



Town of Ajax Street Dedication



Street Name: **Durling Rock Street**

Name of Veteran: James Ronald Durling Sept. 2, 1924-April 17, 2007

Rank: Royal Marine

Ship Served: HMS Ajax

Date of Service on Ship: Oct. 14, 1942 to July 12, 1945

Year of Visit/Dedication: n/a

Veteran or Family Visit: n/a

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

James (Jim) Ronald Durling, was born in Thursk, Scotland on September 2, 1924 to parents Albert Henry Durling and Lydia Elizabeth McQuitters. His father, a lifetime Royal Marine, was serving with the Military Police at the time.



After school Jim worked as an apprentice bricklayer until joining the Royal Marines. His official enlistment date is recorded as January 21, 1942 in Chatham, Kent. He was only seventeen when he enlisted so all of his training was undertaken in Chatham Division, as he was 224 days underage and could not begin active service. Shortly after turning eighteen he joined HMS Ajax and served until July 12, 1945. In fact, five of his brothers also joined the Royal Marines, and one joined the Army. All of them returned after the war.

Jim married Gladys Lillian Hilda Knight on June 14, 1947 in Rochester, Kent, England. They were married for sixty years and lived in Gillingham, Kent with their daughter, Kay.



Jim with Gladys and Kay

Jim died on April 17, 2007, after a very short illness, he was 83 years old. He is remembered as loving life and being an inspiration to all who met him. Despite suffering pain from ongoing health issues for many years, he was strong to the end.



Jim never spoke of his service years, but the friendship of those in the HMS Ajax & River Plate Veterans Association remained close to his heart. He would have been proud to have been granted the respect of the Ajax flag which covered his coffin on his final journey.