Monday 16 November 2026

Volume 60, Issue 23

www.tridentnewspaper.com

TRIDENT

THE NEWSPAPER OF MARITIME FORCES ATLANTIC SINCE 1966 • LE JOURNAL DES FORCES MARITIMES DE L'ATLANTIQUE DEPUIS 1966



Lest We Forget

Royal Canadian Navy sailors stand on parade at the Grand Parade Square in Halifax during a Remembrance Day ceremony on November 11. The annual ceremony was one of many across the Halifax area that brought together service members, veterans and the public to reflect on the service and sacrifice of Canadians in uniform.

MS ALEX HEAGLE



Families, friends and colleagues gathered at HMC Dockyard to welcome home HMCS Moncton and Edmonton on November 5.

CPL ANNABELLE MARCOUX



The homecoming came following a four-month deployment supporting Op REASSURANCE.

CPL ANNABELLE MARCOUX

HMCS *Moncton*, *Edmonton* return home after mine countermeasures deployment

By Nathan Stone
Trident Staff

Two Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) ships are back home after a four-month NATO deployment in European waters.

His Majesty's Canadian Ships (HMCS) *Moncton* and *Edmonton* arrived back in Halifax on November 5, concluding a mission with the Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group One (SNMCMG1) under Operation REASSURANCE.

From July to November, the two Kingston-class Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels (MCDVs) contributed to NATO's security and mine countermeasures efforts in the North Sea. They were tasked to locate, identify and safely dispose of historic sea mines and unexploded ordnance off the coast of Denmark. Their crews included specialist teams of clearance divers and autonomous underwater vehicle operators.

"It was a full mission success," said Lieutenant Commander (LCdr) Justin Wong, commanding officer of HMCS *Moncton* and the Canadian task force commander for both ships.

The deployment saw RCN sailors working closely with allied personnel, as HMCS *Moncton* hosted a Royal Danish Navy mine countermeasures team for more than two months.

"Both crews were able to accomplish not only the mission but also work alongside our allies," LCdr Wong said.

Each vessel carried 47 personnel, including administrative staff, clearance divers and mine countermeasures team members, for a total of just under 100 personnel across the two ships.

As task force commander, LCdr Wong worked closely with the commanding officer of HMCS *Edmonton*, LCdr Michael Ronaldson, throughout the operation.

He said the two ships worked with a singular purpose, holding daily exercises and drills, with "constant communication" between the crews.

"The additional burden (as task group commander) was really just the overall planning and execution, but because the teams are experts in what they do, it was extremely easy," LCdr Wong said.

Family and friends gathered at the dockyard to welcome the returning sailors, cheering and waving handmade signs as the ships came alongside, HMCS *Moncton* first, with *Edmonton* following close behind.

Sherry LeRiche, mother of Master Sailor (MS) Brandon LeRiche, was among the dockyard crowd. She said that sailing on HMCS *Moncton* was MS LeRiche's first deployment aboard an MCDV and that he told her he "loved" serving aboard the small ship.

Members of Master Sailor Jacob Doucette's family were also on the jetty to welcome him home aboard HMCS *Edmonton*. His uncle, Rheal Doucette, travelled from Saint John, New Brunswick, to join MS Doucette's sister and her children at the homecoming.

MS Doucette is an experienced sailor, but Rheal said that the family still worries about him and feels relieved when he returns.

"It's always welcoming to know he's back on Canadian soil."

The deployment marked the fifth time Canada's MCDVs have participated in NATO's Standing Mine Countermeasures Groups through Operation REASSURANCE.

LCdr Wong thanked the families, friends and communities who supported the ships' crews during the deployment.

"We're extremely happy to serve Canada and happy to be home," he said. "We knew we were home when we hit the fog."

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Canadian sailors and Polish colleagues from SNMG1 gather at the HMCS Skeena memorial on Videy Island, Iceland.

CAPT ALAIN FAHÉ

A commemorative wreath rests at the HMCS Skeena memorial site.

CAPT ALAIN FAHÉ

Remembering HMCS *Skeena*:

RCN sailors honour the fallen in Iceland

By RCN

On August 20, 2026, sailors from His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Ville de Québec* and personnel from Standing NATO Maritime Group One (SNMG1) gathered on Videy Island, Iceland, to commemorate the 15 crew members of HMCS *Skeena* who lost their lives when the destroyer ran aground during a violent storm in October 1944.

