

ACTION STATIONS



HMCS Sackville Newsletter

December 2001

The Funeral of Alan Easton

**Lieutenant-Commander Alan Easton, DSC, RCNR
St. Ann's Episcopal Church
Richford, Vermont, 29 September, 2001**

(1902-2001) It is especially difficult today, when the civilized world is confronting the menace and all too deadly reality of world-wide terrorism, to think back to a time 60 years ago, when our world was faced with an even greater peril, one that could have set the course of civilization back a thousand years. That threat from Nazi Germany was confronted, challenged and defeated by our nations and brave men and women; men like Lieutenant-Commander Alan Easton, Distinguished Service Cross, Royal Canadian Naval Reserve.

After ten years in the Merchant Navy, Alan had had his fill of the sea. Many times he acknowledged his loathing of it. By 1940 he was well established ashore with his family. But in that year he also recognized Canada's critical need for professional seaman, and firmly believed it his duty to play his part. The need was stark. The Navy he joined began the war with six destroyers and a combined total of 3,000 Regular and Reserve Officers and Men. By the end in 1945, it had expanded to over 400 ships and 100,000 personnel. 95,000 of these were amateur volunteers, who came from all walks and stations of life. Few had been to sea. In the desperate days 1941-43, when the life line across the Atlantic was in serious

danger of being severed, these young, eager but often terrified men, looked up to and depended upon, the knowledge, experience of the sea, and leadership qualities of men like Alan. And how well he responded. In succession he commanded four ships in the Battle of the Atlantic: the Corvettes Baddeck and Sackville; then one of the new Frigates the Matane and last the ex-British Destroyer the Saskatchewan. Command of a nation's warship is both wonderful and demanding. Continuous command in war involves a responsibility and strain with which many simply couldn't cope. Alan Easton, affectionately known to his ship's companies as "Pappy" (he was after all usually much older than most of his crew) did more than cope, and most magnificently.

So much depends upon the Captain. The men, ships,

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CNMT Trustees Remember Al Young



Lieutenant-Commander Albert E. (Al) Young, CD, RCN (Ret'd), who died Sept 17 in Halifax, will be remembered by his family, service colleagues and friends as a strong supporter of all things naval.

Al, with his ready smile and a story or two to relate, was a familiar figure at naval functions. He was a long-time member of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust (CNMT) and actively involved in the restoration of HMCS Sackville. Fellow trustees Ted Smith and Max Corkum recall his work and contributions over the years.

"Al was our expert in ceremonial procedures, visual and radio communications and did considerable work in procuring signal flags...and...provided the direction for the layout and construction of the radio room along with Herb Warman," Ted Smith says.

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