

The crew of Irish cattle boat SS Ardmore may have been lost when

Mystery slip off the coast



The loss of the SS Ardmore which sailed from Cork in 1940 is one of the unsolved mysteries of the sea.

A 58-YEAR-OLD mystery to find the final resting place of brave merchant seamen killed when their ship was blasted out of the waters shortly after leaving Cork harbour during the Second World War has at long last been solved.

And now law graduate Peter Mulvaney, behind the search for many years to find the stricken vessel, has called on the Government to finally honour the crew of the SS Ardmore.

He is also wants all relatives of the dead men in Munster to come forward for a proposed wreath laying ceremony to be held on the high seas three miles off the Westford coast later this month at 4.15pm on the ship's 58 crew who died leaping into the sea during the war.

He hopes to get the co-operation of Irish Prime and Guinness Lifeboat for the ceremony.

"The Ardmore has finally come home after 58 years," said Mr Mulvaney.

Mystery

The loss of the SS Ardmore in November 1940 remains one of the unsolved mysteries of the sea.

The last Cork for Plymouth on Monday night, November 11, was a crew of 58 men but was never seen again.

Over the years it had been speculated that the ship was sunk after

the ship struck a mine in 1940

Unsolved mystery

THE loss of the SS Ardmore in November 1940 remains one of the great unsolved mysteries of Irish maritime history.

Now a divers group from the Westford area has finally located the stricken sunken vessel three miles from the Saltee Islands off Westford.

The SS Ardmore was built in 1938 at the Calsonic shipyard in Dundee.

The sea purchased in 1939 by the British and Irish Steam Packet com-

EXCLUSIVE

By BRIAN WINDERS

pany from Todenick and McCarrick at the Lady Killiney and was subsequently transferred to the City of Cork Steam Packet company and renamed the SS Ardmore in May of 1939.

The vessel could steam at 14 knots, was of 1,021 tons gross, 417 tons net and had a crew of 18.



stalling a mine which had broken free from the coastal defences around Bristol.

Boiler of the shipper and a weak man were washed up on the Westford coast near Aberystwyth and a sea mark was dispersed and located near the Pembrokeshire coast which was identified as coming from the Ardmore.

Mr Mulvaney has revealed exclusively to the Echo that divers from the Westford area have finally located the sunken vessel three miles from the Saltee Islands off Westford.

"The objective for me is to encourage any sort of 20th of course lost on the Ardmore or on any other vessels lost at the time to come forward and now register these deaths and claim their awards to which they are entitled," said Mr Mulvaney.

One of the last sightings of the

Arthrop was made late at night a November 11, 1940 when it was spotted by coastguards two miles off Blackpoint sailing in calm water. Traps were thrown over the side to catch vessel come from the master of the British coaster Berops with assorted wreckage to the ashore line as water had had dead animals were on the rocks at the Saltee 1 mile.

Message

Mr Mulvaney recalls one of the most aspects of the Ardmore was of a book postman finding a bottle with a message found on Ocella Strand on November 31.

The message read: "Goodbye Mum. Dad and all at home. Be prayers for me. Love JP. 58 Ar name."

Mr Mulvaney reckons this must have come from the late John Peter Bell, a young crew member aged 1 years from Cork.

"In the case of young John Peter Bell, a young crew member aged 1 years from Cork.

"The message was sent in a bottle just in case the Ardmore was sunk."

"At least he would have sent a message to his parents," says N Mulvaney.

Two weeks after the sinking of the Ardmore, the body of Captain Fox was washed up on a beach in Wexford. It was later in December the body of Able Seaman Frank Burns was recovered from a beach near Wexford and returned to Cor

The men

Frank Barry, John Edward Bruland (all former) John Cronin, Spring Lane, Bartholomew Quay, Dublin, Captain James St John Fenwick, St Mary's Ave, Gurransmahon, Patrick Ryan, Assington Rd, M. Ford, James St John Lane, Popham Hill, Patrick O'Donnell, Henry St, Timothy O'Leary, Whitehead St, John O'Flanagan, Port St; Frank O'Sullivan, Lr



LONG CAMPAIGN FOR SPECIAL MEDAL

FRANK MURPHY (right) has led a campaign since 1960 to agree the details all accounts of Irish ships registered as relative can claim a special medal struck in their honour.

His campaign along the loss of the steam trawler Lough off Tory Island in March of 1940 was ultimately successful in November 1988 when it led to the creation of a legal precedent enabling any of the sect of kits to register the death of their relatives.

For their valour these seamen were posthumously awarded a Service medal with three bars attached and a citation, which is the highest award given for service to Ireland during the war.

Mr Mulvaney said as a result of his research, Can Galvin of Raherua, Coolspree, Carrigrohane, the grandson of Mr Edward Bruland lost on the Ardmore, made contact last year and an application has now been made to register the death of the late first.

Finally Located.

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