

The British Isles



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Historic Society

History, Traditions & Customs

Special Edition

Robert Blake McVittie
Marine Artist
1935-2002



Robert McVittie CSMA (August 1, 1935 – 2002)

Born in **England** trained for a naval career at the Thames Nautical Training College and worked in the Merchant Navy before coming to Canada in 1957.

He worked in mining and construction in northern Ontario and British Columbia before moving to Vancouver, British Columbia in 1964. Working in oil, he painted in the manner of Montague Dawson and his subject matter includes all types of shipping from early sailing vessels to fishing boats and modern ships and became a member of the Canadian Society of Marine Artists.

In 1964 he moved to the west coast of Canada to live in North Vancouver and later West Vancouver. He worked for a few years as a graphic

artist for the Hydro and Power Authority. Then he turned to painting full time.

His medium is oil, his style realism, and his subjects are almost exclusively marine, including historic sailing ships, naval and fishing boats as well as freighters and sea life (killer whales). His work is noted for its accuracy. He travelled to the Canadian Arctic and was knowledgeable about the marine history of the Northwest Territories. Throughout his many years as an artist he achieved numerous accomplishments including becoming President of the Canadian Society of Marine Artists and receiving a commission by Northwest Territories Commissioner, Stuart Hodgson, to portray the marine history of the N.W.T. His beautiful paintings have also graced the collections of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, various Heads of State and numerous corporate collections.

McVittie was first engaged to sail aboard Canadian Navy ships in 1985 during the navy's 75th Anniversary. In 1991, he was designated as the official war artist by Canada's Department of National Defense and sailed with the "Operation Friction" Naval Task Group to the first Gulf War. He

recorded the Navy's operations through a series of paintings which are housed in The Maritime Museum of British Columbia, Canada. His paintings are in many collections throughout the world and in many Canadian Museums.

