The Allied Merchant Navy Promotions and Commemorative Celebrations

OVERVIEW

- Throughout history, serving both in times of peace and war, shipping and shipbuilding have been and continue to be a vital human activity, where our prosperity and security depend primarily on international and interregional trade. In fact, transportation has been called one of the four cornerstones of globalization, along with communications, international standardization, and trade liberalization [Kumar and Hoffmann, 2002].

- During the times of imperial expansion, the merchant navies and merchant marine of European states served as an important lifeline to the overseas colonies. Supplying the New World with vital supplies and food for establishing the settlements, the merchant navies and merchant marine faced the daunting task of fighting the elements to make these important Atlantic journeys.

- Since the Revolutionary War of 1775, members of the American Merchant Marine have played, and continue to play a vital role in providing civilian services in areas of national security, and in supporting the economic needs of the United States of America.

- On June 12, 1775, a party of Maine mariners, armed with pitchforks and axes, inspired by the news of the recent victory at Lexington, Massachusetts, used an unarmed lumber schooner to surprise and capture a fully armed British warship, HMS Margareta, off the coast of Machias, Maine. The men used the captured guns and ammunition from the ship to bring in additional British ships as prizes. American privateers soon disrupted British shipping all along the Atlantic coast.

- In times of peace, the U.S. maritime industry employs more than 260,000 Americans, that provides over $29 billion in annual wages, and moves over 100 million passengers, $400 billion worth of goods between ports in the U.S. annually.

The Status of the Allied Merchant Navies and American Merchant Marine

- The Allied Merchant Navies and American Merchant Marine were the mainstay of the Allied Forces Victories in both World Wars, that faced constant life-threatening conditions and experienced the highest losses of life (statistically) among all Army, Navy, and Air Force casualties combined.

- During World War II, over 6,835 American Merchant Marine were killed, in addition to over 11,000 being wounded, and the taking of 604 prisoners of war, of whom 61 died in POW camps, out of the more than 250,000 Merchant Marine that sailed. Over 2,199 Canadian Merchant Navy Seaman were killed in both WWI and WWII. The
American and Canadian death statistics do not reflect global losses that were experienced by other Merchant Marine and Allied Merchant Navy nations. Also, they do not reflect the losses incurred during the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

- Today, the typical age of our Allied Merchant Navy and American Merchant Marine veterans are in their late 80s and 90s, and the attrition rate is very high. The Canadian Merchant Navy did not receive official Veterans’ Status until 1992, and were not compensated until 2000. The American Merchant Marine were officially recognized in 1988, and they are still fighting for just compensation and recognition to this very day. The status of the Merchant Navy and Merchant Marine from other related nations must also be determined.

- The Allied Merchant Navies and American Merchant Marine are the most marginalized group of veterans in the military history of the world. Given the Canadian and American proud dual heritage and strong European ties, for example, we must stop relegating such important elements of our past to the outskirts of present day policy.

Merchant Navy Day and National and International Maritime Days

Merchant Navy Day

- On September 3, 1939, on the day that the United Kingdom and France declared war on Germany, the passenger ship the S.S. Athenia was torpedoed by Fritz Julius Lemp of U-30 (a Type VIIA U-boat) while on patrol in the northwestern sector of Ireland. The ship was carrying 1,103 passengers, including about 500 Jewish refugees, 469 Canadians, 311 Americans, 72 British citizens, along with 315 of her crew. However, 98 passengers and 19 of her crew were killed. Fifty-four were Canadian, 28 were American, including Canadian Stewardess Hannah Baird. Incidentally, the first casualties of WWII were Canadian and American civilians.

- On September 3, 2000, the United Kingdom commemorated Merchant Navy Day, where the Red Duster's 35,000 dead were remembered for the first time in history. For additional information, please select:
  - Merchant Navy heroes honoured at last

- On September 3, 2004, Merchant Navy Veterans Day was commemorated for the first time in Canadian history at the National War Memorial, in Ottawa, ON, Canada. To view these ceremonies, please visit our YouTube Channel at:
  - Merchant Navy Veterans Day in Canada

- On September 3, 2008, the Commonwealth of Australia held a day of national observance to commemorate the service and sacrifice of Australia’s merchant mariners. For additional information, please select:
  - Merchant Navy Day Australia - September 3
International and National Maritime Days

