

## Lieutenant Commander Edward Courtney Boyle VC, RN Honoured with Blue Plaque at Sunningdale Golf Club

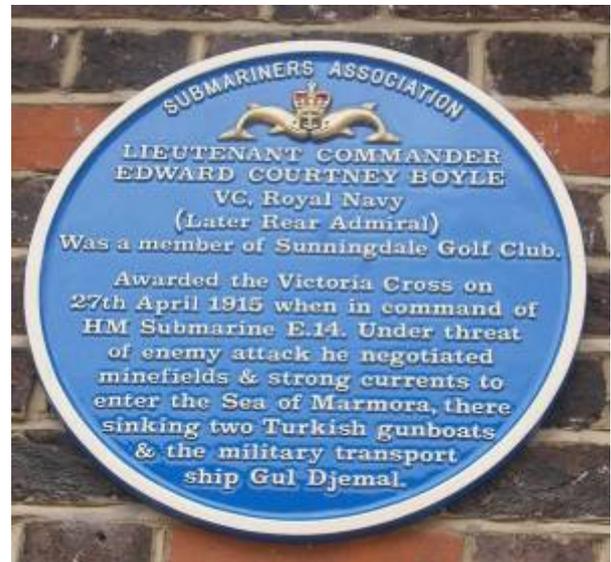


As part of the Submariners Association initiative the fourth Blue Plaque commemorating a WWI Submariner and VC holder was placed on the clubhouse of Sunningdale Golf Club, Ridgmount Road, Sunningdale, SL5 9RR on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

Approximately 40 guests, which included the Secretary of Sunningdale Golf Club Mr. Steven Toon and the Club Captain Mr. .... and other members of the Club, the Boyle family, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire Mr. Andrew Panter MBE, the Mayor of Windsor & Maidenhead (*Councillor Eileen Quick*) and consort Reverend John Quick, joined veteran and serving submariners including RASM, Rear Admiral Parr CB and the National, Medway Towns and Royal Berkshire Standards for the ceremony.

Prior to commencing the ceremony the Club Captain welcomed everyone and provided a short history of Boyle VC. The commemoration service was led by the Reverend Rico Tice (*All Souls, Langham Place, London & a member of the club*). The Associations Vice President Rick Elrick also welcomed everybody to the event and the President Admiral Sir James Perowne KBE provided further information on Lieutenant Commander Edward Courtney Boyle VC

citation and information on the discovery of HM Submarine E.14 in the Sea of Marmora some 94 years after she was sunk. This was followed by the unveiling of the plaque by the Admiral and Mr. Michael Boyle (*Godson to Boyle*).



Lieutenant Commander Edward Courtney Boyle was born on March 23, 1883 in Carlisle, the son of Lieutenant Colonel Boyle, of the Army Pay Department, and Edith Boyle.

He was educated at Cheltenham College and joined the Royal Navy as a cadet, in about 1895. He joined the fledgling Submarine Service in 1904 as a Sub-Lieutenant and was quickly promoted to Lieutenant and appointed to command submarine C4.

Over the coming years he commanded several submarines and at the outbreak of WWI undertook patrols in the North Sea.

He was promoted to Lieutenant Commander in October 1914 and appointed to command the submarine E14, which was sent to the Dardanelles in March 1915 and in which the following deed took place for which he was awarded the VC.

The citation was gazetted on 21 May 1915 and was as follows:

*The KING has been graciously pleased to approve of the grant of the Victoria Cross to Lieutenant-Commander Edward Courtney Boyle, Royal Navy, for the conspicuous act of bravery specified below:*

*For most conspicuous bravery, in command of Submarine E. 14, when he dived his vessel under the enemy minefields and entered the Sea of Marmora on the 27th April, 1915. In spite of great navigational difficulties from strong currents, of the continual neighbourhood of hostile patrols, and of the hourly danger of attack from the enemy, he continued to operate in the narrow waters of the Straits and succeeded in sinking two Turkish gunboats and one large military transport.*

The large transport sunk by E.14 was the Gul Djemal which was sunk in shallow waters with the loss of 2000 troops and a battery of artillery. It's sinking ended Ottoman attempts to reinforce Gallipoli by sea. In addition to Boyle's VC, Edward Geldard Stanley and Acting Lieutenant Reginald Wilfred Lawrence were both awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and all the ratings were awarded the Distinguished Service Medal.



Gul Djemal

Boyle made at least two more tours of the Sea of Marmora aboard E.14 during the Gallipoli Campaign whereupon he continued to sink a number of Turkish vessels. As to E.14 she returned to the Sea of Marmora on several occasions during WWI, but was unfortunately sunk on the 28 January 1918.

In August 1916 Lt Cdr Boyle returned to the UK and commanded the 11th Submarine Flotilla at Blyth.

After the war he was promoted to Commander and was loaned to the Australian Navy and commanded a submarine flotilla there.

In 1920 he was promoted to Captain and subsequently commanded the cruisers HMS Birmingham and HMS Carysfort.

He commanded the battleship HMS Iron Duke from 1929 to 1931 and retired on October 19 1932, a day after being promoted to Rear Admiral. He was recalled to the Active List in 1939 and held several shore appointments before finally retiring in 1943.



In December 1967 Boyle was unfortunately knocked down by a lorry on a pedestrian crossing and died of his injuries. For the last few years before his death he had resided at the Station Hotel in Sunningdale, near to **Sunningdale Golf Club** where he played several times a week. His accident occurred a hundred yards from his hotel whilst he was crossing the A30. His VC was donated to the Submarine Museum, Gosport by the Boyle family.

The unveiling ceremony was completed by the Reverend Rico Tice by blessing the plaque and reading the Naval Collect. This was followed by Admiral Sir James Perowne KBE presenting the Sunningdale Golf Club Secretary Mr. Steven Toon with a framed picture of Boyle VC and citation and the Submariners Association crest. The Vice

President Rick Elrick also presented a framed picture to the Boyle family.



Following completion of the event all guests were invited by the Club for tea and biscuits in the Clubhouse which was very much appreciated by all who attended.

In summary it was a great day, everybody appeared to enjoy themselves and the rain stayed away.

The Submariners Association would like to thank the Sunningdale Golf Club for allowing the plaque to be mounted on the clubhouse and for providing an excellent reception for the guests. In addition we would also like to thank all serving and submariner veterans that attended the ceremony and in particular, the National Standard Bearer, members of Medway Towns & Royal Berkshire Branches together with their Standard Bearer's.

It is planned that the next Commemorative Blue Plaque will be unveiled in April 2016 at Bradfield College to commemorate Lieutenant Commander Geoffrey Saxton White VC, RN.



Author:

*Lieutenant Commander Frank (Sandy) Powell  
– Member National Management Committee  
Submariners Association.*