During the ceremony, participants assembled at the *Skeena* memorial, observed a moment of silence, and laid a wreath in honour of those who perished. Seeking shelter from severe weather on the night of October 24-25, 1944, the ship was driven onto the rocky shores of Videy Island in one of the Royal Canadian Navy's (RCN) most significant wartime tragedies.

For the crew of *Ville de Québec*, the visit offered a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the legacy of those who served before them. Standing at the site more than 80 years later, sailors took time to remember the courage, dedication, and sacrifice of *Skeena*'s crew.

Commissioned in 1931, Skeena was among the first destroyers built specifically for the RCN. During the Second World War, she escorted convoys across the North Atlantic, conducted anti-submarine operations, and supported Allied efforts related to the Normandy landings.

The ceremony also underscored the Navy's ongoing commitment to preserving its history and honouring those who served. By paying tribute to the crew of *Skeena*, those in attendance reaffirmed the values of duty, service, and remembrance that continue to guide Canadian sailors today.

More than eight decades after the tragedy, the story of HMCS *Skeena* continues to resonate within the RCN, ensuring the memory of the ship's crew endures for future generations.





CPO1 Davis Murphy (left) watches as the cover is removed from the Freshwater War Memorial during its unveiling in Freshwater, N.L., on August 9.

DR. ANDREW PEACOCK



CPO1 Murphy addresses attendees following the unveiling of the Freshwater War Memorial. Photographs of local veterans and service members displayed behind him reflect the community's long-standing tradition of military service.

DR. ANDREW PEACOCK

Returning Home:

CPO1 Murphy reflects on Freshwater's new war memorial

By RCN

For Chief Petty Officer First Class (CPO1) Davis Murphy, returning to Freshwater, N.L., as guest of honour for the unveiling of the community's new war memorial was more than a ceremonial responsibility. It was an opportunity to return home, reconnect with the community that helped shape him, and reflect on a naval career spanning more than three decades.

"It was probably one of the proudest things I've done in the CAF," said CPO1 Murphy.

"Growing up in a small town of about 150 people, I never would have imagined that, after 31 years in the military, there would be a war memorial in my hometown."

Held on August 9, 2026, the unveiling marked the culmination of an eight-year community effort to create a lasting tribute to local veterans and serving members. Overlooking the North Atlantic Ocean, it stands as a place for remembrance, honouring generations of service members who have answered the call to serve.

The monument itself is steeped in symbolism.

Its heptagonal base symbolizes the seven seas where Newfoundlanders have served throughout times of war and military operations, while the circular upper section represents the globe and the worldwide contributions of Canadians in uniform.

For CPO1 Murphy, those maritime themes felt especially meaningful.

"Being from Freshwater, the ocean was always part of life," he said.

"We spent a lot of time on boats growing up. Seeing those maritime connections built into the memorial was really meaningful."

The visit also provided an unexpected opportunity to reconnect his own family's military history. During the weekend, CPO1 Murphy was able to recover his grandfather's uniform and reunite it with the medals already in his family's possession.

"My grandfather served in the Navy during the Second World War, but we had never been able to get his uniform," he explained.

"To finally bring it home and reunite it with his medals made the weekend even more meaningful."

Freshwater's strong tradition of military service helped shape CPO1 Murphy's interest in the CAF from an early age. While his grandfather's service was an important part of his family history, he was equally inspired by local military members who returned home and shared their experiences.

"There has always been a willingness to go away and serve, both Newfoundland and Canada," he said.

As guest of honour, CPO1 Murphy delivered remarks, presented a commemorative plaque from the RCN to the community, and awarded Chief of the Navy coins to individuals whose dedication helped bring the memorial project to life.

One presentation in particular left a lasting impression.

The memorial's lead organizer, a Freshwater resident and 38-year military veteran, had spent years advancing the project from concept to reality.

"When I presented him with one of the Chief of the Navy's coins, he became overwhelmed and emotional," he said.

"I hadn't expected that reaction, but it showed me how much the gesture meant to him."

