

Surgeon Lieutenant Alan McCarthy Vaughan O-74990



photo:<http://www.wartimeheritage.com>
Do you have a better photo you can share?
Please submit to CSVC.CVMC@gmail.com

- **Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve**
- **Born: Toronto Ontario, 5 August 1916**
- **Enlisted: HMCS YORK, 11 March 1942**
- **Civilian Occupation: Surgeon, Toronto General Hospital**
- **Death: Killed in Action while serving in HMS Indefatigable on 1 April 1945**
- **Commemorated: Halifax Memorial, Panel 13**

Alan McCarthy Vaughan, enlisted as a Surgeon Lieutenant in the RCNVR at HMCS *York* in Toronto on 11 March 1942 having had previous service with the Canadian Militia force (Queen's Rangers and Mississauga Horse between 1934-35) and Sea Cadets. He was killed in action (KIA) as a result of a Kamikaze attack while serving in the Royal Navy carrier HMS *Indefatigable* on Easter Sunday, 1 April 1945, during strike operations off the Japanese Sakishima Islands in the closing months of the Second World War.

Born in Toronto, Ontario on 5 August 1916, to Joseph M. and Margaret S. Vaughan, Alan was educated at Oakwood Collegiate where he also qualified as a Cadet Instructor in 1931. He had a sister, Charmian, who served with the Red Cross in Italy. He also had two brothers; Bryan, who worked in government service in Ottawa, and Dennis, who served with the Canadian Army show during WWII that entertained Canadian troops in Europe and the UK.

Alan enjoyed sports and activities such as rugby, swimming and sailing and carried his musical interest with him into his service in the RCNVR keeping his clarinet handy at his duty station in the flight deck level sick bay in the carrier's island. He entertained his shipmates with his accomplished musical talent when not at Action Stations; at the ready to provide initial medical treatment to wounded flyers returning on deck from missions in their damaged aircraft. While a medical student at the University of Toronto he ran a summer camp for boys in Muskoka. He was working as a surgeon at the Toronto General Hospital having interned at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children before joining the RCNVR for Surgeon Lieutenant training from June to September 1942.

After his initial training in Halifax, he was seconded to the Royal Navy, serving in the destroyer HMS *Worchester* (1942-43) in the Atlantic theatre before his appointment to HMS *Indefatigable* assigned to the British Pacific Fleet. He undertook flying training and participated in jungle training while serving in the carrier to better understand flying operations and the medical implications of tropical conditions. Known as "Beefy" to his friends in recognition of his large frame or "Doc Vaughan" to the Ship's Company; he earned the respect and endearment of his shipmates for his

cheerfulness and willingness to take on challenges and tasks beyond the scope of his primary medical duties or rank. At his death, this sentiment amongst his shipmates for their Canuck ship's doctor was illustrated by the hundreds of letters of condolence collected from the crew at the Captain's request.

On the day of his demise, 1 April 1945 – Easter Sunday – the *Indefatigable* suffered the first Kamikaze hit of the British Pacific Fleet as a Japanese Zeke fighter armed with a 250 Kg bomb evaded the Combat Air Patrol's attempts to shoot it down and the desperate anti-aircraft fire from the ship to hit the armoured flight deck adjacent to the sick bay in the carrier's island superstructure. The blast effect of the Zeke's impact killed Surgeon Lieutenant Vaughan outright along with thirteen of his shipmates, wounding another sixteen. He was 28 years old.

Buried at sea with his shipmates he is memorialized with his name listed on page 572 of the Second World War Book of Remembrance in the Memorial Chamber of the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill and at the Halifax Memorial (panel 13).

For his Service, Lieutenant-Surgeon Vaughan was awarded: 1939-45 Star, Atlantic Star & Clasp, Burma Star & Clasp, Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp and War Medal. This mother, Margaret Vaughan, was awarded the Memorial Cross

*A **postscript** to the story of Surg Lt Vaughan is that his brother Dennis served as a member of the Canadian Army show that entertained Canadian troops overseas in Northwest Europe and the United Kingdom during the Second World War. Known as Denny Vaughan he went on to some prominence after the war in an entertainment career. He was at one time referred to as the "English Sinatra" in the UK and had his own shows on CBC radio and TV. He also provided musical support to widely popular TV productions of the 1960s and 70s in the United States such as 'The Smothers Brother's Show' and 'The Glen Campbell Hour'.*

Prepared By:

Paul Seguna, CD, Lieutenant Commander RCN (Retd), Citizen Sailor
Virtual Cenotaph Research team



Sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission- <https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/casualty-details/2641105/vaughan,-alan-mccarthy/>
- Library and Archives Canada Service file for rank/ name- <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/second-world-war/second-world-war-dead-1939-1947/Pages/item.aspx?ldNumber=44008&>
- Veteran's Affairs Canada- Canadian Virtual War Memorial- <https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/casualty-details/2641105/vaughan,-alan-mccarthy/>
- Wartime Heritage Association website - <http://www.wartimeheritage.com/storyarchive2/storyavaughan.htm>

- <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/2641105?Alan%20Mccarthy%20Vaughan>
- Canadian Fallen website - <https://canadianfallen.ca/110935/VAUGHAN>
- Denny Vaughan - <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/denny-vaughan-emc>
- British Pacific Fleet during WWII OPERATION ICEBERG - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5p6LI7PKepA>
- The Kamikaze Hunters - Fighting for the Pacific 1945 by Will Iredale. A detailed description of the Kamikaze attack of 1 April 1945 mentions the loss of the Canadian ship's doctor on page 253. See a review at: <https://www.kamikazeimages.net/books/general/iredale/index.htm>
- Kamikaze: The Story of the British Pacific Fleet by Stuart Eadon - reviewed at: <https://www.kamikazeimages.net/books/related/eadon/index.htm>