

# Lead and Line

Naval Officers' Association  
of Vancouver Island

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Volume 27 - Issue #2 - February 2012



Photo by Cpl Brandon O'Connell, MARPAC Imaging Services

HMCS Vancouver departing the Mediterranean and heading out into the Atlantic and home, Gibraltar in the distance

attached to Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 as part of *Operation Active Endeavour* since Nov. 15, is being replaced in the region by East Coast based HMCS *Charlottetown* and is expected to be alongside her home port sometime in mid-February. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4.**

## HMCS VANCOUVER RETURNS

*Courtesy Ben Green, Lookout*

HMCS *Vancouver* marked the end of her mission by flying the ship's Battle Ensign during her transit through the Strait of Gibraltar, thus leaving the operation area of the Mediterranean Sea. Ship and crew are now transiting back to Esquimalt.

After six months of active NATO operations in the Mediterranean Sea, HMCS *Vancouver* has begun her long journey home to Esquimalt.

The frigate, which has been

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**NEXT NOAVI LUNCHEON -MONDAY 27 February at Fireside Grill-Please see details on page 2**

**NOAVI LUNCHEON -Monday 27 February**–Programme Director Kathie Csomany 250-477-4175

**Speaker:** Dr. Jim Boutilier, Asia-Pacific Advisor to Commander Maritime Forces Pacific and our Maritime Affairs Director on the NOAVI Executive Committee.

**When:** 1130 for 1215 Monday 27 February

**Cost:** \$25.00 per person

**Where:** Fireside Grill, 4509 West Saanich Rd.,

**Reservations:** to Bud Rocheleau [bnhrocheleau@shaw.ca](mailto:bnhrocheleau@shaw.ca) or 250-386-3209

by noon on Thursday 23 February

**NOTE:** When making your reservation, please advise of any food allergies or sensitivities.

**FUTURE LUNCHEON at Fireside Grill**

**27 March:** -**Commander Brad Peats**, Commanding Officer HMCS *Vancouver* who will have recently returned from deployment on Operation *Mobile*, the Canadian contribution to Operation *Unified Protector*, the NATO-led international response to the crisis in Libya followed by Operation *Active Endeavour*, NATO's maritime counter-terrorism effort in the Mediterranean Sea.

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**COSTA CONCORDIA DISASTER 13 JANUARY 2012**

The Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera* reported that in a pre-planned stunt the captain, Francesco Schettino, allegedly performed a 'sail-by' perilously close to Giglio's rocky shores to please his head waiter, Antonello Tievoli, 46, who comes from the island. The cruise ship *Costa Concordia* now lies abandoned off the shore of the island of Giglio, in Giglio Porto, Italy. More than 4,000 people were on board when the ship hit rocks on Jan. 13, 2012. Currently there are 17 passengers & crew dead and 15 missing.

If you are receiving this newsletter by email, see ***Tail End Charlie*** page 11 for the AIS (automated information system) plot of the grounding of the *Costa Concordia*, & further information.

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** by *President Michael Morres*

Hope all have recovered from our recent bout of Winter! At least the snow disappeared in time for our lunch last week, which included the introduction of our new Glencairn crested Whisky glasses! I won't say much more here, as Kathie has written about them elsewhere in this issue, but only to note that there are only 21 left out of our initial order of five dozen, so if you would like some please don't wait too long before calling Kathie with your order. We can, and most likely will, order more, depending on demand, but that will take time as they have to come from the manufacturer in Scotland.

We have just received the annual call for nominations for NAC Awards – as a reminder: the Gold Medallion recognizes exceptional and outstanding service to NAC and to Canada. This service must be of a nationally-recognized nature that brings credit to NAC as a whole; the Silver Medallion recognizes outstanding service outside normal Branch activities,

either at the Branch, regional or national level; and the Bronze Medallion recognizes outstanding service and activities by a member at the Branch level, reflecting either a particular initiative or long-time productive service. I have asked Ken Summers to chair a small “Awards Committee” (me, Derek Greer, Bud Rocheleau) to collect and forward nominations from our Branch, which are required by Ottawa by 28 February – so time is short and I encourage anyone wishing to nominate a fellow member to do so at your earliest opportunity. Just send it by email to anyone on the Awards Committee and we will take it from there. Detailed criteria are contained in the Guidance Manual – if you need this, just ask and I will ensure you get a copy.

Short month = Short message ... Yours aye, Mike

**THE GLENCAIRN WHISKY GLASS CUSTOMIZED FOR NOAVI**by *Kathie Csomany*

To stave off the cold winter evenings, your executive has come up with a great way for NOAVI members and friends to enjoy a wee dram.



The Glencairn Whisky Glass personalized for you with the Naval crown and letters NOAVI etched beneath it. Special thanks are due to John Webber for his wonderful design and his infinite patience.

For those of you who have not encountered the Glencairn glass, its unique design was developed in conjunction with master blenders from the 5 largest whisky companies in Scotland to enhance the whisky drinking experience. In 2006 the Glencairn whisky glass was awarded the Queen's Award for Innovation.

The glasses are available at a cost of \$13.00 each in an individual decorated box or, for \$36.00, a set of 2 in a blue presentation box lined with blue satin (cost includes all taxes and customs fees).

