

**THE NAVAL  
MUSEUM OF  
MANITOBA**

**Honorary Patron:**

**The Honourable Anita  
R. Neville, P.C., O.M.**

**BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS**

Chairman & Editor:

J. Dawson

Curator:

C. Rivard

Treasurer:

C. Cassidy

Secretary:

P. Young

Board Members:

A. Sheppard

A. Smith

C. Lemoine

J. Fraser

M. Shortridge

M. Weir

O. Linton

P. Bingham

P. Smith

R. Leveque

**CONTENTS**

Cover Story

The Past – “Recovered”  
HMCS Brandon Bell

Page 2

The Past – “Recovered”  
Brandon Bell (Cont’d)

Page 3

The Present – “Déjà Vu”  
VMC Remembrance Day  
Speech

Page 4

The Future – “New Era”  
Book Reviews  
VMC Speech (Cont’d)

Naval Museum:

Information

**(See also:** “A Legacy in  
Stone” Brochure – “The  
Prairie Sailor Memorial”

# WHEELHOUSE LOG

Our Mandate: *To Preserve, Honour and Educate.*  
Our Motto: *A Look to the Past with a View to the Future.*

FALL 2024

## Feature Article: Recovering the Past - HMCS Brandon’s Bell

By *Jerry Dawson:*

Since its inception, the Naval Museum of Manitoba has attempted to amass naval artifacts that would reflect the history and character of Manitoba and its connection with the Royal Canadian Navy. This has included artifacts which have reflected on the names of cities, towns, rivers, First Nations’ tribes and locations, as well as a number of prominent people and heroes from our coloured past. The following tells the story of the “recovery” of one such artifact. But first, a little mystery, and then a little history.

During World War II, communities in all nine provinces and one of the two territories were represented by 113 corvettes. Of these, four were named after cities in Manitoba: Brandon, Dauphin, Morden, and The Pas. Corvettes have long since ceased to have a high public profile, but there are still signs across the land of our Corvette heritage.

**The Mystery:** For a number of years now, volunteers at the Naval Museum of Manitoba were aware that the bell of Corvette HMCS *Brandon*, K149 might still be in existence somewhere in the province, but they were never sure of its actual location, or how to track it down. The opportunity came at a meeting in Brandon, where preparations for the “Commissioning Ceremony” for the new MCDV HMCS *Brandon* (2nd) were being held. It was learned from Mrs. Betty Coleman, Sponsor of the new



*Brandon*, that the original bell had, or was about to be assigned to the RCA Museum in Shilo, Manitoba.

To make a long story short, after years of discussion and negotiation, it was decided by the Director and Board Members of the RCA Museum that a ‘naval ship’s bell’ more appropriately belonged in a ‘naval’ museum. A vote was held, and on August 2, 2024, a delegation from the RCA Museum met with our Curator and presented him with K149’s original bell. The bell, which hadn’t received appropriate ‘pusser’ naval attention in some years, was taken to “The House of Silver” for refurbishing. It now stands on display in our museum, along with the other bells in the “Ships of Manitoba” display. It took a long time to find its way home, but it is now a permanent and proud resident of the Naval Museum of Manitoba.

*Continued Page 2*

# Recovering the Past - HMCS Brandon's Bell

(Continued from Page 1)

*Continued from Page 1*

**The History:** Named in honour of Canada's "Wheat City", HMCS *Brandon*, K149, a Flower Class Corvette, was commissioned at Quebec City on 22 July 1941, and she arrived in Halifax 1 August of that same year. She joined Newfoundland Command in September after work ups, and left St. John's 26 September 1941 for her first convoy, SC.46. She served as an ocean escort to and from Iceland until December, when she arrived in the UK for three months' repairs at South Shields. From mid-March 1942, after three weeks' workups at Tobermory, she served on the Newfie-Derry run almost continuously until September 1944.

It was during this duty that *Brandon* was reported sunk due to enemy action while escorting a convoy to the U.K.. Fortunately, she had only sprung a serious leak, but because of the need for radio silence, she had been unable to advise anybody. After more than two days of hard work, the leak was repaired, and *Brandon* was able to limp into port like a ghost ship -- three days late, but still able to fight.

From December 1942 onward, she served with EG C-4, helping defend the hard-pressed convoy HX.224 in February 1943, and in the following month escorting convoys to and from Gibraltar. In August 1943 she began a three-month refit at Grimsby, England, including fo'c'sle extension. She left Londonderry 2 September 1944 to join her last transatlantic convoy, ONS.251, and after a two-month refit at Liverpool, Nova Scotia, worked up in Bermuda.

On 5 February 1945 she arrived at St. John's to join EG W-5, Western Escort Force, in which she served until the end of the war. Paid off at Sorel on 22 June 1945, she was broken up at Hamilton, Ontario in 1945.

