

United Services Officers' Club

Charlottetown

United Services Officers' Club

This narrative is a brief record of the foundation, organization and subsequent events pertaining to the history of the United Services Officers' Club, Charlottetown Branch - a member of the Federation of Military and United Services Institutes of Canada.

It pays tribute to all who contributed to its founding and progress but does not presume to single out individuals or events except in a general way.

The nominal lists are confined to those of the original executive, the original or charter members and the successive Presidents to the time of writing.

J. J. Connolly, V.R.D.

Capt. (N)

THE UNITED SERVICES OFFICERS' CLUB, CHARLOTTETOWN BRANCH - MEMBER
OF THE FEDERATION OF MILITARY AND UNITED SERVICES INSTITUTES OF
CANADA

The Charlottetown Armories, prior to the First World War and up to 1964, was situated at the West end of Kent Street, opposite Beaconsfield Heritage Foundation in the space now occupied as a parking site.

This was the headquarters of the various Prince Edward Island Militia units where recruitment, training and recreation were carried out. Space was also allocated to stowage of equipment. One room was fitted out as an Officers' mess for the use of the Officers of each unit, or on occasion, combined units.

In 1932, an invitation was extended by the Commanding Officer of the Royal Canadian Volunteer Reserve (R.C.N.V.R.) to the Officers of the local Militia Units to meet and discuss the forming of a club for the Officers of the various units of the British Empire Forces within the Province.

The meeting was held March 7, 1932, in the R.C.N.V.R. Headquarters, Ex-Navy League Building situated on Haviland Street where the Sacred Heart Home now stands. The meeting was well attended and it was decided that such a club should be formed and to be called "The Army and Navy Club of Prince Edward Island." A committee was appointed to draw up a temporary constitution and by-laws and to appoint a slate of Officers to act until the first regular meeting to be held on March 21, 1932, at which time the first executive would be elected.

Also at this meeting the Commanding Officer, R.C.N.V.R. offered the use of the wardroom to the club, should the club's formation be approved. This offer, highly appreciated, was

accepted.

On March, 21, 1932, having approved the formation of the club, the members held a meeting in the R.C.N.V.R. Headquarters. Committees were appointed, one of which was the Nominating Committee. This Committee submitted a slate of Officers which was presented to the meeting and was moved for adoption, en bloc, listed as follows:

President:	Lieut. Col. G . E. Full, V.D., P.E.I.L.H.
Vice President:	Lieut. Cdr. G. H. Buntain, R.C.N.V.R.
Treasurer:	Capt. C. M. Williams, R.C.A.M.C.
Secretary:	Major P. S. Fielding, M.M., R.C.A.
Committee:	Lieut. Col. P. W. McNevin, D.C.M., R.C.A.
	Major F. B. Conrad, M.M., R.C.C.S.
	Major W. J. McDonald, P.E.I. Highlanders

This constituted the first slate of Officers of the Army and Navy Club of Prince Edward Island.

The main objectives of the Club as laid down in the Constitution were:

- (1) the encouragement and promotion of the study of Military Arts, Science and Literature.
- (2) the promotion of a better acquaintance and greater friendship among serving and retired Officers of the Canadian Armed Forces.
- (3) the maintenance of club premises for the convenience, entertainment and recreation of its members.

Membership in the club was restricted to persons holding or having held a commission in the Armed Forces of Canada or an allied country. A limited number of Association members were accepted. All members, once accepted, were informed of the Constitution and By-Laws and were expected to accept the responsibilities of conduct becoming and expected of an Officer and

a gentleman

All members were subject to payment of dues annually - active members \$2.00, associate members \$1.00.

Members were not permitted to introduce guests except on the occasion of male visitors to the Island.

Records show that when the Club was organized in 1932, it had a paid-up membership of 31 active members. In 1933, membership was 64 active and 6 associate. In 1934, membership was 76 active and 9 association. In 1935, membership was 87 active and 14 associate.

