

Fisherman's Reserve Collection

Dates of Creation: 1939-1998

Physical Extent: 0.33 meters of textual records; 104 photographs: b&w, 2x5-11x14"; 53 negatives: b&w, 2x5-4x5"

Administrative History:

The Royal Canadian Navy created the Fisherman's Reserve in 1938 in response to the growing onset of World War II. A Naval Reserve was formed consisting of men who had at least three years of coastal shipping experience (fishing, tow-boating, freighting). In 1940 they were called to active duty as a regular branch of the Navy for the duration of the war with orders to defend the Pacific Coast against a possible Japanese invasion.

The Fisherman's Reserve played a lead role in the round-up of Japanese fishing boats when the Canadian Government decided to evacuate the Japanese residents to inland locations. The Reserve patrolled all of the outside coastline from continental United States to the Alaskan waters. In addition to regular patrol work, they regularly swept the entrances to coastal ports for possible mines planed by enemy submarines and examined vessels at strategic points along the coast. The ships carried depth charges to roll over the stern in the event of an encounter with submarines.

The original reserve boasted 400 men; later 600 more were recruited and some of these men were given commando training and later went overseas to man the landing barges of Normandy and Sicily. By October 1941, the Fisherman's Reserve was made up of 17 ships and until the advent of the first corvettes, was the only naval force available on the west coast. The ships were mostly fishing craft of various kinds, many of them seiners. It remained an ad hoc organization until August 1942 when its personnel began formal training in Esquimalt in an establishment called "Givenchy II".

The danger of a Japanese attack on the west coast failed to materialize and through 1943-1944, the Fisherman's Reserve personnel were discharged or siphoned off into the Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve. By the end of 1944 the force ceased to exist.

Scope and Content:

Records in the collection include correspondence and announcements about reunion events, reunion attendance books, personal reminisces of time spent in the Fisherman's Reserve, newspaper clippings and articles on the history of the reserve, and photographs of members and vessels that served in the Fisherman's Reserve.

Notes:

Source of Title: Title based on the name of the creator of the records.

Immediate source of acquisition: Records in this collection are from an unknown source. Possibly acquired by VMM curatorial staff for exhibit research purposes.

Arrangement: Records arranged by Archivist.

Related Records: See records/ephemera/publications related to the Royal Canadian Navy.

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Language: The records are in English.

Restrictions on access: There are no restrictions on these records.

Terms governing publication: There are no restrictions on these records.

Finding aids: A box-file list exists for these records and an item-level description has been prepared for the negatives.

Accruals: Future accruals to this collection are expected.

Fisherman's Reserve Collection

Box / File List

PartOf Fisherman's Reserve Collection File No: 1 Title: Fisherman's Reserve - history of first reunion	Location: Box 1 Date: 1975
PartOf Fisherman's Reserve Collection File No: 2 Title: Fisherman's Reserve - history of second reunion	Location: Box 1 Date: 1977
PartOf Fisherman's Reserve Collection File No: 3 Title: Reunion register	Location: Box 1 Date: 1975-1977
PartOf Fisherman's Reserve Collection File No: 4 Title: Roster of Fisherman's Reserve personnel	Location: Box 1 Date: 1977
PartOf Fisherman's Reserve Collection File No: 5 Title: Fisherman's Reserve reminiscences and history	Location: Box 1 Date: 1939-1977
PartOf Fisherman's Reserve Collection File No: 6 Title: Fisherman's Reserve newspaper clippings	Location: Box 1 Date: 1940-1998
PartOf Fisherman's Reserve Collection File No: 7 Title: Fisherman's Reserve photograph album	Location: Box 1 Date: 1939-1941
PartOf Fisherman's Reserve Collection File No: 8 Title: Fisherman's Reserve personnel photographs	Location: Box 1 Date: 1939

Fisherman's Reserve Collection

PartOf **Fisherman's Reserve Collection**

Location: Box 1

File No: 9

Date: 1940-1943

Title: Fisherman's Reserve vessel photographs

PartOf **Fisherman's Reserve Collection**

Location: Box 1

File No: 10

Date: 1939-1942

Title: Fisherman's Reserve negatives