



ASSOCIAZIONE NAZIONALE CARABINIERI
Sezione "Generale M.O.V.C. Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa"
TORINO

FRANCESCO GOLINI

THE CARABINIERI AVIATORS IN TURIN

An Album of memories, illustrations, testimonies





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Translation by Ashleigh Hogg

With the contribution of:



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*1915. Il Corazziere M.A.V.M. Italo Urbinati (left)
and Air Corps Lt Angelo Pizzini (facing camera)
in flight with a Caproni Ca.3
(Massimiliano De Antoni collection)*

Rear cover:
*October 7, 1984. AB 412 in flight over Turin
(photo by Goffredo Borreni)*

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GREETINGS

from *BRIG. GENERAL ANTONIO SCHIROSI*



Warm greetings and thanks to our colleague and member of this more than 100 year old ANC section of Turin, Maj. Francesco Golini MB-VM, for his genial idea of recalling the fiftieth anniversary of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus in Turin with this

beautiful book. Its production has without doubt required challenging and meticulous dedication to collect, organize and catalogue all the relevant documents related to the beginnings of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus and – with a wider scope – the commemoration of the 173 Carabinieri who were aviators during the Great War.

These men were true pioneers of flight who demonstrated their courage and capabilities in many circumstances. As time passes, memories fade and our recollections of past events diminish.

Documenting such events is the best thing to do, and this is what Major Golini – as former Commanding Officer of the 1st Helicopter Nucleus for a number of years – has done with his book in recalling the fallen Carabinieri pilots, those decorated with medals for Valour, the birth of the helicopter, the beginnings of its usage in Turin and many other things.

The ANC Section of Turin could not remain indifferent to the realization of this necessary work; here I would also like to take the opportunity to present the origin of the Section and the work it does. The Royal Decree of April 1881 allowed military personnel no longer in service to form associations.

On February 5, 1888, on the initiative of Major Angelo Parea M.A.V.M. – in collaboration with a large number of colleagues and Carabinieri – the General ASSOCIATION FOR MUTUAL ASSISTANCE AND BROTHERHOOD BETWEEN FORMER ROYAL CARABINIERI AND PENSIONERS OF TURIN was established. Its title remained unchanged until the end of World War I.

This is the period covered by the collection of documents and images of the first part of the *Historical Album of Carabinieri Aviators in Turin*.

It was only in 1925 that the National Federation of Former Royal Carabinieri was established in Rome to bring together and organize the numerous Associations that in the meantime had been set up in Italy, from North to South and in the the Islands.

During the Second World War (1940-43) and the War of Liberation (1943-45), the Turin Section went through a very critical period. During this, some members were particularly active in the Resistance. It is sufficient to recall those who distinguished themselves as Commanders of Assault Brigade Detachments or Brigade Commanders or Chiefs of Staff operating in the areas of Forno and Monferrato:

- the two Carabinieri brothers Aldo and Ottavio Roso;
- General Luigi Sandiano, nicknamed “CESARE”;
- General Silvio Ceva, M.A.V.M, nicknamed “PAOLO”;
- Lieutenant M.B.V.M. Giuseppe Pagliarani nicknamed “FIORELLO”;
- General Casavecchia Secondo, with the nickname of “MARCHINI”.

The most recent transformation of the association took place in 1956 under the name of “National Association of Carabinieri” (ANC) with a Statute approved by the President of the Republic with regulations applicable to Sections formed both in Italy and abroad.

In 1978, following a proposal by Councilor Guglielmo Preve, the Turin Section of the ANC was entitled after General Carlo Alberto Della Chiesa M.O.V.C.

The original principles of united solidarity and aid, established by the founding members in 1888, have remained unchanged in the course of time. This strong propensity is a genuine manifestation of active citizenship that expresses itself in free participation by guaranteeing the presence, observation and reporting in the various areas of civil life.

A large number of Volunteer Members are part of the Civil Protection Nucleus and take part, having acquired specific qualifications and the professionalism required to intervene in situations of danger (such as floods, earthquakes, etc.) which occur in Italy.

Well done Franco, and compliments: Your book has given me the opportunity to highlight the fundamental features of our Section, in which you have actively participated as a volunteer, at the service of its members and the community of the City of Turin.

National Association of Carabinieri, Section
“Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa M.O.V.C.” in Turin,
the President
Brigadier General Antonio Schirosi

GREETINGS

from *LT. GENERAL FRANCO CRAVAREZZA*



It gives me great pleasure to share Gen. Scirosi's greetings, and also on behalf of the of the Defense Research Information Institute and the entire Permanent Council of the Carabinieri Associations of Turin towards Francesco Golini's engaging initiative to bring to

public attention and to recount the adventurous and fascinating history of the Carabinieri Aviators in Turin: a synthesis, as already expressed in the title, of extraordinary realities that recall the imagination of soldiers who symbolized the spirit of service and the fidelity of duty, instituted in Turin in 1814 and the city of Turin, city of the History of Italy and the National capital of technology, united by the human dream, from Icarus to Leonardo da Vinci, to master the skies with the same enthusiasm with which he already travelled the earth ever more speedily, climb mountains, and adventure into the depths of the seas.

The origins of Italian military flight and of the Forces that followed can be traced back to the first experiences with the very difficult to control balloons in the East African countryside of the late nineteenth century and then in the early twentieth century with airships already equipped with motor-driven propellers and steered by aerodynamic fins.

But the thrill of the first flight of a fully Italian aircraft flown by an Italian took place in Turin in January 1909, with a triplane piloted by Mario Faccioli, son of Aristide Faccioli, an automobile industry and aviation pioneer, built in the Piemontese Ansaldo-Ceirano Company factory.

The new specialty still had a pioneering nature and the spirit of the aviators was pervaded by a certain sportiness. Thanks to the interest aroused, and the expectations by the military in this new aviation weapon, also considering the results of its first operational use in Libya and Cirenaica in 1911-12, the Army established an Aeronautical Service and promptly constituted the Aviator Battalion with headquarters in the Marmora Barracks in Turin. This consisted of five squadrons, a training school in Mirafiori and other schools in Pordenone, Aviano and Somma Lombardo.

The location of the Aviator battalion in Turin was the response of the Italian Army to the steady progress

of flight and the subsequent use of military aircraft which saw Turin as the ideal city in which to develop this new vehicle.

It was no coincidence that in that same year, a faculty of Aeronautical Science was instituted at the Valentino Castle.

This became the seat of the newborn Polytechnic University, which in turn stemmed from Turin's long-established military School of Application of Artillery and Engineering. At the beginning of the 20th Century, Turin was considered as being among the most attentive of Italian cities to the novelties of aeronautics, engendering a special rapport with the Carabinieri, a bond and collaboration that would continue as time passed, embellished with legendary gestures, heroic pilots and innovative technicians with their Carabinieri insignia, and still perpetuated in the Piedmontese skies with the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus at Volpiano, still operational in its Institutional activities and ensuring precious aid in the area.

President of the Permanent Council
of the Carabinieri Associations of Turin,
and Northern Italy Activity Coordinator
for of the Defence Research Information Study Institute
Lt. General Franco Cravarezza

INTRODUCTION

by *GIANNI OLIVA*



The existence of “Carabinieri aviators” is largely unknown to the general public, more accustomed to associating the Carabinieri with interventions to assure public order and the contrast of organized crime: and although it is not uncommon to see helicopters with “Carabinieri” insignia, in the collective imagination the Carabinieri are known mainly for their patrol and garrison activities, or for the widespread network of stations spread across the country. There is, however, a rich history of aircraft usage by the Carabinieri, documented here by Major Francesco Golini, an “album of memories, images and testimonies” (as the subtitle reads) dedicated to the “Carabinieri Aviators in Turin”.

The starting point is an interesting and multiform personage – Carabiniere, war volunteer, aviator and inventor, Ernesto Cabrana, born in Tortona in 1889 of a solid family of traders. He entered service in 1907 and was immediately involved in the Messina earthquake emergency; in 1911, now with the rank of sergeant, he volunteered for the Libyan colonial campaign and became part of the contingent which occupied the Dodecanese islands of Rhodes and Co. When he returned, having gained the rank of Staff-sergeant he was given command of the Piedmontese station of Salbertrand, in the upper Susa valley. This was a relatively quiet place: although close to the border of France – the “enemy” (at that time Italy was allied to Germany and Austria by the Triple Alliance Treaty), there were no criticalities other than the endemic traffic of smugglers. It was an ideal place for a carefree career: but this was not Cabrana’s goal. In 1915, when Italy entered the Great War, he asked to be sent to the front line and was assigned to the 10th Carabinieri Company, which was involved in the Asiago plateau struggle. After some months of fighting (in which he gained a Military Bronze Medal for Valour), he made the choice of his life: he requested to become a pilot and was transferred to the Air Force Deposit in Turin, where in 1916 obtained his pilot’s brevet. Flying was a passion that Cabrana had cultivated since his youth: being an ingenious person, in 1910 he had patented a propeller for air and water use. For him, his acceptance into the Aviator Battalion of the Royal Army was the affirmation of a vocation, something which immediately resulted in spectacular actions.

In an epoch when aircraft were in their infancy and the combat between aircraft was similar to chivalrous duels, Cabrana stood out for his reconnaissance and hunting missions carried out first on the Carso front and then on the Piave with Farman MF.II’s, Nieuport Macchi N.10’s and Spad S.VII’s: in 900 flying hours, he was credited with eight victories, plus the downing of a “Draken” observation balloon and the destruction of two aircraft on the ground. In particular, he distinguished himself in the air battle of March 29, 1918 over the Piave bridge, during which, on his own, he attacked an Austro-Hungarian formation consisting of a bomber escorted by ten fighters, succeeding in knocking down the leader and forcing the other aircraft to renounce their mission. For this exploit, Cabrana was promoted to officer rank, as a Second Lieutenant. The following years saw him protagonist as a Carabiniere and patriot, despite the precariousness of his health as the result of a serious accident at the end of the war during a landing: one of D’Annunzio’s men during the Fiume campaign, a Lieutenant, then Captain in the Air Force, deep in his soul, Cabrana retained his Carabiniere and aviator spirit, combining the complementary qualities of obedience and courage. Beginning with the figure of Ernesto Cabrana, the volume follows the episodes of the Carabinieri Pilots of Turin with praiseworthy documentary richness: letters, reports, photographs and testimonies through the decades, ranging from the great novelty represented by the advent of the rotary wing helicopter to the constitution of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus, the use of this aircraft in technical-medical assistance. It is a History of technological inventions, a history of military organization, but above all the history of the Carabinieri: seen particularly from the perspective of a “Carabiniere aviator”, from which the traits that have allowed the Carabinieri to penetrate so deeply into the collective imagination emerge. Invoked in times of need (how many times have we heard “I’ll call the Carabinieri”?). Feared in times of transgression (“Look out, here come the Carabinieri!”), Proudly recalled for their role in international missions, ridiculed in jokes of all kinds: between manifestations of consensus and expressions of dissent, the Carabinieri are the most popular and most well-known Italian institution. This volume only confirms this: from Cabrana’s combat in the sky over the Piave to the helicopters carrying the injured to the hospital in Turin a century has passed, but the mission hospital, nothing has changed. Now as in the past, it is at the service of the community, in the ways that the State periodically requires.

CARABINIERI AVIATORS IN TURIN

To the women of the Carabinieri, to all those who proudly wear the uniform today, and who with their male colleagues share the courage and dedication of each day's duty and to those women who today as in the past have endured even the most painful and extreme sacrifice of their beloved Carabinieri..

THE GREAT WAR



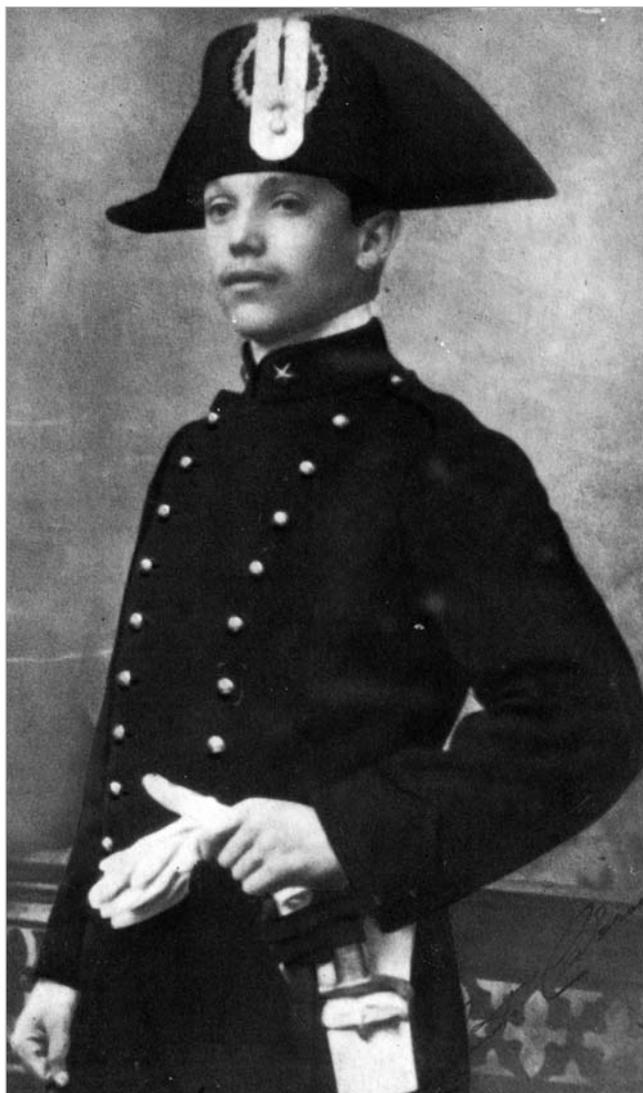
1915. To the left Carabinieri Pilot of the Royal Guards (Corazziere) Italo Urbinati (from behind) and Air Corps Pilot Lieutenant Angelo Pizzini (facing camera) in flight at the controls of a Caproni Ca3 Bomber.

At the outbreak of the Great War, many of the Carabinieri, following the centuries-old tradition which had seen them protagonists in the Wars of Independence and the heroic and decisive Charge of Pastrengo, joined the newly formed military Aeronautical Corps.

While continuing to guarantee the institution's services and despite being committed in the war with a Regiment and 167 mobilized sections, significant numbers of Carabinieri volunteered to be trained as pilots in the flying schools.