The steady increase in membership is indicative of the popularity of an interest in the club. This interest was kept up by the introduction of frequent lectures given by Speakers who were well-known for their experiences and ability to expound on military and civil affairs.

Mess dinners and short parties were organized. The annual Armistice Ball became the entertainment highlight of the season. Topics of discussion were forthcoming from visiting Officers of other military districts, and local Officers returning from training or courses and were always of interest to all members.

In 1936, the Navy League sold the building occupied by the Club up to this time. The Naval Service rented from the Provincial Government, the Simms Building on Kent Street, now occupied by the Maritime Christian College for use as R.C.N.V.R. Headquarters - a building which served the purpose very well.

Arrangements were made at the same time to accommodate the Army Navy Club in the same building - having separate rooms and a separate entrance on Hillsboro Street - where the

Maritime Christian College Book Store is not situated. This move provided more space and facilities to accommodate the growing membership and activities of the Club.

In order to maintain the prestige demanded by Members and expected by others, a system was introduced by which a Member carried out the duties of "Orderly Officer" daily in rotation. His duties were inspect the Club between 11:00 a.m. and closing time, checking on cleanliness, reporting on irregularities and making suggestions for the improvement of the Club. There was no financial obligation on the Club for the use of rooms in the Navy League Building or subsequently the R.C.N.V.R. Headquarters on Kent Street. Club expenses were financed by membership dues, sale of refreshments, dinners, dances, etc. War souvenirs, pictures and books were donated by Members and friends and as funds became available and necessity arose, furniture and fixtures were purchased.

During this period, Prohibition was enforced by law in Prince Edward Island. Liquor was purchased from Government Vendors on presentation of a prescription signed by a medical doctor. As a consequence, the Members who were Officers of the R.C.A.M.C. were, on occasion, called up for assistance.

At times the liquor requirements were dealt with other than legally, but for the most part successfully, although it is recorded that the R.C.M.P., on one occasion, confiscated a quantity of illegal liquor belonging to the Steward "stowed in the Club premises." Following this episode, lockers were constructed for the Members.

In 1939, at the outbreak of World War II and through the war years, Officers were being called to active services. During these years the Club carried on with its activities and as a meeting, information and social center for local and transient Officers.

The Club also offer membership to the active and associate Members of the R.C.N.V.R. Wardroom for the duration of the war. This offer was accepted by many of the Naval mess.

In 1940, a fire broke out in the Club rooms causing considerable damage to the fixtures, furniture and interior and also, in some cases, damage and total loss of Club records. It was approved by the Club to have the rooms renovated and refurnished during which time the Commanding Officer, R.C.N.V.R. granted the use of the Wardroom for the Club activities.

In August, 1942, the Club received notice from the C.O., R.C.N.V.R. that due to increasing demand for space, the Club would have to give up its quarters. In view of this, it was decided that rather than close down, new quarters be found as soon as possible.

In September, 1942, a committee was appointed to find suitable quarters. Reports on several premises were considered and eventually on November 12, 1942, it was decided to rent the lower flat of the Lowden property at 2 Haviland Street at the rental of \$40.00 per month, which was later reduced to \$25.00, and on November 26, a notice went out to members that the Club at this address was now open and members dues were increased to \$5.00 annually to Members living in or within ten miles of Charlottetown.

In January, 1944, it was resolved that the Lowden property be purchased by the Club for the price of \$4,000.00. This property was one of the early and historic residences of the Island. Built in 1869, it was occupied by the Lowden family until 1896 when it was leased to the American Consulate which occupied it until the Consulate closed, after which it was occupied by various tenants until its purchase by the Club. Following the taking over of the premises, a considerable amount of repair work was found necessary, both inside and outside of the property. This

consisted of repairs to the front walk and steps, roof, disposal of a garage on the property, a number of repairs to the outside of the building before painting, renewal of woodwork, rain gutters, spouts, etc., leveling of floors, laying of linoleum, repairs to the plumbing - all walls painted, ceilings whitened and electrical wiring renewed. This work was completed during the war years when funds were low, materials scarce and skilled labour difficult to obtain.

