

CORNWALLIS MILITARY MUSEUM
FORMERLY NAMED
HMCS/CFB Cornwallis Military Historical
Association



CFB Cornwallis was decommissioned in 1994 and the properties were sold or leased to private individuals and companies. Many felt that role of Cornwallis had been forgotten by all and nobody seemed to care about the history and sacrifice of those who served. It was said that HMCS Cornwallis was the, "Cradle of the Navy," young men arrived in Cornwallis and sailors graduated and left to serve their country. For 50 years an estimated half a million men and women served and trained at HMCS/CFB Cornwallis.

Along came a man called Ron Elliott. Ron had served in the Navy and lived close by. He had a dream of creating a Museum to honor those who served. Ron recruited Jack Britton another retired Navy man and together they started lobbying and recruiting help.



Ron Elliott PO 1st Class

22 June 1924 – 4 July 2010



John (Jack) Britton RCNVR, WWII

2 May 1921 – 16 March 2011

By 1997 the HMCS/CFB Cornwallis Historical Society had obtained the Protestant Church, formerly St. George's Chapel, and waded through all the necessary paperwork to become the proud caretakers of an empty building

THEY TOOK THE EMPTY BUILDING AND CREATED A MUSEUM

It sounds simple when you say they “They took the empty building and created a museum”. What these intrepid volunteers did was beg, borrow and find artefacts: They located the church altar, rails and pews in a shed and installed them back in the church (museum). The railing brass were returned from Halifax where they were stored and in one incident they ran after a garbage truck and rescued the Dominion Crest which used to be in the drill shed - how old was the “A Team anyway”. The largest portion of the artefacts were donated by former members of HMCS/CFB Cornwallis.



HMCS/CFB Cornwallis Military Historical Association

The purpose of the HMCS / CFB Cornwallis Military Historical Association is to operate the museum.

Incorporated - February 24, 1997

Registry No. 3005731

Founding members and first Board of Governors:

Cyril E. Caines
Earl K. Macleod
John E.C. Britton
Norman D. Gillard
Mona McDonald
Oran Foster
Ronald E. Elliott

Members added and elected by vote:

Dennis Wiltshire, Betty Morgan and Greg Nash
Secretary - Marie White
Treasurer - Tom Bartlett

The above listed members formed the first Board of Governors.

Chairman - Ronald E. Elliott
Vice-Chairman - John E.C. Britton (Jack)

Honorary Members:

Marilyn Gurney - Halifax
Adm. Budge - now deceased

The first elected Board of Governors was elected April 15, 1998, for one year:

Chairman - Ron Jones
Vice-Chairman - Ray Bordeleau
Directors - Greg Nash, Earl Johnson, Cecil Roy, Ms Betty Mackenzie, Ron Elliott and Jack Britton
Treasurer - Ken Brown
Secretary - Norman Powell
Auditors - The Rev. James McIntosh (1 yr) - Chaplain
John Elliott (2 yrs)
Stewart Faulkner (3 yrs)

By 1998 donated items were displayed and the museum slowly took shape.



In addition to setting up the museum, moving tanks, and planes, providing washroom facilities and painting there were other issues being addressed by the Board Members such as the Battle of the Atlantic Windows and Historical Designation.