While several moments stood out throughout the weekend, one stands above the rest for CPO1 Murphy.

Having deliberately avoided seeing the monument before the ceremony, he experienced the unveiling alongside everyone else in attendance.

"When the covering was pulled away, I saw the monument and the photograph incorporated into it showing Freshwater as it had looked years ago," he said.

The moment prompted reflection not only on his hometown, but also on a career that has taken him to 54 countries, several ships and postings across Canada.

"Seeing that image made me think about how much the community had changed during the 31 years I had been away," he added.

"So many houses were gone, and so many people were no longer there."

"It was a little overwhelming to reflect on how much had changed."

Freshwater may have changed over the years, but the rich maritime history and the culture of service remain.

For CPO1 Murphy, that enduring sense of remembrance is exactly what makes the project so important.

"The community came together to build it, and it's a beautiful tribute," he said.

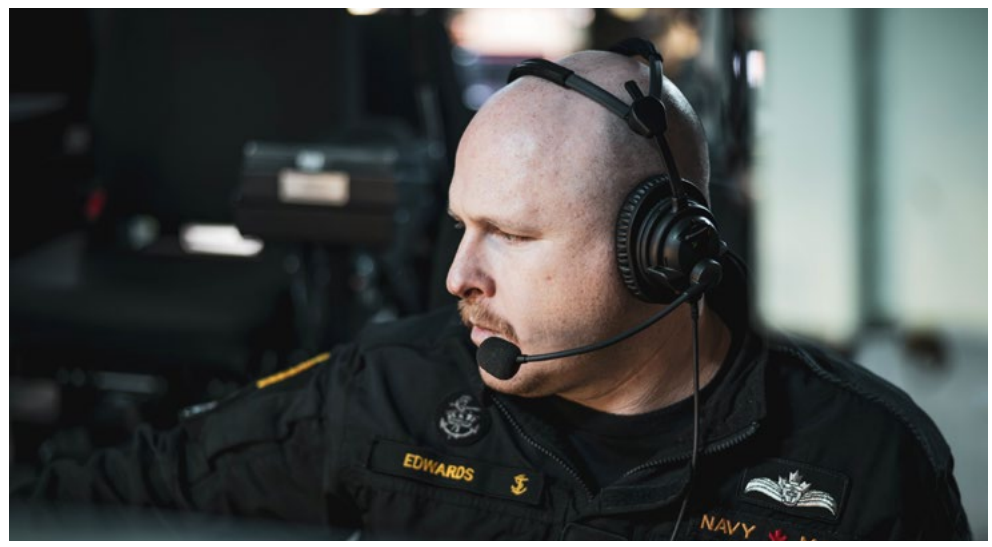
"Being there and taking part in the ceremony was emotional. It was a very proud moment, especially to be invited as the guest of honour."



From Days to Minutes:

How AI could transform anti-submarine warfare

By RCN



A Naval Warfare Officer conducts their duties during exercise NORTHERN VIKING 26 in the North Atlantic Ocean this past August.

CPL GREGORY COLE

Imagine searching for a needle in a haystack, except the haystack is the ocean and the needle is a submarine.

Every day, ships, helicopters, sonobuoys and other sensors collect vast amounts of acoustic data during anti-submarine warfare (ASW) operations. Finding a potential submarine contact within that information can be a complex and often time-consuming process.

For Lieutenant-Commander (LCdr) Mitch Dingwell, who has been overseeing the NEPTUNE project for the past year, the challenge is not simply collecting and reviewing the data but turning it into useful intelligence while it can still make a difference.

"It does not help anyone if we say, 'Congratulations, you found an enemy submarine three weeks ago,'" he said.

"That's great, but we're no further ahead."

That's the problem the Royal Canadian Navy's (RCN) NEPTUNE project is designed to solve.

NEPTUNE is an AI-enabled capability designed to accelerate acoustic analysis and support faster decision-making.

Today, acoustic recordings collected at sea often require extensive manual review. When multiple sensors are deployed, the workload can quickly grow into hundreds of hours of analysis.

NEPTUNE helps streamline that process by rapidly reviewing acoustic data and identifying patterns that may indicate the presence of vessels or submarines. Rather than requiring analysts to manually examine entire datasets, the system highlights information that warrants closer attention.

