



284 RSCCC Marconi
 PO Box 262
 Mount Pearl, NL
 A1N 2C2

December 11, 2017

To the Officers, Cadets and Parents of 284 RCSCC Marconi:

RE: CHRISTMAS MESS DINNER 2017

1. The aim of this document is to detail the administrative and logistical requirements for the annual 284 Marconi Christmas Mess Dinner which will be held at the Knights of Columbus 18 December 2018. All Cadets shall attend unless explicitly excused, by the Commanding Officer, through their chain of command. Dress for the dinner will be FULL UNIFORM, minus whitetops. Please do not bring your head dress to the dinner.

2. Key personnel for this dinner are as follows:

PMC	Coxswain, CPO1 Hope Matchem
VPMC	One per leg – TBD
Guest of Honour	CO, Lt(N) K. MacPhee, AdeC
Guest Speaker	Grand Knight, Mr. Peter Furlong
Mess Manager	Coxswain, CPO1 Hope Matchem
Chief Steward	Trg PO, PO2 Zachary Thompson

A detailed schedule of events is attached at Annex A. The seating plan will be promulgated at the dinner



4. The Mess Dinner will primarily follow the traditions and protocols of a Naval Mess Dinner as detailed in Annex B. Note: Due to the age of attendees and policies of the Canadian Cadet Organization and Marconi Sea Cadets, alternative beverages such as fruit punch and ginger ale will be used for the toast.

A Mess Dinner is one of the most coveted and important traditions of the Canadian Forces. It is a time to appreciate the comradeship and company of fellow service members and guests and to savour fine cuisine in an elegant setting. Given the fact that the Mess Dinner will be attended by a younger age group, strict Mess Dinner protocols will be relaxed. Notwithstanding, military members in attendance shall be held to a high standard of good order and discipline.

Regards,

Lt(N) K. MacPhee, AdeC
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Annexes:

Annex A Schedule of Events
Annex B Mess Dinner Protocol and Traditions

Distr. List:

Action:
284 Marconi Senior Hands

Info:
284 Marconi Officers
Marconi Email Dist. List
All Cadets and Parents



ANNEX A

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Time	Event	Action
1820hrs	Meet and greet in lounge	PMC and CO to greet Guest Speaker
1845hrs	15 min warning for Dinner	Bugler
1855hrs	5 min warning for Dinner	Bugler
1900hrs	Call for Dinner	Bugler
	V/PMCs to be the last to proceed to the Dining Room, checking to ensure all the guests exit the lounge	VPMCs
	Guests proceed to the Dining Room and stand behind their chairs.	
	PMC escorts the Guest of Honour and Guest Speaker to their seats.	PMC
	Chief Steward (PO2 Thompson) reports to the PMC "all members and guests present Ma'am."	Chief Steward
	Head table marches in, and are seated followed by all members and guests.	All
	PMC to toast the bugler	PMC
O/C	PMC raps gavel for silence, and calls on _____ to say Grace. "_____, would you please say Grace?"	PMC
O/C	Grace	
O/C	Dinner/beverage is served Head breaks as determined by the PMC.	All
2000hrs (approx)	10 Minute Break (TBD by PMC)	PMC initiates
	During the break all staff to clear tables. Set up for toast parade.	All staff
	Members and guests are seated	All
On return	PMC raps gavel and calls for all to be seated	PMC
	Chief Steward (PO2 Thompson) reports to the PMC "Punch is ready to be passed, Sir."	Chief Steward
	Beverage is passed	All
O/C	Chief Steward (PO2 Thompson) reports to the PMC "The punch has been passed Sir."	Chief Steward



O/C	PMC raps gavel and calls on the Port VPMC (PO2 Matchem) “Mr Port Vice the Queen of Canada.” The VPMC then addresses all present and says “La Reine du Canada.” All members repeat the toast “The Queen of Canada” and drink. The Band will then play the first verse of God Save the Queen (possible recording).	PMC/VPMC All
O/C	PMC raps gavel and calls on Ms. Leah Carroll to propose the toast to fallen comrades. “Ms. Carroll, would you please propose the toast to fallen comrades”. Ms. Carroll replies with an explanation of the table setting and “To Our Fallen Comrades”	PMC
O/C	“To Our Fallen Comrades”	All
O/C	PMC raps gavel and calls on the youngest Naval Member present to propose the toast of the day. “Mr. Hiscock would you please propose the toast of the day”. Ms. Hiscock replies with “To Our Ships”.	PMC/Ms. Walsh
O/C	“To Our Ships”	All
O/C	Band plays the Marches (recording)	Band/Piper
O/C	Introduction of Head Table	PMC
O/C	Recognition of guests	PMC
O/C	Introduction of Guest Speaker	PMC
O/C	Speech (5 min)	Guest Speaker
O/C	PMC thanks the Guest Speaker (small gift)	PMC
O/C	Adjourn to the Lounge	All
O/C	Dance starts	All
2200	Liberty boat	All



ANNEX B

MESS DINNER PROTOCOL AND TRADITIONS

1. History of the Mess Dinner

Mess Dinners provide an opportunity for personnel to meet on a formal but friendly occasion and allows the CO or their guest(s) to address the members as a group. By custom and tradition Mess Dinners are considered to be a parade and as such, attendance is compulsory for Regular Forces military members except for those excused by the CO.