173 Carabinieri of various ranks and degrees volunteered and were accepted into the military Aeronautical Corps, while remaining in their role as members of the Carabinieri, as it was the custom prior to the constitution of the Italian Air Force in 1923.

One Gold Medal, eleven Silver, eight Bronze and one War Cross, all for bravery, are the decorations that document a long series of dramatic and memorable airborne duels, characterized by disdain for danger and spirit of service to their homeland by these heroic Carabinieri.



Ernesto Cabruna, trainee Carabiniere at the beginning of his career.

Among these bold Carabiniere pilots, was one who excelled for courage, efficiency and fortune – a young Piedmontese Carabiniere, Ernesto Cabruna.

Ernesto Cabruna

Tortona June 2, 1889 – Rapallo January 9, 1960

Born into an honest and solid commercial family, the fourth of five brothers and sisters, he attended the elementary and basic technical schools in Tortona, but the desire for adventure and dream of flight fascinated him.

From time to time, the young schoolboy played truant to venture into the surrounding countryside to meet his need for freedom and movement. At only twelve years old, he ran away from home and walked all the way to the Ligurian coast to see the sea and its infinite blue sky.

His desire to live an adventurous life and to express his generous nature made him enlist in the Corps of the Royal Carabiniere.

The freedom of action, initiative, readiness in decision, sense of duty, the sentiment of solidarity which distinguished him are also the constituting principles of the “Premise” to the secular General Regulations of the Carabiniere. Its Principles are still unchanged today and are fundamental to the Institution known as the “Benemerita” (Most Worthy).

He enlisted in 1907 at eighteen years old as a Carabiniere private and took part in the Rescue operations for the Messina earthquake of 1908.

Among the ruins he dedicated himself to the work of generous solidarity, displaying a spirit of self-denial and singular humanity.

On October 12, 1910, the versatile young man demonstrated his growing admiration for flight when he applied for Patent Certificate from the Prefecture of Turin for his design of an aircraft. This invention obtained the enthusiastic approval of Engineer Franz Miller, the owner of the Miller Aeronautical Construction Factory, who wrote to the young inventor:

... we are delighted to be able to participate in this project for a full-scale model, which apart from some construction details to be defined, should work well, with almost absolute certainty.

October 12, 1910.

Patent for the aircraft designed by Ernesto Cabruna.

DESCRIZIONE DELL'INVENZIONE

avente per titolo

AEROPLANO

per

il Sig. Ernesto CABRUNA

a Torino -

Oggetto della presente invenzione è un nuovo aeroplano che riunisce in sé le qualità che detti apparecchi debbono avere affinché possano realmente esser pratici.

A parità di superficie coperta è dotato di una superficie di sostegno assai maggiore dei comuni aeroplani e ciò in grazia alla speciale disposizione e conformazione dei suoi piani quale la si può scorgere dall'unito disegno in cui la fig.1 rappresenta una veduta prospettica schematica d'insieme e la fig.2 una sezione secondo la linea A B.

Come si scorge dalla figura i vari piani che

compongono l'aeroplano sono in parte orizzontali in parte verticali ed altri inclinati e tutti convergono restringendosi in un unico vertice 1 per modo che ne risulta un insieme che è certamente il più adatto per fendere l'aria e per raggiungere la massima velocità col minimo sforzo.

I piani 1, 2, 3 e 4 sono orizzontali, i piani 5 e 6 sono perpendicolari ed i piani 7 ed 8 sono inclinati. I 4 piani orizzontali sono essenzialmente piani di sostegno e la loro efficacia è notevolmente aumentata dalla maggior pressione d'aria che sotto di essi si verifica per azione dei piani verticali 5 e 6.

I piani 7 ed 8 inclinati tra di loro determinano uno spigolo tagliente che fende facilmente l'aria mentre sotto ad essi risulta incanalata e per la loro forma pure divergente comprimono essi pure una maggior quantità d'aria sotto i piani 2 e 3. Questi piani danno la stabilità all'apparecchio mentre cooperano a sostenerlo nell'aria. Sul prolungamento del vertice 1 trovasi il timone di profondità 9 e sotto a questo ed alquanto indietro potrà esser collocato il timone di direzione 10.

Al di sotto dei due piani 7 ed 8 ed in punto conveniente si collegherà il motore nonché il seggio-

lino per l'aviatore.

Nel disegno non si sono indicati né il motore né i sistemi di leve per il comando dei timoni e nemmeno i particolari di costruzione potendo per tutte queste parti seguire i meccanismi che già si conoscono e che è inutile disegnare.

Le caratteristiche di questo aeroplano sono l'esser formato di piani convergenti tutti in un punto parte inclinati, parte verticali e parte orizzontali e di un timone di profondità collocato sul davanti formato di due piani leggermente inclinati tra di loro, timone che quando si faccia rotabile attorno ad un asse orizzontale può anche fungere da timone di direzione.

Torino, il 12 Ottobre 1900
Per il Sig. Ernesto Cabruna

[Signature]

Il Segretario di Prefettura

[Signature]



IL DIRETTORE
DELL'UFFICIO DELLA PROPRIETA' INTELLETTUALE

[Signature]

Reg. Ind. Vol. 82 N. 112922
Reg. Ind. Vol. 334 N. 200

Fig. 1

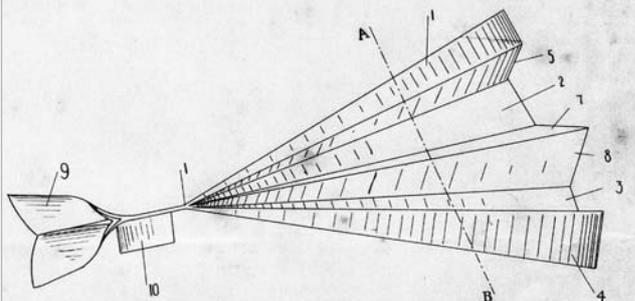
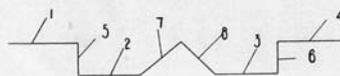


Fig. 2



IL DIRETTORE
DELL'UFFICIO DELLA PROPRIETA' INTELLETTUALE

[Signature]

Torino, il 12 Ottobre 1900
Per il Sig. Ernesto Cabruna



Il Segretario di Prefettura

[Signature]

DESCRIZIONE DELL'INVENZIONE
 avente per titolo
 "NUOVA ELICA"
 per
 il Signor
 Ernesto C A B R U N A a Torino.

Oggetto della presente invenzione è una nuova elica o meglio un nuovo mezzo di propulsione che potrà essere applicato a qualsiasi sistema di locomozione tanto aerea che acqua.

L'invenzione è illustrata dalle figure della tavola annessa che mostrano un modo di pratica attuazione della invenzione stessa e più precisamente la fig.1 è una veduta di una pala di elica e la fig.2 è una sezione ingrandita secondo la linea A B.

L'elica potrà avere ad un dipresso la forma delle eliche comunemente note ma a differenza di queste invece di avere entrambe le superfici perfettamente lisce,

avrà la superficie che batte l'aria rivestita di una serie di rialzi 1 gradatamente crescenti in altezza ed inclinazione a partire dal bordo 2 che taglia l'aria verso il bordo opposto e saranno in parte incurvate a curve concentriche ed in parte rettilinee e radiali dal centro di rotazione.

Scopo di questi risalti si è di creare una pala d'elica che durante la sua rotazione non scivoli semplicemente nel mezzo in cui si trova, ma colpisca più direttamente e quasi in ogni senso il mezzo stesso aumentando in tal modo notevolmente la resistenza che incontra.

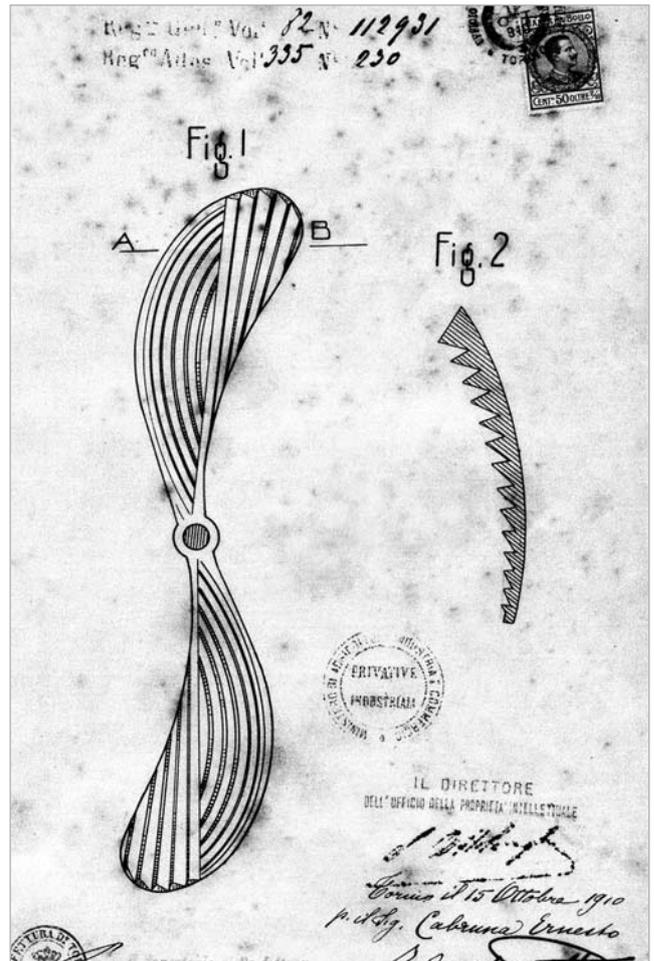
Conseguenza immediata di questa maggiore resistenza creata si è di ottenere un corrispondente effetto utile propulsivo aumentato in proporzione e quindi un elica di potenza propulsiva notevolmente aumentata.

La disposizione dei rialzi delle figure della tavola annessa fu indicata a titolo d'esempio e potrà essere variata quando la pratica abbia indicato quale inclinazione e direzione convenga che abbiano per conseguire il massimo effetto utile.

Torino, il 15 Ottobre 1910
 Per il sig. Ernesto Cabruna
 Felice [Signature]
 Il Segretario di Prefettura

On October 15, 1910, Cabruna deposited the documents for another of his inventions:

... a new propeller or rather a new means of propulsion that can be applied to any system of locomotion, both in the air and in water...



October 15, 1910.
 Patent for an air and water propeller patent designed by Ernesto Cabruna. Original documents discovered by Teresa Triscari at the State Archives in Rome, and published with their permission.



A group of Carabinieri NCOs photographed in Rhodes during the Italian-Turkish campaign of 1911-12. Ernesto Cabrana is the first on the left

Also in 1910, the young carabinieri requested the Ministry of War to be assigned to the Engineer Specialist Battalion to augment and complete his aeronautical studies in order to perfect his aircraft, but the request was not approved.

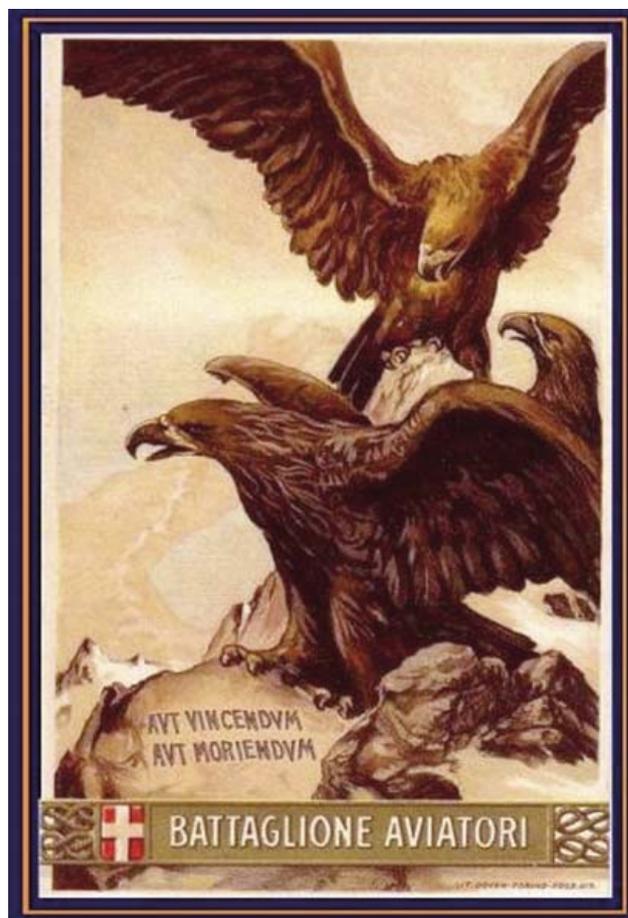
Admitted to the school for NCO's, in 1911 he was promoted to sergeant and volunteered for the Libyan war; He took part in the landing at Kalitea for the occupation of Rhodes and in the battle of Psitas, being repatriated in May 1913.

