

Mississauga Citizen of the Year

Andrew Irwin dies at 92

*Port Credit man
remembered as proud
Navy veteran*

IAIN COLPITTS

icolpitts@mississauga.net

MN June 8, 2017

Andrew Irwin, Mississauga's Citizen of the Year for 2017, has died at the age of 92.

A decorated Navy veteran and Port Credit resident since 1979, Irwin was at Mississauga Hospital since March 24 and died around 3:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 1 after complications caused by a seizure.

His wife Elaine and a close friend who was like a son to him were by his side. He is survived by three children, six grandchildren, and a great-grandchild.

On May 25, Elaine accepted the Gordon S. Shipp Memorial Award on Irwin's behalf at during the Mississauga Civic Awards reception.

"With all of the recognitions he's had, it's wonderful," Elaine said. "I know he went as far as he could go. The doctors kept hoping we would be able to get him in a wheelchair and get him (to the awards ceremony), but that just didn't work."

Irwin's 92nd birthday was on May 28 and Ward 1 councillor Jim Tovey visited him in hospital to present him with his medal and plaque for earning the title of Citizen of the Year.

There were roughly 20 people who showed up to be with him that day and he was still aware of what was going on.

"He shook hands and acknowledged who they were," Elaine said.

Irwin earned many medals of honour - including the Russian Medal of Ushakov and the French Legion of Honour - from his time serving with the Navy during the Second World War.

He was recognized as Citizen of the Year for his efforts in sharing his stories with schools and other community groups across Mississauga.

Tovey admired Irwin's desire to share his stories of the war when many others who fought along with him would have been shell-shocked.

"They went through some incredibly horrendous experiences," Tovey said.

"But here's Andy, who takes it on as his obligation and duty to let everybody know why they fought, what they fought for, and



Metroland file photo

Andrew Irwin, Mississauga's Citizen of the Year for 2017, died on June 1 at the age of 92.

what that freedom means."

During the Second World War, he guided convoys on the Murmansk Run as they shipped vital supplies to the Russians in their fight against the Germans.

He was also on the gun crew of the HMCS Algonquin during the Invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944.

To help teachers in developing teaching aids for Canada's role in the Second World War, he helped create An ABC of the Battle of the Atlantic, an online teaching resource.

An avid sailor and respected member of the Port Credit Yacht, Irwin spent 25 years as the "foreman" of the boat launch and haul.

As part of the Easter Seals Family Fun Day during the Port Credit Regatta, he also took disabled children and their families out for an afternoon on the water.

He was a longtime participant in Port Credit's Canada Day parade and the Port Credit Legion's Remembrance Day parade.

Funeral arrangements are still being made, but Elaine says information will eventually be posted on the Skinner & Middlebrook Ltd. Funeral Home's website, skinnerandmiddlebrook.com.