Just as importantly, it can help identify what is not a threat.

"If NEPTUNE can confidently identify a contact as a whale or a merchant vessel, the analysts can immediately disregard that data," LCdr Dingwell said.

"You could potentially eliminate hundreds of hours of listening time simply by identifying things that are clearly not threats."

The project has brought together the expertise from across government, industry and academia, including the Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship, Amazon Web Services, Acoustic Data Analysis Centre, and Defence Research and Development Canada. Working collaboratively, the team set out to modernize a process that has remained largely unchanged for decades.

So far, the results have been promising.

During early testing, NEPTUNE generated a report in approximately 15 minutes that would typically require a qualified analyst roughly a day and a half to complete.

What once required hours of manually reviewing recordings can now be transformed into a concise report that identifies potential contacts and provides commanders with a clear assessment of the situation.

Despite its use of AI, LCdr Dingwell stresses that NEPTUNE is not intended to replace operators, but rather to help them focus on the information that matters most.

"Right now, analysts are rotated regularly because after staring at a spectrogram for long periods of time, fatigue sets in," he explains.

"People begin to miss things or think they see things that aren't actually there."

By filtering out irrelevant contacts and highlighting areas that warrant closer examination, NEPTUNE allows analysts to focus their attention where it is needed most, reducing fatigue and improving efficiency while preserving human judgment in operational decision-making.

As the project continues to mature, the vision for NEPTUNE extends beyond shore-based analysis centers.

The long-term goal is to deploy the capability directly aboard RCN ships, providing operators with timely analytical support even when communications with shore are limited or unavailable. In those situations, NEPTUNE could help sailors maintain a high-confidence understanding of the underwater environment while operating independently at sea.

The project also points toward broader possibilities.

Future applications could include integrating additional operational data sources, while remote sensors and secure cloud infrastructure may one day support near real-time monitoring in remote regions such as Canada's Arctic.

While those possibilities remain on the horizon, LCdr Dingwell emphasizes that the priority remains turning promising concepts into practical capabilities that operators can use today.

"We don't have the luxury of waiting five to seven years for a traditional project timeline," he said.

"We need to put something useful into the hands of operators now and continue iterating over time."



Lest We Forget

CANEX Sales Associate Frank Beals stands alongside a Remembrance display he created at the CANEX ExpressMart at Stadacona. Featuring the words of John McCrae's "In Flanders Fields," the display offers a moment to reflect on the sacrifices of generations past and recognize the men and women of today's Canadian Armed Forces who continue to serve.

RYAN MELANSON



Take part in the 2026 Official Languages Symposium

By DND

From November 16 to 20, the Official Languages Symposium will bring together participants from across the Government of Canada to explore this year's theme, Strengthening official languages through innovation and collaboration.

The symposium offers Defence Team members an opportunity to strengthen their understanding of official languages, learn from colleagues across the federal public service, and explore innovative approaches that support bilingualism and official language minority communities.

During the week, participants can join virtual discussions on promoting bilingualism through innovation and collaboration, building sustainable partnerships and a full day of workshops and information sessions focused on official languages.

No registration is required! Most activities will be offered virtually. Participants can access events through links that will be posted on the symposium website before each session.

View the full program and participation details on the Official Languages Symposium GCwiki page.

Interested in taking part? Explore the program, then speak with your manager or chain of command about participating in sessions that align with your interests and learning goals.

No injuries after CH-148 Cyclone accident aboard HMCS *Ville de Québec*

By Trident Staff

A CH-148 Cyclone helicopter sus-tained significant damage during a landing aboard HMCS *Ville de Québec* while deployed on Operation REASSURANCE, according to a Royal Canadian Air Force Flight Safety Investigation report. Four crew members were on board at the time of the accident and no injuries were reported.

According to a Royal Canadian Air Force Flight Safety Investigation report, the accident occurred during a night flight involving Cyclone CH148813, callsign AVALANCHE. The aircraft was conducting operations from HMCS *Ville de Québec* and had completed multiple phases of flight before the incident took place during the final landing sequence.

