

# Scuttlebutt

*Crow's Nest Officers' Club*

January 2006

## The Nest Welcomes a Special Visitor by LCdr. Margaret Morris

The Club was delighted to host Mrs. Hilda Hiscock at a Friday lunch recently. Mrs. Hiscock & her husband, Harold, not only managed the Club from 1950 to 1971, they lived on the premises until 1960. The apartment they had is now the Club's dining room. Believe it or not, they raised four children in that small space. Hilda's daughter Ann & son Charlie accompanied her for lunch that day.

It was Hilda who embroidered the names on the tablecloth that was presented to Lady Outerbridge in 1971. That tablecloth was returned to the Club when Lady Outerbridge died. Hilda can tell a story about every name there. She also had good stories about Air Canada pilots (TCA at the time?) who would always bring in fine cheeses and smoked meats that were hard to find in St. John's at the time.

Mrs. Hiscock was made a Lifetime Member some years ago but



Mrs. Hilda Hiscock pictured with her daughter Ann and son Charlie.

the supporting documentation seems to have been lost. So, at lunch that

day, she was re-confirmed as a Lifetime Member.

## *NOANL Holds Annual Christmas Luncheon at the Crow's Nest*



The Naval Officers' Association of Newfoundland and Labrador held its annual Christmas lunch at the Club on Dec 16. The association is a branch of the Naval Officers' Association of Canada.

# Message from the President

## Canada's Wartime Navy - St. John's

Last year I wrote a couple of articles about the U 190 and how I was able to gather the information by simply hanging around the Crow's Nest sixty years on. There was no plan. It all sort of just came along at times I happened to be in the Club.

It now seems that similar things just happen while walking around shopping malls in Ottawa. While doing his Christmas shopping my brother came across an elderly gentleman selling and autographing his book about his years serving in Canada's Wartime Navy. The gentleman's name is Frank Curry and he spent a considerable amount of time stationed in St. John's during the war as a crewman on corvette convoy escort vessels and most of that time was aboard the *HMCS Kamsack*. I looked that up in our artifacts catalogue but there is nothing in the Club from that ship.

As with the U 190 article, various

coincidences patch this much shorter story together. His book, titled *Kye & Soogie*, follows convoys from St. John's to Londonderry. It relates the Battle Of The Atlantic by one who participated. You'll recall John Moyes' article in the last Scuttlebutt about our trip to Londonderry last May to participate in the sixtieth anniversary of the Battle Of The Atlantic. Frank Curry wrote of the relationship between both cities during the war which is the relationship we rekindled during our visit to Londonderry last spring.

The book has much to say about wartime St. John's which is something that is not readily available elsewhere. *Kye*, by the way, is a block of hard chocolate which is shaved down and mixed with boiling water and drunk to keep one warm during a turn on watch. *Soogie*, on the other hand, is a soft soap used in the endless tours of scouring the ship.

As a seaman Frank Curry knew about the Crow's Nest but didn't visit

at that time as it was strictly an officers' club. He did know of the first corvettes which were known as the flower class and they included the *Spikenard*. Having read the book I'm not sure that the author is aware of the significance of the *Spikenard* to the Crow's Nest. That is, of course, the spike driven into the floor of the Club by the officers as they left the Club to return to their ship for its fateful last trip.

The book has plenty of pictures including some taken in St. John's and ends with a substantial glossary of naval expressions. It is well worth a read for those who would like to know more about the role that corvettes, St. John's and Londonderry played in the Battle Of The Atlantic.

I'm not sure what bookstores might carry the book but it is published by Nicolas Chadwick, PO Box 262, Moose Creek, ON K0C 1W0.

Dick Hyslop - President

## *The War Art of Tom Wood*



Greg Twinning of the Artifacts Committee recently visited the War Museum in Ottawa, where he took a number of photographs of war art dealing with St. John's and the Crow's Nest. Tom Wood was an official war artist who was posted to St. John's near the end of the war.