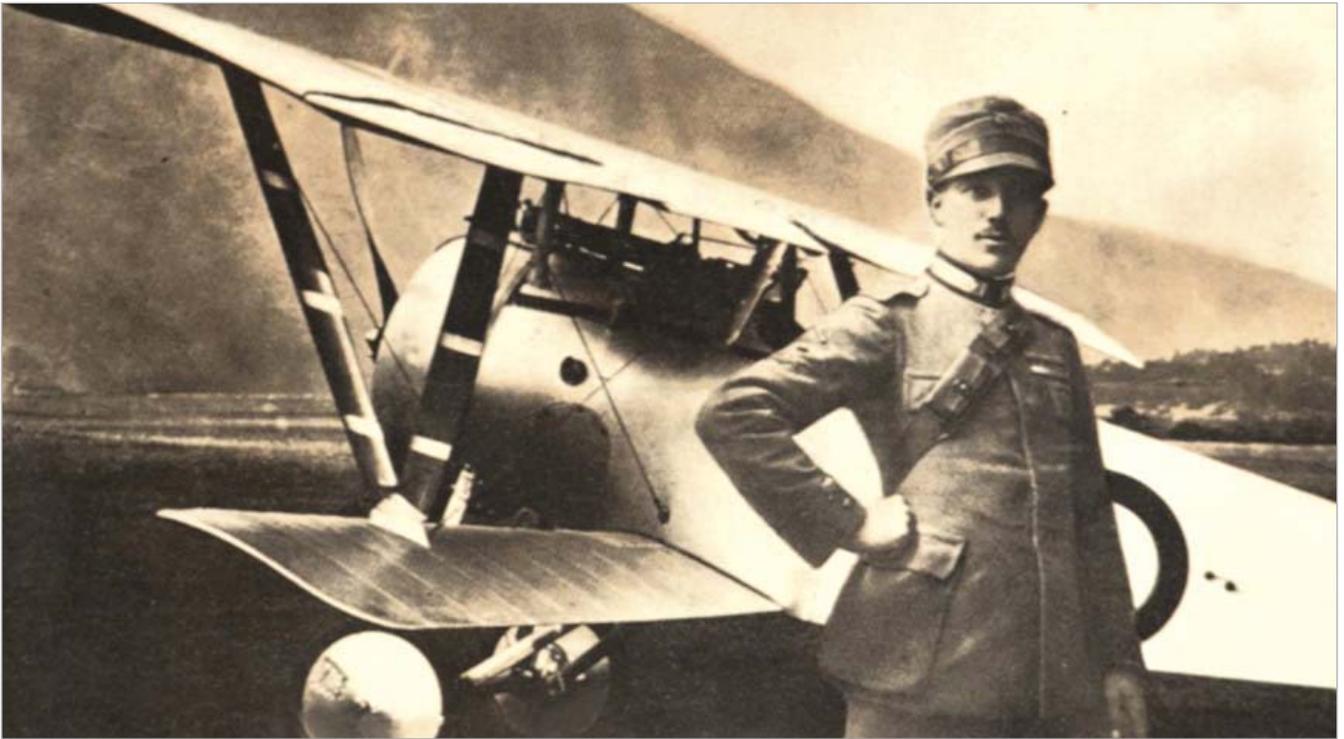
In 1915, at the beginning of the Great War, Cabrana was the Station Commander at Salbertrand, near Turin. Once again he volunteered, and was assigned to the 10th Mobile Carabinieri Company with which he reached the front on October 5, 1915.

On May 15, 1916, at Asiago, as a Carabinieri sergeant, he obtained his first Military Bronze Medal for bravery:

... while enemy artillery bombarded a village, he supervised the recovery of the wounded by remaining in position to complete this dangerous activity under intense enemy fire.

In that same month of May he requested to become an aviator and finally, on July 12, 1916, he was assigned to the Italian Air Force base in Turin – Aviator Battalion, where he obtained his Military Pilot's brevet on November 16, 1916 in a Farman aeroplane.





Ernesto Cabruna with a Nieuport in the background.

Prior to 1916, the Aeronautical Corps of the Italian Royal Army, instituted on January 7, 1915, had only Blériot, Nieuport and Farman aircraft supplied by its French allies because an Italian aeronautical industry did not yet exist.

On December 10, 1916 he was posted to the 29th Squadron, flying Farman reconnaissance aircraft.

In June 1917, Cabruna, promoted to Warrant Officer, returned to Turin to undergo a training course for the Nieuport fighter.

He was then posted to the front lines, first with the 84th Fighter Squadron, then to the 80th and finally to the glorious 77th at the airfields of Aiello and Marcon, with Nieuport and Spad aircraft.

Here the award of a Military Silver Medal for bravery was conferred on the indomitable Tortonese aviator:

A skillful and ardent fighter pilot, he demonstrated admirable calm and fearlessness at all times during the performance of numerous and important missions. On November 14, during an escort mission, attacked by three enemy aircraft, he engaged them all, desisting only after the escorted aircraft had re-entered undamaged to our lines. On October 26 and December 5, 1917, following fierce fighting, he shot down two enemy aircraft.

Skies over the Carso and the Piave, October 26, November 14, and December 5, 1917

Cabruna was and is still admired for the boldness of his actions, as evidenced by the motivations for the medals for bravery awarded to him.

Tireless, with intense flying activities and a series of victories, in 1918 he earned his second Military Silver Medal for bravery:

A most audacious fighter pilot, with strong will and daring he undertook his tireless and wonderful work with zeal and enthusiasm shooting down another enemy aircraft.

On March 29, 1918, in the skies over Ponte di Piave, he intercepted an Austrian bomber with ten escort fighters, including three red Fokkers belonging to Von Richthofen's "Flying Circus". He shot down the leader's aircraft, dodging with extraordinary skill between the enemy fighters. The others then scattered and turned back to their base, renouncing their mission.

On the next page, top right, cover of "La Domenica del Corriere", year XX, no. 26 of September 8-15, 1918 Milan. Below: illustration representing Ernesto Cabruna in a Spad VII shooting down an Austrian Albatros. Illustration by Amleto Fiore.

He wrote in his logbook:

... single-handedly I took on eleven enemy aircraft, shooting one down and putting the others to flight.

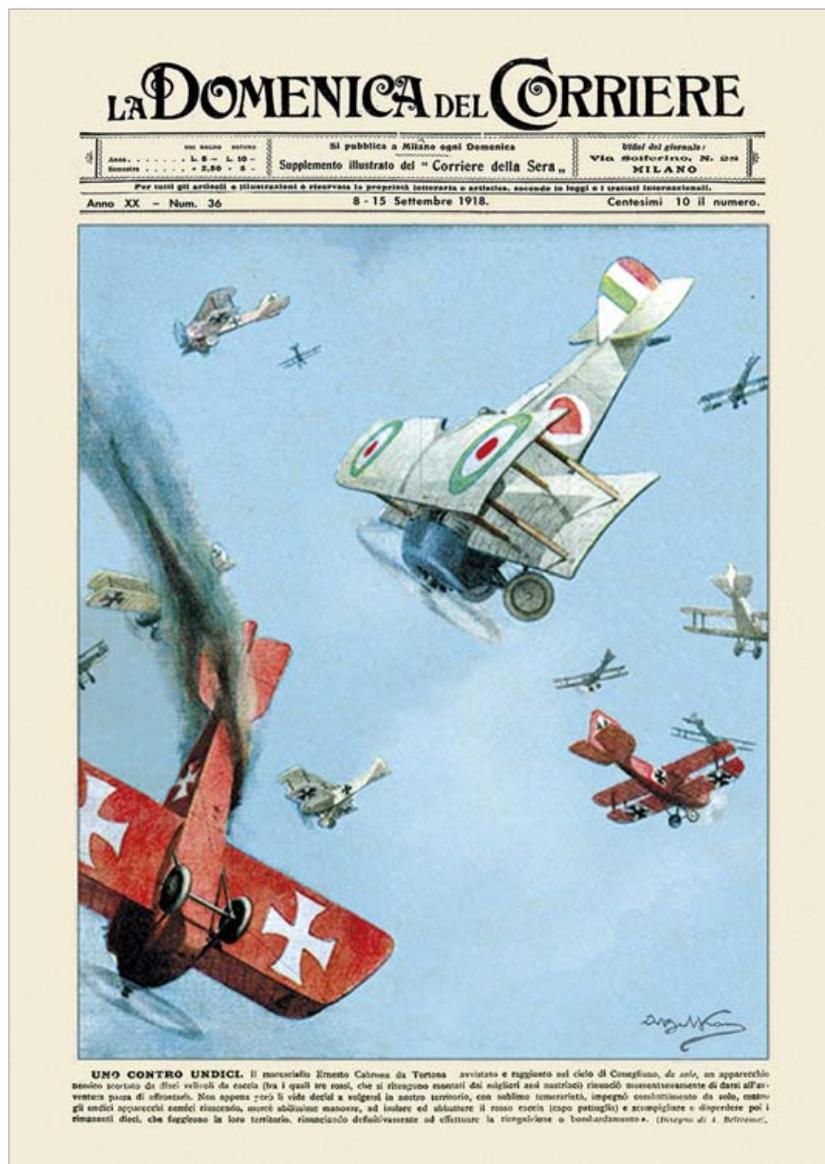
He was proposed for a Military Gold Medal for bravery, commuted, on his own express wish, to a field promotion to 2nd Lieutenant of the Carabinieri in permanent service with effect from April 4, 1918.

The event was recalled by the famous illustrator Achille Beltrame of "La Domenica del Corriere" with a colour cover which the Milanese weekly printed during September 1918, with the title 1 against 11.

Cabruna himself recounted:

March 29, 1918, 11.00:

"On patrol, between Ponte di Piave and Grisolera, I dived out of my group and attacked 10 aircraft (including 3 red ones) escorting a reconnaissance plane. Still unnoticed, or taken for one of their own, I followed them to interfere with their intentions, but seeing the three red aircraft in the lead point directly in the direction of Ponte di Piave-Treviso, over the bridge itself I flung myself on the two behind the leader, disorganizing them. I then threw myself on the red leader, and surprised him, giving me the chance to close and fire on him. Still chasing him as he fled immediately towards his lines I fired a few bursts from short range, saw him jink badly, stall, then go into a steep dive without any attempt at recovery. Due to the thick mist and above all looking out for the threat posed by the remaining enemies I was unable to see where the patrol leader fell. The confusion thus produced among the enemy, particularly with the loss of their leader, was such that they abandoned their mission and most turned back individually towards their own lines. From those, only three remained but they also dived for home as soon as my patrol reached me".





September 1918 Ernesto Cabruna in the hospital in Brescia.

The back of the photograph which is preserved in the city of Tortona. Historical Archive, Municipality of Tortona – ASCT.

He returned unharmed to his base camp on June 15, 1918, after having thwarted an attack by thirty enemy aircraft sent to bomb the Italian defenses. His plane, however, demonstrated all the fury of the battle, with innumerable bullet holes in the wings.

On September 26, Cabruna was entrusted with an important patrol mission over the positions held by the Austrians, from the Piave to Trentino. Taking off from the Marcon base at Mestre, he overflew the Piave, climbing over the high plateau then headed for Brescia, intending to land at Castenedolo airfield.

During the landing, an accident occurred: without warning, an oil pipe broke, spraying hot oil into his face and blinding him.

The aircraft struck the soft ground in a ploughed field and overturned. Cabruna was admitted to the military hospital in Brescia with severe cerebral

... Nell'ultima grande offensiva cui volle ad ogni costo partecipare uscendo dall'ospedale ove era degente per ferita, pur avendo il braccio destro ancora immobilizzato e dolorante, e perciò trovandosi in condizioni di assoluta infermità con inenarrabile tenacia di volere ed animosità attaccava in lontano campo di osservazione vari apparecchi nemici pronti a partire e ne incendiava due.

Brescia ottobre 1918 -

commotion, a fractured right clavicle and bruises in many parts of his body.

After only one month, he was back in the squadron.

On October 31, 1918, during a reconnaissance flight, he flew as far as his old airfield at Aiello, now in enemy hands, and attacked a fighter squadron whose propellers were already in motion ready for take-off:

He hit two aircraft which burst into flames. For



The Spad S.VII donated by the Duke of Aosta to the city of Tortona in 1923.



this action, especially meritorious being accomplished while he was still in precarious physical condition, with his right arm still in a sling, he was awarded the Military Cross for bravery.

It was his last mission of the war.

His logbook details eight aerial victories in 900 flight hours, two planes destroyed on the ground in enemy territory and a drakenballon (observation balloon) burned. No aircraft escorted by him were shot down by the enemy.

At the exhibition of war momentos in Genoa on May 5, 1919, the Duke of Aosta, Emanuele Filiberto, Commander of the Third Army, entrusted Cabruna, “the most glorious of our wings of war”, with the task of flying his undefeated Spad from Trieste to Genoa, the Duke’s home city, wishing with this gesture to send it a special message.

This aircraft is today exhibited at the Italian Air Force Museum at Vigna di Valle.

In July 1919, he wrote a letter to Gabriele d’Annunzio, who he had probably met during his time at the Aiello and Marcon airfields, in which he offered to fly him to Tokyo: “*I was thinking about your adventure to Japan...*” At that time, following the end of the war, il Comandante was considering a new exploit: a Rome-Tokyo raid.

Cabruna confessed that despite the scarce empathy he had for D’Annunzio, “*I had to admire him for the great things he had accomplished as a soldier*”.

Instead, things went differently: D’Annunzio changed his mind and marched on Fiume (today Rijeka, Croatia). Cabruna had no doubts: Fiume must be Italian. He was the first aviator to land in Fiume.

Lieutenant Ernesto Cabruna, one of the most consistent defenders of our cause, is worthy of the trust of



*Ernesto Cabruna aboard his aircraft.
Tortona City Archives – ASCT.*

our friends. We entrust him with the most difficult and delicate assignments.

We recognize him as our direct representative.

October 5, 1919, Letter from Gabriele d'Annunzio,
ARCHIVIO DEL VITTORIALE

He resigned from the Carabinieri to become a legionnaire. While not wishing to enter into the facts of what occurred at that time, it is sufficient to recall that our fearless hero, to avenge the honour of the Carabinieri, to which he always felt associated, challenged the audacious Mario Carli to a duel with pistols following an article published in the newspaper "La testa di Ferro" (The Iron Head), in which the Carabinieri were accused of wanting to abandon the city.

Cabruna was wounded in the ribs, and the "first blood" duel ended without reconciliation.

Following the annexation of Fiume to Italy, Cabruna was allowed to re-enter the Carabinieri and then with the rank of Captain, transferred to the Air Force as AdC to the Chief of Staff, Major Piccio.

I took off my old Carabiniere uniform today to put on that the already glorious one of the Air Force. The merits and my fortunes of war are due to what was learned and strengthened in the Carabinieri, and today I obey these sentiments in leaving my old uniform to take up that of the new Service, which requires men of good will.

I leave the Carabinieri painfully, but even if I am far away, I will not forget that I am the son of that Family to which I belonged and to which I know that I have brought honour.

Wherever I am I will always be grateful to the Carabinieri, masters of all sacrifice and virtue, for what they were able to teach me. and I am sure will not forget them, wherever I am, always proud of having been one of their most affectionate children.

He rapidly wrote a book *Fiume 10 gennaio 1921 – 23 marzo 1922* to put forward his version of the facts without compromises, in antithesis to what Balbo wrote in his diary, and as usual, in defense of legionarism as an antifascist.

For his actions, on May 24, 1924 he was awarded a Military Gold Medal for bravery.