The report notes that ship motion was within established limits for night helicopter operations at the time of the landing. After touching down and being secured in the Helicopter Hauldown and Rapid Securing Device, commonly known as the "Beartrap," two of the helicopter's main rotor blades struck the tail boom.



CH-148 Cyclone helicopter aboard HMCS Ville de Québec.

CPL GREGORY COLE

The impact severed several components, including the section 5 tail rotor drive shaft, resulting in extensive damage to the aircraft. An emergency engine shutdown was carried out and the crew safely exited the helicopter.

While investigators have not identified any technical issues to date, the Royal Canadian Air Force says the flight safety investigation remains ongoing. The inquiry continues to examine materiel and systems, environmental conditions, and human factors as possible contributors to the accident.

The damaged Cyclone has since been replaced aboard HMCS *Ville de Québec* so the ship can continue its operational commitments. The aircraft involved in the accident has returned to Halifax, where further investigation and analysis will continue.





Members of the Stadacona Band of the Royal Canadian Navy parade toward Grand Parade Square in Halifax on November 11. The band also performed its annual Veterans' Week concert, "Our Veterans, Their Stories," on November 9 at Halifax United Church.

MS ALEX HEAGLE

Photos capture Veterans'Week 2026 in Halifax and at sea



Commodore Jacob French, Commander Canadian Fleet Atlantic, lays a wreath at the Halifax Memorial during a Remembrance Day service in Point Pleasant Park.

CPL MORGAN LEBLANC



Deployed in the North Atlantic on Operation REASSURANCE, HMCS Ville de Québec held a Remembrance Day service on board, honouring those who served in the same waters during the Second World War.

CPL GREGORY COLE



The Mi'kmaq Grand Council flag was raised at CFB Halifax on November 8 for Indigenous Veterans Day, which honours the service and sacrifice of Indigenous veterans while acknowledging the barriers and injustices many faced during and after their service.

CPL MORGAN LEBLANC



HMCS Nanaimo sails off Point Pleasant Park on November 11, where the ship's company held its own commemorative service on board.

CPL MORGAN LEBLANC



A candlelight vigil at the Camp Hill Veterans' Memorial Building featured the passing of the "Torch of Remembrance." Rear-Admiral Pascal Belhumeur, Commander MARLANT and JTFA, accepted the torch from Korean War veteran Bill Richards, then passed it to Cadet Warrant Officer Second Class (WO2) Harrison O'Day, symbolizing the responsibility of future generations to carry forward the legacy of service and sacrifice.

CPL MORGAN LEBLANC

Submarine hunters take to the Baltic Sea during new NATO exercise

By NATO Maritime Command

Beneath the surface of the Baltic Sea, a high-stakes game of hide and seek takes place. Submarines operating silently beneath the waves. Warships searching from above. Maritime patrol aircraft scanning vast stretches of sea. All working together in one of NATO's most demanding forms of maritime warfare - anti-submarine warfare (ASW).

Conducted in the Baltic Sea, from November 9-13, NATO brought together forces from eight Allied nations off the coast of Sweden for Exercise DYNAMIC MERLIN 26, a major multinational exercise designed to test Allied ships against submarine, anti-ship missile and drone threats.

At the heart of the exercise were two Allied submarines, from Germany and Sweden, operating alongside surface warships, maritime patrol aircraft and thousands of military personnel. Together, they took part in realistic anti-submarine warfare scenarios, testing the coordination, technology and tactical skills needed to operate effectively in the Baltic Sea's challenging underwater environment.

