



# Pacific Region Cadets

## ROYAL CANADIAN SEA CADETS

ROYAL CANADIAN SEA CADETS IS A NATIONAL YOUTH PROGRAM SPONSORED BY THE CANADIAN FORCES  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CIVILIAN NAVY LEAGUE OF CANADA

## BACKGROUND

## DOCUMENTATION

### THE CEREMONY OF THE FLAGS

The distinctly Canadian Ceremony of the Flags was originally created and performed by the Royal Canadian Navy in 1967 to celebrate Canada's Centennial. The national flag of Canada and the flags of each province and territory are paraded together in a celebration of nationhood. The ceremony is performed by cadets from Sea Cadet Summer Training Centre, HMCS QUADRA and combines elements of the ancient ceremonies of The Tattoo, Sunset Ceremony and Retreat.

The parade opens with a fanfare by the band, and the entire contingent marches onto the parade area. Once the band is in position, it steps off to perform the "Trooping of the Band". The band slow marches across the front of the parade and retires to their original position. The Drum Major then brings the drummers forward to play the "Drummer's Call." The drummer's call is the tattoo portion of the ceremony. Historically, the walled city's or fort gates were left open until mid-evening. The drummers from the garrison, camped outside the wall, would march through the streets to recall the troops and to signal the innkeepers to close their taps. The old Dutch expression for this closure was "doe den tap toe". It is believed that the Dutch phrase was shortened to "tap toe" by the British and eventually became "tattoo". Upon completion of the drummer's call, the drum line returns to the band, and the trumpeters are marched to the forefront to play the "Last Post".

Following the "Last Post", the guard is moved from the rear of the parade to the front and escorts the Flags forward. During the "advance" the guard splits in two, advances forward and fixes bayonets on the march. The movement is complete when the left and right guards and flag party reform in front of the parade. The guard fires three volleys, clearing of the weapons and ensuring they are functional. The "Trooping of the Flag" is then performed with the Flag Party marching through the guards while the field gun crews fire a 21-gun salute to the national flag. When the flag party has returned to position the sunset ceremony begins.

The sunset ceremony begins with the band playing the orchestrated sunset during which the guard will reverse arms and rest. O Canada and God Save the Queen are played during the lowering of the flag. The ceremony is concluded with the parade marching past the reviewing officer in slow and quick time.

The 60-member HMCS QUADRA senior band is comprised of 15 to 18-year old musicians drawn from sea cadet corps across Canada. The guard is comprised of the summer camp's Chief and Petty Officers, who are employed as staff cadets. Most are 16 to 18 years of age. The flag party and guns crews consists of cadets attending the six-week trades training courses.

The only adult supervisors on parade are the guard commander, guard officer, music director, and two flag party officers for the Canadian Flag and the sea cadet banner, the remainder are cadets.