To order, please call Kathie Csomany at [250-477-4175](tel:250-477-4175) or [csomany@islandnet.com](mailto:csomany@islandnet.com).

**NOTE:** This article of Kathie's has raised a good point. Is it spelled “whisky” or “whiskey” with an “e”???

**PRAIRIE SAILOR STATUE** by Ron Skelton via Jim Carruthers & Adm John Anderson

It was mentioned at the AGM last summer that the Winnipeg Branch NOAC/NAC in conjunction with the Naval Museum aboard H.M.C.S. *Chippawa* are conducting a fund drive to assist erecting a statue to 'Prairie Sailors'.



This is the Marquette showing the statue

Any assistance you can provide us with in the publication of the project would be greatly appreciated.

Winnipeg during the 2nd World War was the third largest recruiting centre next to Halifax and Vancouver. After the war many sailors from the prairies relocated to other areas of Canada and we would like to make them aware of this project.

If you can help in any way with a donation or by passing this information on to others it would be appreciated.

Corporate donations are needed and will also be gladly appreciated.

If a gift is given in memory of or as a remembrance an appropriate card will be sent to that person. Tax receipts will be issued for all donations of \$10.00 or more.

Details of the statue can be viewed at the museum web site and a brochure can be printed detailing the 'Prairie Sailor' statue. See <http://naval-museum.mb.ca>

Yours aye, Ron Skelton [rskelton@ms.umanitoba.ca](mailto:rskelton@ms.umanitoba.ca)

**MILITARY-MARITIME AFFAIRS****RUSSIAN NAVY CAPTURES & BLOWS UP SOMALI PIRATES**

TRUE-TURTLE & YouTube via Bob Bedeski

How about that. No worry over Political Correctness on the part of the Russkies.



- The Russians captured the Pirates, tied them up, put them back on their own boats, then set them all on fire - puff no more Pirates!

**NO POLITICAL CORRECTNESS BS HERE!**

A video shows Russian Navy commandos on a Somali pirate ship shortly after the pirates had captured a Russian oil tanker. The Euro Union navy that patrols these waters would not interfere because they feared there could be casualties.

All explanations are in Russian with a single exception of when a wounded pirate says something in English and the Russian soldier says "*This is not a fishing boat*". All conversations between the commandos are in Russian. If you don't understand Russian, the pictures speak for themselves.

The soldiers freed their compatriots and the tanker. The Russian Navy Commandos moved the pirates back to their own (pirate) ship, searched the pirate ship for weapons and explosives and then they left the ship and exploded it with all remaining pirates hand-cuffed to it.

The commandos sank the pirate ship along with the pirates and without any court proceedings, lawyers etc. That is, they used the anti-piracy laws of the 18th and 19th centuries where the captain of the rescuing ship has the right to decide what to do with the pirates. Usually, they were hanged.

I would think from now on, Russian ships will not be targets for Somali pirates.

For members with computers, to view this video, click on <http://www.true-turtle.livejournal.com/85315.html>.

## **HMCS VANCOUVER RETURNS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

The five-week transit back to West Coast waters is the final leg in a tasking that saw *Vancouver* originally deploy on *Operation Mobile*, Canada's part in Operation Unified Protector, the NATO-led international response to the crisis in Libya. Subsequently, *Vancouver* was reassigned to *Operation Active Endeavour*, NATO's maritime counter-terrorism effort in the Mediterranean Sea.

*"We transited the Straits of Gibraltar earlier today; we're westbound and you can see on the crew's faces that we're starting to think of home,"* says Cdr Bradley Peats, Commanding Officer of *Vancouver* in a phone interview. *"We're certainly excited to get back after transiting the Atlantic, through the Panama Canal, and up back towards Esquimalt. To say we're excited about coming home would be a bit of an understatement."*

*Vancouver* left Esquimalt on July 10 and started its first patrol off the Libyan port city of Misrata on Aug. 24. Over the next 58 days the frigate completed three patrols escorting minesweepers, boarding vessels of interest, and gathering information on the movements of Gaddafi forces. *"Unlike exercises where we train and prepare ourselves for any sort of mission or conflict, we were actually in a zone where there was a real threat presence, in particular when we were operating off the coast of Libya,"* says Cdr Peats.

For much of September and October, *Vancouver* enforced the arms embargo and no-fly zone mandated by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973 of Mar. 17, 2011. Cdr Peats says he has no doubt lives were saved because of their highly visible presence in the region. In particular, he notes the safe delivery of humanitarian aid into Libyan ports as a highlight of his vessel's efforts. When they first arrived in Misrata, a World Food Program ship was able to enter the harbour without trouble, due in part to the work of both *Charlottetown* and *Vancouver*. As Gaddafi forces weakened, *Vancouver* was able to provide safe passage for humanitarian aid in other ports.

*"By the end of the mission on the 31st of October, we were operating off Tripoli and that same World Food Program ship was now proceeding into Tripoli harbour,"* Cdr Peats said. *"Throughout the course of our time on station, we were able to ensure every Libyan port was open for maritime commerce."*

During the waning days of the conflict, with *Vancouver* patrolling about 12 miles off the Libyan coast, they were able to track the National Transitional Council (NTC) fighters' final push into Sirte.