In December, 1983?, it had been decided to open the Club to ladies for the first time, the occasions being tea parties to take place on Sunday afternoons at which members and their wives or lady friends were entertained. These proved very popular, especially of Officers of the R.A.F. Reconnaissance School whose support during the year enabled the Club to carry on.

In 1944, Associate membership was extended of Officers of the Sea Cadet Corps,

while holding their appointment, bringing the membership up to-

Active -	Resident or Non-Resident	107
Civilian -	Formerly R.C.N.V.R. - W.R.	7

At this time, as a result of amendments to the Constitution, the titles of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, etc. were changed to - Commanding Officer, Second-in-Command, Paymaster, Adjutant, Quartermaster, etc. A few years later, these titles were changed back to the original terms.

Another change was made in the name of the Club from “Army-Navy Club of Prince Edward Island” to “Navy, Army, Air Force Officers Club of Charlottetown”. This title was again changed in 1947 to “The United Services Officers’ Club of Charlottetown.”

From 1932 with a then-membership of 31, forced to move from two establishments, having purchased and now occupying a third (requiring extensive repairs), having increased the membership and with dedication, persistence, united effort, high moral and integrity of the Members, the Club was now regarded as one of the best-organized and conducted military institutes in the District. These factors were taken into consideration by the Provincial Government when granting concessions, particularly in regards to legally securing pantry stock.

The reputation of the Club was zealously guarded and Members whose conduct jeopardized it were disciplined by temporary loss of privileges and dismissed.

During the post-war period, the interest in the Club was kept alive by the usual activities to which were added some extremely interesting lectures given by members regarding their active service experiences - afloat, ashore, in the air and as prisoners of War.

In 1947, the matter of membership was discussed and the Constitution adopted that year showed that Associate membership was extended to:

- any officer serving or who has served with the equivalent of Commissioner in the Canadian Sea Cadets, the R.C.A.F. or R.A.F. Ferry Commands, the R.C.M.P. or the Defense Forces of the U.S.A.
- any person with rank of Supervisor or equivalent commissioned rank in Auxiliary Services
- any Officer who served in the Canadian Merchant Marine, Canadian Corps of Civilian Fire Fighters up to 1945.

This increased the membership to a total of 233 Members as of September 20, 1947, broken down as follows:

Honorary	-	0
Active		159
Non-Resident	-	55
Associate-		19
Total		233

By Services

Navy		19
Army	-	159
Air Force	-	39
Auxiliary	-	9
Civilian		<u>7</u>
Total		233

In 1948, it was evident that with some alterations to the interior of the premises, more use could be made by the Club of the space available. Therefore, in 1949, a five-man, five-year House Committee was formed to supervise an all-over plan of altering, decorating and furnishing the Club premises over a five-year period. The results of the efforts of this Committee can be

seen in the present lay-out of the Club.

A report from the Committee on extra-mural affairs in 1948 deals with the project of the Fishing Pond at Thompson's Mills in Suffolk. Arrangements had been made with the owner to construct a dam, spillway and flume. This was completed to the satisfaction of the Committee. An approved lease was drawn up and the Pond stocked in 2,500 trout. Plans had also been submitted for the erection of a Club House and for the building of boats suitable for fishing purposes. With the increasing interest shown in this project, the property was cleared of brush. The Club House was built, a boat house erected and boats provided.

In 1954, the lease was renewed for five years at a rental of \$400 per year with an option of renewal for three further periods. A renewal in 1976 was for twenty-five years at a rental of \$800 per year.

An added attraction in the entertainment field was the installation of a television set and on the occasions when events such as national interest as the World Series, the Grey Cup of the Stanley Cup, games were shown, additional sets were provided. In the event of a game or contest, bets were posted and a dinner served in the Club at the expense of the losers.

Billiards, always popular in the Club, provided pastime and competition among Members and led to the occasional inter-city club tournament.