## Welcome to New Members

### *Out of Town:*

Captain(N) John Pickford, Ottawa  
Stephen Porrior, Labrador City  
Michael Gleason, Oakville  
Frank Curry, Gatineau  
Erica Diane Lewis, Illinois  
Henry Raffel, Dartmouth  
Eric Hammond, Orleans  
Dr. Tony Fairrie, Devon, UK  
Kim Tretheway, Grand-Barachois, NB  
Arthur Allan, Riverview, NB  
Mrs. Hilda Hiscock, Halifax

### *In Town:*

John A. Andrews, Jim Parsons, Philip Daniel

# Did Al Capp Really Paint This? by Greg Twining

The picture below has a historic past within the Canadian Naval History of St. Johns. Here's what we know. It was first mounted in what we know

the authenticity of our facts or presumptions before we proceed. There some factors which open the door to the possibility that Al Capp did not



today as the former Fort William Naval Officers club during World War Two. It then went to *HMCS Cabot* in Buckmaster's Field in approx 1956.

It was moved (sailed?) to Pleasantville with the re-location of *HMCS Cabot* in 1968. With the move to the new *HMCS Cabot* facility on the Southside it was found, broken in a dumpster outside the building by Bob Lucas and Yvonne Hepditch. LCdr Margaret Morris informed CNMAA member David Baird who then removed the pieces and began rearranging them. He has worked with well known and respected photographer Lorne Rostotski to painstakingly create this photo. This in itself is a major accomplishment! Well done!

There are those members of CNMAA and the CNOC, who believe that this was painted by the famous U.S. cartoonist Al Capp while visiting St. Johns during a WWII, USO tour. CNMAA is about to commence a fund-raising project using posters of the mural. The present title being used on our displayed reproduction is, "Daisy Mae visits St. Johns".

Certain questions are now being raised as to whether or not this mural was indeed created by Al Capp. We must make every attempt to verify

create this mural.

Firstly, the only direct, possible linkage to Al Capp is the Daisy Mae figure (being pursued by a Canadian sailor - of course!) painted in the upper right corner.

Secondly, many wartime artists of the non-professional category were known to copy well-known comic figures in their work

Then there is the fact the mural is not signed. When you consider that the mural is approx 11 ft long by 4 ft high and is painted on tin-test, did Al Capp have time, while visiting St. Johns to create a piece of work this size with this detail, while on a USO stop? Another interesting fact is that the only naval locations and symbols present are Canadian. (Note the Crow in the Nest).

So now we have much speculation around this mural's origin. The work is now affectionately referred to as Daisy Mae. But, was it created by Al Capp? Did Al Capp only paint the Daisy Mae figure on someone else's work? Did Al Capp ever see this mural?

Does anybody out there in "Scuttlebutt Land" know the actual origins of this mural?

Our thoughts are that there may be some senior members of *HMCS Cabot*, or the naval officers community who may be able to shed some light on this question. We have sent photos of our mural to Al Capp's company online with questions regarding the possible origin of this mural. To date no response has been received.

Is there anybody out there who knows?

## CNMAA Items For Sale

Last fall the CNMAA undertook a promotional activity involving the sale of golf shirts, ball caps and CNMAA pins. We are pleased to report that membership response has positive (we have even shipped to England - thanks Hugh!) and that we have re-ordered additional items and now have the golf shirts and caps available in navy blue and in white.

The prices are as follows:  
Golf Shirts (navy blue & white) \$30  
Ball caps (navy blue & white) \$20  
CNMAA pins \$5

Greg Twining is holding the stock and can be reached at 772-4368 Or by email at TwiningDG@DFO-MPO.GC.CA. Sales continue to move well.

## Crow's Nest Sweaters Have Arrived

A new order of sweaters has been received. They are available in two colours - dark blue and burgundy - and all sizes are currently in stock. The price remains the same (\$50) with an additional \$10 for mail orders.



# The Gun Shield Art of HMCS Wetaskiwin

by Cdr. Gary Reddy

This section of the Scuttlebutt will highlight artifacts on display within the confines of our great Club. It is our hope to enlighten and inform the reader of the club's history and significance of our many artifacts.

**Gun Shield Art** - warships have a tradition when it comes to its gunners. They immortalize their ship by painting art onto the main armament Gun Shield. One of those is *HMCS WETASKIWIN*.

The Flower class corvette *HMCS WETASKIWIN* was commissioned at Esquimalt on December 17, 1940. She was the first west coast built corvette to enter service. She patrolled out of Esquimalt until March 17, 1941, when she left for the Atlantic. She arrived at Halifax on April 13th and left on May 23th for St. John's where she became one of the founding members of the Newfoundland Expeditionary Force. In June she escorted her first convoy, HX.130 to Iceland. During the next eight months she completed eight round trips with East bound convoys. She returned to Halifax on January 24, 1942 and in February commenced a major refit at Liverpool, NS.