*"Certainly at night, you were able to see the rocket fire. None of it was directed at us, but we were able to see as NTC forces advanced towards the city of Sirte,"* says Cdr Peats. *"We were able to report that back and provide situational awareness to the NATO headquarters."*


By November, Gaddafi had been killed and Sirte had fallen. Two weeks later, on Nov. 15, *Vancouver's* role shifted when the Canadian government tasked it to remain in the region as part of *Operation Active Endeavour*.

For the next six weeks the frigate, along with its embarked Sea King detachment, patrolled every corner of the Mediterranean - from France to Algeria, Spain to Israel - in an effort to deter terrorist activities in the area. As part of its maritime surveillance task, *Vancouver* was responsible for hailing and investigating ships that did not seem to fit into the local *"pattern of life."*

Now en route to the confines of Esquimalt harbour, Cdr Peats reiterates how proud he is of what they accomplished during their six months in theatre. *"I want to recognize the hard work and dedication of the crew. Without a good crew, no ship will move, float, or fight,"* he says. *"These sailors, soldiers, airmen, and airwomen are the finest, most professional, and most skilled ship's company I have had the pleasure to sail with."*

He adds that without the unwavering support of the crew's husbands, wives and families in Victoria and across Canada, the success of *Vancouver's* deployment would not have been possible.

Contributions to The Lead & Line costs gratefully received from Associate Member David Nicholson



David has been providing trusted investment advice for over a quarter of a century!

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HMCS *Charlottetown* left Halifax on January 8 to replace *Vancouver* in Task Force Endeavour, the fleet that conducts *Operation Active Endeavour*. The Government of Canada has said it will maintain a maritime presence in the Mediterranean region until the end of this year.

**A/Ed NOTE:** At a Change of Command Ceremony onboard *Vancouver* in the Azores on 13 January, Cdr Bradley Peats was relieved by Cdr David Mazur. NOAVI Program Director Kathie Csomany & Director of Reserves & Cadets Gerry Pash have arranged for Cdr Peats to be speaker at our Fireside Grill NOAVI luncheon on 27 March.

## **MARPAC DAILY INTELLIGENCE BRIEF 25 January 2012**

### **UNITED STATES NAVY TO KEEP 11 AIRCRAFT CARRIERS**

CBS News, 21 January 2012

US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta has ended speculation regarding the future of the aircraft carrier fleet by pledging that the United States Navy will maintain a force of 11 large-deck carriers despite upcoming budget cuts.



USS Enterprise CVN-65. -Wikipedia

Many, including Robert Gates, Panetta's predecessor as secretary of defense, had questioned the feasibility of maintaining the force in times of financial restraint; some had suggested that the retirement of USS *Enterprise*, the oldest of the super carriers, would present an opportunity to scale back the fleet to ten ships.

Panetta dismissed this idea, however, suggesting that the carrier fleet was too important to the projection of US naval and air power to regions like the Indo-Pacific, and that the maintenance of carrier strike groups had wide support both within Congress and the White House.

As if to underscore this commitment, it was also announced that *Enterprise* and her strike group would be dispatched to the Persian Gulf in March, joining the USS *Abraham Lincoln* to help deter

Iranian threats to close the strategic Strait of Hormuz. *Enterprise* will be retired at the end of the year, leaving a 33-month gap before the newest carrier, USS *Gerald R. Ford*, is commissioned. There has been some suggestion that another carrier could be transferred to the west coast to support the government's strategic emphasis on the Asia Pacific, though reports are conflicting as to which ship might be moved.

### **INDIA BECOMES 6TH NATION TO JOIN ELITE NUCLEAR SUBMARINE CLUB**

Defense News 23 January, Times of India 24 January & The Hindu 18 January 2012

At a ceremony near Vladivostok on Monday, the Indian Navy took possession of the nuclear-powered submarine INS *Chakra II* on a 10-year lease. The USD \$900 million contract for the Russian-built, *Akula II* class attack boat was signed in 2004, and was supposed to be completed in 2009.

India already operates 14 conventional submarines, and is now the sixth nation to operate nuclear vessels; its fleet also includes the Indian-built nuclear missile submarine INS *Arihant*, which is undergoing testing and is scheduled to be operational in 2013. India aims to fit its new submarines with nuclear warheads in the future to complete its "nuclear weapon triad" - the capacity to fire nuclear missiles from land, air and sea.

Several other Russian-built ships are scheduled to be delivered to India this year; the stealth frigate INS *Teg* should be ready in April, and the \$2.33 billion refurbished aircraft carrier *Admiral Gorshkov* - to be renamed INS *Vikramaditya* - should be ready in December.

India currently buys around 70 percent of its military equipment from Russia, but its orders have frequently met with long delays, recently spurring India to consider other suppliers such as Israel.



## **CHINA DEVELOPING UNMANNED AIRCRAFT TO COUNTER U.S. FORCES**

*Asahi Shimbun, 24 January 2012*

The Chinese Society of Aeronautics and Astronautics is reported to have sponsored a contest of unmanned aircraft late last year, in which design teams from a variety of universities and research institutions competed for cash prizes. Japanese media claims that the contest is part of an overall Chinese effort to improve its unmanned



aerial vehicle (UAV) capability to better support its future maritime operations, which are predicted to rely heavily on UAVs and anti-ship missiles. Evidence suggests that the Chinese military is hoping to use the unmanned aircraft to help locate and target enemy ships operating in the Western Pacific, then launch shore-based missiles to neutralize them.

