



# NEWS

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## Preserving the RCN's ceremonial flagship – HMCS *Haida*

By Alan Lenarduzzi



In 2016 and 2018, docking and refit work was carried out on Canada's "fightingest ship," the now 76-year-old Tribal-class destroyer, HMCS *Haida*. Since 2002, the ship has been a floating National Historic Site under the care and supervision of Parks Canada in Hamilton, Ontario, and last year was designated as the ceremonial flagship of the Royal Canadian Navy. The refit work, needed mainly to repair and preserve the ship's steel structures, was conducted by primary contractor Heddle Marine Service Inc. in Hamilton, along with local subcontractors.

HMCS *Haida* had her keel laid in England in September 1941, and was commissioned in August 1943. The ship saw extensive service during the Second World War and Korean War. In 1965, two years after the ship was decommissioned from the RCN, a group of naval veterans purchased *Haida* and moved her to Lake Ontario. Today, Friends of HMCS *Haida* [[www.hmcshaida.com](http://www.hmcshaida.com)] continue to support the ship through their mission of "preserving, promoting and protecting the legacy" of *Haida* through multi-tiered education programs.

The intent of the docking in 2016 was to add steel cladding where survey had indicated some thinning of the hull plates. The work also included replacement of wasted hull framing and interior steel decks. In addition, all openings in the hull, including the sonar

dome cavity and the stern tubes for the propeller shafts, were sealed to prevent any further ingress of water, and to ensure the long-term integrity of the hull. Magnesium anodes were affixed to the hull to mitigate any potential future corrosion. Finally, the underwater hull was given two coats of epoxy and two coats of anti-fouling paint, while the hull above the waterline was given two new coats of paint.

The latest work in 2018 included necessary repairs to the steel weather decks, painting of the superstructure, and a safer modern electrical infrastructure that meets code. The ship looks fantastic, a tribute to the officers and men who crewed her. HMCS *Haida* National Historic Site at Pier 9 in Hamilton Harbour is a piece of our naval history that remains an important connection to the past for current and future generations who may want to know more about Canada's role in times of war and peace.

*CNTHA member Alan Lenarduzzi is Senior Marine Engineer at SeaTyme Marine in Ottawa. He is part of a team of ship repair experts who support, inspect and oversee marine work for Parks Canada.*



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