



## Town of Ajax Street Dedication



Street Name: **Masterson Lane**

Name of Veteran: Nigel Masters May 22, 1956-

Rank: A/Leading Cook

Ship Served: HMS Ajax Frigate

Date of Service on Ship: June 1976 to Sept. 1978

Year of Visit/Dedication: August 27, 2016

Veteran or Family Visit: Nigel Masters

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

Nigel Masters was born in Redruth, Cornwall on May 22, 1956. He lived with his family in Newquay, Cornwall until the age of fifteen when he joined the Royal Navy. Naval life began at HMS Ganges Training Establishment as a Junior Assistant Cook 2<sup>nd</sup> class. After completing training he served on HMS Cambridge, HMS Galatea and HMS Seahawk and then joined HMS Ajax in June 1976. The ship and most of her crew had just returned from a world tour but all the talk was of the forthcoming visit to the Town of Ajax, Ontario.



In early August, 1976 HMS Ajax sailed for Canada and visited St. John's in Newfoundland, Halifax in Nova Scotia and Montréal. Nigel fondly remembers the trip down the St. Lawrence River, through the Thousand Islands, out into Lake Ontario and finally berthing at Oshawa harbour. What followed was what Nigel describes as one of the most amazing weeks of his life. Nigel stated that "never before and never since have I been made to feel so welcome and although it is nearly forty years ago the memory of the friendliness of the people of the Town of Ajax still lives with me". He recounts the pride he felt marching through the street with the Ship's company to receive the freedom of the Town. As one of the Ship's cooks he was determined to make an extra special effort with the food for the townsfolk who enjoyed a trip on Lake Ontario.



Nigel served a further two years on the Ajax and left the ship in 1978. By May 1979 he left the Royal Navy and joined Her Majesty's prison service, specializing in Physical Education. He has continued with this work for the last 32 years. One of his proudest moments was when he represented the prison service at football against the Royal Navy.

Nigel has been married to Janet for nearly 40 years, has two sons; Richard and Robert and four grandchildren; Ben, Emily, Pippa and Arlo. They all live in the County of Lincolnshire near the town of Boston. He has been a member of the HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans Association since 2011. In 2014 he and others from the Association, including four from the Frigate, visited the Town of Ajax to help celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle. Nigel found that "the welcome from the townsfolk was again first class". He also thought it was great to speak to people who still remembered the 1976 visit of the crew and is extremely grateful to be considered for a street dedication.

