

His Majesty's Canadian Ship *Cataraqui*

Kingston's Senior Service



Motto:

PORTA LACUUM, PORTUS CLASSIS

Gate of the lakes, Port of the Fleet

Photo Credit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services>

His Majesty's Canadian Ship *Cataraqui*

Commanding Officers RCNVR Kingston/HMCS *Cataraqui* 1939 – 1945

Acting Lieutenant William Campbell Rigney, RCNVR
20 September 1939 – 2 September 1940

Acting Lieutenant Walter Herbert Bruce Thomson, RCNVR
4 September 1940 – 7 February 1941

Lieutenant Sherman Thomlinson Hill, RCNVR 8 February 1941 – 14 April 1943

Lieutenant Gordon Emmerson Kernohan, RCNVR
15 April 1943 – 9 March 1944

Lieutenant-Commander Hugh John Plaxton, RCNVR
10 March 1944 – 5 December 1944

Acting Lieutenant-Commander William Campbell Rigney, RCNVR
6 December 1944 – 30 June 1945

Under the direction of Commodore Walter Hose, RCN, Director of Naval Service, the creation of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve was officially established on 31 January 1923 with a complement of 70 officers and 930 ratings. At the same time the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve was established with a complement of 70 officers and 430 ratings. THE RCNVR enlisted civilians who did not follow a sea-faring career. The RCNR consisted of men who possessed a professional knowledge of ships and the sea.

The RCNVR were organized into companies, or half-companies, in the following cities:

Calgary, Charlottetown, Edmonton, Halifax, Hamilton, Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec, Regina, Saint John, Saskatoon, Toronto, Vancouver, and Winnipeg. Montreal had two companies, one English speaking and the other French speaking. By September 1939, companies were also in created in Kingston, London, Port Arthur, and Prince Rupert.



Rear-Admiral Walter Hose, CBE, RCN

The Father of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserves

Photo Credit

Unfortunately, Kingston was not included on the list of cities to organize a “Company”. However, with the Second World War looming, the Government in Ottawa was motivated to establish a Naval Division in Kingston. A letter from Commander Cuthbert Robert Holland Taylor, RCN, Director of Personnel to Professor Lorne N. Richardson of Royal Military College indicated the search for a Commanding Officer. Two persons recommended by the Professor Richardson were declined by Commander Taylor indicating they were not suitable, Colonel LeRoy Grant was too old and William Crothers, at 22 was felt to be too young. The war would prove that being 22 years old was in fact not old too to command.

Ottawa decided that to appointed William Campbell Rigney, with the rank of Acting Lieutenant as the first Commanding Officer of RCNVR Kingston. William Rigney had attended Royal Military College in the mid-thirties.



Acting Lieutenant William C. Rigney, RCNVR

Photo Credit: Rigney Family

In December 1939, the Richardson Feed Mill Building which was located at the foot of Princess Street was leased as the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve Headquarters for the Kingston Division. The size of the space was 7800 sq. ft. In 1941 a request was made for renovations to accommodate for the sleeping and training of 75 ratings.

Basic training would last for several weeks before the ratings were sent to HMCS *York* or HMCS *Stadacona*.

The original members of the Division consisted of:

Acting Lieutenant William Campbell Rigney
Commanding Officer
Chief Petty Officer H. Sykes
Writer Bill Perry



Original Members of RCNVR Kingston

Photo Credit: Reg Baker

Front Row: (L to R) Fred Carter*, Jim Morlock, Mat Scrutton,
George Cruickshanks, Bill McKellar
Back Row: (LtoR) Bill Nolan, Paul McGeein, Reg Baker,
Stu Foxwell, Tom Chippendale*

Killed in Action*

Members of the ship's company participated in local events such as the launching of HMCS *Napanee* in August of 1940 and war bond parades.

In July 1941, the ship received its first training vessel, the Steam Yacht Magedoma. On loan from the Fulford Family of Brockville. The Fulfords provided stellar service to

Cataraqui's new entries, members of UNTD Queen's Division, and members of the Royal Canadian Sea Cadets until the end of the war.

In August of 1943, *Cataraqui* queried Naval Service Headquarters "as to whether the *Magedoma* was a commissioned ship and if so, should not her captain (a Sub-Lieutenant) receive command pay? NSHQ replied that as much as *Magedoma* had been flying the White Ensign since taken over, she should be considered as commissioned from 11 July 1941. Presumably, the captain got his pay." (1)



HMCS *Magedoma*

Royal Canadian Sea Cadets Manning the Rail

Photo Credit: Smith Family

November of 1941, the Division was commissioned as His Majesty's Canadian Ship *Cataraqui* as a tender to HMCS *Stadacona*. 11 months later in September of 1942 *Cataraqui* was commissioned on its own. The term "tender to" is equivalent to a sub-unit.

In the spring of 1942 plans were approved for the formation of a University Naval Training Division at many of the universities across Canada. This would provide educated young men for the navy as officers or ratings. The University Naval Training Division would be a tender to HMCS *Cataraqui*. Though it would not officially start until the fall of 1943, forty students enrolled for three weeks of basic training, first week undertaken at *Cataraqui* while the other two were held at HMCS *Cornwallis*. These

students came under the direction of the RCNVR at *Cataraqui* and entered the navy as ordinary seamen.