A magnificent fighter pilot ace, whether in perfect execution of orders, or in arduous initiatives, or in fights sustained and won with incredible audacity, even alone against countless numbers of fearsome and capable opponents, often in conditions of poor health, he prodigated himself in all circumstance of war with amazing tireless activity, with Roman temperament of heroism. In the last great offensive, in which he wanted at all

costs to participate, leaving the hospital where he was recovering from wounds, despite having his right arm immobilized and painful and therefore being in a condition of absolute inferiority, at a distant airfield, with admirable tenacity of will and animosity, attacked a number of enemy aircraft ready to take off and set fire to two of them. On another occasion, he dived into the middle of a group of thirty enemy aircraft, shooting one down and preventing the others from achieving their goal – for him the enemy's numerical superiority was a stimulus to the fight. In the most varied and difficult of circumstances, from the start to the end of the war, completing over 900 hours of flight, without hesitation despite the most difficult missions, he was of great and faithful service to the Patria.

Aiello, October 1911, Skies over the Piave,
June, July and November 1918

On September 12, 1927, on the eighth anniversary of Ronchi's march, Gabriele d'Annunzio, conferring the Gold Medal of the Ronchi March on Cabruna, his faithful Legionary, performed an act of justice and of great esteem for those who had renounced their distinctive symbols, hard-earned during the war, performing their duty regardless of sacrifice (in order not to become a deserter by landing in Rijeka, in foreign territory, Cabruna resigned from the Carabinieri). The following motivation is explicit in this sense:

Today, on the eighth anniversary of the March of Ronchi, I confer the Gold Medal on my legionnaire Ernesto Cabruna, formerly my glorious flight companion of the Third Army. Following my occupation of Fiume, he was the first aviator to land there. As my liaison officer, as responsible for state security, he was of exemplary service to the Cause. Obeying my well-determined orders, he remained in Fiume after the "Bloody Christmas". He represented me nobly and wisely in negotiations for the evacuation of Port Sauro. Finally he fulfilled the undertaking I had entrusted to him by leading the Action of March 3, 1922, as Head of the Military Council, leading thus to the annexation, which will need to be necessarily extended to all the Bedie and Dinaric Alps.



Commemorative
medal of the
Fiume expedition
(1919 - 1920)

September 12, 1927,
Gabriele d'Annunzio di Montenevoso
ARCHIVIO DEL VITTORIALE

For our Carabinieri, his future in the Air Force was difficult: in opposition to Balbo and fascism, isolated following a transfer to Cirenaica requested by himself despite his precarious physical condition, he returned to Italy. He was placed in the reserves in 1929 and had his service terminated for health reasons in 1932.

In the years which followed he undertook important journeys: to Buenos Aires in South America in 1930 on behalf of the Dante Alighieri Association, where he was triumphantly received by the Italian community, and in Russia in 1935 through Greece and Turkey. He wrote and published travel notes about this: *An Italian in Russia*.

During the Second World War he was in contact with the Resistance and, according to British sources, also with the English.

Matilde Bassi, Cabruna's great-grand-niece, who collaborated in the writing of this chapter, reports that Cabruna, despite not having played an active role in the Resistance, was sought by the police at the end of 1943 (see the autographed letter of 14 March 1949 in the Gold Medal Archives). And even so, from the Fatebenefratelli Hospital on the Tiberina Island in Rome, a safe shelter being a hospital for infective diseases, he sent a strong letter to the Gold Medal Group so that there would be no doubt regarding his feelings.

In the post-war period, the work he did as Commissioner of the Veterans Association was crucial for the return of Italian prisoners from Yugoslavia.

In his final years, with heart troubles, an illness already present during the period of the Fiume enterprise, he dedicated himself to writing, with bitterness, various articles in favour of the Fiume Cause, defending the legionaries and D'Annunzio himself, despite the numerous clashes he had



Photo with handwritten dedication:

A Giancarlo Zaccaro.

Fedelissimo, generoso, carissimo a Ernesto Cabruna, 1960-61

(To Giancarlo Zaccaro.

Most faithful, generous and dear friend of Ernesto Cabruna, 1960-61).



Gardone Riviera (Bs). Mausoleum of the Heroes at the Vittoriale.

had with him, as shown by the letter of 2 March 1920 “I no longer have faith in you, Leader” (in the D’Annunzio – Cabruna correspondence).

After a transparent and honest life, inspired by sense of duty and spirit of sacrifice, as the Carabinieri had tempered him, physically exhausted and unhappy, he lived his last years in solitude, always in nursing homes. In 1959 he was a patient at the Villa Azzurra clinic in Rapallo, where he died on January 9, 1960 and was buried there at his own request.

As of 1963, to pay your respects to Cabruna, you must go to Gardone Riviera at the *Vittoriale degli Italiani*, as he is now buried there, next to his companions of that unique event.

The Carabinieri Company of Tortona (Al) and the Station Command of Marcon (Ve) are named after him, as are numerous Sections of the National Association of Carabinieri.

There are two Spad S. VII’s which bear his insignia: the original can be seen at the Military Aircraft Historical Museum at Vigna di Valle and the other, a reconstruction of the early 80’s, is at the Carabinieri School of Rome in the pavilion dedicated to the aviation pioneers of the Carabinieri.

At one hundred years after his entry in the Aviatori Battalion in Turin, Cabruna was remembered in Turin during the celebrations for the Centenary of the Torino-Aeritalia Airport ¹.



Postcard printed on behalf of the Aero Club Torino in 2016 at the Centenary of the Torino-Aeritalia Airport and the 50th Anniversary of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus.

¹ I would like to thank Major Francesco Golini, who very kindly involved me in the drafting of the biographical notes of my great uncle Ernesto Cabruna, whose gestures give me pleasure to recall. It was emotional and finally contented my desire to see the fanciful designs of his inventions “Aircraft” and “New Propeller” that Teresa Triscari has so tenaciously sought in various archives in Turin and Rome, finally uncovering them in the State Historical Archives in Rome – unpublished documents that I knew about but had sought in vain.



The interest and enthusiasm shown make me optimistic about the establishment of a Cabruna documentation centre, in which the systematic archiving of the materials, donated some time ago by his family to the Municipality of Tortona, can be consulted and become part of a Cultural promotion of early twentieth century history.

Matilde Bassi, great-grandniece of Ernesto Cabruna

1950 Tortona. A photo very dear to me of the last time we were all together; the “sublime temerary” is smiling, surrounded by his brothers, his sister, his grandnephews and great-grandnephews. Ernesto is seated on the far left, I am the last on the right.

Fallen Carabinieri Pilots

August 20, 1915

VICE BRIGADIERE DOMENICO CATTANEO KIC²

Malpensa 18.30 hrs, 15th Caproni Squadron – Caproni Parasol

During a technical check flight, at 2000 metres above ground, the Carabiniere pilot switched off the engine and dived, engine off. At about 1500 metres above ground he pulled back on the stick to recover the aircraft, which was now at high speed. The left wing failed and bent back to the fuselage. The same happened to the right wing. The aircraft plunged towards the ground in a spin, with only the damaged wings and the tailplane, still attached by the guy-wires, providing any air resistance. The rupture of the safety harness during the spin caused him to be thrown from the cockpit, and he was killed instantly when he hit the ground, some 20 metres from the wreckage of the aircraft.

October 12, 1916

BRIGADIERE M.A.V.M.³ 3456 ALBINO MOCELLIN KIA

In the tumult of the First World War, a Caproni Ca 33, piloted by Captain Ercole Ercole and by the Royal Guardsman (Corazziere) Carabinieri Brigadiere Albino Mocellin with Captain Emilio Corbelli aboard, duelled in the sky over Zarnec with the Hansa- Brandenburg C.I. piloted by Offizierstellvertreter Josef Sieghel and Lieutenant Richard Ernst Wolf. The agile Austrian fighter sprayed the slower Italian bomber with a hail of bullets. One particular burst raked the bomber from prow to stern; Corbelli was hit in the chest and Mocellin was killed outright at the controls.

He was the first Carabinieri pilot to fall in combat, and was posthumously awarded a Military Silver Medal for bravery.



Carabiniere Brigadier pilot Albino Mocellin, posthumous Military Silver Medal for bravery.

Ercole, the commander of the bomber, who was manning the forward machine gun during the confrontation, managed to regain the pilot's position and despite the punctured fuel tanks and only one engine, made an emergency landing 50 kilometers from the front line, in Austrian-occupied territory. He managed to return to his base after a tenacious and fortunate adventure on foot. He was awarded a Military Gold Medal for bravery. The action was portrayed by Achille Beltrame in one of his famous cover pages for "La Domenica del Corriere".

² Standard abbreviations used:

KIC	<i>Killed In Crash</i>
KIA	<i>Killed In Action</i>
WIC	<i>Wounded In Crash</i>
WIA	<i>Wounded In Action</i>
DOW	<i>Died Of Wounds</i>
ESC	<i>Survived the war</i>

³ Medal Table

M.B.V.M.	<i>Bronze Medal for Bravery</i>
M.A.V.M.	<i>Silver Medal for Bravery</i>
M.O.V.M.	<i>Gold Medal for Bravery</i>

13 luglio 1917

MARESCIALLO GIUSEPPE

MARINI KIC

Ghedi 09,00 – 201st Squadron –
Caproni Ca.3 No. 2360

The bomber was prepared for a photographic reconnaissance flight. Lieutenant Dolazza, the technical officer, noted that during the takeoff made by Major Amedeo Ferraro, the aircraft lurched left and right as the pilot was not operating the engines simultaneously and was operating the throttles badly. During the takeoff roll, Maresciallo Giuseppe Marini rose from his seat to look at the rear of the aircraft, something that confirms that the take-off was performed solely by Major Ferraro.

The aircraft took off with the left wingtip scraping the ground and it was only after about 20-30 metres that level flight was restored. At about 70 metres above ground, it was seen to turn in a nose-high stall, losing speed until it almost stopped, then went into a spin and crashed, bursting into flames and leaving the crew with no possibility of escape.

August 27, 1917

VICE BRIGADIERE CESARE

VINEA KIC

18.45 – Training School Malpensa
Caproni Ca I No. 1236

During a training flight over the area called “Campo delle Bombarde”, the crew felt strong vibrations from the left engine and determined that the engine had broken a con-rod.

Bersagliere Private Vito Pozzi, the instructor, saw that below them there was moorland seemingly unobstructed by obstacles, throttled back all three engines and began a glide. But immediately after landing, as the aircraft lost speed, it struck the banking of a country road, slightly in a dip and hidden by high grass. The impact was such that the aircraft overturned and finished tail high. Vice Brigadiere Caesar Vinea was struck by a fuel tank and died almost immediately, but Bersagliere Pozzi sustained only slight bruises.



First on the left, Carabiniere (Corazziere) pilot Italo Urbinati, Military Silver Medal for bravery.

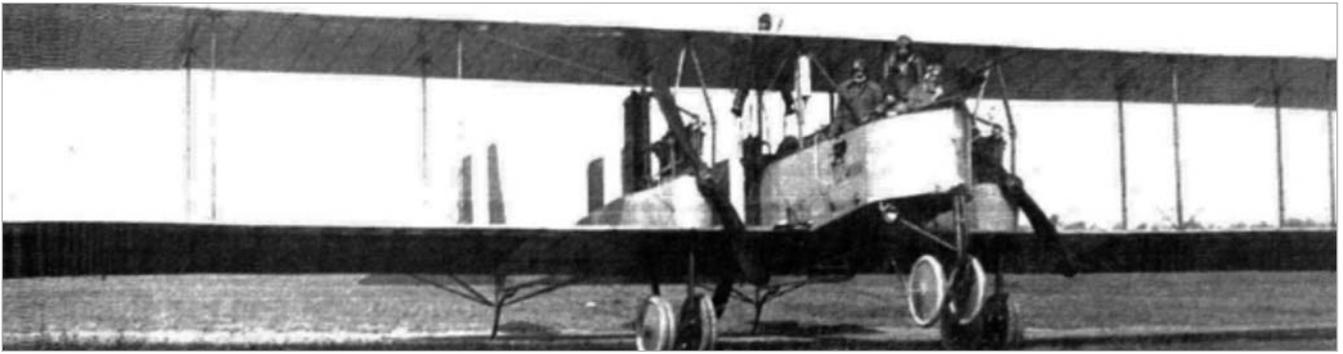


Corazziere Urbinati, recognizable by his height, poses with his colleagues in front of the Caproni No. 2309 that would be shot down in the afternoon of November 7 with the death of the machine gunner Galbiati and the capture of the other three crew members.

2 November 1917

CORAZZIERE M.A.V.M. ITALO LUIGI URBINATI WIA DOW

During the morning over the Tagliamento – 201st Bomber Squadron. Caproni Ca3 No. 4080. Shot down by enemy fire while his Caproni was bombing the Austrian positions at Motta Livenza (Treviso) at very low altitude. The crew consisted of Lieutenant Giancarlo Sailer POW, Urbinati himself, Private Carlo Pa-



Caproni No. 4080 of the 201st Squadron, a squadron at the disposal of the Directorate of Aeronautical Services of the Italian Royal Navy, operating from Marcon as of the summer of 1917.

Extract from PAOLO VARRIALE, I caduti dell'aviazione italiana nella Grande guerra, Italian Air Force Historical Office, 2014.

store KIA and Private Battista Torpagnone KIA.

On his return from POW Camp, Sailer testified:

While descending near Palazzolo sullo Stella to 200 metres for reconnaissance purposes and to machine-gun an Austrian patrol, we were hit by machine gun fire which cut through the control cables, causing the aircraft to go out of control and crash. Urbinati, the pilot, was severely injured by a machine gun bullet during the descent and the two machine gunners, both wounded, were taken by an Austrian Red Cross vehicle near the nearest hospital. I was only stunned by the fall, and was immediately taken prisoner by a General. I could not set fire to the damaged aircraft since my companions still lay within the wreckage and also due to the prompt intervention by the Austrians.

Urbinati died the following November 17 at the Villa Vicentina Field Hospital. On his tomb at Avio in Trentino, the propeller of his Caproni bears the inscription:

ITALO URBINATI, WHO FOR HIS COUNTRY,
OVER ALL OTHERS FLEW LIKE AN EAGLE.

He, too, formerly of the Carabinieri Royal Guard Squadron, left Turin to follow his aviator companions. In the skies over Venezia Giulia, despising danger and with singular audacity, he accomplished numerous and arduous missions, including night bombings on the arsenal and other sensitive targets in Pula.

