



PROJECT BLUE PUTTEES REPORT

MESSAGE FROM THE HONORARY COLONEL

GREETINGS HIGHLANDERS ~ SERVING SOLDIERS, FORMER MEMBERS, AND MEMBERS OF THE REGIMENTAL FAMILY



Dedication of 48th Highlanders memorial plaque, Ortona, Italy.

I attended the Remembrance Day ceremonies in Ortona, Italy with HCol (Ret) John Newman. It was a special occasion for the Regiment, with a new plaque in honour of the 48th Highlanders of Canada and their contribution to the liberation of Ortona. In addition to the new plaque on the monument for the 48th, HCol Newman also arranged a plaque to honour the First Nation and Métis fallen soldiers.

It was moving for me to see the support in Italy for our soldiers. The ceremony was organized by Angela Arnone. Angela is a longtime supporter of Canada's military history in Italy from World War II. Those in attendance included: Ambassador Elissa Golberg, from the Canadian Embassy in Rome; LGen Stephen Kelsey, deputy commander of JFC Naples; Canadian Defence attaché in Rome, Capt André Boisjoli; Mrs Sandra and Eugenia Seagram Annovazzi, respectively daughter and granddaughter of Capt Philip Seagram of the 48th Highlanders of Canada.

Several leading citizens were also in attendance, including Mayor Castiglione.

Angela was the MC and her comments included: "This monument stands in the newly named Piazza degli Eroi Canadesi, Canadian Heroes Square. From the start of his mandate, Mayor Castiglione was determined to dedicate this part of Ortona to the memory of Canada's armed forces, who fought and died to free the civilian population. In upgrading an urban square at the heart of the community, citizens and visitors would meet here and each day the memory of young Canadians who fought in the Battle of Ortona would be evoked with the words "eroi canadesi". Work on the square was also funded by a donation from Veterans Affairs Canada. While COVID delayed progress and a formal inauguration with Canadian guests was not possible, since 2021, Piazza degli Eroi Canadesi, with its maple leaf design, fountains, and flags, is part of Ortona life."



Ambassador Golberg, HLCol Newman and I laid a wreath in honour of Canadian First Nations and Metis soldiers; and I laid a wreath with LGen Kelsey, Sandra and Eugenia Seagram Annovazzi, and HLCol Newman in honour of the 48th Highlanders of Canada.



The group then moved to the traditional Remembrance Day ceremony, which is held annually at the Moro River Cemetery. This is a well-organized and very well attended gathering. I did not realize the respect that the local community demonstrates on November 11 every year. At the end of the ceremony, Sandra and Eugenia Seagram Annovazzi presented me with Capt Seagram's medals, to be a permanent part of our museum.

I was honoured to participate in commemorating our fallen soldiers in Italy,
and to see the appreciation of that sacrifice by the people of Ortona.

DILEAS GU BRATH
HCol John MacIntyre