After working up in May she joined EG C-3, arriving in Londonderry on June 5th for the first time while escorting convoy HX.191. During this period *WETASKIWIN* participated in two major convoy actions, SC.42 (Sept 1941) and SC.48 (Oct 1941). On July 31, 1942, while escorting ON.115, she shared with *SKEENA* the sinking of U-588. In mid-January, 1943 she arrived at Liverpool, NS for refit, followed by further repairs in Halifax on March 9th. In May 1943, she joined EG C-5, and that December went to Galveston, Texas for an extended refit, including the extension of her foc'sle. On March 6, 1944 she returned briefly to Halifax before proceeding to Bermuda for work-ups in April.

Returning northward she joined C-5. *WETASKIWIN* left Londonderry on Sept 23 for the last time to join EG W-7, WLEF, for the remainder of the war. She paid off at Sorel, Quebec on June 19, 1945 and was sold to the Venezuelan Navy, who renamed her *VICTORIA*. *HMCS WETASKIWIN* was discarded in 1962.



Scuttlebutt  

Crow's Nest Officers' Club P.O. Box 23161 Churchill Square St. John's, Newfoundland Canada A1B 4J9	Editor: Derek Yetman Phone: (709) 753-6927 E-mail: crowsnoc@nf.aibn.com
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## Dinner Dress Code Reminder

*“Dress down Days” at the office are becoming more widespread these days and the Club understands that this practice will, to some extent, flow over to to the Nest at less formal times at the bar after work. However, at Club dinners and special functions **members are asked to abide by the established dress code.** That is, dress is informal meaning “dress of the day” for serving members, suit/sports jacket/blazer with tie for gentlemen and for ladies, dress/skirt/slacks as appropriate. **Members should advise their guests accordingly** and ask for their co-operation in this matter.*

Thank you,  
Board Of Directors

# **CLUB DINNER SCHEDULE**

## **January - April 2006**

### **Friday, January 27th, 2006**

#### ***Weepers***

Complimentary hors d'oeuvres

### **Saturday, January 28th, 2006**

#### ***Happy Birthday Crow's Nest***

Appetizer - Winter Green Salad

Main Course - London Broil with a Three Pepper-corn Jus and Yorkshire Puddings

Dessert - New York Style Cheesecake

### **Saturday, February 18th, 2006**

#### ***Club Dinner***

Appetizer - Chicken Spring Rolls

Main Course - Shaved Beef with Mushrooms, Pan

Fried Cod, or Pork Chop with Grilled Onions

Dessert - Carved Fresh Fruit with Yogurt Sauce.

### **Friday, February 24th, 2006**

#### ***Weepers***

Complimentary hors d'oeuvres

### **Saturday, March 18th, 2006**

#### ***St. Paddy's Day Dinner***

Appetizer - Potato Bacon Soup

Main Course - Stuffed Chicken Breast, Maple & Whiskey Salmon, or Beef Stew with Guinness

Dessert - Apple Dumpling with Bailey's Custard

### **Friday, March 31st, 2006**

#### ***Weepers***

Complimentary hors d'oeuvres

### **Saturday, April 1st, 2006**

#### ***Club Dinner***

Appetizer - Spinach Salad

Main Course - Leg of Lamb Stuffed with Local Herbs, Berries and Bread Crumbs (alternate menu available upon request)

Dessert - Carrot Cake

@ \$ 21.95 per person

### **Friday, April 14th, 2006**

#### ***Club Dinner***

Appetizer - Market Garden Salad

Main Course - Flipper Dinner

Dessert - Bavarian Cream with a Newfoundland Berry Compote

### **Friday, April 28th, 2006**

#### ***Weepers***

Complimentary hors d'oeuvres

### **Saturday, April 29th, 2006**

#### ***Club Dinner***

Appetizer - Roma Tomato and Juniper Berry Soup

Main Course - Roasted Striploin Au Jus, Baked Cod, or Sun-Dried Tomato Chicken

Dessert - Chocolate Cup with Raspberry Mousse

***All Club Dinners, are \$ 18.95 plus HST, unless other wise indicated. Gratuity is at your Discretion***

**Pub Lunches are served every Friday from 12:00PM - 2:00PM**

**Private Bookings can be arranged through Red Oak Catering at (709) 368-6808 or Johnr@redoaknf.com**

**Smart-Casual dress is required at Club Dinner Events.**