

# The Shipbuilding Monument

North Vancouver, BC

Vancouver Naval Museum & Heritage Society



# THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

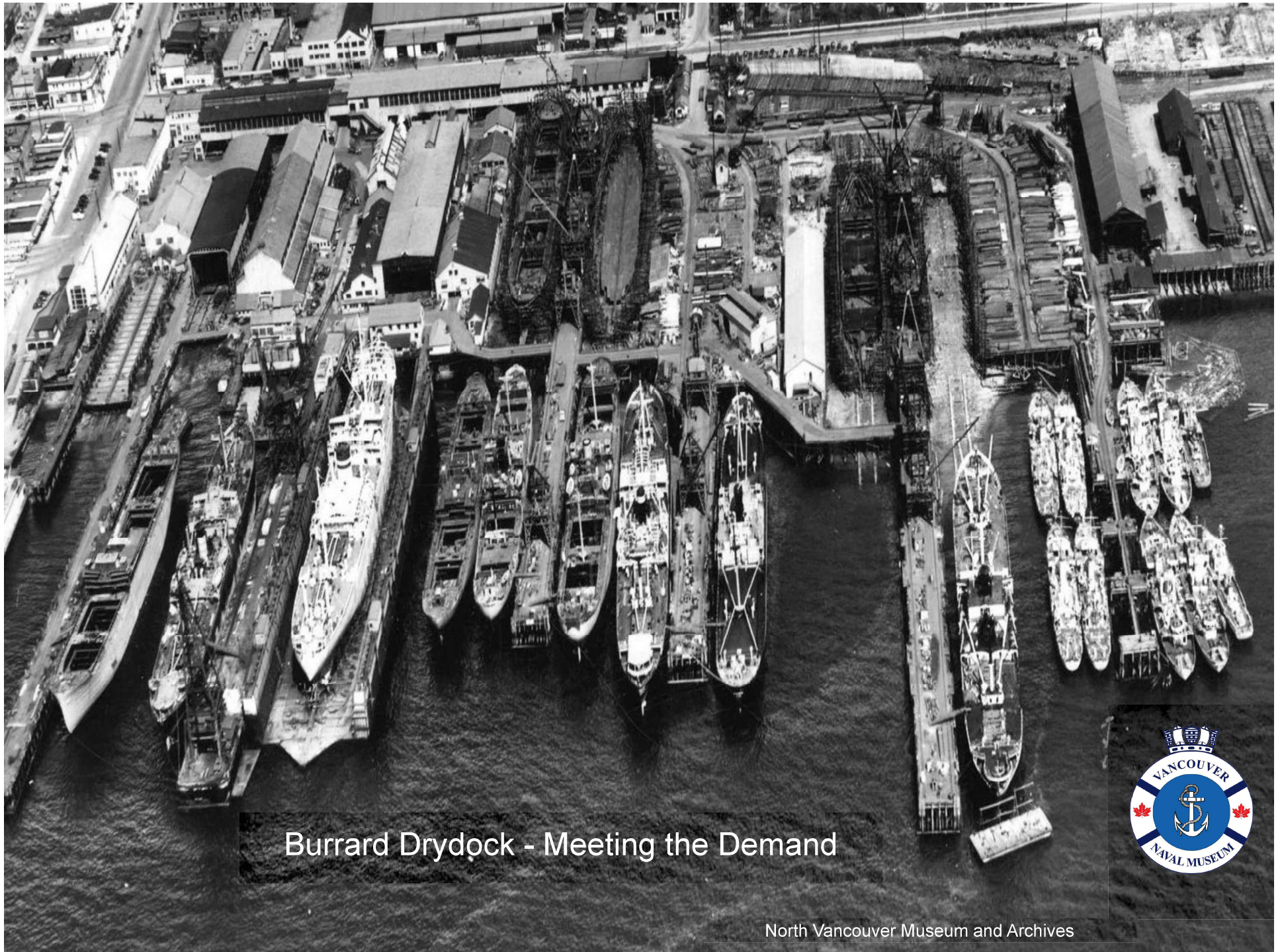
Rear-Admiral Bob Auchterlonie, in his 2019 Battle of the Atlantic message in the Pacific Navy News *Lookout* stated:

“Esquimalt, BC, is approximately 5,000 kilometers from Halifax N.S., and 7,600 km from London, England. In fact, we in Victoria are closer to Tokyo than Berlin. So why should Canadians on the Pacific coast care about the Battle of the Atlantic?”