Commentators suggest that this is part of a sea denial strategy designed to prevent foreign warships from entering the seas around disputed areas like Taiwan or the South China Sea. It is also believed that there is a growing interest in equipping future aircraft carriers with primarily unmanned combat aircraft, rather than conventional jet fighters, though this capability is years from development for any of the world's militaries.

## **CANADA'S SUBMARINES** by John Webber

A submarine is one of the most complex pieces of equipment on the planet. It must supply everything it needs while below the ocean and navigate under the sea by using an inertial guidance mapping system that is an



underwater version of a GPS system.

A submarine is a thousand times more complex than an automobile and more complex than a space station. There are over a million parts on a submarine. Each part must pass stringent specifications and tests to meet the rigors of underwater warfare. Canada's *Victoria* class submarines weigh 2,400 tons and have over 100 gauges, 1,000 valves, 100 kilometres of cables, 2 kilometres of pipes and 100 digital sensors. Each sub has a crew of 49 working 6-hour shifts. With all its equipment, it is extremely tough to find a space just to hang a picture.

I know a lot of home garages like that. While an automobile driver can stop any time to eat or fuel, a submarine must carry all its food, fuel and air, operate 24 hours a day and must withstand up to 300 tons per square meter sea pressure. A sub also has its own fire department, electric generators, repair shop, office, food service, crew quarters and, of course, weapon systems.

When purchasing a new computer or a used high tech submarine, there is always compromise. Each size and type of submarine has advantages and disadvantages just like an automobile or a computer. There are no used submarine dealerships and because they require maintenance one-third of the time, they are purchased in groups of three or four to ensure two are available.

During each maintenance period, the sub crew takes time off with their family or obtains further technical training. The submarine must have all its systems and equipment certified regularly to meet stringent standards and ensure the proper safety of its crew. While an auto is maintained from the outside, most submarines parts are removed from the inside and are maintained by over 1,000 workers. Canada's submarines are an advanced diesel-electric prototype designed by the Royal Navy. This new design made it a challenge for our navy to change the required maintenance procedures from the previous Canadian *Oberon* class submarines to our new Victoria class submarines.

Submarines by nature are hidden and sneaky. There are over 40 nations with submarines. A sub during peacetime is primarily used for training the crews of warships and aircraft to locate foreign submarines. They are also used for intelligence gathering, and to locate smuggling or illegal fishing operations. Submarines are necessary to help maintain our nation's security and are an asset to our NATO commitment. Tactically, one submarine can tie up a whole fleet of surface ships searching for it.

The lessons of WWII taught us that we must have our navy trained and equipped for any conflict. Homeowners put up a fence around their home to stop an intruder, we must also put up a defense around our country to stop an intruder. Omitting submarines from a navy would be like

building only the top half of a fence around your home.

Canada's new *Victoria* class submarines are extremely capable and stealthy. They will provide the needed underwater support for our navy during the next 20 to 30 years.

**ADDENDUM by John Webber:** The article is based on my formal interview and tour with the Commanding Officer of HMCS *VICTORIA* in December.

My knowledge comes from many years of reading and research on submarines and naval vessels coupled with over 40 years as a member.

**NOTE:** For those receiving Lead & Line electronically, see John's complete set of *Victoria* photos in Tail End Charlie starting on page 15.



## **SINKING OF THE ARGENTINEAN CRUISER *Belgrano* DURING FALKLANDS WAR 1982** by David Wilkes, Daily Mail 26 Dec 11 via David Cooper & Michael Morres

It was one of the most controversial events of the Falklands War. The sinking of the Argentine warship the *General Belgrano* by a Royal Navy submarine with the loss of 323 lives led to accusations of unnecessary force by Britain and became a cause celebre for anti-war campaigners.



It was claimed the ship was returning to its home port and was outside an exclusion zone imposed by Whitehall.

**Invasion:** The Argentinean cruiser *General Belgrano* sinks after being hit by a torpedo as its crew takes to life rafts in the South Atlantic Ocean during the Falklands War in 1982.

But now, just months before the 30th anniversary of the attack, a new book based on a

top secret report has revealed that the *Belgrano* was heading into the exclusion zone when it was hit.

The contents of the report have never been publicly revealed before, but its existence was hinted at by Margaret Thatcher, the prime minister at the time, a year after the attack of May 2, 1982.

Quizzed about the *Belgrano* by teacher Diana Gould on BBC TV's Nationwide programme during the 1983 election campaign, Mrs Thatcher said: *'One day, all of the facts, in about 30 years' time, will be published.'*

**Resolute:** Margaret Thatcher sent a task force of 100 ships to regain control of the Falklands Islands after the Argentine junta invaded.

The book's author, Major David Thorp, tells how after the war Mrs Thatcher 'requested a complete and thorough investigation into the sinking as pressure was building from opposition parliamentary backbenchers . . . for a ministerial enquiry'.