- In addition, there are two (known) International Maritime Days (organized by the International Maritime Organization (IMO)), and a number of national maritime days that are celebrated by various countries. They are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Dates for National Maritime Day</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 29 to April 5, 2016</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 22, 2016</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 25, 2016</td>
<td>International Day of the Seafarer (IMO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 11, 2016</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 18, 2016</td>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 29, 2016</td>
<td>International Maritime Day (IMO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 29, 2016</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
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Support Messages from the Political Leaders of the World

- Between 2013 and 2015, for the first time in the history of Canada, Messages of Gratitude to the Canadian and Allied Merchant Navies were received by The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, (then) Prime Minister of Canada, The Honourable Tom Mulcair, (then) Leader of the Official Opposition, Mr. Justin Trudeau, (then) Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, and The Honourable Senator Joseph A. Day.

Also, Her Honour Vaughn Solomon Schofield, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, was the first among Her Majesty's provincial and territorial representatives to acknowledge the sacrifices of the Canadian and Allied Merchant Navy, as the mainstay of the Allied Forces victories in both WWI and WWII. In addition, former Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Paul Davis provided a support message, and was the first political leader in Canada to acknowledge the Canadian, Allied Merchant Navy, and the American Merchant Marine Veterans inclusively.

- The purpose of this section is to encourage political leaders of the world to provide a message of gratitude/support to our Allied Merchant Navy and American Merchant Marine Veterans. It is intended to be a virtuous embodiment of collaboration, upholding the highest standards of governance, and the values inherent in our freedoms and systems of democracy, for which our veterans fought and died.

Please select Messages from Political Leaders of the World to view this section.
Lack of Awareness of Canadian, Allied Merchant Navy, and American Merchant Marine History

- With a total absence of awareness, knowledge and understanding of the history of the Allied Merchant Navies and American Merchant Marine of WWI and WWII, and their contributions to the Korean and Vietnam Wars, we continue to face an uphill battle in educating Canadians, Americans, and the international community about this forgotten aspect of our history in a time critical fashion.

- For instance, on August 27, 1942, the US Army troop transport *Chatham* was torpedoed in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence. The ship was carrying 562 passengers, in which 13 Americans died. This was to become the first American troop ship lost during World War II.

Our focus areas to begin addressing these issues are:

**a) Consolidation of the History of the Canadian, Allied Merchant Navy, and American Merchant Marine**

- Currently, our national and international maritime history is disparate, highly fragmented, and virtually unknown by the common person. Only a handful of historical publications and papers have been published on the topic of the Canadian Merchant Navy and American Merchant Marine. There are no known academic experts researching this topic in Canada or the United States of America.

  In fact, in a recent discussion with the President of the American Merchant Marine Veterans Association, these sad circumstances were clearly expressed. We must also assume that this situation is also the same for most countries that were part of the Allied Merchant Navy during both World Wars.

  To begin addressing this issue, we have created a framework to consolidate the on-line maritime history, and other related information of the world, into a centralized repository, by country and then by various sub-categories. These sections will be written in the indigenous language of each participating nation. This will eventually evolve into a multi-lingual platform.

  Please select [History of the Allied Merchant Navies](#) to view this section.

**b) Creation of WWI and WWII MN Veterans International Database**

- Efforts are currently under way to build an on-line database system that will contain all the names of the Allied Merchant Navies and American Merchant Marine Veterans of WWI, WWII, and the Korean and Vietnam Wars.
This database will have a Facebook-like functionality that will enable users to research (by various fields and search criteria) a particular veteran. We will encourage all respective nation stakeholders to identify with these veterans, and to encourage (for example) family members and communities to upload information, such as lost stories, pictures, military documents, and more.

c) The Battle of the Gulf of the St. Lawrence and the War of 1812, Sydney Harbour (Cape Breton, Nova Scotia), and the Battle of the Atlantic and the Pacific

- During 1942 and 1944, 23 ships were sunk in the Gulf of the St. Lawrence. This marked the only time since the War of 1812 that enemy warships inflicted death within Canada’s inland waters. The battle advanced to within 300 kilometers of Quebec City.
- The Merchant Navy Commemorative Theme Project originated with a project to preserve WWII Fortifications surrounding Sydney Harbour (Cape Breton, Nova Scotia) in 1988. This network of fortresses had been built to protect ships-in-port, and to defend the steal and coal resources that were being produced for the war effort. For more information on this component, please select: The Battle to Preserve the Sydney Harbour Fortifications
- The history of the battles that took place in the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans will be integrated within central historical themes.

