



# Thame Remembers



## Able Seaman Sydney A Richardson

Sydney Alfred Richardson was born in Bicester on the 2nd January 1911. He was the son of Edwin Richardson, a shoeing smith, and Florence Richardson (nee Harris). Edwin was from Thame and by the start of the Great War, the family had moved back to Thame, and were living in Nelson Street. His father went on to serve with the RASC during the war. In 1926, Sydney enlisted as a "Boy" in the Royal Navy, and after training at HMS Ganges, at Shotley in Suffolk, his first sea posting was on the battleship HMS Emperor of India, and then in 1927 the newly commissioned battleship HMS Nelson. By 1942, P/JX 126446 Able Seaman Sidney Alfred Richardson, had completed his initial 12 years service with the Royal Navy. He was retained for war service and was assigned to HMS President III, the establishment for training DEMS (Defensively Equipped Merchant Ship) gunners and sailors. On 1st November 1942 Sydney was a DEMS gunner on the troop transport ship SS Mendoza which was a Ministry of War Transport liner of 8,234 tons sailing from Mombasa, East Africa. She was torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U-178 about 70 nautical miles ENE of its destination, Durban, South Africa. The Glasgow-registered Mendoza, an ex-Vichy French ship captured off Montevideo was sailing under the Blue Funnel flag. She was carrying 153 crew and 250 passengers when it blew up taking the lives of 28 of her crew and 122 service personnel. With her two propellers and rudder blown off, the ship settled by the stern. Ten lifeboats were launched, the survivors attempting to reach land when the American ship SS Alava arrived. Sydney was 31 years old and left a wife, Ethel Florence Richardson. P/JX 126446 Able Seaman Sidney Alfred Richardson was lost at sea on 1st November 1942 and is commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Southsea, Hampshire. He is remembered in Thame on the war memorial.



**The  
Thame Remembers Cross  
was delivered to  
Portsmouth Naval Memorial  
on 14 June 2017  
by  
Cllr Tom Wyse  
Mayor of Thame**