When the program officially opened in the fall of 1943, the complement rose to over one hundred. UNTD Queen's was under the command of Lieutenant (Special Branch) William A. Wolfe, RCNVR.

They wore the uniform of a rating with a white band in place of a cap tally which was later replaced by the war-time cap tally with HMCS embroidered on it.



UNTD on Victory Loans Parade
Marching up Princess Street
1945
Photo Credit: RCN



Wren Margaret (nee MacKay) Gibson, WRCNS

1944 - 1946

Photo Credit: Gibson Family

Wren Gibson's trade was Special Duties, Miscellaneous. After receiving her new entry training at HMCS *Galt*, she was drafted to HMCS *Stadacona* where she became a member of the team of only 3 wrens at the Gunnery School. Wren MacKay along with the two other wrens were given permission to proceed to sea for a gunnery shoot. It was the only time she was permitted to wear her bell bottoms.

With the creation of the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service on 31 July 1942, over 100 women had enrolled at *Cataraqui* by late October 1942.

It wasn't until March 1943 that the Division was able to move into newly renovated quarters located at 47 Wellington Street. The new quarters were inspected by The Honourable Angus L. MacDonald, Naval Minister and Captain Eustace A. Brock, Commanding Officer, Reserve Divisions.

The new quarters accommodated a total of 125 men for sleeping, messing, and training. The officers were billeted in private residence for which they received lounge and scrouge (lodging and compensation).



47 Wellington Street

Photo Credit: RCN

On 21 October 1942, the Rotary Club of Kingston struck a committee to create the Kingston Rotary Sea Cadet Corps. Lieutenant-Commander Kernohan, Commanding Officer HMCS *Cataraqui* would join the committee later. July 1943 saw the official opening of the Sea Cadet Camp at Rotary Island. Rotary Island was located among the Admiralty Islands between Kingston and Gananoque on the St. Lawrence River.

Those in attendance included Vice-Admiral Percy Nelles, RCN, Chief of Naval Staff, Lieutenant-Commander Duff Wood, SO, CORD; Brigadier Armstrong, Officer Commanding, Military District No. 3; Lieutenant-Commander Gordon E. Kernohan, RCNVR, Commanding Officer, HMCS *Cataraqui*; Mr. Stevenson, co-ordinator, Sea Cadets, Navy League and the Honourable Angus L. MacDonald, Naval Minister.



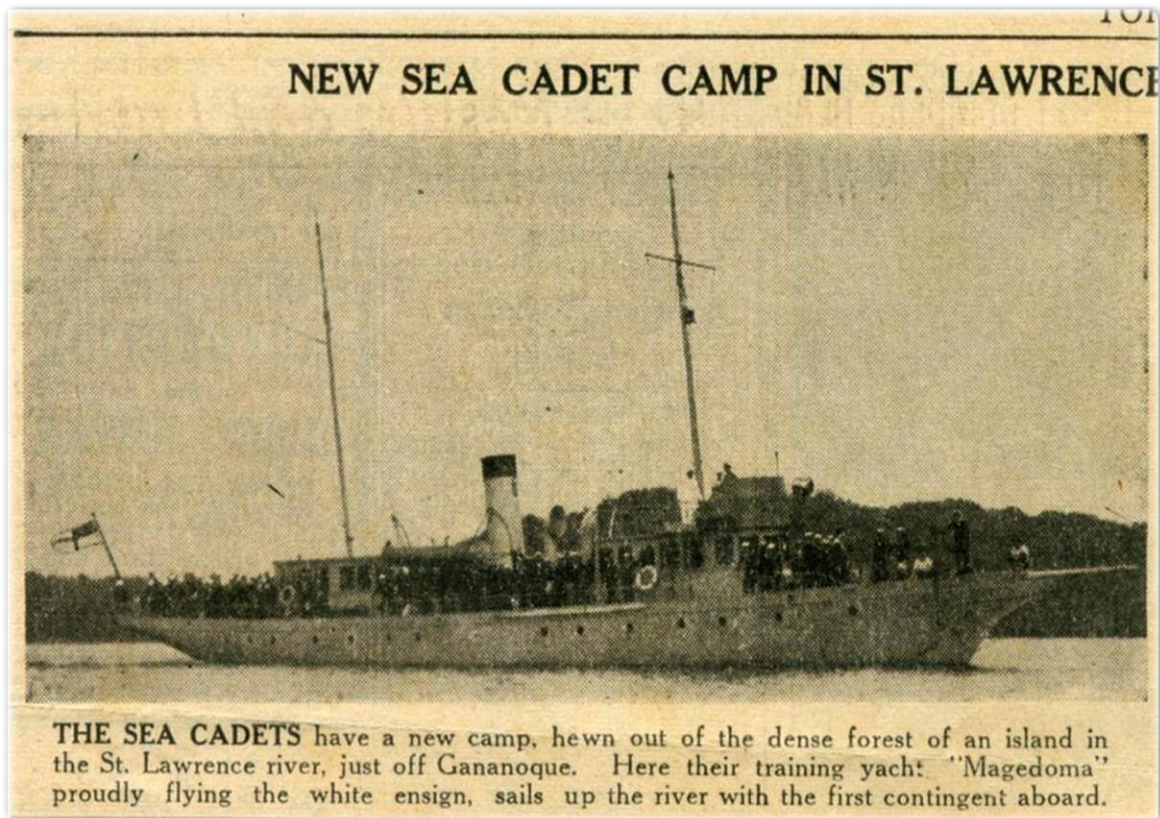
Official Opening of Rotary Island Sea Cadet Camp

Admirals Aide-de-Camp, Vice-Admiral Percy Nelles, RCN, Lieutenant-Commander
Gordon Kernohan, Commanding Officer HMCS *Cataraqui* and
Surgeon-Lieutenant McCulloch

July 1943

Photo Credit: RCN

Cataraqui's personnel assisted the sea cadets in their basic naval training. The *Magedoma* was used to transfer the Sea Cadets to and from the sea cadet camp.