**WW II Battle Honours:**

The Gulf of St. Lawrence – 1945

**Commanding Officers:**

A/LCDR J C Littler, RCNR	22/07/41 – 19/08/42
LT R J G Johnson, RCNVR	20/08/42 – 20/09/42
A/LCDR J C Littler, RCNR	21/09/42 – 24/11/42
LT H E McArthur, RCNVR	25/11/42 – 25/05/44
LT J F Evans, RCNVR	26/05/44 – 26/04/45
LT P J Lawrence, RCNR	27/04/45 – 22/06/45

**Members of the RCA Museum Delegation:**

Sarah Glennie:	Owner of the Bell
George Haggerty:	Director, 26th Field Regiment, Brandon MB
Chuck LaRocque:	Director, RCA Museum, Shilo MB
Claude Rivard:	Curator, The Naval Museum of Manitoba



Before



After

# Concern for the Present: “Déjà vu” All Over Again

## Vincent Massey Collegiate Remembrance Day Service, November 11, 2024

### A Speech Delivered by LCdr (Ret'd) J.O. Dawson, CD

Students, Teachers and Administrators of Vincent Massey Collegiate:

I'd first like to thank Mrs. Kehler for her kind invitation on behalf of Vincent Massey to address you on this special occasion of “Remembrance”; and to dedicate my comments to her father, Ed Wilson, who was a close friend of mine, and a fellow shipmate for many years. I should also point out that at least a dozen fellow teachers from the old Fort Garry School Division served with me as officers in the RCN, so your school is clearly represented by such a time-honoured tradition.

It has been quite a while now since I have stood before a class of high school students, let alone a full auditorium, so we'll just have to see how this goes. However, I should point out that the order of persons in my salutation was deliberate. My presentation today is not so much just “a look at the past”, but a serious warning and “clarion call” -- or call to action -- for your generation.

So let me turn to the subject at hand by quoting from one of Western Civilization's greatest philosophers, George Santayana, who admonished us with the warning: “Those who cannot remember the past are **doomed** to repeat it.” (*The Life of Reason*, 1905); and please notice that I emphasized the word “**doomed**”.

Could I have a show of hands from those of you who are at least 17 years old? Thank you.

In 1941, the whole graduating class of your current cross-town rivals - “**The Boys of Kelvin**” - enlisted in the RCAF's Bomber Command, the most dangerous branch of the Air Force. At the same time, more than 7,000 “**Prairie Boys**” and 260 young women (WRENS) were recruited at Winnipeg's NRD *HMCS CHIPPAWA*, making it the third largest naval recruiting centre in the country. So: I wonder - what would you be willing to do to defend your current democratic way of life. What would you be willing to sacrifice; who and what would you be willing to leave behind - or forego altogether? **As of 80 years ago last June, you** might have been storming the beaches of Normandy, or fighting your way from **the shores of Sicily, up the Italian peninsula. One hundred and ten years ago, you'd** have been fighting amid the carnage of Passchendaele; and if you survived those engagements, you might have been assaulting the heights at **Vimy Ridge**, which was probably Canada's most famous battle, and the one that defined us as a nation.

I was born during WW II -- though like President Biden, I know I don't look it -- and in my lifetime we have often longed for “**an enduring peace**”; but truth be told, I have known **nothing but war**. Since WW II, Canadians have served in active duty, and as UN peacekeepers and peace makers during a number of serious conflicts throughout the world: the Korean War, the Congo insurrection, the crisis in Suez and Cyprus, and the war in Viet Nam; the two Gulf Wars, the upheavals in Libya and the former Yugoslavia (Kosovo), the genocide in Rwanda, and most recently, the war in Afghanistan -- just to give a few examples of a world that seems to be in perpetual anguish -- but a world that barely seems to touch us at times. And yet we should always remember -- there are always those who “stand on guard for thee”.

And so today, we honour and remember all those who served, but especially those who gave their lives in the cause of peace, freedom and security; and as we do, we repeat the phrase “**We will remember them**”.

But there is another aspect of Remembrance Day to which we should also pay special attention: the poignant phrase “**Lest We Forget**”; and by that I mean we should question the **evil ideologies** against which our men and women were willing to fight and die for democracy to survive.

In recent years, those of us who are of a certain age (**80+ years old**) have been reminded of the chaotic events which began in the 1930s, but more clearly emerged in the “**sitzkrieg**” (or “sitting war”) of 1939 - 1940, followed shortly thereafter by the “**blitzkrieg**” (“lightning war”) as “**storm troopers**” -- (today's **Wagner Group**) -- ranged across Europe and other major land masses, wrecking horror, destruction, chaos and death. Meanwhile, in the North Atlantic, submarine “**wolf packs**” ravished supply convoys during the longest battle of WW II (Sept.'39 – May'45, or 2,074 days). **For six horrendous years**, the light of civilization went out all over the world; and for decades thereafter, the threat of mutual nuclear destruction hovered over us all throughout the “**Cold War**” (1945-1991).

