

A.J. (TONY) SCHINKINGER

I came to Athabasca with my mother, at the age of four in 1928, to join my father who had established a harness shop in 1927.

Attended public school in the Brick School until 1942, when, at the age of 18, I joined the R.C.N.V.R. (Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve) at H.M.C.S. Nonsuch, Edmonton.

I was sent to Calgary to the engineering school at Victoria Park and was attached to H.M.C.S. Tecumseh. On completion of the nine (9) months there we were drafted to Halifax. (H.M.C.S. Stadacona) for further training and graduated in 1943 as an ERA (Engine Room Artificer). I also took a further course in Electrical Engineering at the University of Alberta, Edmonton.

On completion of this I was again drafted back to Halifax to await a draft to a ship.

I then received the news I was to join a new frigate which was under construction in Levis, Quebec.

I received a two week leave and while I was in Calgary, Irene and I decided to get married. We spent our honeymoon in Athabasca.

I was then drafted to Montreal where the crew was assembled and two weeks later to Quebec City to board and commission the K 4 14 H.M.C.S. Glace Bay. We then set sail for Sydney, Nova Scotia, and had a commissioning party at Glace Bay, N.S., after this we were off to Bermuda via Halifax for 30 days workups.

Our ship was then appointed to C4 convoy escort group as senior ship on the St. Johns, Newfoundland to Londonderry, North Ireland run.

Our first duty, I recall, was to escort ten (10) Russian subchasers built in the U.S. to the British Isles and refuel them at sea. It was a very rough trip and quite an experience for my first active sea duty.

My job aboard ship was to be in charge of the ships engine room during my watches and also to effect any mechanical repairs necessary.

We made several trips back and forth across the North Atlantic escorting convoys and we were on one of these crossings on VE Day, May 8, 1944.

I signed up to take part in the war in the Pacific but that war ended on VJ Day while I was home on leave.

I then returned to H.M.C.S. Cornwallis, Digby, N.S., to begin my demobilization then back to Calgary for my final discharge on October 29, 1945.

I was discharged with the rate (rank) of ERA 4thC (Petty Officer).

My wife and I lived in Calgary until the fall of 1946 when we, my wife and I and new son, returned to Athabasca and I went into my father's business.

I immediately joined the Legion here (actually, I transferred from Calgary) and became an active member. I held several positions on the executive such as secretary and vice-president. I took over the chair after President Joe Atkinson left our Community and was in this position when the Legion acquired its first beer license.

I have been a member of the Legion continuously since that time but although not having been an active member recently, I have been sympathetic to what the Legion stands for.

I might add, I was instrumental in the Legion acquiring the downtown property when it was discovered the Legion only had an expired lease. I convinced Council that we had a moral obligation to transfer title to the Legion for these lots at a nominal sum.

Irene and I have four children, two sons and two daughters and five grandchildren. Our two sons operate the family business which is now in its third generation and is the oldest active business in Athabasca.