



Town of Ajax Street Dedication



Street Name: **Hawkins Crescent**

Name of Veteran: George Hawkins Oct. 23, 1911-Oct. 23, 1984

Rank: Petty Officer

Ship Served: HMS Ajax

Date of Service on Ship: 1938 to 1942

Year of Visit/Dedication: June 2014

Veteran or Family Visit: Daughter, grand-daughter and others

Veteran of the Battle of the River Plate: Yes Died at Battle: No

George Hawkins was born October 23, 1911, the son John Henry Hawkins and Florence Powney, George of London, England. He was one of eleven children, four sisters; May, Gladys, Violet and Florence and brothers; Bill, Jack (John), Arthur, Alf, Wally and Charlie.



George joined the Royal Navy in 1927 at the age of sixteen and began his training on HMS Ganges. He was scheduled to complete his service after twelve years, but when the war broke out in September of 1939 he was dispatched to service on HMS Ajax. George served on the Ajax during the first naval surface action of WWII at the Battle of the River Plate, and he also served at the last surface battle of the War on HMS Vigilant.

HMS Vigilant was part of the 26th Destroyer's squadron conducting a coordinated torpedo attack at night on the Japanese heavy cruiser HAGURO and on the Destroyer KAMIKAZE. The HAGURO was sunk at the western entrance to the Malacca Strait. This was the Royal Navy's last major surface action of the War. Throughout George's thirty three year naval career he served on over ten different ships.



George married Patricia Price on March 2, 1940 and they had four children; daughters Janet (1940), Stella (1944), Carolyn (1951), and son Kim (1956). During the early 1940s George served with the Russian convoys out of Scapa Flow. He also served on one of the troop carrying ships on D-Day.

After the War George stayed on with the Navy, based at HMS Vernon in Portsmouth, and during this time George was an instructor, training departing officers in electrical skills for jobs once they left the service. George retired from the Royal Navy on April 16, 1960 as a Chief Petty Officer.

After his service George worked in the holiday industry on Hayling Island and several years before his retirement he became a caretaker at Mengham Infant School where he greatly enjoyed the work and the children loved him. In his retirement he pursued his hobbies, especially gardening and he was particularly proud of his fuchsia and carnations. He died on October 23, 1984 at the age of seventy three, his ashes committed at Spithead in the Solent.