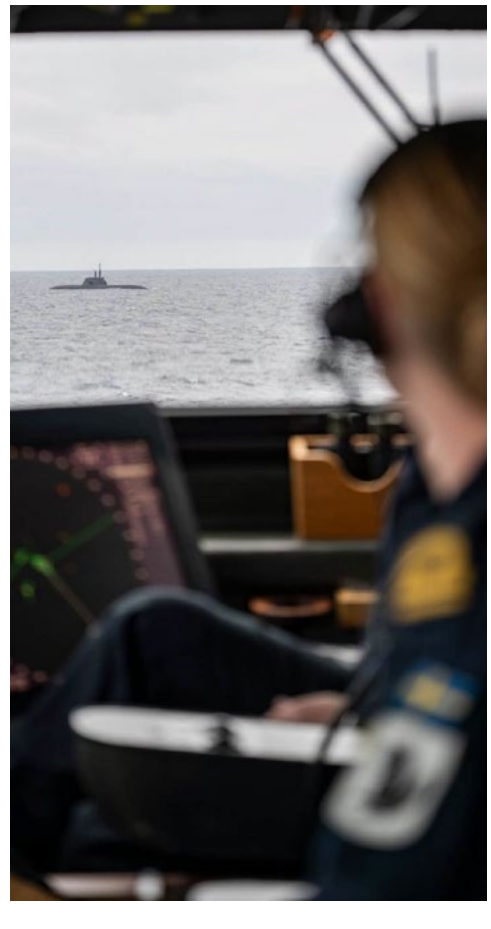
Speaking at the start of the exercise, Commander Submarines NATO, US Rear Admiral John Craddock, said "Exercise Dynamic Merlin 26 marks an important milestone in the evolution of NATO's anti-submarine warfare training in the Baltic Sea. Having been conducted twice before as Playbook Merlin, the exercise is now formally incorporated into Allied Maritime Command's established Dynamic series of exercises, alongside DYNAMIC MANTA and DYNAMIC MONGOOSE. This progression reflects both the success of the previous iterations and the growing importance of strengthening our anti-submarine warfare capabilities in the Baltic Sea."

Anti-submarine warfare (ASW) is a complex, multi-domain mission that relies on close coordination between surface ships, submarines, helicopters and maritime patrol aircraft. While integrating these different capabilities can be challenging, it is also the most effective way to detect, track and respond to underwater threats.

Each platform brings unique strengths: surface ships provide endurance and the ability to deploy ASW helicopters; maritime patrol aircraft offer speed and the capacity to search vast areas quickly; while submarines excel at covert detection and tracking. By combining these complementary capabilities, Allied forces can conduct more effective and coordinated anti-submarine warfare operations.

With the Baltic Sea playing a vital role in Allied security, Exercise DYNAMIC MERLIN 26 brings these capabilities together to strengthen NATO's ability to operate seamlessly in the air, on the surface and beneath the sea, safeguard vital maritime routes and respond effectively to underwater threats.

Surface ships from Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1), Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany and Netherlands, and Sweden participated in the exercise. Maritime Patrol Aircraft from France, Germany, Sweden and the UK were also involved.



NATO Exercise DYNAMIC MERLIN took place in Baltic Sea from November 9-13.
NATO MARITIME COMMAND