Major Thorp, who spent 34 years working as a signals expert in an elite military intelligence unit, was 'provided with every conceivable document, file, report and note imaginable that related to, or included the name, *Belgrano*'.

These included the Official War Diary from HMS *Conqueror*, the hunter-killer submarine which fired the two torpedoes that sunk the *Belgrano* in the South Atlantic.

All the information was covered by the highest security classification. It is thought that much of the material will be made public via the National Archives next year



under the 30-year rule on the release of secret documents.

Major Thorp, now 72, was in charge of a signals interception section hidden on the amphibious warship *Intrepid* as it travelled with the Task Force.

In his book *The Silent Listener*, he writes: *'Shortly after the UK's announcement of the exclusion zone, the Argentinean Navy HQ notified its warships, possibly for the purpose of re-grouping, of a pre-arranged rendezvous (RV) point. When the co-ordinates for the RV were plotted on a map, the actual location, though east of the Falkland Islands, was nevertheless inside the 200 nautical miles exclusion zone. Some considerable time prior to the Conqueror firing its torpedoes, my analysis revealed that*



*the General Belgrano had been instructed to alter course and head in the direction of the RV inside the exclusion*

zone. 'The findings of my report stated that the destination of the vessel was not to her home port as the Argentine Junta stated, but the objective of the ship was to relocate to a pre-arranged RV within the exclusion zone.'

**Sunk:** The Argentinean cruiser *Belgrano* was torpedoed by HMS *Conqueror* with the loss of 368 lives.

Major Thorp's report was never disclosed by Mrs Thatcher because she did not want to reveal the extent of Britain's ability to intercept enemy electronic and radio signals. The book was cleared for publication by the security services.

The strike on the *Belgrano* signalled the first loss of life in the Falklands conflict.

Two days later Argentina hit back with a missile attack on the British cruiser HMS *Sheffield*, killing 20.

The sea battle continued for many more weeks, then the conflict turned to the land before the Argentine forces finally surrendered & peace was declared on June 20, 1982.

Read more on your computer at: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2078749/Belgrano-fair-target-headed-Falklands-exclusion-zone-NOT-port-according-secret-dossier.html#ixzz1km9wtPl6>

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## **SERVICE OFFICER'S REPORT** by *Irvine Hare* 250-592-2268 or email [ihare@telus.net](mailto:ihare@telus.net)

### **Visits and Visitors**

**Mrs. Margaret Bartlett:** Glengarry Hospital,  
Richmond unit, 1780 Fairfield Rd.

**LCdr. Ted Clayards:** Lodge at Broadmead

**Cdr \*Ted & Addie Semmens:** Lodge at Broadmead  
Ted -Rm A430 250-592-2345

**LCdr Bill Creighton:** Daffodil House, Sunridge Lodge,  
361 Bundock Pl., Duncan BC

**Lt.\*Sheila Davis:** 12-3958 Cedar Hill Rd. 250-721-1541

**Cdr. Bob Luke:** 3967 Olympic View Dr  
250-478-7560

**Cdr. \*Rusty MacKay:** 4619 Elk Lake Drive  
250-727-6980

**Cdr. Harry Palmer:** Palm South,  
Broadmead Lodge

The \* asterisk with the name indicates that this is a person who is near to a phone and would appreciate a call. If you would like to call the spouse, it might be more useful. Please do not hesitate to phone any member of the Visitation Committee to discuss the matter.

**John Mason** at 250-477-7496 continues to live on his own and would appreciate a phone call. *Irvine Hare*

### **Associate Visitation Committee Members** (See *May Lead & Line* for Terms of Reference)

**Geri Hinton** 250-477-7334, **Elizabeth Campbell** 250-598-1837, **Lea Shaw** 250-592-4404

### **Visitation Committee Members**

**Michael Ellis** 250-658-2473 <[m.ellis@shaw.ca](mailto:m.ellis@shaw.ca)>, **Irvine Hare** 250-592-2268 <[ihare@telus.net](mailto:ihare@telus.net)>

## **EDITOR FELICITY HANINGTON UPDATE** by *Felicity*, 21 January 2012

Things are slowly improving in our household. I finished the last of my treatments (18 months worth!) at Christmas and am now working on rehab. Larry is at 3 months since his surgery and is allowed to drive again which relieves the stress on the family a lot! Charlotte is not well but we expect that for another year or two. The rheumatic fever is well entrenched and she is on a yearlong course of antibiotics to try and shift it. She needs a cane but managed to order one from abroad which she is well pleased with. It is a lovely conservative black and has a sword inside it!

Larry and I have both signed up for the heart program's 3 month exercise rehab program which has not actually started yet because of the snow. We are both hoping that another three months will see us largely recovered and ready for another move and a job hunt. We only rented in downtown Victoria for a year to put us all closer to hospitals and the cancer clinic and it is time to find something less expensive.

So in a nutshell we are on the upswing. Our profound thanks to NOAVI for helping us with meals and driving and a particularly fond thank you to Geri Hinton for coordinating it all. We are truly grateful! Felicity

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## **A/Editor Notes:**

- (1) Good for Felicity, Larry & Charlotte and well done Geri! We look forward to getting Felicity back as Editor.
- (2) If you have a story for *Lead & Line*, please contact me as per listing on page 2.

