

Lt. Cmdr Allen Russell Burgham
DSC, MID, CD, RNZVR, RCNR (Ret.)
OLS (Ret.) # 813
1920 – 2011

Submitted by Robin V. Moore



Allen died peacefully with his family at his side on November 10, 2011 after a long and loving life of duty and service. He was 91 years of age. He continues to be greatly loved and missed by his wife of over 66 years, Barbara Jean Burgham (nee Wallace); his sons Ronald, Ian (Catherine West), Mark (Mary Sean, nee Kelley) and his adoring and greatly saddened grandchildren. Predeceased by brothers Clem and Colin, he will be missed by brother Robert "Bob" Burgham, his sister-in-law Isobel Gordon, his brother-in-law Donald Hubble and his many cousins, nephews and nieces in Canada, New Zealand and England.

Allen was born in Onehunga, New Zealand and virtually grew up on the beach at Kohi with his brothers and friends and went on to Captain the Tamaki Rugby Club (Juniors). In 1940 at the age of 19 he enlisted in the

RNZVR, became Flight Commander of the Fighter Component and Senior Pilot of the 835 Squadron, Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm serving on H.M.S. Nairana on the Atlantic, Arctic and Gibraltar convoys; became Commanding Officer in 1952 of the Royal Canadian Navy's VC921 Squadron of H.M.C.S. Cataragui. During his duty aboard the H.M.S. Nairana in the Arctic seas defending the convoy from attack against great odds of survival, Allen became the first pilot in history to land a "day fighter" on an aircraft carrier at night and was awarded his second gallantry award, the Distinguished Service Cross. Allen was a quiet gentleman, a great friend and leader and a Royal Navy Pilot to the end.

After the war Allen and Barbara settled in Kingston where he became an Ontario Land Surveyor and partner in the firm of Humphries and Burgham O.L.S. Many projects in and around Queen's University and the Kingston General Hospital were carried out by this company. Allen left his mark on the landscape of this part of Eastern Ontario in the design of many Subdivisions, cottage developments, rural severances and condo projects along the Kingston waterfront.

Allen, Barbara and family enjoyed summers at their cottage on Buck Bay of Bob's Lake and after his retirement, the condo on Lake Ontario's waterfront. Being in the heart of downtown Kingston, evening walks, farmers market and other activities were close at hand.

Allen, with the assistance of his son Ian, compiled a memoir of a Fleet Air Arm Pilot that was completed in March of 2011. This memoir is a fitting tribute to the brave airmen that helped shape history. Allen was surely one of these great men.