Does the largest land war in Europe since WW II now raging in Ukraine, the chaos and carnage in the Middle East, or the destruction of war and eruption of famine and refugees from Sudan in the east -- right across the sub-Sahara of Africa to the Ivory Coast in the west -- signal something equally sinister for our times and near future? As the world's geo-political landscape shifts radically to the “Right”, we are left with the distinct impression that at best, we are in the midst of a “**Cold War 2.0**”.

Military personnel are “**a-political**”; we serve at the pleasure of our government, our country, and “**the rule of law**”. We serve in “The Profession of Arms”; we have a “**Code of Conduct**” and stringent “**Rules of Engagement**”, so what I am about to say is **my personal opinion only**.

I originally wrote this address before we knew what the outcome of the American Presidential Election of three days ago would be. Would the world's democracies “**dodge a bullet**”, or would America join the grasping clutch of autocracies, kleptocracies, dictatorships and tyrannies, with the imminent prospect of humanity's “staring down the barrel!” of a **nuclear Third World War within the next decade?** Now we know! **[We may have dodged that bullet, but the threat still lingers!]**

I have served in the RCNR for 28 years, four of those as Commanding Officer of *HMCS CHIPPAWA*. My ship's motto is “**Service**”; and to give you just one example, I saw true “commitment to service” and teamwork when 150 Naval Reservists from 24 NRDs across Canada left the comfort of their civilian jobs or occupations and gathered at *CHIPPAWA* to fight the “**Flood of the Century**” -- 24/7 for two and a half months solid.

*Continued Page 4*

# Hope for the Future: A New Era of Exploration

## Book Reviews



### **COLD WAR 2.0: Artificial Intelligence in the New Battle between China, Russia and America**

by George S. Takach

This is perhaps the most important book of the group which we have reviewed, and the one through which the reader will gain the clearest picture of what lies ahead within the geo-political terrain of the foreseeable future.

So much of what we hear about China and Russia today likens the relationship between these two autocracies and the collection of Western democracies to a “rivalry” or a “great-power competition.” Some might consider it alarmist to say we are in the midst of a second Cold War, but that may be the only responsible way to describe today’s state of affairs.

What’s more, we have come a long way from Mao Zedong’s infamous observation that “political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.” Now we live in an age more aptly described by Vladimir Putin’s cryptic prophecy that “artificial intelligence is the future not only of Russia, but of all mankind – and whoever becomes the leader in this sphere will become ruler of the world.”

In a nutshell, then, this study scrutinizes the role of artificial intelligence, military coordination, missile defense systems, advanced semiconductor chips, quantum computers and bio-engineering in shaping the fault lines of geo-political conflict between democracy and autocracy, and explores how Western democracies can navigate such challenges and mitigate these fault lines to ultimate triumph.

[With thanks to the Canadian International Council.]

*Continued from Page 3*

Now, I also know that Vincent Massey has a history of fantastic sports teams, and a band program and ‘improv’ - groups of significant renown; and your success and achievements have been attained through teamwork. “**Teamwork**” and “**service to others**” also go hand-in-hand in the preservation of democracy. There can be no complacency -- no “**the other guy can do it**” if we are to achieve a resounding victory. So, I ask you: “If not you, who; if not now, when; and if not here, where will you be willing to stand up and be counted for what you truly believe?”

**Remember:** Throughout the world today, there are countless millions of refugees from war, famine and the horrific impact of climate change, as witnessed most recently with the two devastating hurricanes that just ravished the State of Florida. And yet, for those of us who were born or now live in Canada -- we have both figuratively and literally ‘**won the lottery**’!

But freedom, liberty and democracy **are not free**; many times these ideals have been paid for with the lives of those who have come before us. Let’s make sure that we do something significant with the abundance of democratic wealth that we have inherited from our forefathers.

“With failing hands...,” my generation now passes the torch to you: -- “**The Greatest Generation**” who fought WW II, and the “**Baby Boomers**” who followed, are now rapidly fading into history. It is now up to you -- “**Gen X**” (1965-1981), “**Gen Y**” (1982-1994), and particularly you -- “**Millennials**” and “**Gen Z**” (1997-2012) -- to be “the change agents” who will lift high the torch of civilization, and ensure the continued safety and endurance of our democratic values in the face of the threatening forces of anarchy and chaos bound up in the **insane** and world-wrenching grasp for unbridled power and world domination.

**Thank you for your attention, and God bless you.**



**The Naval Museum of Manitoba located at HMCS Chippawa 1 Navy Way Winnipeg**

When is the Museum open?

Wednesday 9:00 am to 3:00 pm  
**School or Group Tours available on request.**  
 Contact: Claude Rivard  
 Phone (204) 9437745 Ext: 3294  
 Contact can also be made through the web site  
<https://naval-museum.mb.ca/>

Was a member of your family in the Royal Canadian Navy during WWII ?

All Donations made to the Naval Museum, whether they are naval artifacts or financial donations, will receive a tax receipt for charitable purposes.

For More information call:  
 Claude Rivard, Curator  
 Phone: 204-943-7745 Ext: 3294