**Please note: CUT OFF DATE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR MARCH LEAD & LINE IS SUNDAY 26 FEBRUARY**

## **TAIL END CHARLIE (Electronic Version Only)**

### **MILITARY-MARITIME AFFAIRS**

#### **COSTA CONCORDIA DISASTER 13 JANUARY 2012** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

We continue to get mixed messages as to just what happened onboard *Costa Concordia* on 13 January. Here is the text of an illuminating email from Adm John Anderson which shows the AIS (automated information system) plot of the grounding of the *Costa Concordia*.



**Costa Concordia aground on the island of Giglio, Italy**

*“ From the time of impact 20:46 the captain realized the ship had to be beached. At 21:09 he starts working his thrusters and azipod’s (propulsion system like big outboards extending down from the hull near the stern of the ship) providing the port azi wasn’t torn off.*

*Grounding the sinking vessel was a good decision in providing safety of the passengers and crew.” John.*

On a pc, \*press the Ctrl key & then left click on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZ4LCVa2ts0> ) or <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZboaj2CeJg>.)

We will continue to follow the news & perhaps have a more conclusive article in next month’s newsletter.

#### **COSTA CONCORDIA DISASTER 13 JANUARY 2012** via Bob Bedeski

The current plight of the *Costa Concordia* reminds one of a comment made by Winston Churchill.

After his retirement he was cruising the Mediterranean in an Italian cruise liner and some Italian journalists asked why an ex British Prime Minister should choose an Italian ship.

*“There are three things I like about being in an Italian cruise ship,” said Churchill. “First their cuisine is unsurpassed. Second their service is superb. And then, in time of an emergency, there is none of this nonsense about women and children first.”*

## **IRAN: STRAIT OF HORMUZ, KEY OIL SUPPLY ROUTE, EASILY CLOSED** by the Huffington Post 28 January via Lloyd Skaalen



Iran's Navy Commander Admiral Habibollah Sayari points at a map during a press conference in Tehran on December 22, 2010, as saying that Iran will launch 10 days of naval drills from December 24, covering east of Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman to the Gulf of Aden. (Hamed Jafarnejad/AFP/Getty Images) By ALI AKBAR DAREINI and TAREK EL-TABLAWY, Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran -- The U.S. strongly warned Iran on Wednesday against closing a vital Persian Gulf waterway that carries one-sixth of the world's oil supply, after Iran threatened to choke off traffic through the Strait of Hormuz if Washington imposes sanctions targeting the country's crude exports.

The increasingly heated exchange raises new tensions in a standoff that has the potential to spark military reprisals and spike oil prices to levels that could batter an already fragile global economy.

Iran's navy chief said Wednesday that it would be "very easy" for his country's forces to close the strategic Strait of Hormuz, the passage at the mouth of the Persian Gulf through which about 15 million barrels of oil pass daily. It was the second such warning by Iran in two days, reflecting Tehran's concern that the West is about to impose new sanctions that could hit the country's biggest source of revenue, oil.

"Iran has comprehensive control over the strategic waterway," Adm. Habibollah Sayari told state-run Press TV, as the country was in the midst of a 10-day military drill near the strategic waterway.

The comments drew a quick response from the U.S.

"This is not just an important issue for security and stability in the region, but is an economic lifeline for countries in the Gulf, to include Iran," Pentagon press secretary George Little said. "Interference with the transit or passage of vessels through the Strait of Hormuz will not be tolerated."

Separately, Bahrain-based U.S. Navy 5th Fleet spokeswoman Lt. Rebecca Rebarich said the Navy is "always ready to counter malevolent actions to ensure freedom of navigation."

Rebarich declined to say whether the U.S. force had adjusted its presence or readiness in the Gulf in response to Iran's comments, but said the Navy "maintains a robust presence in the region to deter or counter destabilizing activities, while safeguarding the region's vital links to the international community."

Iran's threat to seal off the Gulf, surrounded by oil-rich Gulf states, reflect its concerns over the prospect that the Obama administration will impose sanctions over its nuclear program that would severely hit its biggest revenue source. Iran is the world's fourth-largest oil producer, pumping about 4 million barrels a day.

Gulf Arab nations appeared ready to at least ease market tensions. A senior Saudi Arabian oil official told The Associated Press that Gulf Arab nations are ready to step in to offset any potential loss of exports from Iran. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment on the issue.

Saudi Arabia, which has been producing about 10 million barrels per day, has an overall production capacity of over 12 million barrels per day and is widely seen as the only OPEC member with sufficient spare capacity to offset major shortages.

What remains unclear is what routes the Gulf nations could take to move the oil to markets if Iran goes through with its threat.

About 15 million barrels per day pass through the Hormuz Strait, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

There are some pipelines that could be tapped, but Gulf oil leaders, who met in Cairo on Dec. 24, declined to say whether they had discussed alternate routes or what they may be.

The Saudi official's comment, however, appeared to allay some concerns. The U.S. benchmark crude futures contract fell \$1.98 by the close of trading Wednesday on the New York Mercantile Exchange, but still hovered just below \$100 per barrel.

U.S. State Department spokesman Mark Toner played down the Iranian threats as "rhetoric," saying, "we've seen these kinds of comments before."

