



Town of Ajax Street Dedication



Street Name: **Flazington Court**

Name of Veteran: Claude Reginald Flaxington July 13, 1907-Feb. 2, 1978

Rank: Master-At-Arms

Ship Served: HMS Ajax

Date of Service on Ship: 1939

Year of Visit/Dedication: October 1999

Veteran or Family Visit: Charles David Flaxington, son

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

Claude Reginald Flaxington was born to parents James Charles Flaxington and Grace Ann Smickersgill in Abival, Northern Cape, South Africa in 1907. He left South Africa in 1923 and immigrated to London, joining the Royal Navy shortly afterwards.

In 1928 Claude married Leonora Jane Howe in Bramley, Yorkshire, UK and together they built a family. By the time World War Two was declared, Claude was one of the more 'seasoned' sailors, having already served the Royal Navy for sixteen years. He would have been thirty-two years old at the Battle of the River Plate on December 13, 1939.



Claude with his sister and brother, reuniting after 45 years.

Shortly after the war, Claude and his family emigrated from the United Kingdom and moved to Quebec, Canada. He was working as a mechanic in a Montreal oil refinery when the Naval Officers' Association of Canada put out a personal ad in the paper looking for anyone involved in the Battle of the River Plate. The idea was to have them present at the premiere viewing of 'The Battle of the River Plate'. Three men answered the ad, Claude and two former crew members of the Graf Spee.



Claude (second from left) at the premier of 'The Battle of the River Plate'.

Claude served a total of twenty-nine years in the Royal Navy, including six in the submarine service. He was awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, among others.

Claude Flaxington died in Quebec on February 2, 1978 at the age of seventy.

*Note – Information has been gathered from the June 2024 HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans' Association Newsletter.

*Note – Typo on original RN crew list showed last name as Flazington, which is reflected on the street name. The correct spelling is Flaxington. Attempts were made by the Mayor's office and the Planning Department in 2001 to rectify this, but support from residents was not unanimous.