HMCS MAGEDOMA transporting Sea Cadets to Rotary Island Sea Cadet Camp

Photo Credit: http://www.forposterityssake.ca>Navy>HMCS_MAGEDOMA.htm

In February 1945 a motion was passed transferring the Sea Cadet Corps over to the Navy League.

October saw the completion of the dock at the foot of Princess Street by members of the ship's company.

November saw the ship's company amass a total of 334% of their quota in the 5th Victory Loan Campaign, thereby leading all the RCNVR Divisions in Canada.

By war's end, *Cataraqui* attested a total of 3211 officers and ratings. This number did not include the members of the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service.

It is believed over 100 wrens had joined at *Cataraqui*.



RCNVR Kingston/HMCS *Cataraqui*'s losses during World War Two were 63 Officers and Ratings.

Commanding Officers HMCS *Cataraqui*
1946 – 1959

Lieutenant Frederick Alvin Goad, RCN(R)
1 July 1945 – 2 January 1946

Lieutenant-Commander Edward Burton Pearce, RCN(R)
3 January 1946 – 14 March 1946

Lieutenant George William Dunn, RCN(R)
15 March 1946 – 7 April 1946

Lieutenant-Commander William Gray Crothers, RCN(R)
8 April 1946 – 31 August 1948

Commander Henry Knox Hill, RCN(R)
1 September 1948 – 19 September 1950

Lieutenant-Commander Harold William Webster, RCN(R)
20 September 1950 – 7 January 1951

Commander Gerry Martin Coleman, RCN(R)
8 January 1951 – 4 May 1952

Commander Arthur George Cuthbert Whalley, CD, RCN(R)
5 May 1952 – 7 August 1955

Commander John Godwin Chance, CD, RCN(R)
8 August 1955 – 26 January 1960

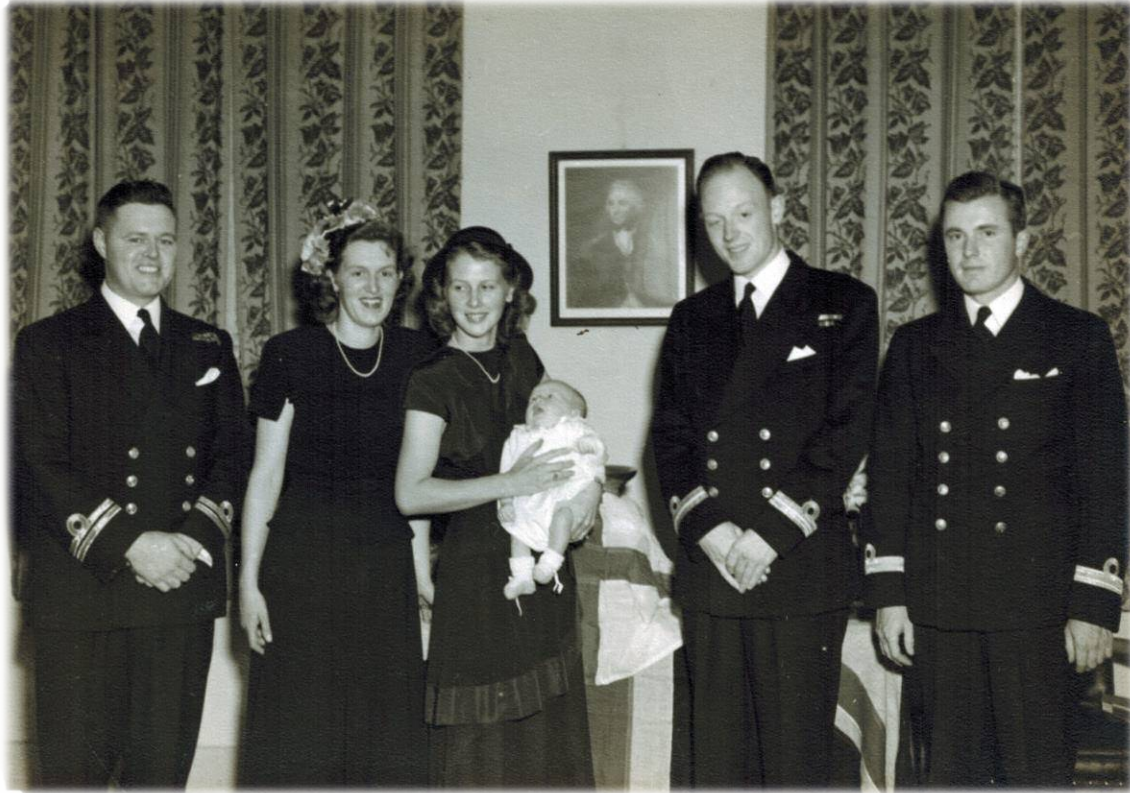
On 1 January 1946, the Royal Canadian Navy (Reserve) was created, with the reserve officers wearing the same gold braid on their uniforms as the RCN officers. The designation that followed their names changed from RCNVR to RCN(R). The post war naval reserves were authorized for a total compliment of 18,000 officers and men.