While many analysts believe that Iran's warnings are little more than posturing, they still highlight both the delicate nature of the oil market, which moves as much on rhetoric as supply and demand fundamentals.

Iran relies on crude sales for about 80 percent of its public revenues, and sanctions or even a pre-emptive measure by Tehran to withhold its crude from the market would already batter its flailing economy.

IHS Global Insight analyst Richard Cochrane said in a report Wednesday that markets are "jittery over the possibility" of Iran's blockading the strait. But "such action would also damage Iran's economy, and risk retaliation from the U.S. and allies that could further escalate instability in the region."

"Accordingly, it is not likely to be a decision that the Iranian leadership will take lightly," he said.

Earlier sanctions targeting the oil and financial sector added new pressures to the country's already struggling economy. Government cuts in subsidies on key goods like food and energy have angered Iranians, stoking inflation while the country's currency steadily depreciates.

The impetus behind the subsidies cut plan, pushed through parliament by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, was to reduce budget costs and would pass money directly to the poor. But critics have pointed to it as another in a series of bad policy moves by the hardline president.

So far, Western nations have been unable to agree on sanctions targeting oil exports, even as they argue that Iran is trying to develop a nuclear weapon. Tehran maintains its nuclear program - already the subject of several rounds of sanctions - is purely peaceful.

The U.S. Congress has passed a bill that penalizes foreign firms that do business with the Iran Central Bank, a move that would heavily hurt Iran's ability to export crude. European and Asian nations use the bank for transactions to import Iranian oil.

President Barack Obama has said he will sign the bill despite his misgivings. China and Russia have opposed such measures.

Sanctions specifically targeting Iran's oil exports would likely temporarily spike oil prices to levels that could weigh heavily on the world economy.

Closing the Strait of Hormuz would hit even harder. Energy consultant and trader The Schork Group estimated crude would jump to above \$140 per barrel. Conservatives in Iran claim global oil prices will jump to \$250 a barrel should the waterway be closed.

By closing the strait, Iran may aim to send the message that its pain from sanctions will also be felt by others. But it has equally compelling reasons not to try.

The move would put the country's hardline regime straight in the cross-hairs of the world, including nations that have so far been relative allies. Much of Iran's crude goes to Europe and to Asia.

"Shutting down the strait ... is the last bullet that Iran has and therefore we have to express some doubt that they would do this and at the same time lose their support from China and Russia," said analyst Olivier Jakob of Petromatrix in Switzerland.

Iran has adopted an aggressive military posture in recent months in response to increasing threats from the U.S. and Israel of possible military action to stop Iran's nuclear program.

The Iranian navy's exercises, which began on Saturday, involve submarines, missile drills, torpedoes and drones. A senior Iranian commander said Wednesday that the country's navy is also planning to test advanced missiles and "smart" torpedoes during the maneuvers.

The war games cover a 1,250-mile (2,000-kilometer) stretch off the Strait of Hormuz, northern parts of the Indian Ocean and into the Gulf of Aden near the entrance to the Red Sea and could bring Iranian ships into proximity with U.S. Navy vessels in the area.

The moderate news website, [irdiplomacy.ir](http://irdiplomacy.ir), says the show of strength is intended to send a message to the West that Iran is capable of sealing off the waterway.

"The war games ... are a warning to the West that should oil and central bank sanctions be stepped up, (Iran) is able to cut the lifeblood of the West and Arabs," it said, adding that the West "should regard the maneuvers as a direct message."

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El-Tablawy reported from Cairo. Associated Press writers Adam Schreck in Dubai and Abdullah Shihri in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, contributed.

## **IRAN CONDUCTS NAVAL EXERCISES**

On a pc \*press the Ctrl key & left click on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EILn6QTYdqs>)

**NOTE:** \*Our thanks to Kathie Csomany and her son Steve for providing us with the methods of opening the YouTube videos here and on page 11.

## **USN RESPONSE TO IRANIAN THREATS**

One should note the aggressive stance being taken by the US Navy in response to Iranian threats.

The Bahrain-based U.S. 5th Fleet's spokeswoman subsequently warned that any disruption at the strait "*will not be tolerated.*" The spokeswoman, Lt. Rebecca Rebarich, said "*the U.S. Navy is always ready to counter malevolent actions to ensure freedom of navigation.*"

