



**CWGC**  
Commonwealth War Graves Commission

30 July 2018

Agira, Italy

MEDIA RELEASE

# 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landing of Canadian allies in Italy Commemorated at Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery

- A Canadian Project group is marking Operation Husky by organising a schedule of events in recognition of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary landing of the Canadian allies in Sicily on July 10<sup>th</sup> 1943.
- A daily ceremony will take place in 20 towns across Italy and a wreath will be laid for the Canadians, Italians and Germans who died in the war 75 years earlier. One marker will be placed for each of the days of the 28-day campaign, featuring a list of the fallen.
- Project culminates in a ceremony at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Agira on 30 July 2018.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission is delighted to announce that it will be hosting the Operation Husky project at its Agira War Cemetery on 30 July 2018. The project, which was the idea of father and son, Steve and Erik Gregory, seeks to honour and remember the Canadian soldiers landing in Sicily on July 10<sup>th</sup> 1943 for the liberation of Italy.

The project, which is made up of a 20-day march that covers over 400 km of Italian land, mirrors the actions of the Canadian allies in Sicily and began on 10 July. A ceremony is then undertaken in every city visited by the march and a 'remembrance pole' listing the names of the fallen is then installed. During the ceremony each attendant stood in front of a grave, remembering the sacrifice of every soldier for the freedom of Italy.

The closing ceremony for the project will take place in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Cemetery in Agira on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2018. This is the final resting place for 490 Canadian soldiers who were killed in the Sicily campaign.

Ian Hussein, CWGC's Mediterranean Area Director, said: "This ceremony marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Operation Husky, an important moment in WW2 history. We will always honour the memory of Canadian soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of Italy such a long way from their home country."

**For more information, images and spokespeople please contact:**

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Notes for editors:

1. Historical background



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On 10 July 1943, following the successful conclusion of the north African campaign in mid-May, a combined allied force of 160,000 Commonwealth and American troops invaded Sicily as a prelude to the assault on mainland Italy. The Italians, who would shortly make peace with the Allies and re-enter the war on their side, offered little determined resistance but German opposition was vigorous and stubborn. The campaign in Sicily came to an end on 17 August when the two allied forces came together at Messina, but failed to cut off the retreating Axis lines.

## **2. Agira Canadian War Cemetery**

Agira was taken by the 1st Canadian Division on 28 July and the site for the war cemetery was chosen in September for the burial of all Canadians who had been killed in the Sicily campaign. Agira Canadian War Cemetery contains 490 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War.

## **3. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org))**

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) commemorates the 1.7 million Commonwealth servicemen and women who died during the two world wars. It also holds and updates an extensive and accessible records archive.

The Commission operates in more than 23,000 locations in more than 150 countries.

### **Get to know the Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

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