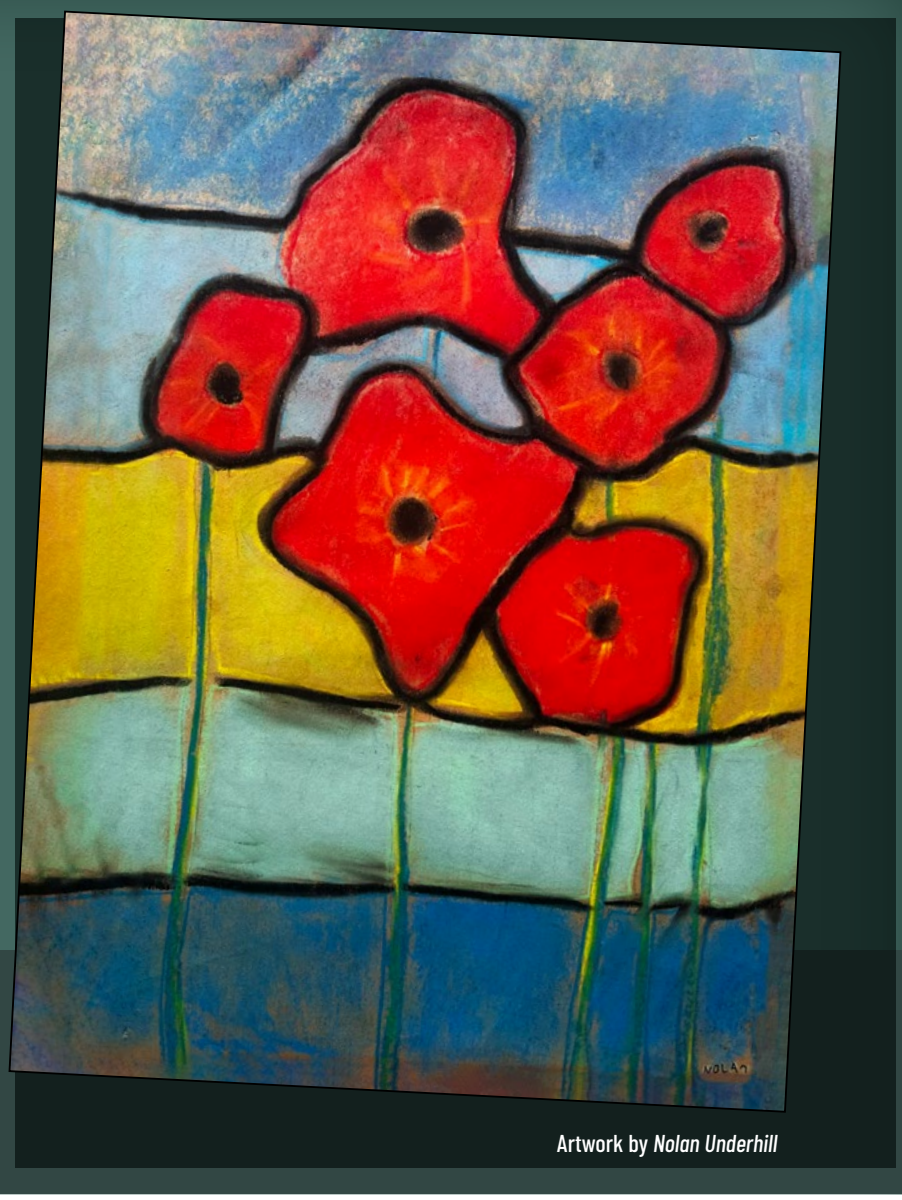
"They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun
and in the morning

We will remember them.

— Laurence Binyon"



Artwork by *Nolan Underhill*

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Funded by Veterans Affairs Canada
Financé par Anciens Combattants Canada | Canada

SPORTS & FITNESS



The CFB Halifax Mariners men's soccer team faces off against Edmonton Garrison on September 25 during the CAF National Soccer Championship.

AVR CHERIE LEE



The CFB Halifax Mariners women's slo-pitch team in action against the Borden Stars on September 17 during the CAF National Slo-Pitch Championship.

S3 OWEN DAVIS

CFB Halifax teams win silver and bronze at CAF nationals

By Trident Staff

The Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Halifax Mariners brought home three silver medals and a bronze after strong showings at the recent Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) National Championships for soccer and slo-pitch. Both tournaments were held in September at CFB Borden.

Men's soccer

The CFB Halifax Mariners men's soccer team won the silver medal, falling short in the championship match against the CFB Kingston Knights by a score of 2-1. It was the Mariners' only loss of the tournament, following an undefeated round-robin portion and a 1-0 semi-final win over Edmonton Garrison. Mariners Team MVP: Lieutenant (N) Jaidonn Freeland.

Women's soccer

The Mariners women's soccer team won the bronze medal at the national tournament, taking a 3-0 win over the CFB Edmonton Warriors in the third-place match. This came after a 3-0 loss in the semi-final against the Ottawa Nationals, who went on to win gold. Mariners Team MVP: Lieutenant (N) Kate Costello.

Men's slo-pitch

The Mariners men's slo-pitch team won the silver medal after a 15-11 loss against the Bagotville Vortex in the gold-medal game, following an impressive 17-2 win over 19 Wing Comox in the semi-final. Mariners Team MVP: Petty Officer 2nd Class Justin Stone.

Women's slo-pitch

The Mariners women's slo-pitch team also won silver, falling just short in a close championship final that ended in a 6-4 loss against CFB Borden.

The early part of the tournament saw the Mariners take wins against Esquimalt (8-1), Montreal (14-11), and a 21-1 victory over the eventual champions from Borden. Mariners Team MVP: Captain Kyra Ward.



The event, a celebration of achievement in sport across Formation Halifax, returned for 2026 after a hiatus.

MS ALEX HEAGLE



Maj Stephanie Bigelow was the guest speaker at the CFB Halifax Sports Recognition Breakfast on October 7.