In 1946, Lieutenant William Crothers, RCN(R) was appointed Commanding Officer and subsequently promoted to Lieutenant-Commander. He remained the commanding officer until 1948.

1946 also saw a change in command of the UNTD. Lieutenant Jake Edwards replaced Lieutenant (SB) Wolfe. The UNTD cadets continued to wear the seaman's rig until 1948 when they changed to No. 25 Dress: dress included a battledress jacket with a white twist on each collar, with a white shirt and black tie and an officer's cap.

With the large numbers of members, the UNTD trained on a separate night from the ship's company.

On 19 September 1948 *Cataraqui's* first baptism was held when John Malcolm MacFarlane was baptised by the ship's Chaplain the Reverend Henry Weland Cliff, RCN(R). Lieutenant George MacFarlane, RCN was the staff officer at the time.



***Cataraqui's* First Baptism**

Photo Credit: https://www.nauticapedia.ca/Articles/NAV_Topics.php

19 September 1948

L to R:

Lieutenant George MacFarlane, RCN (Staff Officer), Audrey Agnew (God Mother), Kathleen Rau MacFarlane, John Malcolm MacFarlane, Lieutenant (S) John Agnew, RCN (Supply Officer) (God Father), Constructor John O'Neill, RCN(R)

By 1949, *Cataraqui* had reached 200 in strength, with sub-units in Brockville, Gananoque, Picton, Deseronto, Napanee and Belleville.

In 1951, a new reserve summer Great Lakes Training Scheme was set up to provide basic naval training in the Great Lakes for new entries and officers. Before being sent to ships and fleet establishments, until they were considered sufficiently trained, the new scheme was intended to give new sailors the experience they needed on the Great Lakes. The Reserve Training Commander Great Lakes formed six motor launches from HMC Ships *Star*, *York*, *Cataraqui*, *Prevost*, *Hunter*, and *Griffin* to form the "Fairmile Flotilla". The

flotilla's first operation was "Operation Beaver II", a combined operation at Erieau. In 1952 the Great Lakes Training Centre was established at HMCS *Star* making Hamilton the summer home to thousands of naval reservists from all over Canada.

In 1953 the stone frigate HMCS *Patriot* was commissioned as the headquarters for the Royal Canadian Navy (Reserve) with Rear-Admiral Kenneth Adams, CD, RCN as Commanding Officer, Naval Divisions (COND).



Rear-Admiral Kenneth Adams, CD, RCN

Photo Credit: <https://www.nauticapedia.ca/dbase/Quey/Biolist3>

Previously based in Toronto during the Second World War under the title Commanding Officer, Reserve Divisions (CORD), COND now supervised 21 naval divisions across Canada and directed the summer operations of the Great Lakes fleet reserve training ships, HMC Ships *Porte St. Louis*, *Porte St. Jean*, and former air force supply vessel *Scatari*, permanently stationed at HMCS *Star* for use by the reservists.

Throughout the summer months a squadron of warships would sail on the Great Lakes assisting in the training of naval reservists. They would have included destroyers, frigates and Algerine minesweepers.



Alongside in Hamilton, HMC Ships *St. Croix*, *Kootenay*, and *Terra Nova*

Photo Credit: COND-5440

In February 1952 the entire ship's company paraded and attended the King George VI Memorial Service, sponsored by the Royal Canadian Legion.

In September 1952 Able Seaman Charles Bissett a member of *Cataraqui* whilst attending the Regatta held at HMCS *Star* rescued a woman from drowning and reported a fire aboard the SS Hamiltonian.

In October ship's personnel and HMC Tug *Loganville* assisted in raising a 19th Century 8-ton scow from Deadman's Bay.



Lieutenant (SB) Wally Berry, RCN(R)

Photo Credit: Wallace R. Berry

In February 1953 Lieutenant (Special Branch) Wally Berry rescued a young lad from drowning in the Cataraqui River. Lieutenant Berry, with a line around his waist, dived three times into the icy river water to rescue an exhausted and unconscious boy who had sunk to the bottom. Berry was able to revive the boy when he brought him to the surface.

In March the ship's company attended a Memorial Service for Her Royal Highness Queen Mary at Sydenham United Church.



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Coronation 3 June 1953

Photo Credit: www.history.com/topics/european-history/queen-elizabeth

The Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was held on 3 June 1953. Three members of *Cataraqui* attended the coronation: Chief Petty Officer 2nd Class Gordon Clarabut, Petty Officer 2nd Class Robert H. Farrell, and Able Seaman R.W. Bennett. Petty Officer Farrell and Able Seaman Bennett formed part of the reserve guard from across Canada.

On 30 September 1953, VC 921 Squadron was commissioned as a tender to *Cataraqui*. The squadron was the second of only five commissioned across Canada. The Squadron operated out of the Kingston Flying club located at the Norman Rogers Airport.