In his intense and risky activity of aviator, he proved to possess considerable ability to disengage from the attacks of Austrian fighters

These merits brought him the role of night flying instructor of trimotor bombers. Decorated with a

Military Silver Medal for bravery, his name ranks alongside those of the famous Baracca, Ferrarin, Cabrana and Fulco Ruffo of Calabria.

November 18, 1917

CARABINIERE M.A.V.M. CELSO BOTTEGHI – KIA

In a air combat mission together with Lieutenant Ettore Bernardo KIA, and following an order by the 5th Army Corps Commander, the SP aircraft No. 4518 aircraft of the 31st Squadron flew over Castelgomberto and headed for Villaverla to wait for two fighters from the 71st. After having set off the recognition smoke flares, while the escort was gaining height, instead of staying close to the airfield, the two-seater flew towards the Asiago plateau, where it was attacked by an enemy patrol.

The chaplain and the senior adjutant of the 141st Infantry said that they had seen the airplane still in Italian territory, succumb to the attack of an enemy patrol, catch fire and break up in the air.

Botteghi had attended the pilots course at the Turin Mirafiori airfield after leaving the Carabinieri training school in Rome.

After gaining his brevet, he flew from April 24, 1917 with the 31st Squadron with SP3 reconnaissance aircraft.

The motivation of the Silver Medal defines him as:

An aircraft pilot, and constant example of devotion to duty and serene audacity to his companions. During a difficult war mission, in the skies over Arsero, he was attacked by four enemy fighters simultaneously.

As was the habit of this aviator, he did not think about the danger and with admirable courage, fought the enemy assailants until he was finally shot down.



Seated, second from left, Brigadiere Giovanni Zepegno.

December 16, 1917

CARABINIERE GIUSEPPE RAPETTI KIC

Busto Arsizio Flying School – accident in an unidentified aircraft.

June 6, 1918

CARABINIERE FEDERICO PELLIZER KIC

08.15 Cascina Costa – Malpensa Flying School

During take-off, his SVA, most likely due to having a too nose-high attitude at low speed, stalled and crashed from a height of about 150 metres.

June 7, 1918

BRIGADIERE EGISTO GABELLI KIC

10.30 Visnadello – SIA 7b of the 24th Squadron

Gabelli while flying with Lieutenant Urbano Franci KIC during a liaison mission with the 48th Infantry Division, had a wing failure in flight and crashed.

August 5, 1918

VICE BRIGADIERE M.A.V.M. CARLO BORELLO KIA

10.30 – Mattarello – SAML No.3080 of the 121st Squadron. Air combat together with Lieutenant Luigi Franchi – KIA

Advised by the usual smoke signals, as the escort gained height they saw that contrary to expectations, the two-seater did not wait for them but headed for the front line.

Of the three Spads, one lost contact immediately, a second aircraft did similarly shortly later and the third was forced to retire with engine problems. A message launched behind the Italian lines in September communicated the death of the aviators and their burial with military honours. After the war, it was learned that the two-seater had been shot down in flames, falling near Taja, about one kilometer from the village of Mattarello, near the road leading to Romagnano, in a field belonging to one Giuseppe Gabana. The crew were thrown out of the cockpit during the impact of the plane with the ground. The kill was credited to Oberleutnant Friedrich Navratil of Flik 3/J in a D. III No.253.06.

Coming from the Carabinieri Legion in Milan, he started flying in a war zone on 2 October 1917 with the 121st SAML Reconnaissance Squadron. On June 28, 1918, returning from an operation on the Asiago plateau, he gained his first Military Silver Medal for bravery: during the forced landing, the aircraft which had already been hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire overturned and burst into flames, and “with admirable presence of spirit and feeling of affection”, he assisted his observer officer to extract himself from the wreckage of the plane while the bombs and the cartridges of the burning aircraft were exploding around them.

His second Silver Medal came instead from the result of his ultimate sacrifice to the Homeland in which he lost his life on August 5, 1918, when during an air combat over the skies of the Val Grana, he confirmed his disdain for danger and his determination, prepared even to the extent of making the supreme sacrifice.

"Nel Cielo", a fortnightly magazine by "Il Secolo illustrato", Anno III No. 4 of 25 February 1919. Article dedicated to the Carabiniere pilot Carlo Borello.

Nel Cielo

BORELLO CARLO
e **FRANCHI LUIGI**




Pochi mesi prima che Trento redenta potesse salutare i tricolori vittoriosi, due dei più arditi ed entusiasti aviatori italiani cadevano da prodi per il raggiungimento di quella radiosa realtà, non lontano dalla città agognata: il pilota Borello Carlo, V. Brigadiere dei CC RR., ed il tenente osservatore Franchi Luigi.

Il pilota Borello era considerato come uno dei più arditi e sicuri piloti; aveva già una medaglia d'argento al valor militare e la Croce di guerra.

Il tenente Franchi si era arruolato volontario nell'83.^o Reggim. Fanteria, e nell'epica difesa della primavera del 1916 in Val Sugana si era guadagnato la prima medaglia al valor militare con ben cinque ferite.

Arruolatosi fra i soldati dell'aria perchè inabile permanentemente in seguito alle ferite riportate, il 21 giugno 1918 era compensato con una seconda medaglia al valore. Nella vita privata era stato decorato di medaglia al valor civile.

I due aviatori, partiti la mattina del 5 agosto 1918 su di un apparecchio S. A. M. L. per una lunga ed ardua ricognizione in Val Lagarina, trovatisi soli, senza scorta, molto al di là delle linee nemiche, persistevano nel loro mandato. Assaliti da 5 aerei avversari sostenevano con una lunga e disperata resistenza l'imparsi lotta fino a che l'apparecchio ripetutamente colpito, precipitava in fiamme all'altezza di Mattarello (Trento).

Le salme vennero sepolte da aviatori austriaci della 3.^a Compagnia nel cimitero di Romagnano di Trento.

Alla memoria dei due valorosi fu decretata la medaglia d'argento.



Brigadiere Giovanni Zeppego. Photo: Massimiliano De Antoni collection.

In preparation for the last great general offensive on a delicate section of the front, he successfully accomplished a decisive reconnaissance to ascertain the positions of defensive preparations and the lines of movement of the Austrian troops.

His tenacious desire to gather this indispensable information made him fly at a very low altitude deep behind enemy lines, during which he was attacked by five enemy fighters simultaneously.

In the unequal combat, he fought a ferocious and tremendous struggle, until a burst of bullets damaged the control surfaces of the aircraft, which went down in flames near Trento.

BRIGADIERE GIOVANNI ZEPPEGNO KIC



Nieuport 27 – No. 19750. 79th Squadron, XXIII Group, Royal Army Aviation Corps. Aircraft of Sergente Marziale Cerruti, S. Luca di Treviso, October 1918. Illustration by Marco Gueli.

Decorated Carabinieri Pilots ESC

BRIGADIERE M.A.V.M.

ANNIBALE COMAZZI

Born in Granozzo di Monticello (No) on April 10, 1886, he had his baptism of war on May 24, 1915, the very day that Italy entered the conflict. Two days later, from his base at Campoformido, the pilot officer of the 6th Squadron took off at 4:15 am, with his Nieuport in company with another Nieuport of the 5th Squadron, headed for Dornberg in the Gorizia area, with the task of bombing the Divisional headquarters of the Gorizia Sector. This was one of the first offensive actions carried out by our aviation on Austrian targets. He then flew Caproni and HP Fiat (Ca 300) aircraft with the 1st Bomber Squadron. His audacity and expertise were acknowledged by the award of the Military Silver Medal for bravery in two separate missions. The first mission, a reconnaissance flight, took place on August 1, 1915 in the skies over Sdraussina where he had the best of four enemy aircraft and the second mission was on September 13, 1916 over Trieste. That day he was part of a formation of twenty-two Caproni Bombers which took off from our bases at La Comina, Campoformido and Aviano to bomb the Arsenal of Trieste and its seaplane hangars. The reaction of the enemy artillery was lively and prompt, as was the response of the Austrian seaplanes which did not, however, prevent the bombers from effectively performing their mission. Comazzi's Caproni was intercepted on the return home by Austrian fighters. The valiant Carabinieri pilot fought back, forcing his assailants to abandon the fight and, although wounded, managed to land safely with his crew at his home field.

Un nostro velivolo precipita sulla città Due aviatori morti

Questa mattina un grave avvenimento luttuoso ha impressionato la città. Verso le 11 i passanti potevano ammirare gli audaci voli di un velivolo montato da due aviatori che librandosi a poca altezza sopra il porto, compì due giri della morte, dirigendosi a bassa quota e con grande velocità verso Sussak. Di lì ritornò, seguito dagli sguardi di numerosi curiosi, attenti alla manovra.

Quando il velivolo che si trovava a circa cinquecento metri di altezza, nel suo ritorno fu sopra le case di San Vito, egli seguiva constatò un rallentamento dell'elica, che, dopo un poco rimase totalmente ferma. Coloro che conoscono il funzionamento dei velivoli ebbero subito la percezione che qualche cosa di anormale succedeva al motore.

Ed invece il velivolo cominciò subito a precipitare ed a oscillare. L'aviatore che lo guidava doveva certamente cercare di tenere in equilibrio l'apparecchio, per portarlo sopra uno spiazzo.

Ma mancò il tempo e la possibilità: il velivolo improvvisamente precipitò vertiginosamente, battendo contro la casa Fabich di via Pomerio.

Il velivolo s'abbattè in un piccolo cortile tra la casa Fabich e la casa Viezzol. Un alta colonna di fumo si alzò dal motore in fiamme.

Uno degli aviatori piombato dall'alto cadde su la ringhiera che chiude il cortile rimanendo infilato in due lance, che gli trapassarono il fianco e il cuore. Gli accorsi trovarono così il corpo del compianto, lambito dalle fiamme.

Il secondo corpo era in mezzo al cortile, reso irriconoscibile dalle fiamme che l'avevano tutto ustionato.

Le persone accorse rimasero fortemente trattistate della grave sciagura, molte donne piangevano.

Poco dopo giunse sul luogo il Coman-

dante, ed i corpi dei due valorosi vennero trasportati alla cappella mortuaria del cimitero.

Il velivolo precipitato portava il numero 31.

I due disgraziati aviatori sono: il tenente Aldo Bini, decorato di medaglia di bronzo, e il vice-brigadiere del carabinieri Giovanni Zeppego, appartenente alla 128. Squadriglia di Bolzano.

Non sorge nuovo sole che non sia preceduto da un'alba sanguigna. Fiume italiana ha oggi il suo primo sangue. Segua nel nostro cuore questi due nomi ormai sacri alla storia: Aldo Bini e Giovanni Zeppego, assunti come gli evangelisti, all'immortalità in un gran centro di fuoco, volontariamente offertisi per la libertà di Fiume e la gloria d'Italia oggi, come ieri, sul cielo del Quarnero come sul cielo del Casco e dell'Altipiano. L'esercito di Fiume ha due volontari di meno e una gloria di più; una gloria di fronte alla cui maestà divengono insignificanti i cachinni malvagi di chi insultava gli avventurieri della nostra legione, di chi opponeva alla nostra fede i conti del carbone e del grano. Due spoglie suere schiatteranno con la loro maestà, i vigliacchi e gli ignavi. Sentite: Aldo Bini era già stato vittima due mesi addietro d'un disastro aereo. Gravemente ferito, dal letto dell'ospedale, aveva giurato al padre di non più volare. Ma Fiume lo aveva chiamato. La salvezza di Fiume valeva più del suo giuramento; e da Bolzano, Aldo Bini, spiccava il volo per Fiume, recandovi il suo aeroplano e la sua fede. Domani il padre, la fidanzata, gli amici sapranno che Aldo Bini ha pagato con la vita il suo amore per l'Italia. Con lui ha dato il suo tributo il Brigadiere Zeppego, venuto con lui da Bolzano, bello e bravo giovane di cui tutti abbiamo ammirato la serenità e la fede.

"Comando di Fiume d'Italia" Official Gazette of 8 October 1919, year I. The following page shows the article published on October 11. Massimiliano De Antoni collection.

MARESCIALLO M.B.V.M. ZELINDO PANCANI

Born in Signa, Florence, on October 18, 1885.

Born in Signa, Florence, on October 18, 1885.

His war career began on December 11, 1916, with the 30th (Farman) Squadron. He later flew with the 139th, with the 23rd and with the 32rd (Pomilio) reconnaissance squadrons. For his courage and for his valiant actions during combat, he was awarded the Military Bronze Medal for bravery three times between February and July 1917, on the Isonzo front.

Frequently demonstrating audacity and intelligence, he performed bombing and reconnaissance raids of the greatest value, without regard for the increasingly accurate enemy anti-aircraft fire.

On February 12th, in the skies over Chiapovano and again on April 4 over Vorgesko, at the end of demanding reconnaissance flights deep into Austrian territory, he managed to return to the Italian lines although the aircraft had been seriously damaged by enemy fire. Part of the motivation for his first medal for bravery reads:

Credete voi che il rogo sia stato spento? Credete voi che si possa domare una tale vampa?

Ieri, dalle finestre, dai balconi le donne di Fiume gettavano l'acqua su l'incendio, e piangevano. Piangevano le lacrime nuove, e piangevano il pianto già pianto: il pianto già pianto per quell'altro italiano stato che primo precipitò nel suolo di Fiume dal cielo di guerra, in un agosto lontano, e s'ebbe la sua sepoltura e il pellegrinaggio votivo e le votive ghirlande. Ma veramente la pietà delle donne si travagliava a spegnere la fiamma?

La fiamma non senti l'acqua; non senti se non le lacrime. E le lacrime delle donne di Fiume sono un doloroso aroma che eccita la fiamma e la profuma per sempre.

C'era là, nel meriggio, tra le case pallide, un incendio di legni, di tele, di metalli, di essenze. C'è qui, nel vespro, un incendio di anime, che dura, che perdura, che non può estinguersi.

Gloria a chi ha aggiunto il fuoco al fuoco!

Gloria alla coppia alata che ha offerto il primo olocausto di libertà all'Olocausto!

Gloria ai due messaggeri celesti che, nella vicenda delle ore brevi, hanno appreso al nostro spirito come questa da noi vissuta sia la vita sempiterna!

Cittadini di Fiume, scopritevi! Soldati d'Italia, presentate le armi!

