

RELEASE DATE: TUESDAY MAY 8TH, p.m., 1945

Healy

WITH THE CANADIAN 65TH M.T.B. FLOTILLA IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL –

Three motor torpedo boats manned by Royal Canadian Navy personnel recently helped disperse a pack of German E-boats attempting to lay mines in the convoy lanes off the Scheldt Estuary. It was the flotilla's second action in several days and they suffered only four casualties.

The boats, operating with other coastal force units of the Royal Navy, were commanded by Lieut. Archie Byers of Vancouver and Lieutenants Malcolm Knox and Les McLernon, D.S.C., both of Montreal.

The flotilla was on a defensive patrol in the Scheldt in early morning darkness when three groups of E-boats were reported laying mines in the area. They immediately were sent after one of the groups.

"We illuminated the enemy and saw four E-boats in line ahead travelling at 40 knots," Lieut. Byers said. "We were travelling at 30 knots and heading on to the E-boats at a 160 degree angle. We opened fire at short range and closed rapidly. By then a battle royal was underway but it took the enemy a good 15 seconds before returning our fire."

Working as a unit, the two boats commanded by Knox and Byers cut between the third and fourth E-boats in line and the fourth boat, cut off from the others, sped down the M.T.B.'s starboard side with all guns blazing "and gave us quite a raking".

"We scored definite hits on the second, third and fourth boats, said Lieut. Ross Bartram of Montreal, Byers' first lieutenant, "and it's a wonder we didn't stop them. They must have taken quite a beating before they turned away after fighting it out for less than [missing word] minutes."

[missing words] ...fire broke out on the fo'c'sle [forecastle] of Byers' boat which blinded the vision of the officers on the bridge and prevented Byers from keeping station behind Knox. But they shot up an E-boat on their starboard side and extinguished the fire in a few minutes. The action ended with the enemy turning off to the north in a smoke screen. Lieut. Knox had one engine knocked out. One man was seriously injured and three others received slight wounds.

The E-boats regrouped 20 minutes later and came back in further to the west and this time were engaged by Lieut. McLernon's M.T.B. and an English boat. The engagement lasted six minutes but the enemy was driven off without laying a mine.

It was not known what damage was done to the enemy and although the Canadian ships suffered some casualties and damage, the E-boats "were driven off too soon to lay mines and we had achieved the objective of our patrol."

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## Notes

### Archie Byers

Found in *The Graduate Chronicle*, Oct. 1946: Archie Byers, 13.Comm. '42, who graduated this spring after a lengthy sojourn in the Navy, has gone to Duke University to take his Master's Degree in Forestry. Byers, captain of the University swimming team, travelled to the Olympic games at Berlin in 1936 as a member of Canada's Swim Team.

[https://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/chronicle/AL\\_CHRON\\_1946\\_10.pdf](https://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/chronicle/AL_CHRON_1946_10.pdf)



**Lt. Archie Byers, R.C.N.V.R., B. Comm. '41**—Wounded when his truck struck a land mine in Holland. He has been in command of a motor torpedo boat in the North Sea.

Also: JULY-AUGUST, 1945

The Graduate Chronicle, July August, 1945.

[https://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/chronicle/AL\\_CHRON\\_1945\\_07.pdf](https://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/chronicle/AL_CHRON_1945_07.pdf)

## **Malcolm Knox**

Malcolm Knox was Mayor of Pointe-Claire from 1982 to 1998. He was Captain of the Montreal Amateur Athletic Association Water Polo Team, won the 1939 Canadian Junior Championship and would have led his team to compete in the 1940 Olympics had the war not intervened. He joined the Royal Canadian Navy, eventually serving as Lieutenant Commander on a motor torpedo boat in the English Channel, took part in the invasion of Normandy, and was one of only 199 Canadians to be awarded the Distinguished Cross for Bravery. The article shows his participation in Pointe-Claire's annual Remembrance Day Cenotaph ceremony and includes reminiscences from his own wartime service.

<https://www.facebook.com/patrimoinepointeclaire/posts/malcolm-knox-was-mayor-of-pointe-claire-from-1982-to-1998-he-was-captain-of-the-963903772449398/>

## Pointe Claire honors Canada's war dead



At centerstage, Frank Wheatley, 90, salutes comedies

## Mayor saw friends vanish in the cold sea

"I think back, not really as a reflection, of knowing the story as something."

But when you get older, who or what is important, as who lives? Frank Wharton, a 90-year-old Florida Coast resident, was also asked to reflect on his life.

In his First World War, he was a member of the 688 Central Postal Directory in France.

His younger sons ask him, "What are you proud of in your life?"

Frank says simply, "The fact that I am still here."

I would like to add one more thing. In my 70s, I realized my friends do not care about me; they care about their own lives. So I'm going to live on my own terms and make a wish come true."



Obituary:

<https://www.legacy.com/ca/obituaries/theglobeandmail/name/malcolm-knox-obituary?id=41754584>

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## **Malcolm KNOX Obituary**

### **KNOX, Malcolm Campbell, D.S.C.**

After a long and happy life, Malcolm Knox passed away on Friday August 1, 2003 in his 82nd year. Predeceased by his wife Carolyn, he is survived by his children: Alayne (Malcolm Hamilton), Marilyn (Paul Daly), and Malcolm (Kathleen Schultz) and his grandchildren Lindsay, Craig and Heather Knox, and Murray, Colleen, and Margaux Daly. Malcolm served in the RC Navy in WWII reaching the rank of Lieutenant Commander and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for Bravery. He had a successful career in the shoe industry for over thirty years and then spent the next twenty eight in public service serving first as a City Councillor and then Mayor of Pointe Claire. Visitation will be held at the Collins Clarke Funeral Home, 222 highway 20 (Cartier Exit 49)

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Daly, Collins, O'Connell, 514-487-1870

**Leslie McLernon**

Oshawa Daily Times, 6 Sep 1940, p. 5



D.S.C. FOR CANADIAN

Sub-Lieutenant **Leslie McLernon** of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve has been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross "for courage and resource in the withdrawal of troops from the neighborhood of Le Havre." It is not known whether he was serving on a Canadian or a British warship. His father, S. A. **McLernon**, lives in Montreal.