MS ALEX HEAGLE

CAF English Channel swimmer inspires at Sports Recognition Breakfast

By Nathan Stone,
Trident Staff

A Canadian Armed Forces surgeon who conquered the English Channel shared her story of resilience and joy with athletes from Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Halifax, telling them that "sport is what makes us feel alive."

Major (Maj) Stephanie Bigelow, base surgeon at CFB Kingston, spoke at the CFB Halifax Sports Recognition Breakfast held at Juno Tower on October 7. Returning after a seven-year hiatus, the event recognized the people, teams and organizations who earned awards during the 2025-2026 sporting year, while also welcoming Maj Bigelow as guest speaker.

Maj Bigelow, a competitive swimmer who has represented Canada internationally, completed a solo crossing of the English Channel in August 2025 in just under 14 hours.

She told the crowd that after losing her father to cancer during the COVID-19 pandemic, she realized swimming "wasn't just an exercise or a sport."

Inspired by a line from Mary Oliver's poem The Summer Day, "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?", she set out to conquer the English Channel, one of the marquee challenges in the world of endurance swimming.

She described the brutal realities of the swim: 34 kilometers point to point on paper, but farther in practice due to tides, freezing water and one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world.

"You don't really get to choose when you swim," Maj Bigelow said. "You get this swim window and then you wait and the channel decides."

Her window opened at night. After a year of training, she stood on the Dover shore at 9 p.m., accompanied only by a small boat providing light and a way out of the water in an emergency, she dove in.

Rough waves, a ripple effect from a hurricane in North America, left her feeling like she was in "a washing machine."

After nine and a half hours of darkness, daylight finally broke.

"It was euphoria," she said. "A voice in my head said, 'You never have to swim in the dark again.'"

But the relief was short-lived. When she put her face back in the water, she encountered "an endless sea of stinging jellyfish." For nearly two hours, she changed her stroke, crossing her hand in front of her face to protect her mouth and eyes.

She pressed on, and eventually France came into view.

But as she approached the French coast, the channel's current shifted, sweeping her along at incredible speed. Her boat captain became increasingly intense, and she initially misinterpreted his anxiety as anger.

"I remember thinking, 'Buddy, I've been in the water for 13 hours. What is your problem?'"

What she didn't then understand was that he could see the narrow window to make land. If she missed it, she could face another 10 hours of swimming.

She put her head down and kept going until her hand hit rock. After 13 hours and 58 minutes, she made it to France.

But the most profound moment came hours later, after she had showered and climbed into a bed.

"For the first time in so many hours, everything was finally quiet," she said. "I completely broke down."

It wasn't pain, though her underarms were split open and her mouth was raw from salt water.

"I cried because all at once, I realized what it took to get there," she said. "I thought about my kids who watched their mom chasing something that probably sounded impossible. I thought about the people in the boat staying behind in the darkness."

She realized that while she would receive the credit and accolades for the swim, "I was never the only person swimming it."

"That ridiculous, impossible thing didn't make my life more important. It didn't make my responsibilities less important. As a mom, it certainly didn't make any more hours in a day," she said. "But it gave me something I didn't know how badly I needed: It gave me joy and it gave me healing."

She encouraged the audience to pursue the things that tug at them.

"You don't have to wait until life becomes simple to do something that matters to you, because it may never become simple," she said. "Your thing doesn't have to be swimming the Channel. It just has to be something that makes you feel more alive."

The Sports Recognition Breakfast also served as an opportunity to recognize the following award winners for the 2025-2026 sporting year:

- 2025/2026 Base Cup – Navy Fleet School (Atlantic)
- 2025/2026 Fleet Cup – HMCS Toronto
- 2025/2026 Wing Cup – Fleet Diving Unit (Atlantic)
- 2025 Alexander Keith's Cup – Formation Halifax Women's Soccer Team
- 2025 Rob Sneath Memorial Award – PO2 Robert Sanford
- 2025 Admiral Jones Shield – PO2 (Retired) Ashley Telford
- 2025 MARLANT Male Athlete of the Year – Maj Raymond Doiron
- 2025 MARLANT Female Athlete of the Year – Lt(N) Caroline Wood