The answer is simple. When Canada declared war on Germany in September 1939, and sent ships and sailors to sea on convoy escort duties, the whole country committed to the effort. Men and women from every corner of the dominion volunteered to serve in the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN). Thousands of British Columbians from all walks of life served in the RCN”

Another story, not so well known, was the huge effort by Canadians to build new ships to replace those lost during the Battle of the Atlantic and expand the merchant fleet to meet the increasing demand for supplies to the war in Europe. BC shipyards played a major role.





Burrard Drydock - Meeting the Demand



# World War II

Since the earliest European contact shipbuilding has been a part of British Columbia's economic and social history, with the busiest and most record-setting activity occurring during the Second World War.

Some 250 Victory ships and 50 naval vessels were built in BC shipyards from 1939 to 1945, with more than 14,000 workers employed at the Burrard Dry Dock alone. With neighbouring North Van Ship Repairs, the waterfront became the centre of shipbuilding in BC.

With women hired to fill the gap while men went to war, Burrard was the first in Canada to employ them in shipbuilding. They were not just relegated to office and menial custodial jobs, but excelled in the precision detail work of the electrical, sheet metal and machine shops. The women also pulled their weight alongside the men in the pipe, plate and blacksmith shops as shipwrights and reamer's helpers, welders, burners and bolters.

Women at Burrard Dry Dock 1945



North Vancouver Museum and Archives



# Post-War Construction

After the war naval destroyer escorts, ferries, icebreakers, tugs, log barges, fishing and other vessels were constructed, adding value to BC's growing economy.



# Today

Under the National Shipbuilding Strategy (NSS), three offshore fisheries research vessels, Canadian Coast Guard Ships John Franklin, Jacques Cartier, and John Cabot have been turned over to the Canadian Coast Guard by Seaspan's Vancouver Shipyard. The first of two naval supply ships, HMCS Protecteur is under construction at Vancouver Shipyard with completion expected in 2023.



# The Monument Project

There has been little recognition for the thousands of BC workers, who made such a huge contribution to the war.

The Shipbuilding Monument, saluting this great effort, will consist of three bronze statues, symbolic of British Columbia's robust shipbuilding activity during the Second World War. The statues will depict a male shipyard worker using a torch to bend pipes, a female worker taking a break and a naval petty officer unrolling a drawing.

Designed to engage people, the sculptures will be at ground level on the waterfront walkway, site of the original shipyards. Their positioning will allow visitors to take photographs of the monument and themselves with the life-size statues.

The sculptor of The Shipbuilding Monument is Norm Williams. He created the Roger Neilson and Pat Quinn statues at Rogers Arena in Vancouver, the Vancouver Fire Fighter Burn Unit Statue, and the monument to BC's fishing industry workers outside the Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site in Richmond, BC.



# The Challenge

A total of \$350,000 is needed to complete The Shipbuilding Monument on the North Vancouver Waterfront. Contribution categories reflect ship types built, or to be built, by Vancouver's shipbuilding industry.

Donors in all categories will receive a charitable donation tax receipt and an embossed certificate. If desired, they will be recognized in their category on the Vancouver Naval Museum website.

Donors in the Corvette and higher categories will receive recognition on a plaque at the monument site.



- |                       |                     |                 |                    |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| • Shipbuilding Legacy | \$50,000 or more    | • Victory Ship  | \$5,000 - \$10,000 |
| • Naval Supply ship   | \$30,000 - \$50,000 | • Corvette      | \$2,000 - \$5,000  |
| • Ice Breaker         | \$20,000 - \$30,000 | • Minesweeper   | \$500 - \$2,000    |
| • Destroyer Escort    | \$10,000 - \$20,000 | • Landing Craft | \$100 - \$500      |





# Progress

Approximately 85% of the pre-foundry work (concept, design, and sculpturing) has been completed.



# ***Donations***

To make a donation to this project, please forward your cheque, made out to the **Vancouver Naval Museum** and marked **Monument**, to:

Vancouver Naval Museum and Heritage Society  
PO Box 47050 RPO Denman Place  
Vancouver, BC V6G 3E1

A tax receipt will be provided for all donations of \$50.00 or more.

Donations may also be made on the Internet through:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/>

(enter **Vancouver Naval Museum** in the charity search box)

***Your contribution will be greatly appreciated***



Any support you can provide  
will be greatly appreciated

Thank You