Tenente Aldo Bini, Brigadiere Giovanni Zeppegno, Italiani dell'Italia novissima, primizie del fuoco, primizie della morte giovine coppia alata e giurata, ordino che sia distesa su la bara duplice la grande bandiera dei fanti, la bandiera su cui fu fatto e rinnovato il giuramento unanime.

Aldo Bini, da fante, tu combattesti al Sabotino, al Sabotino, dove l'impeto «fu come l'ala che non lascia impronte». Da fante tu combattesti al Fanti dove fu osato l'estremo sforzo verso la mèta d'oriente.

Miei piloti, ammantate i due feretri. Complete il rito nel segno di quella croce che fa l'ombra della macchina alata con le sue doppie ali traverse fra la prua e i timoni.

Popolo di Fiume, seniori del Consiglio, questi primi nostri morti noi li consegniamo alla terra sacra, alla terra libera. Custoditeli.

E tenete per fermo che tutti, come questi due arsi confessori della fede, vogliamo per fede morire.

L'attesa al cimitero

Nessuno dei quarantamila italiani di Fiume è mancato. Quelli che non erano a far ala al passaggio dei convogli e nè il seguivano, erano al cimitero ad attendere. Erano accalcati alle porte della dimora ultima, dove il plebiscito di italianità ammonisce ed educa dalle tombe, dei morti, erano fra le tombe, nell'attesa commossa dei due ultimi morti che la terra di Fiume avrebbe raccolto devotamente, olocausti sacri alla causa santa.

Una gran folla di popolo si era recata fin dal pomeriggio nei luoghi santi dell'etero riposo. Dall'alto del Cimitero essa poteva vedere l'altra folla, l'anima senza misura di Fiume italiana che si partiva dall'ospedale per seguire i funebri convogli e i carri su cui fasci di fiori e moltitudini di corone attestavano la profonda venerazione per gli eroici caduti. Un fremito di commozione scorre fra gli aspettanti. Lentamente, per il Viale XVII Novembre, per la Piazza Regina Elena, per il Corso, per la Via XXX Ottobre il corteo si avviava verso la Piazza Roma, ove le parole del Comandante hanno celebrato il sacrificio e l'eroismo dei gloriosi legionari aviatori.

Erano passate le 19 ore. Le ombre della sera coprivano di un velo di malinconia la solennità della cerimonia. Le migliaia di cittadini che aspettavano al Cimitero videro giungere ancor lentamente i carri e con essi l'altra fiamma di popolo che gli

accompagnava. Una religiosa commozione li ha invasi, allorché le due bare sono state trasportate nella cappella mortuaria. Le donne, i bambini quanti — gli arami serrati dall'angoscia — si trovavano nei luoghi santi, come in pellegrinaggio di fede e d'amore, come nel supremo compimento di un dovere mesto e senza nome, si sono recati laddove erano deposte le bare, a posarvi i loro fiori, le loro lacrime, il loro cuore. Donne, bambini, vegliarli nel cui sguardo brillavano lacrime d'amore, baciavano le bare, benedicevano nel lor dolente linguaggio le due salme, offrivano il tributo perenne del loro più grande affetto ai due caduti, allontanandosi poi perchè altri li imitassero, altri compdessero il mesto ufficio, altri benedicevano, come loro, la morte gloriosa.

Picchetti di soldati erano alle soglie e ai lati del Cimitero. Soldati taciti, penserosi, tristi, di una tristezza accorata, rigidi nella loro divisa di gloria. Rendevano gli ultimi onori alle salme dei gloriosi fratelli. Facevano buona guardia al nome santo d'Italia, laddove italianamente riposano i morti d'Italia; e rendevano gli onori ultimi a coloro che l'avevano servita ed elevata in Fiume d'Italia, offrendo la vita giovane. Ma gli onori erano resti anche a quella folla di popolo che lentamente, quasi indugiando nel dolore del distacco si allontanava dalle soglie sacre della morte, dopo la celebrazione della morte, per portare nelle sue case la purezza di un ricordo che non morrà, di una fede che non morrà.

La tumulazione

Durante la notte, guarda d'onore intorno ai feretri, vegliarono con l'arme al piede i bersaglieri. Sulle bare, letteralmente coperte da enormi ghirlande — grandeggiava su tutte quella inviata dal Comandante — venivano portati mercoledì altri serdi di fiori: tributi di semplici popolane commosse e riverenti; molte piangevano silenziosamente nella mite penombra della cappella.

Alle 10 di mercoledì il cappellano dell'ospedale padre Sfogli celebrava dinanzi a una gran folla una solenne messa di requiem e pronunciava commoventi parole di saluto estremo alle salme: dopochè levate a braccia da ufficiali aviatori, le due bare venivano portate sino alle cripte approntate martedì; e qui il tenente aviatore Tomaso Carosio, della prima squadriglia fumana, dava l'ultimo valedo ai valorosi compagni.

Il gran cuore di Fiume

Sotto questo titolo «La Vedetta d'Italia» così scrive sugli imponenti funerali ai due primi eroi dell'impresa legionaria di Ronchi:

Mai, in passato, ci fu dato di assistere a più imponente dimostrazione di affetto e di cordoglio: se diciamo che tutta Fiume partecipò alle solenni onoranze tributate ai nostri due morti gloriosi, non facciamo della retorica, constatiamo un fatto.

Altre volte i cittadini furono chiamati a raccolta per dire la loro volontà d'italiani, e risposero a decine di migliaia all'appello; ma iscriva a onorare i due morti per Fiume italiana nessuno mancò: nel corteo o a far ala ai carri funebri c'erano tutti: giovani e vecchi, borghesi e popolani, ricchi e poveri. Erano i due primi martiri della causa santa di Fiume, che in un accidentato disgraziato avevano lasciato la

vita, e Fiume manifestava la sua riconoscenza a questi martiri che suggellavano col loro sangue il suo diritto.

E per questo Fiume tutta rispose in un impeto di pietà, che non ha riscontro nella sua storia.

Chi credette che la lotta per il trionfo dell'italianità di Fiume, italianità così evidente e inoppugnabile, poteva essere difesa e fatta valere da chi specificatamente s'occupava di politica, e intanto si teneva in disparte, ieri non si credette autorizzato a mancare al dovere preciso di esprimere la propria gratitudine ai due eroici caduti e fu al suo posto o nel corteo che non voleva più finire, o lungo il percorso a fare ala d'onore ai feretri.

E non era curiosità per uno spettacolo coreografico: per semplice curiosità non si corre, come le nostre magnifiche donne, lungo le strade, le braccia cariche di fiori, pazienti nell'attesa, con gli occhi lucidi di commozione, silenziose sul percorso di un funerale: era l'anima italiana palpitante di Fiume ieri nelle sue strade, venuta a rendere tributo di gratitudine ai suoi grandi morti, ai suoi protomartiri.

La sventura grande ci ha procurato un immenso dolore; ma ha dato anche occasione a una affermazione d'italianità, di solidarietà cittadina alla lotta che abbiamo ingaggiata, che non aveva avuto occasione di constatare mai prima. E questo, nel cocente dolore che ci strazia, è umano ci sia di conforto.

Proprio in questi giorni si tenta con manovre subdole, con offerte allettanti di sprezzare la nostra resistenza. Fiume ha risposto onorando i suoi morti che essi sono pegno nuovo di vittoria, che sulle bare dei due valorosi essa, tutta in piedi, rinnova il suo giuramento per non tradirli.

Aldo Bini rompe il giuramento fatto a suo padre di non più volare, per troppo amore; ma Fiume che tradisse il suo giuramento più volte ripetuto, tradirebbe la memoria di quest'eroe e del suo compagno; le due vittime sono un nuovo legame, un nuovo dovere: Fiume ha da tenere fede a sé e ai suoi morti. E che essa la terra l'ha dimostrato ieri con un impeto così commovente, che non ha l'eguale. Sia la manifestazione di ieri monito a tutti i nemici.

Sulle bare dei due caduti Fiume depose ieri tutte le sue ghirlande, le donne fumane gettarono a fasci tutti i nostri fiori di questa fine di stagione.

Nel corteo l'odore dei ciclamini era acutissimo penetrante come se si fosse entrati in una stanza chiusa colma di fiori, tanti ce n'erano: erano tutti i fiori della città. Mai morti a Fiume ebbero così unanime compianto, mai onore di tanti fiori; ma mai fu in passato alcuno che come le due vittime di lunedì abbiano offerto deliberatamente la loro vita alla salvezza e alla libertà nostra, mai alcuno fu degno di tanto amore. Fiume ancora una volta — purtroppo in circostanza luttuosa, terribile — ha dimostrato la sua indomabile volontà e la sua fede incrollabile a chi specula di fuori sulla sua stanchezza, e ha detto ai valorosi accorsi in sua difesa con che cuore li ospita, di che amore li ama, quanto del loro sacrificio essa sia degna!

Bold aircraft pilot... A splendid example of constant bravery and profound sense of duty.

On November 3, 1917, in the operational theatre of Latisana he heroically engaged in a fierce air combat against three enemy planes. Having put the first of the three to flight, despite the fact that his own Pomilio aircraft had been seriously damaged, and although both he and his observation officer had been seriously wounded by enemy fire, he managed to return to Italian-controlled territory and land without further consequences.

Following his recovery, he returned to the squadron and in the summer of 1918 became an instructor on Pomilio aircraft, and at the same time performing war missions on the Piave front.

For his tenacious and effective commitment, he was granted a number of exceptional awards by the Commissariat General of the Air Corps.

**BRIGADIERE M.A.V.M.
FRANCESCO VULCANO**

Born at Longobucco (Cosenza) on February 11, 1887.

His baptism of fire took place on May 5, 1917 while he was with the 22nd Squadron before being sent to the 21st reconnaissance squadron with S.P.2 aircraft. In the skies over the Isonzo he distinguished himself for his bold and efficient missions, often coming back with the aircraft full of holes from enemy anti-aircraft fire. For the quantity of highly appreciated actions against the enemy, carried out with singular disregard for danger, he was awarded the Military Silver Medal for bravery in August 1917.

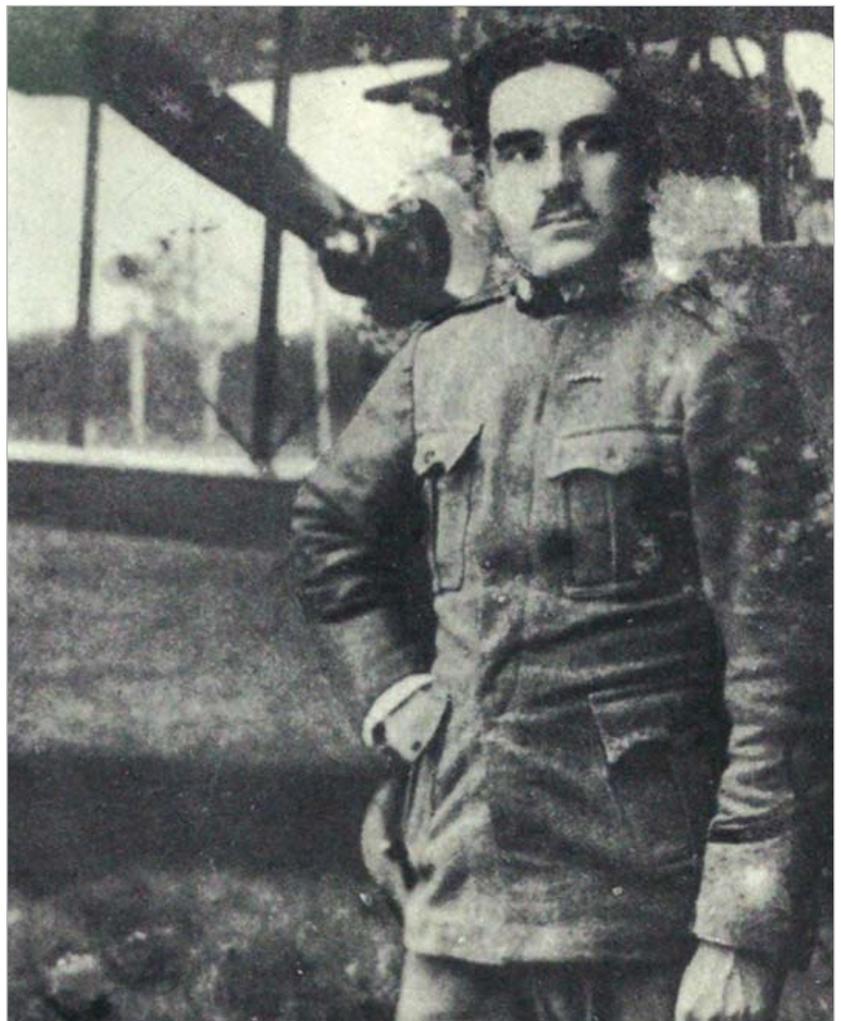
**BRIGADIERE M.A.V.M.
DEMETRI ARTUSO**

Born in San Sperato (Rc) on April 14, 1893.

Caproni Bomber Pilot of the 3rd



Illustration by Amleto Fiore dedicated to an air battle during the Great War between a Carabiniere aviator and an Austrian pilot, taken from I Carabinieri 1814-1980.



Carabiniere Brigadier Pilot Francesco Vulcano, Military Silver Medal for bravery.

Squadron, he took part in activities on the Venezia Giulia front, performing 30 missions from July 1916 to August 1917.

This valiant pilot showed his temperament on January 8, 1917 when, despite enemy anti-aircraft fire, he managed to reach and bombard the San Daniele del Carso positions. With his right engine severely damaged, he suffered the simultaneous attack of four Fokker fighters, forcing him to descend dangerously low over enemy lines where anti-aircraft fire hit his aircraft repeatedly as his crew repulsed the assailants with their on-board machine guns. The then twenty-four-year-old aviator managed to return to his own airfield where some 20 bullet-holes were found in various parts of the aircraft, including not only the right engine, but also the central propeller, the tailplane, the wings and the wheels.

The motivation for his first decoration for military bravery reads:

Brave and accomplished pilot [...] an example of courage and enthusiasm in the many offensive actions performed even at night.

But Artuso's commitment was also renewed on the French-German front where, in the winter of 1918, starting from the field of Longive Ocheley, his remarkable ability and his singular determination in combat won him a Military Bronze

To the right and on the next page, the article dedicated to Captain of the Carabinieri Ernesto Sequi in "Nel Cielo", fortnightly magazine of the "Secolo Illustrato", year 11, No. 17, of 10 December 1918. Massimiliano De Antoni collection.