The Mess Dinner is one the most important and time honoured traditions in the Canadian Forces. The Mess Dinner evolved from formal and state banquets and at first attendance was reserved for royalty and officers only. Following the Second World War the Mess Dinner evolved to include Senior NCOs, Junior Ranks, as well as cadets today.

Prior to the unification of the Canadian Forces in 1967, each service had their own customs and traditions. Following unification, various Mess Dinner customs of the previous services resulted in variable standards and considerable uncertainty amongst many personnel about how a Mess Dinner should be conducted.

2. Customs and Traditions

Passing the Port – Tradition to be carried out with Replacement Beverage

At a Naval Mess Dinner, port is always passed to the left, and the decanters are passed on the table. The origin of this custom is uncertain.

Passing the port decanter on the table was a practical precaution against the motion of the ship. Lifting a heavy decanter off the table might result in the ship, and the table with it, rising rapidly and unexpectedly to strike the bottom of the decanter. Spilling valuable port would be too terrible to contemplate. The point is that the decanter should be passed under positive and safe control to the next diner.



There is no necessity to hold your glass below the edge of the table then tilt the decanter to pour while its base remains firmly on the table. The decanter can be picked up to pour in a normal fashion as long as it is passed to the next diner on the table.

Naval Toast of the Day

Naval toasts of the day are proposed at Mess Dinners, usually by the junior member present, as they were in HMS VICTORY in the late eighteenth century. The toasts themselves have been modified to reflect not so much political correctness, but the realities of our service in the 21st century. This is not the creation of a new tradition, but the updating of an old and precious one.

Learn the new toasts of the day to avoid embarrassment, as any person attending a Mess Dinner may be called upon to propose the toast of the day. They are:

Monday	Our Ships
Tuesday	Our Sailors
Wednesday	Ourselves
Thursday	Our Navy
Friday	Our Nation
Saturday	Our Families
Sunday	Absent Friends

Naval Officers never clink glasses when they make a toast. The sound is reputed to be too much like the solemn toll of the ship's bell as the body of a sailor was committed to the deep. Thus, it is assumed that the clinking sound will herald the death of a sailor.

Loyal (or Royal) Toast

Naval Officers drink the health of the sovereign seated. Details vary, but the gist of the origin of this custom is as follows. Either Charles II (when King and replying to a loyal toast), or William IV (joining the loyal toast as heir to the throne), hit his head on the deck header when standing up in the stern cabin of a first rate ship of the line. The deck headers were very low at the best of times, but if he were seated under a beam, even this limited headroom would be diminished. In any case, he decided that it was more sensible for all concerned to remain seated. Thus, it is by Royal Decree that Naval Officers are the only group of people to enjoy this privilege. This right was reinforced by George IV who exhorted Royal Navy officers who were standing to honour him: "Gentlemen, pray be seated. Your loyalty is above suspicion".



Rules of Order

As soon as the PMC raps the gavel for grace no diner may leave the table, read (except menu/musical programs), write or have a second helping of any course.

No diner may commence a course before the PMC, smoke, utter an oath or use foul language, place a bet or a wager, discuss political or other controversial subjects, talk shop, tell smutty stories or propose a toast.

If a diner wishes to address the PMC, he/she shall make indication to the appropriate vice, the vice will then rap his/her gavel, receive acknowledgment from the PMC and seek permission for the diner to speak.

Rank shall not be used during the Mess Dinner. All diners shall be addressed either as Mr., Mrs. or Ms. followed by their last name without exception and regardless of rank or position.

Whenever a gavel is used everyone is to cease talking and listen to what is being said. Beware those that do not heed the authority of the gavel.

3. Etiquette, Dress and Behaviour

It is important that the unique atmosphere of the Mess Dinner not be disturbed or degraded in any way by immature or offensive behaviour.

The PMC will ensure a high standard of decorum. Permission is normally granted prior to leaving the dinner and conveyed to the PMC through the Chief Steward. Tunics must be buttoned at all times. Only the mess dress jacket is acceptable either buttoned or unbuttoned. Any misconduct is unacceptable. Mess dinners are special events and everyone is responsible for his/her behaviour.