



**Bridget "Bride"  
Fitzpatrick**

Canadian Virtual War Memorial

## **Bride Fitzpatrick**

In memory of:

## **Stewardess Bride Fitzpatrick**

October 14, 1942

### **Military Service**

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### **Age:**

61

### **Force:**

Merchant Navy

### **Unit:**

Canadian Merchant Navy

### **Division:**

S.S. Caribou (St. John's, Newfoundland)

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### **Born:**

April 22, 1881

Bay Roberts, Newfoundland and Labrador

Daughter of Mary and Matthew Fitzpatrick. Stewardess Fitzpatrick is also commemorated on a memorial plaque affixed to a new eight-sided old-fashioned bandstand in Veteran's Park in Langford, British Columbia. The plaque was unveiled by ex-merchant mariner Tom Osborne and Barbara Duncan on May 19, 2002, as a bugler sounded Reveille. It is believed to be the first war memorial anywhere in the world dedicated to women merchant mariners who died at their posts in the two world wars.

Born in Bay Roberts, in the Dominion of Newfoundland, she was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Fitzpatrick of Bay Roberts, Newfoundland.

Stewardess Bride Fitzpatrick is commemorated on Page 135 of Canada's Merchant Navy Book of Remembrance. She had initially been commemorated at the Halifax Memorial, which is on the waterfront in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Bride Fitzpatrick is now commemorated in The CANADIAN BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE.

Stewardess Fitzpatrick is one of eight Canadian Women Mariners killed in action during wartime, and commemorated on a War Memorial Plaque, ceremoniously unveiled on 19 May 2002; it is affixed to an old-fashioned bandstand in Veteran's Park in Langford, British Columbia, Canada. It is believed to be the first world-wide war memorial dedicated to women merchant mariners who died at their posts in the two World Wars.

“In Channel (PAB), Newfoundland, on 6 Nov 1942, G. Penney, Stipendiary Magistrate, presented the findings of:-- "A Magisterial Enquiry Into The Death Of 34 Persons Whose Bodies Were Brought

into Port Aux Basques on October 14th and 15th A.D. 1942 Following The Sinking By Enemy Action At Sea Of The S.S.

CARIBOU."

Under 'CREW' was written:-

--"Miss Bride Fitzpatrick, Stewardess. Body landed from skiff at Port Aux Basques on October 14th. Identified by friends and relatives at Port Aux Basques. Released to Newfoundland Railway at Port Aux Basques on October 15th for shipment to Bay Roberts, her home." (Her body was recovered with that of [Nursing Sister Agnes Wightman WILKIE.](#))

In the early morning of 14 Oct 1942, the Newfoundland Railway passenger/rail ferry, S. S. 'Caribou', was sailing across the Cabot Strait when it was torpedoed and sunk by a German U-boat; it had left Sydney, Nova Scotia, on the evening of 13 Oct and was heading for Port-aux-Basques, Newfoundland. Aboard were 192 passengers (armed forces personnel, as well as civilians), a crew of 46, some livestock, rail cars and other cargo. The island of Newfoundland, a sea-faring country which was still a British colony at that time, was in a strategic location during the Second World War because it was so close to Canada. There were several military bases on the island where Canadian, British, and American personnel were stationed; these

servicemen often travelled on the ferries between Newfoundland and Canada. Of the 46 crew members of the S.S. 'Caribou', 31 died, including her captain and his two sons. Of the 118 Canadian, British, and American armed services personnel, 57 died. And of the 74 civilians aboard the Caribou that early morning, 49 perished. 136 people in all were lost.”

Stewardess Fitzpatrick was one of the S.S. 'Caribou' crew members who perished at sea.

From the Canadian Virtual War Memorial- Military Service:-

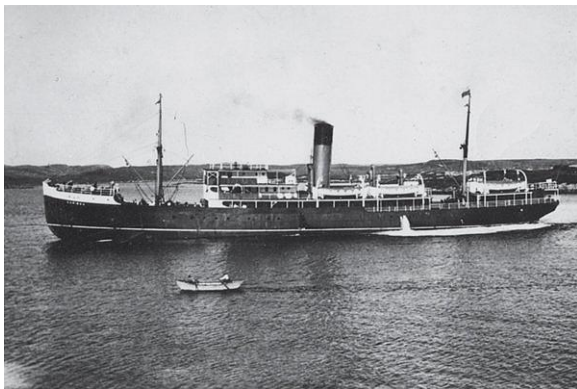
Rank: Stewardess

Force: Merchant Navy

Unit: Canadian Merchant Navy

Division: S.S. 'Caribou' (St. John's, Newfoundland)

### **The Account of the Sinking of the SS Caribou**



**SS Caribou**

The night of October 13, 1942 was dark and moonless as the SS Caribou made its way from North Sydney, Cape Breton, to Port aux Basques, Newfoundland. The ship departed North Sydney at 9:30 pm with seventy-three civilians, including eleven children, one hundred eighteen military personnel, and a crew of forty-six. Captain Benjamin Tavenor, aware of the U-boat danger to the crossing had the passengers familiarize themselves with the lifeboat stations prior to departure. The SS Caribou was escorted astern by the single stack minesweeper, HMCS Grandmere as it proceeded toward Port aux Basques. The two ships were sighted by U-69, forty miles south-west of its destination. A single torpedo struck the SS Caribou, at 3:40 am, causing the ship's boilers to explode and sinking the passenger ship in four minutes. HMCS Grandmere immediately went in pursuit of U-69. "At the time of the explosion most passengers were in cabins and there was much confusion as passengers and crew tried desperately to reach lifeboats and rafts." ("Sinking of the SS Caribou - October 14, 1942") It was 6:30 am when HMCS Grandmere, unsuccessful in finding and destroying U-96, began to rescue survivors. Of the two hundred and thirty-seven aboard the SS Caribou, one hundred and thirty-six had perished, fifty-seven military personnel, forty-nine civilians, including only one of the 11 children, and thirty-six of the crew. U-69 would meet its fate the following February when it was destroyed by HMS Viscount, east of Newfoundland. All forty-six of the crew were killed in the sinking.