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LE FIGURE GLORIOSE

Come l'aviatore Sequi, capitano dei carabinieri

ritrovò le vie della Patria nelle terribili giornate del Montello

SCHIETTISSIMA tempra di sardo, il capitano Ernesto Sequi, prima di diventare aviatore, apparteneva all'Arma dei Carabinieri. E' stato allievo della Scuola di Pinerolo e ha partecipato a tutti i più importanti concorsi ippici — e a vari campionati del cavallo d'armi. Prima della guerra, era istruttore d'equitazione e allo squadrone Allievi Carabinieri a Roma. E nella equitazione il capitano Sequi portava lo stesso ardimento che doveva dimostrare più tardi nel campo aviatorio. La sua audacia gli fruttava il vanto di possedere un record eccezionale: quello delle cadute da cavallo: ben trentatré, che non ebbero, per fortuna, conseguenze gravi.

Passato, all'inizio della guerra, in aviazione, parve che il caso si divertisse a contrassegnare l'entusiastica attività del capitano Sequi con incidenti bizzarri. E il più bizzarro fu certamente quello che portò l'aviatore — che pilotava un *Hanriot* — ad atterrare... su un grosso albero. Simili avventure — bisogna convenirne — non sono di tutti i giorni. Si sa di un aeroplano caduto a Parigi in pieno *boulevard*, di un altro finito sul tetto di una basilica, di un'altro ancora — austriaco questo — adagiato sul tetto d'una casa, in un piccolo paese friulano; ma l'atterramento su un albero non si verificò che rarissimamente, da che l'aviazione ha vita.

Il capitano Sequi conosce anche questa rarissima emozione, che gli costò tuttavia delle forti contusioni al ginocchio e ad un piede. Ed ha un altro primato: quello degli atterramenti fuori del campo: sette, sempre per *pannes* di motore.

Alla fine di un volo avventuroso, urtando violentemente contro terra, il Sequi riportò la frattura del bacino.

Ma neppure questo dolorosissimo incidente diminui la sua grande passione per l'aviazione.

Durante la guerra egli non conosceva limiti al sacrificio: il suo dovere era sempre al di là della necessità.

E di quale eroismo — mai la parola è stata tanto appropriata — sia stato capace il capitano Sequi dica questo episodio magnifico, che riassume ideal-

mente tutte le glorie della tenacissima razza Sarda.

Il 17 giugno scorso, verso sera, sotto una pioggia torrenziale, il capitano Sequi — comandava allora una squadriglia — volava a breve altezza oltre il Piave. Di tempo in tempo si abbassava a fior di terra per meglio colpire le truppe nemiche. Quante e quante volte non aveva egli mitragliato gli austriaci così, tornando con l'apparecchio crivellato di proiettili? Malgrado l'imperversare della bufera, continuò a bersagliare dappresso le file dei soldati grigio-azzurri. Fitte scariche di fucileria scrosciano intorno allo apparecchio, l'avvolgono in nemi mortali, sibillando. E una pallottola colpisce il capitano

Sequi in bocca, spezzandogli la lingua e otto denti, forandogli il palato. L'aviatore, malgrado soffra atrocemente e perda sangue in gran copia, non vacilla, non piega. Continua nel volo temerario, sebbene la tempesta non abbia tregua, e la notte sia ormai prossima. Tenta di tornare, innalzandosi. Ma la foschia gli impedisce di discernere la giusta direzione. La nebbia sembra inghiottire l'apparecchio, che ha quattro centine spezzate, alcune funi tagliate, e vibra fortemente. Quando la nebbia si dirada, l'aviatore scorge sotto di sé il Piave. Il velivolo è a quattrocento metri, ed è fatto segno a un rabbioso tiro dei cannoni. Scende, intanto, la notte. Lottando col dolore e con l'oscurità, il Sequi cerca di orizzontarsi alla meglio. Ma il sangue continua a colare abbondantemente dalla ferita orribile e le forze gli cominciano a mancare.

Si abbassa, si abbassa ancora per distinguere un villaggio, una strada, il fiume, qualcosa insomma che, gli possa servire di guida. Inutilmente. Finalmente, un ampio spiazzo libero gli appare. Dei cannoni, un sentiero, una grande stalla. E' un campo d'aviazione. Sequi si abbassa ancora, rasenta il suolo: mille segni lo persuadono di una triste realtà: il campo d'aviazione è austriaco. Scendere significa la cattura, la salvezza. Non scendere significa la fine, quasi certa. E l'ampia distesa di terra ha lusinghe indicibili... Ma no: Sequi



ERNESTO SEQUI



Il capitano SEQUI prima della guerra.

Medal for bravery, whose motivation concludes:

Brave and active pilot [...]. A splendid example of bravery, faithfulness, and great sense of duty.

CAPITANO M.A.V.M.

ERNESTO SEQUI

Born at Borsa (Nu) on April 10, 1882, his baptism of fire occurred on October 9, 1917, with the 76th Squadron. Posted to the 70th (Henriot) Fighter Squadron, he soon became its Commanding Officer.

He participated in more than 50 combat missions and 20 escort missions over the skies of Musile, Intestadura and Paludella, frequently returning to base with the plane damaged by enemy fire. One of his most dangerous missions was on 17 June 1918, on the Musile front, when, in greatly reduced visibility during a thunderstorm, he strafed the Austrian positions on the Montello in support of a simultaneous attack by our troops.

Having achieved this, with his aircraft and he himself wounded in the face by anti-aircraft fire, he managed to regain height and return to the Gazzo airfield. For this action, Sequi was decorated with a Military Silver Medal for bravery.

Among other things, the motivation reads:

Bold pilot, excellent squadron commander [...] a constant example of boldness, perseverance, and great sense of duty.

On June 18, the following day, General Luigi Cauvin, General Commander of the Army, sent the following message to the Carabinieri Command of the 4th Army:

In these desperate events in which our aviators heroically prodigate themselves, our valiant Captain Sequi has shown his worth in this hour of glory, generous tribute of blood to the victory which today intensely vibrates our souls.

Nel Cielo

L'istruzione nei Campi Scuola

Pubblichiamo anche questo scritto dovuto alla penna di un valoroso e noto capitano pilota perchè rileva giustamente — ora che l'elemento attempato ha modificato il suo valore, in argomento — la necessità di completare l'allievo pilota con una seria e buona preparazione teorica dei problemi inerenti al volo.

Ultimamente il signor G. B., già pilota aviatore, accennava alla necessità di regolare l'istruzione che viene impartita nei campi scuola secondo certi suoi criteri brevemente esposti, e che egli crede indicare per una migliore produzione dell'elemento pilota.

D'accordo, in via di massima, con quanto egli espone, credo sia il caso di ricordare qui come nei programmi dei corsi allievi piloti aviatori siano comprese non poche prove tecnico-teoriche, ad epilogo di regolari corsi teorici che dovrebbero svolgersi in ogni campo scuola di pari passo con l'istruzione pratica di volo. Però — ecco il famoso però di tante cose nostre, belle ed utili — tali corsi, sui motori, sui materiali e loro resistenza, topografia, aerologia, ecc., hanno avuto vita per modo di dire.

Ovunque si svolsero — ciò che credo sia avvenuto in due o tre delle 31 scuole d'Italia — ebbero ottima accoglienza ed ottimo risultato.

Gli insegnanti — tutti allievi in istruzione di pilotaggio come gli altri — supplirono con la loro iniziativa alla deplorabile mancanza d'insegnanti fissi e veramente competenti. Spesso un ufficiale doveva assumersi due o tre delle materie d'insegnamento, per la mancanza di un collega disposto, o capace, d'impartire le altre lezioni. Così il fardello diveniva gravoso e, alla lunga, insopportabile.

Sui campi, o meglio, sulla linea di volo, si dava spesso più importanza alla pratica che alla teoria, quasi che questa non costituisca quel logico e sicuro coefficiente di riuscita per tanta gente che di meccanica non aveva mai sentito parlare, e che di sport non aveva fatto altro, come disse un amico comandante di scuola, che cavalcare — con paura — un innocuo somaro!

Ma la guerra voleva piloti. Tanti piloti. Le squadriglie alla fronte ed in paese, ne assorbivano in maniera sempre più impressionante. L'attuazione del programma massimo del Commissariato ne reclamava buon numero per i campi nuovi; molti altri ne occorrevano per le incredibili esigenze delle vecchie scuole, sempre in aumento. Sicché venne la febbre del far presto — tanto che si ebbe una circolare che voleva si ottenessero i piloti in un massimo di sei mesi di permanenza alle scuole! Se ne concluse — *bon gré, mal gré* — che la teoria, in aviazione, era una bella cosa, ma non necessaria, tanto è vero che i piloti riuscivano a brevettarla lo stesso ed alla fronte; mercé un po' di audacia e molta buona volontà, bene o male, volavano, compiendo bravamente il loro dovere!

Come conseguenza logica ne venne, ovunque, l'automatica abolizione di quel programma teorico, che però ancor oggi esiste e vige, ed in obbedienza al quale venne sempre e viene tuttora compilato, da parte degli istruttori, un certo verbale d'esame teorico che è necessario allegare alle cartine barografiche ed agli altri documenti delle prove di pilotaggio che costituiscono la pratica di laurea del neo-pilota aviatore. E tutto questo è l'incartamento reclamato dalla non agile burocrazia aviatoria prima di emettere l'agognata determinazione ministeriale che investe l'allievo della carica aeronautica!

Come si vede, un'istruzione teorica era già stata ritenuta necessaria da coloro che crearono la nostra aviazione militare; loro stessi infatti ne compilarono i programmi ai quali ho, ora, accennato. Credo che la ritengano indispensabile tutti coloro che hanno dovuto sobbarcarsi la fatica d'istruire al volo degli elementi vergini, oppure comandare una qualunque squadriglia di aeroplani. La reputano doverosa coloro che devono, o dovranno, affidare la propria vita al pilota, il quale tecnicamente edotto degli sforzi in gioco nel suo apparecchio in volo, si farà più riflessivo e più cauto.

La guerra ha dato di frego alle quisquiglie ed anche alle nostre famose lezioni... Il che però non vuol dire che esse non ritornino, e presto, all'onore della vita, ora poi che la calma preparazione dei piloti necessari al funzionamento avvenire dell'armata celeste ha già fatto pensare a tante opportune disposizioni tendenti a migliorare la qualità dell'elemento pilota, nel senso di avere uomini effettivamente capaci di volare senza arrecare *soverchio* danno al materiale. E io sono convinto che solo con una saggia preparazione teorica si avrà la tanto sospirata economia dell'uomo e del materiale, coefficienti, questi, del tutto indispensabili per raggiungere al più presto quella fase veramente pratica dell'aviazione dalla quale tanti vantaggi attendiamo, e non noi italiani soltanto.

Novembre 1918.

Il capitano pilota.

non scende: un sardo non si dà mai vinto; soffre, ma resiste; è straziato, ma non si arrende. Vola. Vola, innalzandosi di nuovo, in direzione opposta a quella dianzi seguita.

Quando la speranza di aver raggiunto le linee italiane non gli sembra più troppo ardita, si riabbassa di nuovo. Una città si stende sotto di lui. Cupole, case, campanili. Riconosce Treviso: raccoglie tutte le sue forze, irrigidite dalla volontà, e cerca un luogo ove atterrare, cerca ansiosamente, guidato dall'istinto, dal desiderio.

Ecco finalmente delle località note, famigliari, ecco il campo, il suo. Sequi vi atterra, stinito, a nove ore. I compagni accorrono in soccorso. E lo trovano quasi dissanguato.

Pochi giorni dopo gli veniva decretata la medaglia d'argento.

Il primo combattimento aereo di Sequi avvenne nel cielo del Monte Nero. A 4400 metri incontra un caccia nemico. Colpisce ed è colpito. Una pallottola incendiaria fora il serbatoio della benzina. La lotta continua finché l'austriaco vi rinuncia.

L'11 febbraio scorso il capitano Sequi, il tenente Scaroni, il tenente Di Loreto, e il sottotenente Razzi, simbattono, volando nel cielo di Grigno, in un aeroplano da ricognizione austriaco.

Venti colpi bastano per farlo precipitare in fiamme su Fontanaseca. Continuando la crociera verso l'altipiano, trovano una pattuglia di tre velivoli germanici. Sequi, Scaroni e Di Loreto, attaccano il capo pattuglia, un aeroplano tutto nero, che appariva pilotato abilissimamente. Il sottotenente Razzi, assale il secondo, lottando furiosamente e scaricandogli contro più di 400 colpi. Il terzo scompariva presto a tutta velocità. L'aeroplano nero fu abbattuto. Quello assalito dal sottotenente Razzi, sebbene colpito, aveva potuto fuggire.

Venne poi abbattuto pochi giorni dopo dallo Scaroni. Il pilota, fatto prigioniero incolume, raccontò il duello avuto col Razzi e espresse il proprio rammarico per la fine del capo pattuglia, quello che montava il velivolo nero. « Sapete? — disse — era Kiss ». Uno dei più celebri cacciatori austriaci.

All'inizio dell'offensiva che doveva culminare nella trionfale vittoria, il capitano Sequi, pure essendo sofferente, fece insistenti richieste per essere inviato alla fronte. Ma il precipitare degli avvenimenti frustrava questo suo ultimo, spontaneo sacrificio.

Quando, essendo stato esaudito il suo desiderio, poté raggiungere il suo posto di combattimento, l'Austria aveva già abbassato definitivamente le armi.

Ecco la motivazione con cui gli venne decretata la medaglia d'argento per l'epico fatto del giugno:

« Ardito pilota da caccia, ottimo comandante di squadriglia; prese parte a numerosi mitragliamenti da bassa quota contro truppe nemiche, ritornando spesso con l'apparecchio gravemente colpito dal tiro avversario. Il 17 giugno 1918, sotto la pioggia dirotta, abbassatosi per meglio colpire il bersaglio, e rimasto gravemente ferito, malgrado il dolore e la copiosa perdita di sangue, riuscì a riportare l'apparecchio al proprio campo. Costante esempio ai suoi dipendenti di audacia, di costanza e di elevato sentimento del dovere. - Cielo di Musile, di Intestadura e di Paludello, 17 giugno 1918 ».

Angelo Frattini.

