Alice afloat in the Korean War

The Korean War ended in the year 1953.

More than 26,000 brave Canadians served in Korea, far away from home. That's a lot of people. That's the population of many small cities in Canada.

Many brave sailors served on warships in the ocean waters off the Korean coast during the war. Did you know that animals served with them, too?

Alice wearing her new sweater aboard HMCS Cayuga.
(Photo: Crowsnest Magazine CA-448)

Several of these ships had animal mascots, including a cute little brown-eyed dog named Alice on HMCS *Cayuga*. While on board, she was given the rank of O.D. (meaning Ordinary Dog), and she had her fair share of adventures. Once she even fell into the water between two big ships while in a port! There was no way Alice could climb out by herself and the sailors were worried she might get hurt. The captain called for all hands on deck to rescue the pup. In the end, someone was lowered down to pull her to safety. Imagine that, a sailor risked his life to save his canine friend.

Alice was a favourite pet of her shipmates – it's nice to have an animal friend when you are far from home! But Alice was also loved by the sailors' families. One of the sailor's children even sent Alice a new Christmas sweater to keep her warm!

Alice and the 285 men aboard HMCS *Cayuga* went through eight months of war together. It was a friendship that meant a lot to the sailors and everything to the little pup.

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Animal mascots are no longer officially allowed on our navy's ships, but the tradition does continue in another way. Today, Sonar, a Newfoundland dog, is the official mascot of the Royal Canadian Navy. Bark on, Sonar!

SONAR – The Royal Canadian Navy's official Mascot. (Photo: DND)

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