

Aubrey George Connors

Born: November 6, 1922
Hometown: Lincolnville, ME
Class: 1944
Service: Merchant Marine
Position / Rank: Deck Cadet
Date / Place of death: April 23, 1943/ 57-30N, 43-00W
Date / Place of burial: April 23, 1943/ Lost at Sea –
57-30N, 43-00W
Age: 20



Aubrey G. Connors signed on aboard the SS Robert Gray as Deck Cadet on April 3, 1943 at the port of Baltimore, NY. His classmate Stephen Siviglia signed on the same day as Engine Cadet. A week later, on April 12, 1943 the ship sailed from New York with a number of other ships in Convoy HX 234 bound for Liverpool, England, apparently loaded with a cargo that included ammunition or explosives. For unknown reasons the Robert Gray fell back from the convoy on the night of 13/14 April. Although ordered to return to Halifax, the ship apparently attempted to follow or re-join the convoy, but was never heard from again.

After the war, German Navy records told the rest of the story. The ship was spotted by U-108 at a little before 3am on April 19th while the submarine was running on the surface about 125 miles south of Cape Farrell, Greenland. The submarine fired four torpedoes and heard two explosions. However, the ship did not sink immediately and its gun crews began firing at the surfaced submarine, forcing it to dive. While submerged U-108 fired two more torpedoes, with the final torpedo hitting the Robert Gray a little after 5am local time. This caused an fire and explosion in the ship's cargo, sinking the ship quickly by the stern. There were no survivors among the crew of 39 and the 23 Naval Armed Guard. On June 14, 1943 the Navy Department determined that since the Robert Gray had not been heard from since April 13/14 it must be presumed lost.

Cadet-Midshipman Aubrey G. Connors was posthumously awarded the Mariners Medal, Combat Bar with star, Atlantic War Zone Bar, the Victory Medal, and the Presidential Testimonial Letter.



1939 High School graduation photo.

Aubrey G. Connors, the second of three children of Wilbur S. Connors and Ellen J. Connors, was born in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. In 1927, the Connors family left their farm in Nova Scotia and moved to Brooklyn, New York, where Aubrey started grade school in 1928 at P.S. 132. The family moved again in 1934 to a farm near Lincolnville, Maine. Aubrey, his older brother Ernest and younger sister Lucille attended elementary school there through eighth grade. After eighth grade he moved on to the High School in nearby Camden where Aubrey graduated in 1939. In addition to being an avid sportsman, Aubrey was also a talented bass horn player in the Camden and Lincolnville bands.

In 1941 Aubrey accepted a job at Sperry Gyroscope Company and moved to Brooklyn. He was able to continue playing music with the Sperry Gyroscope Band. While he was employed at Sperry, Aubrey's older brother Ernest entered Kings Point and graduated in 1943. Aubrey followed his brother to Kings Point, entering in 1942. While the Connors boys were at Kings Point their sister Lucille was attending Columbia University.



From left to right; Aubrey (4), Lucy (2) & Ernest (6 ½).