



William "Billy" Neville

Billy Neville was born in the early 1900's in North River, Conception Bay. He was one of seven boys born to Richard Neville and Grace (Reid) Neville.

However, for most of his childhood, he grew up being raised by his grandmother and other family members. This was a result of his mother's death during childbirth in 1932, and his father spending a lot of time away working.

Growing up, Billy and some of his brothers became interested in boats. Billy and his brother, Arthur, spent years fishing out of Black Tickle, which made them prepared and gave them skills to use in the future. They were always surrounded by a hard-working family and were raised to be energetic and strong.

By 1939, the Second World War had begun, and the Neville boys were eager to answer the call to defend their country.

William and his brother, Arthur "Art" Neville, signed up for the Royal Navy in 1939. They were among the First Contingent of two hundred men who were immediately sent to England for training in the same year of their enlistment.

After a few years of training and postings, Billy Neville became a naval gunner on the Canadian National Steamships liner the R.M.S Lady Hawkins.

In January 1942, the boat was on its way to the Caribbean when U-66 off the Carolinas torpedoed it.

Over 250 lives were lost that day, including William Neville's. He was declared "missing while on passage."

William Neville's name is enshrined on the Chatham Naval Memorial in Kent, England dedicated to Royal Navy personnel lost at sea during the First and Second World Wars.

The tragic loss of Billy's life was devastating for his family, but his story and bravery will always be remembered by family today.

Source used:

<https://www.saltwire.com/newfoundland-labrador/news/a-north-river-familys-story-of-sacrifice-327976/>



The Chatman Naval Memorial, Kent, England

Service No: C/JX 173321

Regiment/Service: Royal Navy, First Contingent

Missing while on passage in S.S. Lady Hawkins (Halifax). Torpedoed by German U-boat 66, off Cape Hatteras. U-Boat 66 was later sunk by US Aircraft and escort ship Buckely West of Cape Verde Islands, May 6th, 1944.

1939-45 Star

Atlantic Star

War Medal



From Bay Roberts Guardian 02 Dec 1944

IN MEMORIAM

NEVILLE—In loving memory of Able Seaman William Neville who was drowned on Nov. 27th, 1942, when the s.s. "Lady Hawkins" was torpedoed and sunk, and A/B Arthur Neville, who was drowned while on war service in January, 1943.

—Inserted by their father, Richard Neville, North River.