In 1950, a Club accountant and a Club secretary were appointed from the membership to carry out the duties on a permanent basis. By 1963, these Officers were replaced and the appointment of a permanent Club Secretary-Manager was made.

As the membership of the Club increased, showing 383 in 1952, amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws became more in order, and records indicate that at this time ladies could be introduced to the Club, i.e. on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturday afternoons and evenings and on public holidays, later amended to - “introduced at any time.” Further, that male non-residents could be introduced as guests at an time, that any person serving as an Officer Cadet could become a number while qualifying. Failing to qualify would automatically cut-off membership.

The twenty-fifth birthday of the Club was observed on May, 7, 1957 in the form of a Stag Party in the Club rooms at which time Life Membership Scrolls were presented to the following originals of 1932 -

Col. F. I. Andrew, O.B.E., MM., E.D.	P.E.I. Highlanders
Commander G. H. Buntain	R.C.N. (R)
Lieut. Col. F. B. Conrad, M.M., E.D.	R.C.C.S.
Capt. J. J. Connolly, V.R.D.	R.C.N.(R)
Major J. S. DesRoches, E.D.	P.E.I. Highlanders
Lieut. Col. P. S. Fielding, M.M., E.D.	R.C.A.
Col. G. E. Full, V.D.	P.E.I. Light Horse
Major F. W. Hyndman, E.D.	P.E.I. Light Horse
Lieut. Col. L. T. Lowther, O.B.E., E.D.	P.E.I. Light Horse
Major J. F. Morris, E.D.	P.E.I. Light Horse
Lieut. Col. W. J. MacDonald, E.D.	P.E.I. Highlanders
Capt. Leo McKenna, E.D.	R.C.A.M.C.
Major T. E. MacNutt, M.B.E., E.D.	P.E.I. Highlanders
Major F. M. Nash, E.D.	P.E.I. Light Horse
Capt. P. E. Palmer	P.E.I. Highlanders
Brigadier G. G. K. Peake, D.S.O., E.D.	R.C.A.
Capt. G. E. Ritchie, V.D.	R.C.A.
Major C. M. Williams, E.D.	R.C.A.M.C.
Major W. H. Worth, M.S.M., E.D.	R.C.C.S.

Two minutes of silence was then observed and the names of the following deceased original members were read:

Lieut. C. S. Chandler	R.C.C.S.
Lieut. Col. R. C. Chandler, E.D.	R.C.C.S.
Capt. A. B. Cosh	P.E.I. Highlanders
Lieut. Col. P. W. McNevin, D.C.M.	R.C.A.
Major E. S. Notting	P.E.I. Light Horse
Capt. W. E. Phillips	P.E.I. Light Horse
Major T. B. Rogers, E.D.	P.E.I. Highlanders
Major H. M. Simpson, E.D.	P.E.I. Highlanders
Major W. A. Smith	R.C.C.S.
Captain J. E. Sterns	R.C.A.
Lieut. Col. C. C. Thompson, M.C., V.D.	P.E.I. Highlanders

Due to the loss of the original list, a number of the names were overlooked and presentations were later made to:

Capt. James Coles, M.M., E.D.	P.E.I. Highlanders
Lieut. Col. D. N. Bell, E.D.	R.C.C.S.
Lieut. Col. J. D. Stewart, D.S.O., E.D.	P.E.I. Highlanders
Lieut. F. G. Kennedy	R.C.A.

Before the presentation of the scrolls, a short history of the Club was read. This was followed by a brief entertainment and the cutting of the birthday cake.

Comments were made on the increasing membership, activities, interests and general development of the Club over the twenty-five year period. A comparison was made between the present day assets of the building, furniture, fish pond and equipment, etc. which exceeded \$40,000, back to the time when the down payment of \$4,000 required for the present building was hard to come by.

In 1944, there were twelve United Services Institutes in Canada of which the then Navy, Army, Air Force Officers Club of Charlottetown was one. Efforts had been made on various occasions to form a National body embracing all branches to endeavor to encourage interest in

matters concerning military affairs and to maintain a direct liaison between the Institutes and the Department of National Defense, Ottawa.

