

PERSEVERANCE: Some Reflections on 50 Years of the Canadian Sea King

VICTORIA, BC - A public lecture on the remarkable record of the Canadian Sea King helicopter will be presented at the Maritime Museum of BC at 12pm on May 8 in the courtroom. Admission is by donation.

The speaker will be Colonel (Ret'd) John Orr who has just completed writing the history of the 'first' 50 years of the Canadian Sea King, drawing on official documents and published material as well as more than 70 oral history interviews with those who have supported, maintained and flown this capable helicopter.



Canadian Sea King Helicopters in flight

Image courtesy of: Corporal Francis Gauthier, Formation Imaging Services, Halifax, Nova Scotia

The Canadian Sea King saga began in 1963 with the acceptance of the first helicopter by the Royal Canadian Navy and is a tale that is still being written.

Introduced as an anti-submarine helicopter, the Sea King served in that role throughout the Cold War and then, following the first Gulf War in 1990, was transformed into a flexible surface and sub-surface surveillance aircraft.

A constant throughout has been its operation from the flight decks of Her Majesty's Canadian Ships, although a number of significant domestic operations have been carried out from ashore as well. It was

the marriage of a medium-sized helicopter with the improved St. Laurent and Annapolis-class helicopters that vaulted the Royal Canadian Navy and Canada to the forefront of maritime helicopter aviation and is a distinguishing feature of Canadian Sea King operations.

Throughout its 50 years of service to Canada, the operational tempo for the Sea King and its personnel has remained constant and has even increased since 9/11— an accomplishment that is not well known within the Canadian Armed Forces let alone by the Canadian public.

As we mark a half-century of Canadian Sea King operations, the personnel and colour of the uniforms may have changed over time and the roles and equipment of the aircraft have been modified to meet new threats, the requirement to provide ‘Wings for the Fleet’ remains as true today as it was when the first Sea King served in 1963.

Come and salute the achievements of an amazing aircraft and the personnel who supported, maintained and flew her.

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Other upcoming events at the Maritime Museum:

May 12 | Salty Sundays: Mother’s Day | Drop-in 1-3pm | Included in admission

May 24, 25 | So long and thanks for all the fish | 8pm | \$20

May 29 | In Amundsen’s Footsteps | 7pm | General admission

June 8 | World Ocean's Day

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