Lieutenant-Commander Allan Burgham, DSC, RCN(R)

Photo Credit: Wallace R. Berry

The squadron's commanding officer was Lieutenant-Commander (P) Allan Russell Burgham, DSC, CD, RCNR(R) from 1954 to 1959.

The squadron participated in combined operations which included members from HMCS *Cataraqui* and the Princess of Wales Own Regiment. Summer training was completed at HMCS *Shearwater*. It was while training at *Shearwater* in August 1957, that Sub-Lieutenant (Pilot) Julian George Freeman was killed in a collision between his Grumman Avenger which was taxiing on the runway when struck by a McDonnell F2H Banshee jet that was practicing mirror landings on the runway.

The squadron was awarded the Safety Flying Award for 1954 and 1955. The squadron was disbanded in March of 1959.



VC 921 Squadron

14 May 1955

L to R:

Back Row: Ken MacLennan, John Freeman, Dave Humphries, Allan Burgham, Fred Hooper, Don Chown, Eddie Myers

Front Row: Julian Freeman, Bob Hicks, John Myers, Lionel Shillington

Photo Credit: Wallace R. Berry

During the 1950's, the ship operated several vessels including a Fairmile, the Loganville (tug) and several yard craft. These were extensively used for training by members of the ship's company including members of the UNTD.

It was also during this period that UNTD Queen's achieved its highest membership. Throughout their history they continued to participate in mess dinners, host dances and other related functions in the Gunroom. As the late Captain (Supply) Peter Fortier, CD, RCN said, "Spent a lot of time there, it was the only place in town we could legally drink".

The Wardroom of HMCS *Cataraqui* had a very active social life, very much part of the social fabric of Kingston. The Wardroom hosted many functions including formal balls.

In October 1955 members of HMCS *Cataraqui* participated in the official opening new Recruiting Center on Montreal Street. Captain Harold V.M. Groos, CD, RCN was the reviewing officer.

On 23 October 1955 HMCS *Cataraqui* held a special parade in honour of the 150th Anniversary of Horatio Nelson, 1st Viscount's victory over the French at Trafalgar. In October 1955 the Annual Trafalgar Day Ball was held in honour of the 150th Anniversary of Lord Nelson's victory at Trafalgar.



Trafalgar Day Parade in Front of St. George's Cathedral
October 1955

Photo Credit: Wallace R. Berry

This was also true of the Chief & Petty Officer's Mess.

The ship also hosted a variety of sporting events including basketball softball, regattas, hockey, boxing matches and family events like Christmas Parties.



Christmas Party

1953

Photo Credit: Wallace R. Berry

Throughout the 1950s *Cataraqui* hosted visiting ships from the United States Navy and the Royal Canadian Navy including reserves that were participating as part of the COND training program which operated out of HMCS *Patriot*.

On 26 June 1958 construction was started on a new stone frigate for HMCS *Cataraqui*. It was located on Point Frederick adjacent to the Royal Military College of Canada.

On 24 October 1959, *Cataraqui*'s new home was commissioned. The new stone frigate had been designed and built for the navy. It had all the bells and whistles, including a rifle range, modern shipwright shop, radio room, multiple classrooms, modern medical facilities, and new messes.



Commissioning of HMCS *Cataraqi*'s Third Stone Frigate

24 October 1959

Back Row: Lieutenant Ted Shire, CO, RCSC St. Lawrence, Lt, Sherman T. Hill,
 LCdr Bill Rigney, Cdr George Whalley, Cdr Gerry Coleman
 Middle: Commodore Edward Finch-Noyes, RCN, CO, COND, Chaplain Henry Hill,
 unknown, Rear-Admiral Tony Stores, RCN
 Front: Commodore (S) Charles Dillon, RCN, Mr. B. Allmark, MP
 Standing: Commander John Chance, CD, RCN, CO, HMCS *Cataraqi*

**Commanding Officers HMCS *Cataraqi*
 1960 - 1972**

Commander (S) Hugh Glover Cheesman, CD, RCNR
 27 January 1960 – 9 January 1967

Commander Donald George MacPhail Chown, CD, RCNR
 10 January 1967 – 31 August 1970

Commander John Mintram Stephen Jacques, CD
 1 September 1970 – 31 December 1972



A special service was held honouring the Golden Jubilee of the Royal Canadian Navy

8 May 1960

Photo Credit: Wallace R. Berry

The service was officiated by Commander (S) Hugh Cheesman, CD, RCNR Commanding Officer HMCS *Cataraqui* and Dr. A.N. Thompsons, ship's Chaplain. Participating members of the ship's company, Royal Canadian Sea Cadets, staff and Cadets from the Royal Military College and naval veterans and the public at large. The Royal Canadian Corps of Signals Band provided the music.

With the move from Wellington Street across the Cataraqui River to Point Frederick, many associate members of the different messes did not renew their memberships. Members of the ship's company retired rather than move across the river. At the time the new location of *Cataraqui* seemed to be in the outback.

The Wardroom, the Chief & Petty Officer's Mess, Junior Ranks Mess, and the Gunroom had to rebuild their respective messes. The Chief & Petty Officer's Mess was the most success followed by the Gunroom. However, the Wardroom continued to host very successful Trafalgar Balls.



