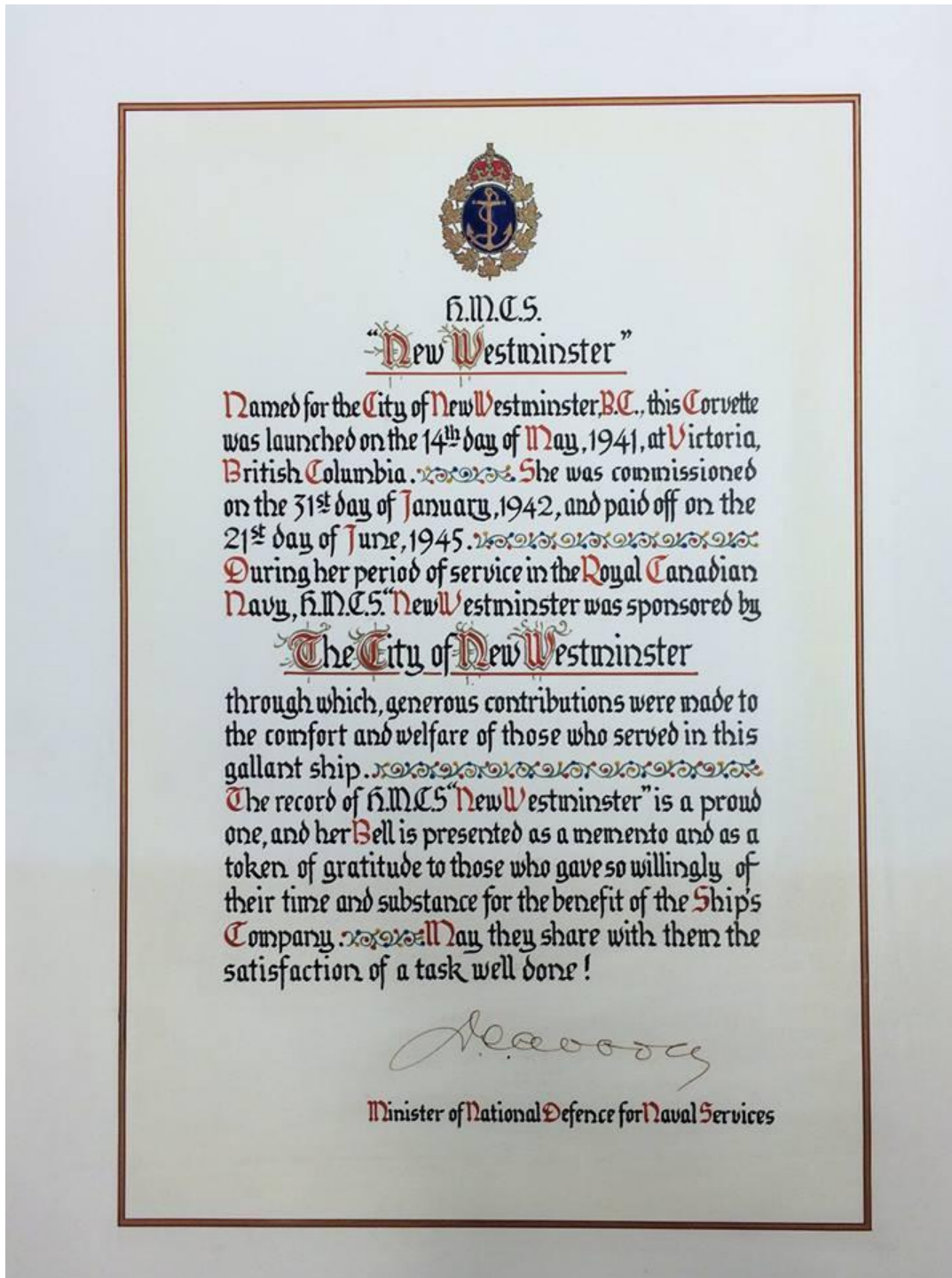


## Post War History of HMCS New Westminster's Ship's Bell

Right after the war the RCN showed its appreciation to communities that supported a Canadian warship by presenting the ship's bell to them as noted in the "official certificate" sent to the City. (This was the RCN's version but the bell was actually presented by one of her crew who saved it from disappearing at war's end as noted below).



**New Westminster's ships bell did reside in the foyer of New Westminster's City Hall at one time then it was moved to the City Museum but where did it go?**

*From the Columbian Newspaper of New Westminster, dated 26 July 1975  
By Clive Mostyn, Columbian Staff Reporter*

### ***“For Whom does the bell toll?”***

*Cecil Manson wants to know what happened to the gift he sent to the City of New Westminster in 1946.*

*It was late August of that year in Sorel, Quebec, and the Canadian Navy was mothballing warships in the wake of World War II. One of those ships was the HMCS New Westminster, a “Flower Class” corvette, and Manson, then 26, was in charge of the ship’s anti-submarine detection system (ASDIC).*

*Acting on his own initiative, Manson took down the ship’s 40-pound brass bell, engraved HMCS New Westminster, crated it up and mailed it to the New Westminster city hall.*

*The gift arrived because when the new city hall was built in the mid-1950’s the bell was hanging in the foyer, says Manson, now a Burnaby general contractor.*

*A couple of years ago, however, Manson, was in the city hall on business and noticed the HMCS New Westminster bell had been replaced by a larger version – a gift from the city of Vancouver.*

*The disappearance of the bell didn’t bother Manson until about two weeks ago when he visited the B.C. museum train during a stopover in Burnaby. “The museum had a small scale model of the New Westminster so I got to wondering where the bell was.”*

*Manson asked Irving House Archie Miller if the bell had ended up in the city museum.*

*(Note: Irving House was the name for the City’s original museum which consisted of the former residence of Captain William Irving who was an important figure in the river trading industry of the Lower Fraser River in the late 1800’s as well as the City Museum. The museum itself was relocated to a new site in the Anvil Centre).*

*Miller couldn’t find it, so he wrote council asking for help in the search.*

*City Clerk Peter Larkin said Friday, “I haven’t had time to look for it.”*

*Manson said a city staff member told him the bell wasn’t in the hall.*

*The bell is about 10 inches tall with an eight-inch wide mouth. It probably still has the fancy white Italian cotton lanyard Manson wove for the bell’s sounder.*

*Manson says he’d like to know where the bell is adding with a chuckle: “If its in somebody’s rec room it should be in mine as I paid the freight on it.”*

*Irving House Curator [Archie] Miller said if the bell is found he’ll try to get it up on the wall in the city museum.*

*“The main thing is to find out where it is.”*

*As for the bell’s namesake, the HMCS New Westminster was sold to a civilian buyer in 1947 and was rechristened the Elisa. ...”*

### ***So what became of the bell?***

*From the City of New Westminster  
Barry Dykes, Archivist, Museums and Heritage Services*

*“I believe we do have the bell in the museum. There is also a certificate ...” (shown above)*

*[This statement was made to me a few years ago - but neither the bell or certifacte was on display until very recently when only the bell was put behind glass in the City Museum but there is no history attached to the name card.]*



*Ship's bell of HMCS New Westminster*