

Town of Ajax Street Dedication



Street Name: London Lane

Name of Veteran: Stanley James London October 2, 1919-August 25, 2019

Rank: Stoker 1st Class

Ship Served: HMS Exeter

Date of Service on Ship: April 21, 1938 to April 12, 1940

Year of Visit/Dedication: August 27, 2016

Veteran or Family Visit: HMS Ajax & River Plate Veterans Association on behalf of Jim London

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

Stanley James (Jim) London was born in rural Herefordshire, England on October 2, 1919. The youngest of eight children, the family had relocated from the East End of London. Leaving school at the age of fourteen, Jim worked in a depot and as a lorry driver's mate distributing petrol and paraffin.

In October 1937 Jim travelled to Devonport for his initial training in the Royal Navy. He joined HMS Exeter in 1938 in Bermuda and visited the East Coast of the United States, the West Indies, Brazil, South Georgia and the Falkland Islands. In 1938 they visited Valpariso, Chile after a major earthquake and were later awarded a medal for their humanitarian aid.



After the Battle of the River Plate, HMS Exeter returned to England for a refit. Jim was drafted to HMS Inglefield, taking part in Operation Claymore, the British Commando raid on a German Factory in the Loeften Islands.

In 1941 Jim was transferred to HMS Centurion visiting most of Africa and Western India before being involved in Operation Vigorous, a Malta relief convoy. His next ship was HMS Seaham, a mine sweeper which had the distinction of capturing an Italian submarine (The Bronzo) on July 12, 1943. When returning to England, HMS Seaham rescued the crew of a German destroyer which had been sunk in the Bay of Biscay. From 1944 until 1948 Jim served HMS Implacabe bombing targets in Norway, before joining the British Pacific Fleet which attacked the island of Truk and the Japanese Islands. Joining the American 3rd Fleet the Implacable's planes were involved in bombing attacks on the Japanese mainland. After the war's end the planes were flown off and the capacity was taken up by Prisoners of War who were repatriated via Vancouver. Their final return to England included a contingent of 'War Brides'. Jim's final ship was HMS Sluys, a destroyer in the home fleet that was involved in early NATO duties.



In 1944 Jim met Margaret Lewis who was serving in the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service) and saw service in Belgium and Germany. They kept in touch and in December 1947 they married in Margaret's home town of Bootle, Liverpool. When Jim left the Royal Navy in 1949 they settled in Worcester where Jim obtained work as an electrician in a factory making car windshields. In 1952 their first son Raymond was born, followed by another son, Graham in 1953. Margaret died in 2000 after 53 years together. Jim's grandson David was born in 1981 and his first great granddaughter Siena in 2016.



Jim as a keen gardener kept his family supplied with fresh vegetables and excelled in growing Dahlias, winning prizes locally and nationally. In the early 1980s Jim retired from his job as an electrician and took up gardening full time. His garden continued to win awards for many years.

Stanley James 'Jim' London died on August 25, 2019 in his 100th year.