Trafalgar Ball
24 October 1952

Lieutenant-Commander George Whalley and his wife Elizabeth and Mr. & Mrs. Bogart
Trumphour (his wife Isabel)

Photo Credit: Wallace R. Berry

The UNTD worked very hard at recruiting under the command of Lieutenant-Commander (Pilot) Donald Chown, to bring up the numbers to a respectable level. With the decline of the number of members, the UNTD commenced training the same drill night as the rest of the ship's company.

On 4 May 1962 a special ball was held which included Her Royal Highness Princess Maria Louisa and His Serene Highness Prince Karl of Leiningen and His Excellency the Lieutenant- Governor of Ontario John Keiller MacKay.



HRH Princess Maria Louisa and HSH Prince Karl of Leiningen

On 19 May 1963 the Emergency Naval Headquarters was established at HMCS *Cataraqui*.

As part of Canada's 100th Anniversary celebrations, members of *Cataraqui* participated in Kingston's Dominion Day parade and were part of the sail past. 9 members of HMCS *Cataraqui* were presented with the Centennial Medal. *Cataraqui* provided logistical and liaison with Her Majesty's Yacht *Britannia*. Petty Officer 1st Class David Folger, CD, a former Royal Marine, had the honour to be one of the official drivers for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1959 and 1967.

Fiscal restraints by the Liberal government in 1964, brought about the decommissioning of HMCS Patriot, the Great Lakes Naval Reserve Training located in Hamilton as well as the following stone frigates: HMC Ships *Queen*, *Queen Charlotte*, *Chatham*, *Prevost*, *Nonsuch*, *Caribou* and VC 920 Squadron.

Unification of the armed forces in 1968, brought about the end of the University Naval Training Program which operated from 1943 – 1968. The final parade for all three-service college programs included the University Naval Training Division, the University Air Training Plan and the Canadian Officers Training Corps was held onboard

HMCS *Cataraqui*. The Reviewing Officer was Brigadier Douglas (Ben) Gordon Cunningham, CBE, DSO, EC, CD.

In 1970 Commander (P) Donald Chown was promoted to Captain. He was the first officer from *Cataraqui* to be promoted to Captain.



Lieutenant (W) Marion Leslie, CD, RCNR

Photo Credit: Wallace R. Berry

In 1971 saw the retirement of Lieutenant (W) Marion Leslie, CD, RCNR.

Marion was the third wren to join *Cataraqui* in 1951. She rose to Petty Officer 1st Class Communicator before being commissioned as a Sub-Lieutenant (W). At the time of her retirement, the highest rank for a Wren Officer in the naval reserves was a Lieutenant-Commander. Through out her career Marion became the unofficial poster wren for HMCS *Cataraqui*.

Commanding Officers
HMCS *Cataraqui*
1972 - 1992

Captain (P) Donald George MacPhail Chown, OMM, CD
1 January 1973 – 22 April 1975

Captain Bertrand John Plant, OMM, CD
23 April 1975 – 12 September 1984

Acting Commanding Officer
Lieutenant-Commander Stephen Arnold, CD
1978 – 1979

Commander Alan Donald Walker, CD
12 September 1984 – 14 September 1988

Commander Neil Verne Payne, OStJ, CD
15 September 1988 – 30 June 1991

Commander Ronald Norman Paquin, CD
1 July 1991 – 30 June 95

As part of the restructuring of the military, HMCS *Cataraqui*'s home was handed over to the Royal Military College in 1972 when the College wished to expand their facilities, forcing *Cataraqui* to be moved into the Kingston Armoury, to share accommodations with the Princess of Wales's Own Regiment.



Summer Student Training Program

1972

Photo Credit: John Running

With the closure of Great Lakes Training Facilities in 1964, new entries completed their basic training onboard a variety of warships. This changed in 1971 when the Summer Student Training Program was introduced. The first year 25 new entries were recruited. At one point the number rose to 120 students taking naval training at *Cataraqui*. It ran for the next 20 years.

They received 6 weeks of basic training with the option of 2 additional weeks working on Canadian Olympic Regatta Kingston. It was a great tool for recruiting each September, a high percentage of summer students would join the naval reserves. The ship continued to participate in Gate Vessel weekends, sports weekends, parades and recruiting drives. For the next 20 years, the ship continued to produce reserves to serve in the fleet and ashore.

The highlight during this period was *Cataraqui's* participation in the 1976 Summer Olympics. While some members of the ship's company served at the games in Montreal, many of *Cataraqui's* people manned the safety boats for the sailing Olympics, under the overall command of Lieutenant-Commander Hal Davies, which became know with great affection as 'Davies' Navy'.



Naval Tug Towing Three Rescue Boats

1976

HMC Ships *Saguenay* and *Nipigon* in the background

Photo Credit: IMOC76-2215

In 1977, in honour of Her Majesty's Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee, *Cataraqui* participated in Naval Reserve Regatta held at HMCS *Discovery*. 9 members of *Cataraqui* were awarded the Silver Jubilee Medal.

In September 1979, HMCS *Cataraqui* hosted its 1st reunion, to honour the 40th Anniversary of the commissioning of RCNVR Kingston. The reunion was a complete success. As a result, HMCS *Cataraqui* Association was formed with Vice-Admiral John Allen, OMM, CD as its honorary president. The Association's mandate was to find the ship a new home. To this end, two members, worked extensively with The Honourable Flora MacDonald, MP, Bogart Trumpour and George Vosper to achieve the Associations mandate.

