

Neil HAIGHTON

Born: 1921 – Burnley - Lancashire

Parents: Son of Alan & Doris Haighton believed to have lived at Burnsall,
Yapton Road, Middleton-on-Sea, Sussex
and at the time of their son's death at Machynlleth, Montgomery,
Wales

School Years: 1933 – 1938 St Wilfrid's House Chichester High School for Boys

Armed Forces Record

Service Rank: Able Seaman

Service Number: P/JX 152380

Service Record: HMS Blean

Service Base: Royal Navy

Date of Death: 11 December 1942

Type III 'Hunt-class' Escort Destroyer HMS Blean (L47) (Lt N.J. Parker) was named after the 'Blean Beagles' Hunt of the village of Blean just north of Canterbury. The ship was to have the shortest 'H' class mission career of the 2nd World War (sunk just four months after commissioning on 13th August 1942).

Whilst escorting the British Convoy MKF-4 off the Algerian Coast, HMS Blean was torpedoed north-west of Oran (Algeria) by U-443 on 11th December 1942. U-433 aimed one torpedo against her and a second against the convoy but both hit the Blean and she sank within four minutes with the loss of 89 men including *Old Boy* Neil Haighton. He was 21. Eight officers and 86 ratings were picked up by HMS Wishart (D67) (Cdr H.G.Scott)

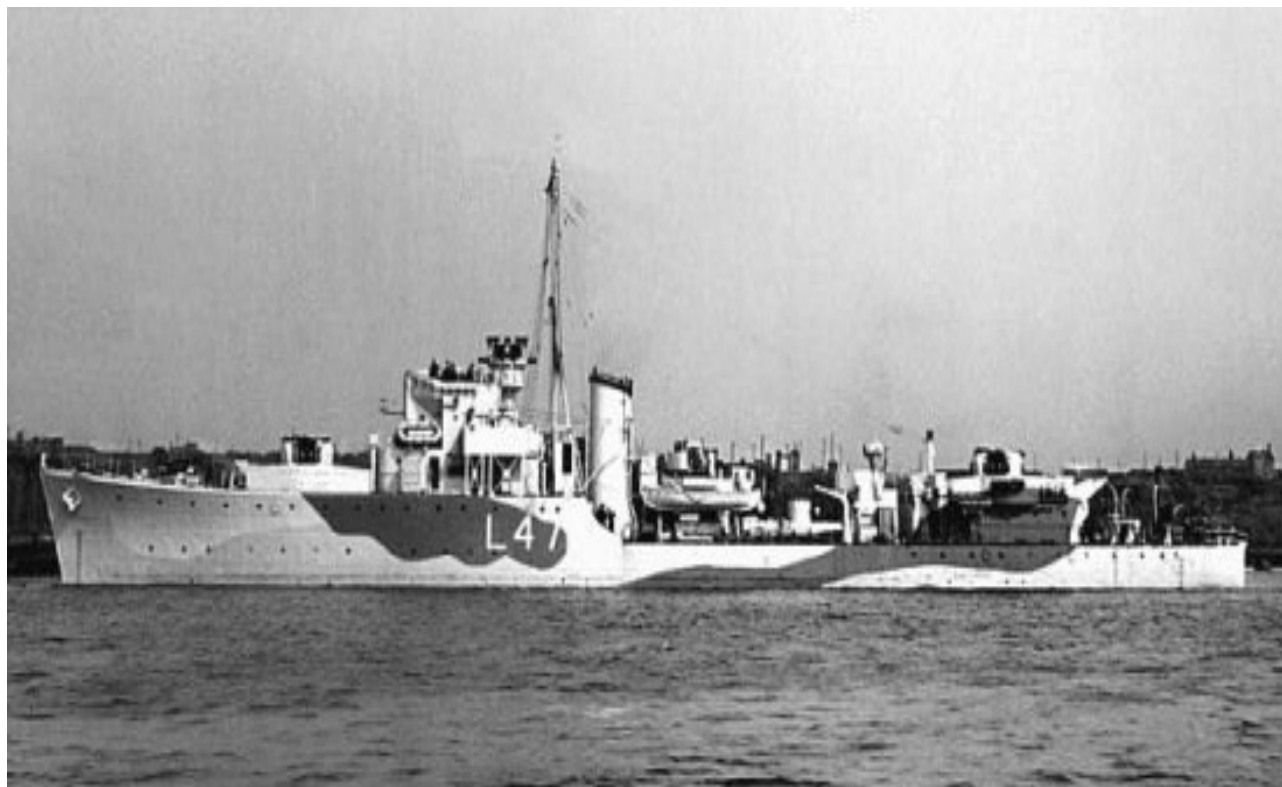
The Fate of U-433

On 16th February 1943 U-443 (Cmdr. Obit Konstantin von Puttkamer) was sunk in the Mediterranean east of Gibraltar by depth charges from escort destroyers HMS Bicester, Lamerton and Wheatland with the total loss of her 48 crew.

On 3 patrols (67 days) U-433 also sank 3 merchant ships – GTN 19.435

Memorial Plate

To HMS Blean was unveiled in the church of St Cosmas and St Damian in the village of Blean, Kent on 10th December 2006



Escort Destroyer – HMS Blean

In memory of

HMS Blean

Launched 15th January 1942

Torpedoed 11th December 1942.

60 miles west of Oran, Algeria.

With the loss of 89 men.

Commemorated:

**Chichester High School for Boys - St Nicholas Church, Middleton on Sea West Sussex and
the Naval War Memorial Portsmouth Panel 64 Column 1**