

Stoker Joseph Germain Pilon V-49934



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- **Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve**
- **Born: L'Original ON, 29 December 1919**
- **Enlisted: HMCS Cartier, 4 November 1942**
- **Civilian Occupation: Brakeman, Amunition Plant, Defence Industries Ltd., Valleyfield, Qc**
- **Death: Died when HMCS Alberni sank on 21 August 1944**
- **Commemorated: Halifax Memorial, Panel 12, The Alberni Project (Courteney, BC), & Cenotaph in l'Original, ON**

Joseph Germain Pilon was born to Félix and Sophie Pilon on December 29, 1919, in L'Original, Ontario and was baptized Roman Catholic. He was the youngest of a family of 11 children, having 6 brothers and 4 sisters. Joseph grew up on a dairy farm and went to elementary then secondary school to grade 11 in the county of Prescott. He completed 4 years of matriculation – Junior before becoming employed as a brakeman for Defense Industries Limited (now General Dynamics) for three months in Valleyfield Québec before his enlistment in November 1942.

Joseph Germain Pilon enlisted at HMCS Cartier in Montreal as an Ordinary Seaman on 4 November 1942. On enlistment with the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, Joseph was 5' 4", 128.5 lbs. He has black hair and brown eyes. He was 22 years old and single. He started active service in March 1943 at HMCS Cartier. Ordinary Seaman Pilon was promoted to Stoker first class that same month and remained at Cartier until June 1943. In mid-June of that year, he was sent to HMCS Cornwallis until November 1943 followed by HMCS Stadacona for training. Stoker Pilon joined his first seagoing ship HMCS Alberni on 23 January 1944. He served in this ship during the Allied Landing at Normandy in June 1944.

On August 21, 1944, at 11:45, Stoker First Class Joseph Germain Pilon, aged 24 years old, was lost at sea and presumed dead when the HMCS Alberni was attacked by a U480 commanded by Hans-Joachim Forster while escorting a convoy in the English Channel. The ship was hit with a torpedo on her port side immediately aft of the engine room. The Alberni sank in under a minute taking 59 crew: 4 officers and 55 ratings to a watery grave. Three officers and 28 crew survived and were rescued by two Motor Torpedo boats returning from the Normandy coast. Joseph Germain Pilon's remains were never recovered. He was 24 years old.

Stoker First Class Pilon is remembered as a fallen sailor in The Alberni Project Society (2005), at the HMCS Alberni Museum in Courtenay, British Columbia (2016), on Panel 12 of the Halifax Memorial in Point Pleasant Park in Nova Scotia and his name can be found on the cenotaph in L'Orignal, Ontario.

For his Service, Joseph Germain Pilon, Stoker First Class was awarded: 1939-45 Star, France-Germany Star, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp & War Medal.

Prepared By:

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Sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission data for Stoker First Class Pilon
- Library and Archives Canada Service file for Stoker First Class Pilon
- Wikipedia – HMCS Alberni
- Canadian Virtual War Memorial – profile page for Stoker Joseph Germain Pilon
- History and Heritage, Royal Canadian Navy history – <https://www.canada.ca/en/navy/services/history/ships-histories/alberni.html>
- Pilon International www.piloninternational.ca/international/archives/germainpilon/germainpilon.htm
- Picture of Joseph Germain Pilon from Pilon International www.piloninternational.ca/international/archives/germainpilon/germainpilon.htm
- Uboat.net – <https://uboat.net/allies/merchants/ship/3326.html>
- L'Orignal: Nos Anciens Combattants - <https://lorignal.com/anciens-combattants/germain-pilon/>