On 30 April 1980 Cataraqui was visited by Supreme Allied Commander (SACLANT) Briefing Team. The briefing included the origins of NATO, its evolution, the Soviet threat and SACLANT capacity to counter this threat.

On 23 October 1982 the Freedom of the City was granted to HMCS *Cataraqui*. Commander John Plant, CD Commanding Officer HMCS *Cataraqui* was granted “Freedom of the City” by His Worship the Mayor John Gerretsen in a ceremony held in front of Kingston City Hall. The parade included a 70-man guard, a colour party, and a band from *Cataraqui* as well as a Sea Cadet band and 300 Sea Cadets from 10 units across Eastern Canada.



Freedom of the City

23 October 1982

Photo Credit: Randy Genios

In 1982 over the Christmas school break 68 members of *Cataraqui* participated in a winter cruise out of Esquimalt.

On 15 September 1985 members of the ship’s company participated in the dedication of the Memorial Plaque honouring Lieutenant (P) Robert Hampton Gray, VC, DSC, RCNVR at 416 Wing Association.

With unification in 1968 the women in the navy were no longer addressed as Wrens. This did not apply to the naval reserves. The naval reserves continued to use the term rank until 1986.

**Commanding Officers HMCS *Cataraqui*
1992 – Present**

Commander Ronald Norman Paquin, CD
1 July 1991 – 30 June 1995

Commander Jamie A. Cotter, CD
1 July 1995 – 31 July 1998

Commander Bruce E. Lodge, CD
1 August 1998 – 18 July 2000

Lieutenant-Commander Vince K. Bambury, CD
19 July 2000 – 30 June 2003

Lieutenant-Commander Julie A. Bennett, CD
1 July 2003 – 31 December 2005

Acting Commanding Officer
Lieutenant-Commander Gayle A. Pokotylo, CD
18 November 2005 – 31 December 2005

Commander J. Paul Henault, CD
1 January 2006 – 31 May 2009

Lieutenant-Commander Susan B. Long-Poucher, CD, RCNR
1 June 2009 – 11 July 2012

Acting Commanding Officer
Lieutenant-Commander Philip Charles Henderson, CD, RCNR
3 August 2011 – 18 April 2012

Commanding Officer
Lieutenant-Commander Philip Charles Henderson, CD, RCNR
12 June 2012 – 19 September 2015

Commander Robert A. Brunner, CD, RCNR
20 September 2015 – 24 June 2019

Commander Christopher Parsons, RCNR
25 June 2019 – 31 March 2022

Acting Commanding Officer
Lieutenant-Commander Michelle Moore, CD, RCNR 1 April 2022 – 22 July 2022

Commander François Desjardins, CD, RCNR
23 July 2022 – Present

In 1992, the 5th stone frigate for HMCS *Cataraqui* was completed at Point Frederick, on the banks of the Cataraqui River, and the Division formally opened the building on 21 November 1992 under the command of Commander Ronald Paquin, CD. The reviewing officer was Admiral John Anderson, CMM, CD, Chief of Defence Staff. The VIPs in attendance included Vice-Admiral Peter Cairns, CMM, CD, Commander Maritime Command and the Honourable Flora MacDonald, MP, Minister of External Affairs and Senator the Honourable Lowell Murray, on behalf of the Minister of National Defence.

From the outset the concern was the location of the new stone frigate with its proximity to Royal Military College. History had already shown that RMC would absorb the new stone frigate just like they did to the former Sergeant's Garrison Mess and HMCS *Cataraqui's* former home.

Many former sailors felt that RMC would claim the new barracks as their own in 5 years. However shortly after the ship was commissioned, RMC started storing their sports gear onboard. The Executive Officer Lieutenant-Commander Lloyd Brewer, CD, RCN politely kicked them out.



Commissioning of HMCS *Cataraqui*
21 November 1992
Commander Ronald Paquin, CD escorting
Vice-Admiral John Anderson, CMM, CD
Photo Credit: DND



Naval Memorial

2014

Photo Credit: HMCS Cataraqui

On 1 May 1994 the Naval Memorial was dedicated. The memorial was built by members of the Kingston Naval Veterans Association, HMCS Cataraqui Association, the WRCNS (Wrens) Association of Kingston and the families of naval veterans. The guest speaker was Rear-Admiral Sturton Mathwin Davis, CD, RCN. Rear-Admiral Davis served onboard HMS *Rodney* as a Constructor Sub-Lieutenant during the action when the German Battleship *Bismarck* was sunk.

Cataraqui participated in the commissioning of HMCS *Kingston* in 1996. The Association had the seaman's mess named in honour of Leading Stoker (Mechanic) Howard Muller who was lost when HMCS *Raccoon* was sunk.

In 1998 the ship in conjunction with HMCS *Cataraqui* Association hosted a special reception in honour of the 75th Anniversary of the creation of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve.



**Alan Easton, DSC, RCNR, LCdr Maureen Barlett, Bill Rigney, RCNVR
1998**

Photo Credit: Randy Genios

In 1999 HMCS *Cataraqui* hosted a two-day reunion of VC 921 Squadron, which was a tender to *Cataraqui* which was decommissioned in March 1959.