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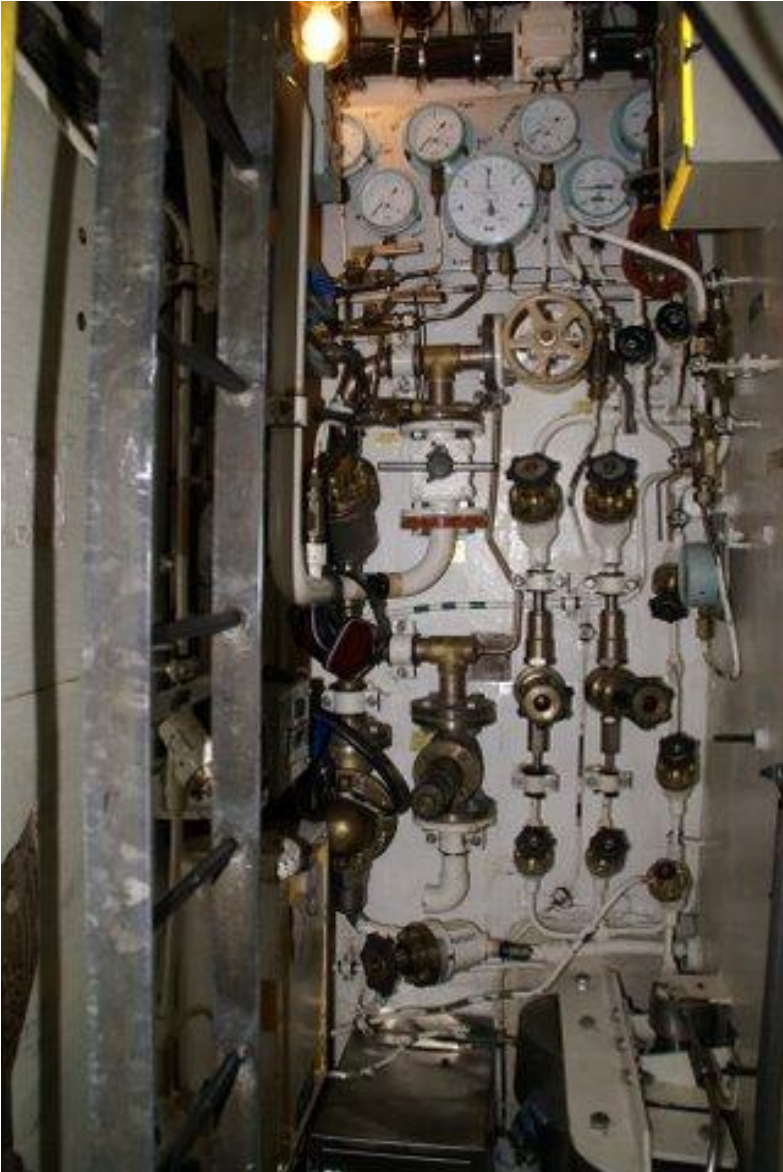
**CANADA'S SUBMARINES** by John Webber *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8*

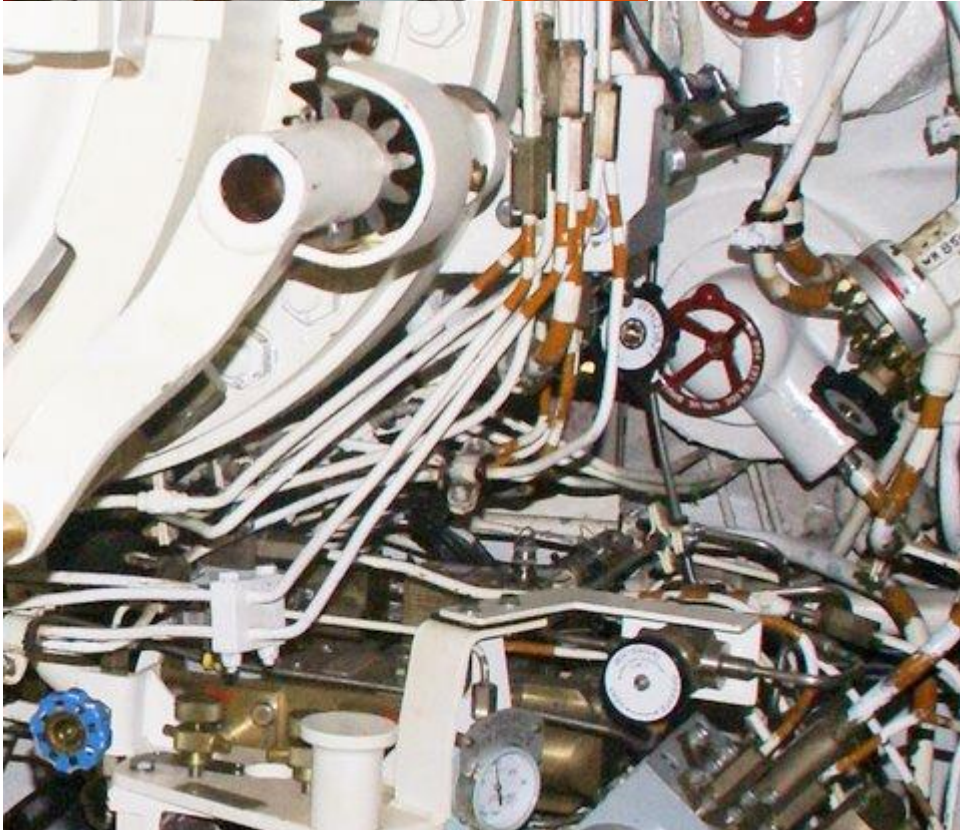
Further to John Webber's article starting on page 7, here are John's complete set of excellent photos that he took during his December 2011 tour of HMCS *Victoria* with *Victoria's* Commanding Officer.















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**THROUGH THE WELLAND CANAL** *via George Schober*

The following link is to a trip through the Welland Canal

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U15Fwo9tbJ4>

(Again, on a pc, holding your “Ctrl” key down, left click on the above tab & the video should start.)