A Constitution and By-Laws had been drawn up for this Body but it was not until October, 1973, that the first National meeting was held in Winnipeg with delegates from 19 units out of a total of 21 Institutes.

At this meeting a resolution to the effect that this national body be known as the “Federation of Military and United Services Institutes of Canada” (F.M.U.S.I.C.) was proposed, moved, carried and so named.

In keeping with and in an effort to maintain the military status of which the Club was now institutionalized, plaques of various services and regiments in which members served were now displayed, also uniform “Button” of the British Regiments in existence at the end of World War II presented by a member and suitably mounted on display. Crests were presented by various visiting ships, in addition to which was added the collection of H.C.M.S. Queen Charlotte on its de-commissioning in 1964. The Club acknowledged the receipt of these artifacts by sponsoring a Dance in honor of the Past Commanding Officers and retiring officers of Queen Charlotte.

The successful and efficient running of the Club is in no small way due to the carrying out of duties required and service expected of the Stewards. With very few exceptions, they came highly recommended and proved for the most part capable and reliable. Nevertheless, due to the increasing membership and increased activities, frequent changes in the staff took place causing, in some cases, unsatisfactory accounting and stock control.

A new accounting system was introduced which was followed by the appointment of a Club Accountant and Secretary to be replaced later by a Club Secretary-Manager who, with the

House Committee, Pantry Committee and Chief Steward carry out duties and requirements of that department in a most satisfactory manner.

By 1965, the reasons for organizing and the objectives of the U.S.O.C. were becoming history. The membership, which was limited by constitution almost exclusively to commissioned officers of the Armed Forces, was becoming depleted and with the reduction of military manpower, the disbandment of units and regiments, the unification of military services, the source of new membership under the present constitution was becoming non-existent.

In order to keep up with the increasing cost of maintenance, repairs, etc. of the premises at 2 Haviland Street, the fishing pond, the pond clubhouse, the boathouse, boats and other expenses, it was decided that an increase in membership was required.

This was arranged by adding an amendment to the Constitution which would cover the acceptance of social members, the number of which was governed by the number of active members borne, with the proviso that said members be entitled to all the privileges of the Club with the following exceptions - the right to make motions, nominate for executive offices or hold the following offices - President, Vice- President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chairman of the House, Audit, Membership or Pantry Committees, or member of the Board of Trustees.

The popularity of the Club has been enhanced by the efforts of the members to provide entertainment on fitting occasions and as required by the members. Such entertainments are varied and are as follows - dances, dinners, lobster and oyster parties, fish-ins, wine and cheese parties, lectures, weekly "Meet the Members" hour, card parties and games nights, etc. Provision is also made to accommodate private parties of a limited number.

A reading room on the second floor of the Club premises contains current magazines and newspapers and provides a quiet retreat.

The historic background, achievements and privileged fellowship of the United Services Officers' Club gives this institution a prestige of its own. The list of honorary members carries the names of many officers of high rank in the Defense Forces, as well as numerous distinguished civilians.

The list of active members carries the names of two former presidents who have become Provincial Lieutenant Governors. Also among the list of former members serving on the Executive, one has been appointed Chief Justice of the Province, while others have distinguished themselves in professional, industrial and civic fields.