**Memorial Service for Unveiling the Memorial Passageway
2005**

Commander Ron Paquin, CD (Ret), Reverend Donald McLean, Canon James, Thompson, unknown, Petty Officers Heather Bardell and Peter Clarabut, unknown
Photo Credit: Randy Genios

In September 2005 a special service and dedication was held for the unveiling of the Memorial Passageway. The Master of Ceremony was Commander Ronald N. Paquin, CD, former Commanding Officer. The service included a cross with a cenotaph party of two sailors, a children's choir who sang four songs, O Canada, Maple Leaf for Ever, the Naval Hymn and God Save the Queen. The service was officiated by the Reverend Donald McLean and Canon James Thompson. The public at large placed a card with a poppy along with the name of one of *Cataragui's* war dead on a table in front of the cross.



Gordon Sedgwick and Lieutenant-Commander John Leighton, CD
2008

Photo Credit: UNTD Association

In May 2008, HMCS *Cataraqui* hosted the 40th Anniversary Reunion of the decommissioning of the University Naval Training Division. A special committee was chaired by the Honourable Mr. Justice Gordon Sedgwick. As part of the 3-day reunion, the committee donated a frame picture with the images of all the former Commanding Officers of UNTD Queens from 1943 until 1968. The pictures were mounted on the bulkhead outside the classroom named as the “Gunroom” in memory of all former members of UNTD Queens.

The Honourable Mr. Justice Gordon Sedgwick as Cadet Captain Gordon Sedgwick was awarded the Department of National Defence Sword for Best Cadet in 1956. He is the only member of University Naval Training Division Queen’s to be awarded the sword.



Unveiling 100th Anniversary RCN Cairn

2010

Dr. John Plant, OMM, CD, (Ret), Betty Robertson, WRCNS, Bea Corbett, WRCNS,
Bill Fitsell, RCNVR, Bob Crothers, RCNVR

Photo Credit: Bill Fitsell

In May 2010 in Honour of the 100th Anniversary of the Royal Canadian Navy, a cairn was unveiled in Navy Memorial Park. The committee included members of HMCS *Cataraqui* Association, Wrens (WRCNS) Association of Kingston, the Navy League of Canada, and naval veterans at large.

HMCS *Cataraqui* presented the following Namesake Plaques on behalf of the Canadian Naval Centennial: His Majesty's Canadian Ships *Hallowell*, *Belleville*, *Trentonian*, *Brockville*, *Port Hope*, *Cobourg*, *Peterborough*, *Napanee* and *Prescott*.

On 11 November 2011 following the Remembrance Day Service, the Chippendale Brother's Memorial Crosses were unveiled in the main passageway of HMCS *Cataraqui*.

In 2012 the following members of HMCS *Cataraqui* were presented with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in honour of Her Majesty's 60 years as Queen of Canada: Leading Seaman Kieran MacDonald, Leading Seaman James McDonald, Master Seaman Melissa Burns, Master Seaman Monica Danila, Master Seaman Teresa Hawkins, Petty Officer Second Class Felix Akol,

Petty Officer Second Class Heather Bardell,
Petty Officer Second Class Karli Montgomery, Warrant Officer Mary Bradley-Nangle,
Chief Petty Officer Randolph Cousineau, Lieutenant Stepanie Belanger and
Lieutenant-Commander Philip Henderson.

In 2012 members of the ship's company participated in EX Avalon Responder Joint Exercise which included the Naval Reserve, Canadian Coast Guard and Royal Newfoundland Constabulary in St. John's, Newfoundland.

In 2017, in honour the 100th Anniversary of the Canadians victory at Battle of Vimy Ridge, a special service and parade were held. The parade was led by HMCS *Cataraqui* under the command of Lieutenant-Commander Robert Brunner, CD, RCNR.

On 13 October 2019 A Memorial Service was held in honour of the 50th Anniversary of the engine room explosion onboard HMCS *Kootenay* which killed nine ratings.

In April 2023 HMCS *Cataraqui* hosted a formal Naval Ball in honour of the 100th anniversary of the creation of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve. The very successful dinner and dance was held at the Royal Military College Senior Staff Mess. The Guest Speaker was Vice-Admiral Angus I. Topshee, CMM, MSM, CD, RCN, Chief of Naval Staff.



Freedom of the City

23 September 2023

Photo Credit: Raymond Paquin

Since 911, members of the ship's company have participated in harbour defence exercises, completed operation tours in the fleet, while others provided humanitarian aid for natural disasters across Canada and around the world. Members have also provided security for the Olympics and G8 Summits.

Since the outbreak of the Afghanistan War, several members of the ship's company have served overseas. Commander Robert Brunner became the first Commanding Officer since Captain Donald Chown to have served in a war zone.

A first for the ladies from *Cataraqui*, Lieutenant-Commander Michelle Moore became the female officer to have served in a war along with Petty Officer 1st Class Karli Montgomery.

HMCS *Cataraqui*'s personnel have a long tradition and reputation for spirit, hard work, and dedication to duty; they are a credit to the original ten new entries and the hundreds of officers, ratings and wrens who preceded them.

Notes

- (1) Freeman D., (2000) Canadian Warship Names, Vanwell Publishing Limited