Moving the Tank

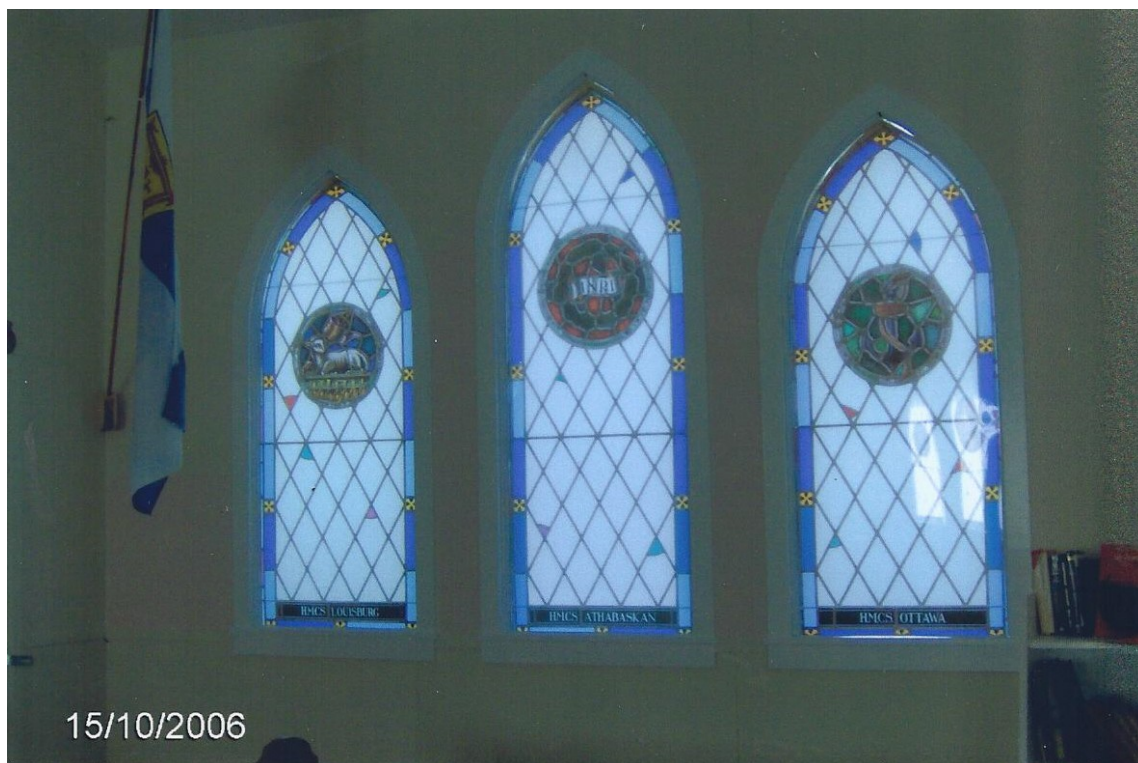


Battle of the Atlantic Commemorative Windows

The original Battle of the Atlantic Commemorative windows (24 representing the ships lost in the Battle of the Atlantic, three with religious themes and a round window 'Jesus and the sailors') had been removed from the chapel when the base was decommissioned and many felt they should be returned to Cornwallis. The recruits paid for the windows through payroll deduction and to the best of our knowledge the original windows were installed in the mid to late 1950's. The Department of National Defence felt that the windows belonged to all service personnel and should be on an active base

The museum board advocated and pursued every avenue for the return of the windows including picketing Willow Park in Halifax where the windows were located at the time. Facsimiles of the Battle of the Atlantic Memorial Windows were eventually installed in Cornwallis due to the efforts of people like Ed Smith Lcdr Ret'd, Rev James MacIntosh, Maj Ret'd, Douglas Moore, CPO Ret'd and the former Maritime Commander, Admiral Glenn Davidson who committed \$10,000 (I believe it might have gone over budget).





Note: The original Battle of the Atlantic Windows are now located in the CFB Halifax Chapel in a chapel built and designed to display the windows and honor those who served. They are worth a visit.

The original St. Patrick's Catholic Church windows went to the Catholic Church in Digby and were returned to Cornwallis about 2004. They are now installed in the museum the most unique is windows is the one with the HMCS Cornwallis Crest. The frames were built by Randy Corbin, Lt (N) (Ret'd) and installed by Wally Herlt, Capt (Army) (Ret'd). Guy Godin, CPO Ret'd paid for the supplies.



The Museum carries the memory of those who served in times of conflict. The Altar area of the Museum and Rose Garden are dedicated to the sailors who trained in Cornwallis and went on to serve in the Battle of the Atlantic WWII and honors those who paid the ultimate sacrifice. The Museum has a Battle of the Atlantic Service every year on the first weekend in May and the Cornwallis.



2012 Florence Courtney laying a wreath



Sea Cadets have played an integral part of the ceremony since 1997





The altar accruements were returned to Cornwallis in 2012 from HMCS Star in Hamilton where they ended up after the base closed.

In 2000 Jack Britton and Karl White were pursuing Historical Designations for the Museum. It was a long lengthy process which did not result in Historical Designation but the NS Provincial Government recognised, in a session of the House, the contribution made by Cornwallis to the Military and the Community and a Certificate was presented to that end.

October 2001 saw the creation of a website www.cornwallismuseum.ca Douglas Moore put in many hours designing the website and scanning photographs. The site received several awards. The site is now managed by Corey Forman who is carrying on the hard work.

In 2007 Peter Nordland conceived the idea of a Rose Garden to commemorate WWII and the Battle of The Atlantic. The result is a beautiful Rose Garden and a sign (designed by Douglas Moore) commemorating the Navy and Merchant Marine ships lost. Our volunteers Winna Smith, Florence Courtney and Dorothy Stewart, with the help of some male muscle, keep the garden looking beautiful.