United Services Officers' Club

Presidents

1931 - 1932	Col. G . E. Full, V.D.
1932 - 1933	Lt. -Col. L. T. Lowther, O.B.E., E.D.
1933 - 1934	Lt. -Col. R. C. Chandler, E.D.
1934 - 1935	Lt. -Col. W. J. MacDonald, E.D.
1935 - 1936	Cdr. G. H. Buntain
1936 - 1937	Col. U. G. Dawson, V.D.
1937 - 1938	Maj. T. B. Rogers, E.D.
1938 - 1939	Maj. T. B. Rogers, E.D.
1939 - 1940	Lt. W. P. Bruce, D.C.M.
1940 - 1941	Capt. J. E. Sterns
1941 - 1942	Maj. A. W. Matheson
1942 - 1943	Cap. A. B. Cosh
1943 - 1944	Lt. Stewart G. Ives
1944 - 1945	Lt. Cdr. C. P. MacKenzie
1945 - 1946	Maj. E. S. Notting
1946 - 1947	Maj. D. L. Mathieson
1947 - 1948	Lt. -Col. J. D. Stewart, D.S.O., E.D.
1948 - 1949	Lt.-Col. P. S. Fielding, M.M., E..D.
1949 - 1950	Lt.-Col. W. H. Soaper
1950 - 1951	Lt. F. G. Kennedy
1951 - 1952	Maj. H. M. Simpson, E.D.
1952 - 1953	Capt. J. J. Connolly, V.R.D., R.C.N.(R)
1953 - 1954	Lt. S. G. Bryant
1954 - 1955	F/Lt. J. W. F. McCallum
1955 - 1956	Maj. E. K. Kennedy, C.D.
1956 - 1957	Cdr. J. N. Kenny, C.D.
1957 - 1958	Lt.-Col. R. D. McNeill, C.D.
1958 - 1959	F/Lt. S. M. McInnis
1959 - 1960	Major L. G. MacNevin, C.D.

1960 - 1961	Capt. G. R. Foster
1961 - 1962	F/Lt. J. A. Carruthers
1962 - 1963	Capt. W. B. LePage
1963 - 1964	F.O. I. G. Kerry, D.F.C.
1964 - 1965	Lt. A. W. Gaudet, R.C.N.®
1965 - 1966	S/L J. C. Sinnott
1966 - 1967	Lt.-Col. H. G. Williams
1967 - 1968	F/Lt. D. E. MacLean, D.F.C.
1968 - 1969	Capt. J. F. L. Burge, C.D.
1969 - 1970	Lt. W. R. Brennan, R.C.N.®
1970 - 1971	Lt. Cdr. J. I. Dowling
1971 - 1972	Lt. G. B. Beers, R.C.N.®
1972 - 1973	Capt. F. C. Lambert
1973 - 1974	Lt. H. H. Cook, R.C.N.
1974 - 1975	Maj. Keith L. Mollison, C.D.
1975 - 1976	Maj. J. E. Ayers, C.D.
1976 - 1977	Lt. G. E. Staples
1977 - 1978	B. Gen. B. P. Kearney, M.B.E., C.D.
1978 - 1979	Lt. Col. J. J. Coyle, C.D.
1979 - 1980	Lt. Cor. J. H. Hodgson, C. D.
1980 - 1982	Lt. G. Arsenault, RCN (RT)
1982 - 1984	Cap. M. P. Stevenson, C.D.
1984 - 1985	Col. W. P. Hunt, C.D.
1985 - 1986	F/O/ W. P. Ross
1986 - 1987	F/O/ I.C. Kerry, D.F.C.
1987 - 1988	Maj. A. B. MacRae
1989 - 1990	Maj. W. B. White
1990 - 1992	L. Col. S. J. Woodman, C.D.
1992 - 1993	John Gallant (Military)
1993 - 1995	Cap. Patrick J. Connolly
1995 - 1996	Maj. George MacRae

**Listing of Past Presidents
of
The Haviland Club Inc.**

1997 - 1998	K. Scott Stevens
1998 - 2000	K. Scott Stevens
2000 - 2002	Lt. Col. John Stewart
2002 - 2004	J. Norbert MacDonald (Military)
2004	Cap. Patrick J. Connolly
2004 - 2008	Neil MacDonald
2008 - 2010	Len Hynes
2010 - 2012	Ray Malone
2012 - 2014	Mark Belfrey
2014 - 2016	Jeanette Doucette
2016 - 2018	Tricia Belfrey
2018 - 2020	Tim Rose
2020 – 20??	Jamie Trainor