

Action Stations (CANADA'S NAVAL MEMORIAL HMCS SACKVILLE MARCH/APRIL 2011)

Hal Davies remembered for Energy, Vision, Strong Leadership
By Len Canfield

The late Captain (N) Hal Davies, who served as Chair of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust 1997-2000, is remembered by fellow Trustees for his energy, vision and strong leadership in advancing the Trust and ensuring the long-term operation of HMCS SACKVILLE. His unexpected passing occurred in February in the Bahamas. Trustees recall that Hal not only brought his experience as commanding officer of ships and training establishments but also his civilian business management skills to the day to day operations of the Trust and SACKVILLE.

Under Hal as Chair, the CNMT Board brought forward or advanced a number initiatives and projects, including enhancing the visibility and relevance of SACKVILLE; expanding membership in the Trust especially among serving members; strengthening the Trust's financial position including building up the endowment fund, and increasing collaboration between the Trust and the Navy, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic and other significant stakeholders. One of the initiatives advanced by Hal was formalizing the CNMT Executive Director position and Ray Soucie assuming the position. Ray recalls Hal's organizational abilities and contributions in a number of areas, including website design, development of a long-term communications plan, translation and installation of sound stations in the ship, supporting Mel Baird's Life Membership initiative and Canada Post's HMCS SHAWINIGAN and HMCS SACKVILLE stamp unveiling ceremonies in 1998.

Capt (N) Davies joined the RCN in 1959. His appointments included command of HMC Ships SASKATCHEWAN, NIPIGON, QU'APPELLE and PROTECTEUR; Commander Sea Training, CF Fleet School and his final appointment (1990) as CO of HMCS SCOTIAN. After retiring from the Navy, he developed a training and technology company and later served as a consultant.

One 'salty dip' paragraph (of several) in a bio of Hal deserves repeating. It reads, in part: "Command of NIPIGON followed and he thought he had died and gone to heaven. Ten visits to Newfiejohn led to honorary citizenship and an insatiable taste for screech, tongues and cheeks, bruse, toutons, salt cod and pork craps, and screech.... In idle moments he honed his skills in tiddley work—telescopes, bell, ropes, etc" His interest in 'tiddley work' continued through the years, culminating in Hal initiating and funding a national Naval Bell rope competition during the Naval Centennial celebrations and the judging of the competition in SACKVILLE.

A celebration of Hal's life was held in St George's Anglican Church, Halifax followed by a reception in the Wardroom (Stadacona). He is survived by his wife Jean, son Stephen and daughter Joanna.



Hal Davies is shown with other members of the CNMT Board during 'Up Spirits' in December 1997. Front, from left: Sherry Richardson, Hal, Ray Soucie, Dick Aldhelm-White. At rear, from left: Mel Baird, Charles Westropp, Brian Leask, Ted Smith, Len Canfield, Marvin Moore, and Don Cameron.



Capt(N) Hal Davies greets Duke of Edinburgh during the Royal Visit to HMCS SACKVILLE June 2010.