

HMS Foylebank Memorial Dedication Service

Sunday 4th July 2021



On Sunday 4th July, a typical Portland 'breezy' day a few Branch Members were kindly invited by the Court Leet to attend a Dedication Service at the newly erected Foylebank Memorial and view point at Beacon Hill overlooking Portland Harbour. The Service was led by the Rev'd Tim Gomm. Andrew Straw from the Court Leet related 'The Foylebank Story', Petty Officer Cadet Blade read the VC Citation and Ordinary Cadet Jacob unveiled the Memorial inscription



The Inscription on the plaque reads;

IN MEMORY OF HMS FOYLEBANK AND HER VALLIANT CREW

Whilst at anchor in Portland Harbour on 4 July 1940, HMS Foylebank suffered a devastating 8 minute attack by WW2 Stuka dive bombers. It is recorded there were 22 direct hits to the ship and from a total of 292 Officers and men aboard 72 lost their lives and many more were left severely wounded following the attack.

One of the crew, 23 year old Leading Seaman Jack Foreman Mantle, despite being hit early in the attack, stood fast at his post on the Starboard Pom-Pom gun. When the ship's power failed Jack continued firing with great courage using hand gear only until he could do so no more, whereupon he collapsed and died.

Jack Foreman Mantle was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross (the first awarded in WW2) for his action in defending his ship whilst mortally wounded.

Jack with other shipmates is laid to rest at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery on the lower slopes of the Island, overlooking Portland Harbour.

The Memorial was Commissioned and Financed by the Island and Royal Manor of Portland Court Leet. It was produced from Portland stone by Albion Stone Restoration Ltd.

Unfortunately, due to 'Covid' restrictions, only a limited number were allowed to attend