The Allied Merchant Navy Promotions and Commemorative Celebrations (AMNPCC)

Facing these many time critical challenges, the following needs were identified:

- bridge the gap between the present day shipping industry and its glorious and predominantly forgotten past;
- promote the vital role that that the “present day” Merchant Navy and American Merchant Marine provides to global security and the economy;
- consolidate the maritime history of the world into a centralized on-line repository; and
- unify countries of the world under common veterans’ and maritime themes.

What is the AMNPCC?

- The Allied Merchant Navy Promotions and Commemorative Celebrations (AMNPCC) is a Global Maritime Promotion Integration and Outreach Strategy (GMPIOS) that consists of a series of proposed programs, projects, products, and special events that are designed:
  - To effectively and efficiently bring to the Canadian, American, and international frontons the roles of the Allied Merchant Navy and American Merchant Marine as the mainstay of the Allied Forces victory in both World War I and World War II, and to acknowledge their critical contributions to the Korean and Vietnam Wars.
  - To ensure appropriate inclusion of the Allied Merchant Navy and American Merchant Marine events into the annals of history, both within our shores and worldwide, from the twentieth century to its historical beginnings.
To successfully organize commemorative themes and special events, and develop products and services, that accurately promotes the history of the Allied Merchant Navy and American Merchant Marine within an integrated national and international framework.

To expand our stakeholder base and identify mutually beneficial opportunities for developing partnerships within Canada, the United States of America, and abroad.

Our key programs, projects, products, and special events (also referred to as our Strategic Objectives) for the second phase of the AMNPCC are:

2) Establishing September 3 as the Official International Day of Remembrance for the Allied Merchant Navies and American Merchant Marine, and to Promote Merchant Navy Day to National and International Audiences
3) The Never Forgotten National Memorial: “Mother Canada”
4) Merchant Navy Travelling Exhibit & Teacher’s Guide
5) Promo Video/Dramatic Feature/Documentary Series
6) Commemorative CD Music Compilation – National & International Artists
7) International Award Recognition Ceremony
8) Operation “Clean Sweep”— Navigating Across Canada, the United States of America (and other Nations of the World) to Discover the Unknown History of Our Forgotten Heroes
9) Operation “Heavyweight” — An International Fundraising Initiative
10) Virtual International Wall of Memory (Website)
11) Ceremonial Trans – Atlantic Crossing
12) Establish Research Centre & Resources
13) Sydney Harbour Fortifications Restoration Integration and Promotions (Cape Breton, Nova Scotia)

In 2015, the MNCTP launched Phase I of the AMNPCC with the *Pan-Canadian and International Recognition of September 3 Initiative*. The goals of this exercise were to encourage the provinces and territories to recognize Merchant Navy Day, and to foster co-operation among nations of the world in a similar fashion. Due to this forward momentum, the following activities/events transpired:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Event</th>
<th>Activity/Event Date</th>
<th>Office of Primary Interest (OPI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Message from Her Honour Vaughn Solomon Schofield The Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td>Office of the Lieutenant-Governor of Saskatchewan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Blessing from His Holiness Pope Francis</td>
<td>September 1, 2015</td>
<td>Apostolic Nunciature of Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant Navy Day Proclamation by the Province of Manitoba</td>
<td>September 3, 2015</td>
<td>Government of Manitoba</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Merchant Navy Day Proclamation by the Province of Saskatchewan | September 3, 2015 | Government of Saskatchewan

A Message from the Premier of Newfoundland | September 3, 2015 | Government of Newfoundland

A Message from Mr. Jim Wilson, Member of Provincial Parliament, Simcoe-Grey | September 3, 2015 | Former Interim Conservative Leader for the Province of Ontario

Merchant Navy Veterans Day | September 3, 2015 | Collingwood, Ontario

NEXT STEPS:

- To obtain consensus among: international, national, provincial, and municipal governments; public and private sector organizations, and non-for-profit organizations; educational institutions; and more.

- To establish the Project Advisory Board and Steering Committees (at the international, national, and provincial levels) to identify roles, assign responsibilities, and discuss timelines.

- To link to broader themes, within Canada, the United States of America, and overseas, that share common goals and strategic objectives. This will ensure that our ships are all sailing in the same direction.

For additional information on the Merchant Navy Commemorative Theme Project (MNCTP), please visit our website at:

- www.alliedmerchantnavy.com