HMCS/CFB Cornwallis Military Museum



Cornwallis Military Museum

With the decline of volunteers, the loss of our curator, lack of expertise and the funding required to run a military museum and keep it growing it was decided; after much debate, to focus on the unique role of Cornwallis in the military which was as a **Training Base for 50 years**. The Cornwallis Museum is about the men and women and their families, military and civilian personnel who trained worked and lived, loved or hated Cornwallis.

The museum name was changed to The Cornwallis Military Museum (Douglas Moore handled the paperwork) and revamping the displays began. Changing the displays has taken three years and work is ongoing, not all changes were appreciated but, in spite of personal misgivings, all the members have been supportive. Our goal is to give returning servicemen a glimpse of the past and the visitors a look at life in Cornwallis during the years of operations.







Volunteers

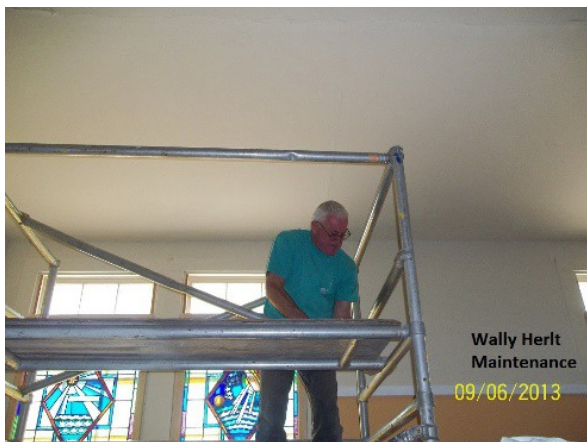
The success of the museum relied on the Volunteers who took on the task of finding a building, obtaining the documentation required to run a Charitable Organization. That was probably the easy part, raising funds to keep the museum running, developing and expanding displays and concepts for the last 17 years **that** requires dedication and some really noisy meetings. Many retired men and women have found a new talent for designing, painting, construction and sandwich making. Talents they never knew they had.

Some above and beyond contributions are:

Betty Morgan worked with the museum since 1997 and for the past 10 years she has made a quilt which has been a fund raiser for the museum.



Dennis Wiltshire 2001



Wally Herlt



Ken Ilitski



Florence Courtney and Peter Nordland



To summarize the Museum Highlights:

- ! 1997 - The Cornwallis Museum opened doors**
- ! 1998 -The building was re-consecrated**
- ! 2000 – Application for Historical status**
- ! 2001 – The award winning Museum website was created by Douglas Moore. www.cornwallismuseum.ca**
- ! 2007 - Memorial Rose Garden**
- ! 2013 – CF 101F Voodoo 006 Cornwallis 1984-2013 was transferred to the Jet Aircraft Museum London Ontario where the exterior will be restored. www.jetaircraftmuseum.ca**
- ! 2015 – A Media area was created with a small library with books relating to Cornwallis, a computer so visitors can look up photographs and a television so that they may view videos. This is a popular section with visitors.**

Fund Raising Events

For many years the museum has had several ongoing fund raising events.

The Saturday Breakfast which takes place every three months.

The Navy Theme Breakfast Team 2005



Back Row: Left to right, Sam Burton, Dave Boudreau, Peter Nordland, Gerry Cann, Wally Herlt, Dick Winchester, Douglas Moore

Middle: Left Lorraine Herlt, Karl White, Lorraine Moore

Front: Florence Courtney, Marie White, Betty Morgan

Beef Dinner 2013 Pie Auction and Guests



Tea and Craft Sale 2014



Gordon Magee President and Betty Morgan quilter



Anna MacNally won the Quilt 2014

2015 Annual Christmas Tea and Craft Sale



2015 Marilyn and
Bernie



Winna Snith and Pete Nordland selling tickets



Bev Mosher and Betty Morgan 2016 Quilt

Special Visitors

Vow Renewal



Veterans from Tide View Nursing Home



Local Celebrations

Natal Day 2002



Annapolis Natal Day 2015



Parade Marchers Digby Scallop Days 2015

Front: Michael, Lindsay, Josey, George & Jane Dowler, Marilyn & Shawn Oliver
Back: Bev Mosher, Wally and Lorraine Herlt



Reunions:
2006



2006 Reunion Parade
to Memorial Garden



2014 Reunion Attendee OS Ian Wilson



Cadets dressed in Museum Uniforms 2014



Cornwallis Museum has Monthly Meetings April – December and then electronic if required culminating in the Christmas Party.
If you would like to join the Cornwallis Military Museum team contact any board member for meeting dates and times.