great opportunity for us to work with other nations, learn from and share experiences, and it will ultimately make FDU members in attendance better IED operators," said Petty Officer First Class Scott Ensor,

*We are ready for this great opportunity of neutralizing IEDs at the water line and below it, so it should be a great experience for the team.*

PO1 Scott Ensor  
FDU (Pacific)

Senior Instructor for the Training Department at FDU (Pacific).

Upon arrival, FDU members will undergo work-up diving in the local waters to familiarize themselves with the environment. Then, they will team up with divers from the other participating navies to complete different IED neutralization scenarios.

IEDs situated under the water may be neutralized with the help of the FDU's



FDU members work on an improvised explosive device (IED) in Comox at the end of February 2015, building valuable skills that can be used in exercises such as Exercise Tri-Crab.

specific IED technology – the Van Guard IED Robot, a remote vehicle complete with cameras and a manipulating claw, or their marine sonar system, which is able to detect shapes in the water several hundred feet away.

IEDs to be neutralized on maritime surfaces above water will benefit from the help of the FDU's extensive disrupter suite.

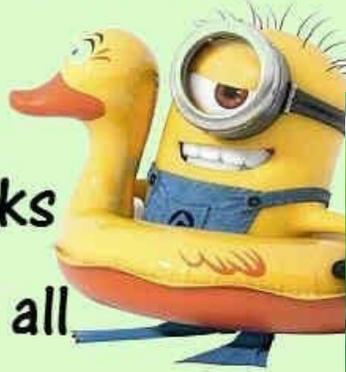
All equipment, says PO1 Ensor, was carefully packed into a 20-foot sea container and transported via ship to

Guam just over a month ago. "Other preparations for the exercise have included us updating our immunizations, completing health checks, and moving through work-ups to get our operators ready for the different diving scenarios

we will be involved in," says PO1 Ensor.

"We are ready for this great opportunity of neutralizing IEDs at the water line and below it, so it should be a great experience for the team," adds PO1 Ensor.

Every time I think  
I have my ducks all in  
a row,  
the damn ducks  
waddle off in all  
directions.



## Editor's 10 Foot Stop

As with any previous issues, the saddest part of being the editor of the Dippers Digest is reporting the passing of any Divers from our midst. This issue is no exception especially with the number of truly great people that we have lost. Since the last issue, the Divers I know about include John (Jack) Hartley (Dinger) Bell, George Burton Carnahan, Charles (Chuck) Rolfe, Kenneth J. Whitney and James (Doug) Ross. 5 Bells to all! Special mention also goes to the sad loss of Dr. Derek John (Piet) Kidd who was our very special guest of honour at the last CNDA Reunion. I apologize if I have left out or am unaware of anyone else I haven't named herein. As an association we are still very much reeling with the loss "Chuck" Rolfe in particular who passed away so suddenly and was so active on our behalf. He was very much the glue that bound our organization together for a very long time and worked tirelessly as a major contributor to the Dippers Digest and the inner workings of the CNDA Executive. His interest in gathering and authoring material to write a history of the branch is a legacy that he had left as a work in progress. It still needs to be organized and published in a manner that fits his vision. More to follow as we sort out and collate what he left behind. Chuck, we certainly thank you for the guiding hand you had provided us for so long.

I would like to now take this opportunity to announce that the CNDA has reorganized as a result of a number of issues including the loss of Chuck from our ranks. The most notable impact has been the amalgamation of the Ottawa and Western Chapters into a single "Western Chapter". I invite all CNDA members to visit the web site Executive Page to review the minutes posted of the last CNDA Executive Minutes linked therein to explain the ongoing Constitution Review and the newly realigned Executive Membership and reorganization of the CNDA. Have a great summer all and we will strive to have another issue posted for 15 September is according to the publishing schedule.

TMF

