



**Commonwealth War
Graves Commission**
Country Report:
Maldives



CWGC
Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) is responsible for maintaining commemorations to 70 individuals at one location in the Maldives: the Addu Atoll Memorial.

Addu Atoll Memorial, Maldives

Addu Atoll is one of the most southerly of the Maldivian Islands, a group of coral atolls in the Indian Ocean 644 kilometres south-west of Sri Lanka.

After the loss of Singapore additional bases in the Indian Ocean were necessary, and early in 1942 a naval base was rapidly and secretly built on Addu Atoll, and was already usable in April of that year when the first Japanese naval raid into the Indian Ocean occurred. A Royal Air Force Station also was soon established, and the island was garrisoned by units of the India, who also provided the labour units for work on the airfield and defences. Climatic and other conditions at first caused a very high sick rate among these men, and the remains of those who succumbed were either buried on the island or cremated.



The names of 70 men of India, who died during the years 1942 to 1944, are commemorated on a memorial which stands on a small lawn immediately in front of the Royal Air Force Headquarters at Gan. It is in the form of a rectangular stone pillar bearing on three of its faces marble panels upon which the names are carved. On the fourth face a panel of the same marble bears an explanatory inscription in English, Hindi and Urdu. This reads:

1939 - 1945 THOSE COMMEMORATED HERE DIED IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY. THE MORTAL REMAINS OF SOME WERE COMMITTED TO FIRE AND OTHERS LIE BURIED ELSEWHERE ON ADDU ATOLL.