

LCDR(Ret) JOHN COLE 1938-2012

I had talked to Patricia Cole about preparing some information about her husband, John Cole for inclusion of an article in the next DIPPERS DIGEST, just a couple of weeks before he passed away in Ottawa on 15 February 2012. It is my sad duty to now write a different report. After retiring from 25 years in the RCN, I joined the Naval Reserve Unit, HMCS CARLETON in the 1970's & 80's where John became the Unit's Staff Officer, and I became the Chief Diver and Cox'n. We got along famously, and I was always aware that John was very wise in the ways of sailors. The Ottawa CNDA Chapter members would hold their summer meetings and banyan at John's home, during which Patricia was the consummate hostess to us and our better halves. We will deeply miss all their great camaraderie - Chuck Rolfe.

My memories of John Cole are from the "Old Granby" at the French Cable Wharf in Dartmouth, N.S. and John was the finest Officer of that time, along with Alan Sagar. He never pushed himself around, just went on doing his job. You could never say a bad word of John's work with the "Gang of Bandits", and I don't think anything bad has ever been said about him. We will all miss this True Gentleman, farewell dear friend - Andre Desrochers.

John Cole was my boss on SDL-1 in the early to mid 1970's. He was a real gentleman - Dusty Millar.

Roy Busby writes that this is sad news indeed. John's path and mine crossed many times during our RCN careers in the "Diving Navy", and beyond. I think the first time was when I was on exchange duty with the USN at the Explosive Ordnance Disposal(EOD) Facility in Indian Head, Maryland and John came through to take the Long EOD Course(6 months)at the School there. The next time was at Camp Bouchard, St. Therese, Quebec when I was the Chief Instructor on the first Specialist EOD/IED Courses being conducted there. John was among the first Canadian Forces personnel to become qualified as such, and was issued with the coveted "Green Card". Following our careers in Diving/EOD, our next contact was when John was on Staff at Director of Naval Reserves(DNR)at South Street in Halifax, and then when I was the Staff Officer at HMCS CARLETON. We had many meetings and long telephone calls, which weren't always about Naval Reserve business!!! And then, lo and behold, when it was my time to depart HMCS CARLETON, who should arrive to relieve me but John! I went on to serve at NDHQ(DGRC)as Staff Officer, Naval Reserves. So once again we were in close contact. During John's time in CARLETON, my wife Shirley and I had two

daughters who became young Officers in the Unit, so we spent many happy years attending functions at CARLETON in company with John & Patricia. Following our time in the Navy, we met again at a couple of CNDA Reunions, one in Halifax in 1994, and again in Ottawa in 2006. John will be sadly missed by all of us.

Gary Reddy wrote that he knew John as a Naval Diver when he was just starting his career in the Navy, while John was heading to a position in Ottawa – a great guy!

Some comments from his many friends are as follows:

“John was a man of many talents, and we fondly remember him sitting in the corner of the pool, holding court, while discussing the topics of the day”.

“John was a gentleman, and a gentle man, beloved by all of us!”.

“John was a great friend to all who were privileged to know him”.

“I recall meeting John for the first time, shortly after arriving in Ottawa, and I saw a man of such quiet dignity. It was always my pleasure to see him over the years”.

“We will miss his friendly greetings, and always remember John as the Canadian Club President”.

“Patricia, you have lost a wonderful, loving and kind husband, father and grandfather – we have lost a dear friend of long standing – adieu dear pal”.