

# Royal Navy veterans, ex-marines, invade Castleton

By Bob Owen

For a few precious hours they were transformed and transfixed. It was another time, another continent, another life, and all were young again.

On June 22 veterans of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines spent the afternoon together at the home of Audrey and Malcolm Tucker. They renewed acquaintances, picnicked and reminisced as the Cobourg Band performed.

The Cobourg band, under the direction of the colourful ex-Royal Marine Rollie White, is the only Royal Marine band in North America and was adopted by the British Marines in 1973, three years after it was formed.

White served on the Royal Yacht Britannia in the immediate post-war era.

The veterans were all, at one time, members of the British naval service. Some of the more senior members saw active duty in World War II. All have since emigrated to North America. Most are spread out across southern Ontario.

And most of them have been in this country for more than a quarter century according to Neil Pennington, President of the Royal Marines Association of Ontario.

And they number in the thousands.

Mr. Pennington served in the late 1950s and early '60s, before coming to Canada in 1967. He is

In their opening parade the band also "beat the retreat," a special march which replicates the efforts of the navy drum-

mers who went through the streets of villages near where the navy was bar- racked to collect the men. Close to 150 members

then joined the band in an old-fashioned sing- song which featured old gems like Lili Marlene, White Cliffs of Dover and

a host of others.

But the most riveting moment was the Ceremony of Sunset. Every day in the life of a British sailor was punctuated by the ritual of lowering the White Ensign at 5 p.m.

Present for the party were navy and marine veterans and members of the WRNS (Womens Royal Navy Service).

The WRNS are the newest members of the British military. They are a wing of the Navy, the senior service. The navy originated back in the 1500's, pre-dating the army. The Royal Marines

took shape in 1664. Their most notable military battle was the Battle of Gibraltar in 1704. Their badge is the laurel surrounding the globe.

The Commandos were founded in 1942 as a branch of the Marines. They were used as shock troops.

The official membership of the Navy and Marine Associations is small, but their memories are kept bright as they celebrate their 50th anniversary, collect for their annual picnic and march in Veteran's Day parades commemorating their service in the British navy.



**I love a parade** — The Cobourg Band under the direction of Rollie White is on parade on the grounds of Castleton residents Audrey and Malcolm Tucker. The band is the official Marine Association Band. It performed the official songs of the Royal Navy Association and the Royal Marine Association in the opening ceremonies and at a Sunset Ceremony, Saturday, in full dress uniform. Photo by Bob Owen

## Salem club suspends meetings for summer

### Salem Social Club

On Friday, June 14, Salem Social Club's euchre closed for the summer with a delicious lunch at Salem Restaurant, then went to play euchre.

Results were as follows: ladies' high, Evelyn McMullen; ladies' low,

Bernice Brown; men's high, Claude Allen; men's low, Earl Ireland; lone hands, Trudy Smith; travelling prize, Dorothy Edgar; 50-50 draw, Jean Sprung; ladies' gift from Viola Stickle, Evelyn Whaley; men's gift, Everett Beattie.

Hoping to see you all back Sept. 6!

- Viola Stickle



**Picnic time** — Cobourg Band members, including director Rollie White of Castleton, sang for their supper at the Castleton property of Audrey and Malcolm Tucker last Saturday. Photo by Bob Owen