La discesa del primo "Caproni" nel campo riacquistato della Comina è riferita da Gabriele d'Annunzio al tenente colonnello La Polla, comandante le squadriglie di bombardamento, in una superba lettera, di cui il SECOLO ILLUSTRATO del 15 dicembre pubblicherà l'autografo.

CARABINIERE M.B.V.M.

GIUSEPPE CANTÙ

Born in Cambiano (To) on July 5, 1894.

The motivation for his Military Bronze Medal for bravery testifies to his daring qualities as a pilot and the tenacity shown from March to September 1918, when he fought in the war zone while based with the 113rd (Pomilio) reconnaissance squadron.

He fought on the Carnia, Grappa del Piave and Tonale fronts.

[...]splendid example of serene calm, Of great sentiment of duty and of noble Disdain of danger.

BRIGADERE M.A.V.M.

EDGARDO BALDAZZI

Born in Cesena (Forlì) on 9 December 1890. Fought with the 118th (SAML) reconnaissance squadron. He contributed significantly to the acquisition of essential information

about the Austrian defensive lines by undertaking numerous and risky reconnaissance missions over the most distant Austrian bases as a prelude to the final great battle that marked the victory of the Italian Army.

The motivation for his Military Silver Medal for bravery acknowledges the merits of his action as an intrepid aviator:

An extremely capable aircraft pilot, during the countless missions he performed, he carried out his assigned tasks, often in the face of intense anti-aircraft fire that severely damaged his aircraft and despite the threat of many enemy aircraft, he boldly countered and engaged them in combat. At all times, he demonstrated constant, marvelous audacity, firmness, and disdain for danger.

Skies over Santa Lucia, Skies over the Piave,
October 1917 – October 1918

BRIGADIERE M.B.V.M. PACIFICO MALFRANCI

Born in Castelnuovo di Farfa (Rieti) on July 8, 1893. The motivation for his Military Bronze Medal for bravery defines him as:

a great and bold fighter [...] he undertook numerous missions during the war, always demonstrating his great sentiment of duty, uncommon audacity, strong will and courage.

Monte Grappa-medio Piave,
June-November 1918

Brigadiere Pilot M.B.V.M. Pacifico Malfranci.



Squadron companion of Carabinieri Brigadiere Roberto Balandi, he flew with the 76th (Henriot) Fighter Squadron, in which he carried out 14 fighter, 27 reconnaissance and 13 bomber formation escort missions during the cruel and decisive battle of the Piave in June 1918 and during our final offensive against the Austrians in October.

BRIGADIERE M.B.V.M. ROBERTO BALANDI

Born in San Bartolomeo Bosco (Ferrara) on April 30, 1892. He participated in reconnaissance flights, escort missions, and many flights across the front line in territory occupied by the enemy, engaging in combat and shooting down an Austrian plane. His determination, courage, and fighter-pilot ability brought him the award of the Military Bronze Medal for bravery:

Courageous Fighter Pilot, conscientious during transfer flights, and during escort service, gave continuous proof of courage and daring, and can boast one victory over an enemy aircraft.



Brigadiere Pilot M.B.V.M. Roberto Balandi.



Savoia Pomilio S.P.2 – No. 3512. 21st Squadron, II Group, Royal Army Air Corps. Campoformido (Udine), summer 1917. Illustration by Marco Gueli.

Other aviators of the Carabinieri who fought in and survived the Great War ESC

CARABINIERE LINO MONTELLO CHIAVENTONE ESC

From June 1916 he fought with the 36th Squadron of Duino, flying missions over Comen, Dottoglian, Prosecco, Miramar and Trieste... On many occasions he returned from these actions with his aircraft seriously damaged by enemy anti-aircraft fire. He took part in all the combat operations on the Gorizia and Oppacchiasella fronts.

He also performed photo-reconnaissance missions, as well as those of launching propaganda and machine-gunning Austrian positions, conducting many incursions into enemy-controlled territory.

After a year with the 36th he was posted to the 81st Fighter Squadron. Here he showed himself to be a bold pilot, escorting bombers on missions to strategic targets thus allowing them to conduct the most daring bomb raids: Chiapovano, Selva di Ternova, Idria, Bazza, Saint Lucia di Tolmino, Tarvis... and during these missions, among other things he strafed enemy positions, without regard for the contrasting fire from enemy anti-aircraft batteries. He was also victorious in a number of aerial combats.

Lt. Gen. Arnaldo Ferrara (ed.), I Carabinieri dell'Aria, Ente Editoriale dell'Arma dei Carabinieri, 1983, p. 25.

Carabiniere Pilot Lino Montello Chiaventone. Note that in the photo in the article reproduced here, the pilot is wearing the insignia of the Royal Army Air Corps.

Pil. Lino Montello Chiaventone



Dal giugno 1916 appartenne alla 36.^a di San Giovanni di Duino, Comen, Dottoglian, Prosecco, Miramar, Trieste, ecc.

Da queste azioni ritornò parecchie volte con l'apparecchio danneggiato seriamente dagli anti-aerei.

Partecipò a tutte le operazioni di guerra nella zona di Gorizia e di Oppacchiasella. Sulle posizioni del Carso eseguì pure delle ricognizioni fotografiche, nonché lan-

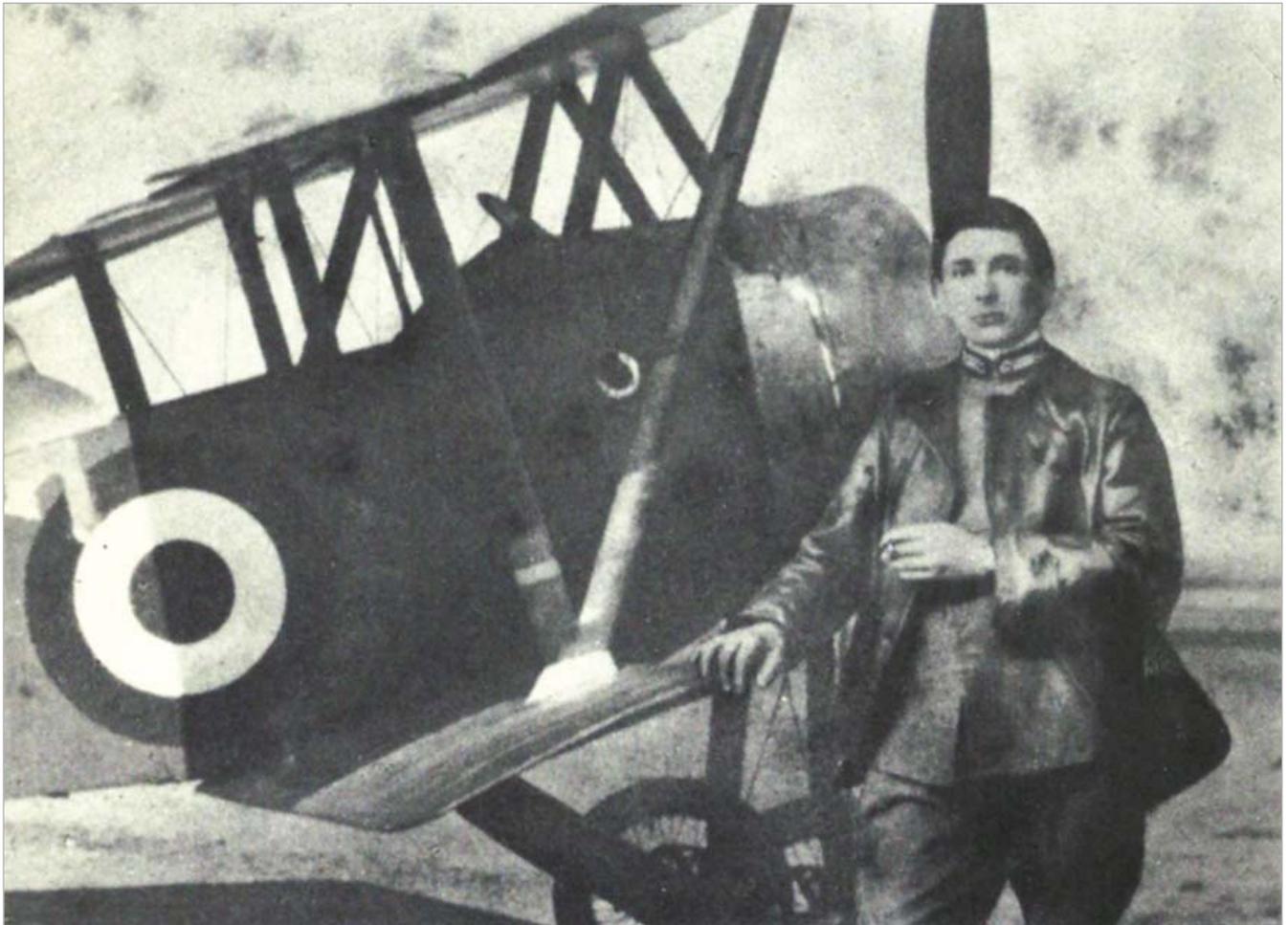
cio di manifestini e mitragliamenti di truppe, facendo ripetute crociere sulle linee di combattimento. Dopo un anno circa di permanenza alla 36.^a passò all'81.^a squadriglia da caccia. Qui cominciò a scortare gli apparecchi che andavano a fare i più audaci bombardamenti: vale a dire di Chiapovano, Selva di Ternova, Idria, Bazza, Santa Lucia di Tolmino, Tarvis, ecc., e fra l'altro, durante queste scorte, mitragliava le posizioni avverse.

Sostenne vittoriosamente parecchi scontri aerei.

Nel settembre si ferì in seguito a una caduta e dopo una breve convalescenza venne comandato quale istruttore in volo alla Scuola Idrovolanti, a Sesto Calende, dove rimase fino alla chiusura di questa, cioè fino all'ottobre 1918. Anche coprendo la nuova carica, come nelle altre, il Chiaventone si mostrò pilota calmo, abile, coraggiosissimo.

== DO ==





Carabiniere pilot Armando Chiantini.

In September 1916 he was accidentally injured, and following convalescence was employed as an instructor pilot at the Seaplane School at the Sesto Calende seaplane base, where he remained until the school was closed in October 1918.

This brief summary of Carabiniere Lino Montello Chiaventone's service, despite his not have received any recognition for his valour, is representative of the contribution of courage, dedication to duty and precious military virtues by the following Carabiniere Aviators during the Great War:

Carabiniere Anfosso Paolo
Vice Brigadiere Angeli Donato
Carabiniere Armiraglio Giovanni
Carabiniere Baglioni Antonio

Caproni Ca.3 – No. 11505. 1st Squadron, IV Group, Royal Army Air Corps. Aircraft of Group Commander Major Fernando Bonazzi, San Pelagio (Padoa), November 1917. Illustration by Marco Gueli.





Spad S. VII – No. 1673. 77th Squadron, XIII Group, Aeronautical Corps. Aircraft of Sergeant Carlo Ferrario, Marcon (Ve), September-October 1918. Illustration by Marco Gueli.

A handshake before a mission, between the pilot Emilio Momicchioli and a colleague of another Corps. Until 1923 there was no Air Force as such, but simply an “Air Corps” whose pilots came from a number of different service branches.





Carabiniere Francesco Fabbri.

- Carabiniere Baldi Giulio
- Carabiniere Barone Giuseppe
- Carabiniere Beltrameo Biagio
- Carabiniere BerTECCO Giovanni
- Carabiniere Bianchi Ireneo
- Brigadiere Bonuzzi Igino
- Carabiniere Borsari Giuseppe
- Brigadiere Boscarioli Luigi
- Carabiniere Brunori Pasquale
- Carabiniere Caberlotto Adriano
- Carabiniere Calvino Carlo
- Carabiniere Caporuscio Salvatore
- Carabiniere Carboni Telemaco
- Carabiniere Casoli Mario
- Carabiniere Castagnoli Lazzaro
- Carabiniere Cavallero Giovanni
- Carabiniere Chiantini Armando
- Vice Brigadiere Ciarrochi Emidio
- Vice Brigadiere Cocco Giuseppe
- Carabiniere Cucchiari Eugenio
- Carabiniere Dagnì Antonio
- Carabiniere Dal Don Armando
- Carabiniere Dal Don Giovanni



Carabiniere Pilot Luigi Pisello.

*Pomilio PE – No. 7020. 112th Squadron, IX Group,
Royal Army Air Corps. Castenedolo (Bs), summer 1918.
Illustration by Marco Gueli.*



Carabiniere De Rosa Giuseppe
Vice Brigadiere Domenis Giovanni
Carabiniere Donati Basilio
Carabiniere Fabbri Francesco
Carabiniere Fabbris Antonio
Vice Brigadiere Facciocchi Mario
Carabiniere Fermanzio Attilio
Carabiniere Ferrando Michele
Carabiniere Ferrando Severino
Carabiniere Fontana Giovanni
Brigadiere Fornaciari Romualdo
Carabiniere Foroni Francesco
Carabiniere Furini Giovanni
Carab. Fratteggiani Fratteggiano
Carabiniere Frau Felicino
Carabiniere Freoni Giuseppe
Carabiniere Garganese Antonio
Carabiniere Gasturri Luigi
Vice Brigad. Germinetti Fiorenzo
Vice Brigadiere Gerra Antonio
Carabiniere Gianmattei Roberto
Vice Brig. Gianfranceschi Virgilio
Carabiniere Giannetti Alfredo
Brigadiere Giannotti Vincenzo
Vice Brigadiere Giordani Roberto
Carabiniere Greti Teodoro Luigi
Carabiniere Guerreri Francesco
Vice Brig. Guidotti Benvenuto
Vice Brigadiere Guidotti Guido
Vice Brigadiere Gullone Pasquale
Carabiniere Innocenti Anelito
Carabiniere Lacchelli Natalino
Vice Brig. Lacitignola Giuseppe
Vice Brigadiere Lago Giovanni
Carabiniere Larcà Luigi
Carabiniere Laudani Rosario
Vice Brigadiere Lecca Antonio
Carabiniere Leoni Lelio
Vice Brigadiere Lomi Giuseppe
Carabiniere Lo Schiavo Florindo
Carabiniere Lo Spalluto Francesco
Carabiniere Luberti Carmine



Carabiniere Pilot Giacomo Pomi.

*S.A.M.L. S.2 – No. 1904. 113th Squadron, XX Group,
Aeronautical Corps. Cividate Camuno (Bs), August 1918.
Illustration by Marco Gueli.*

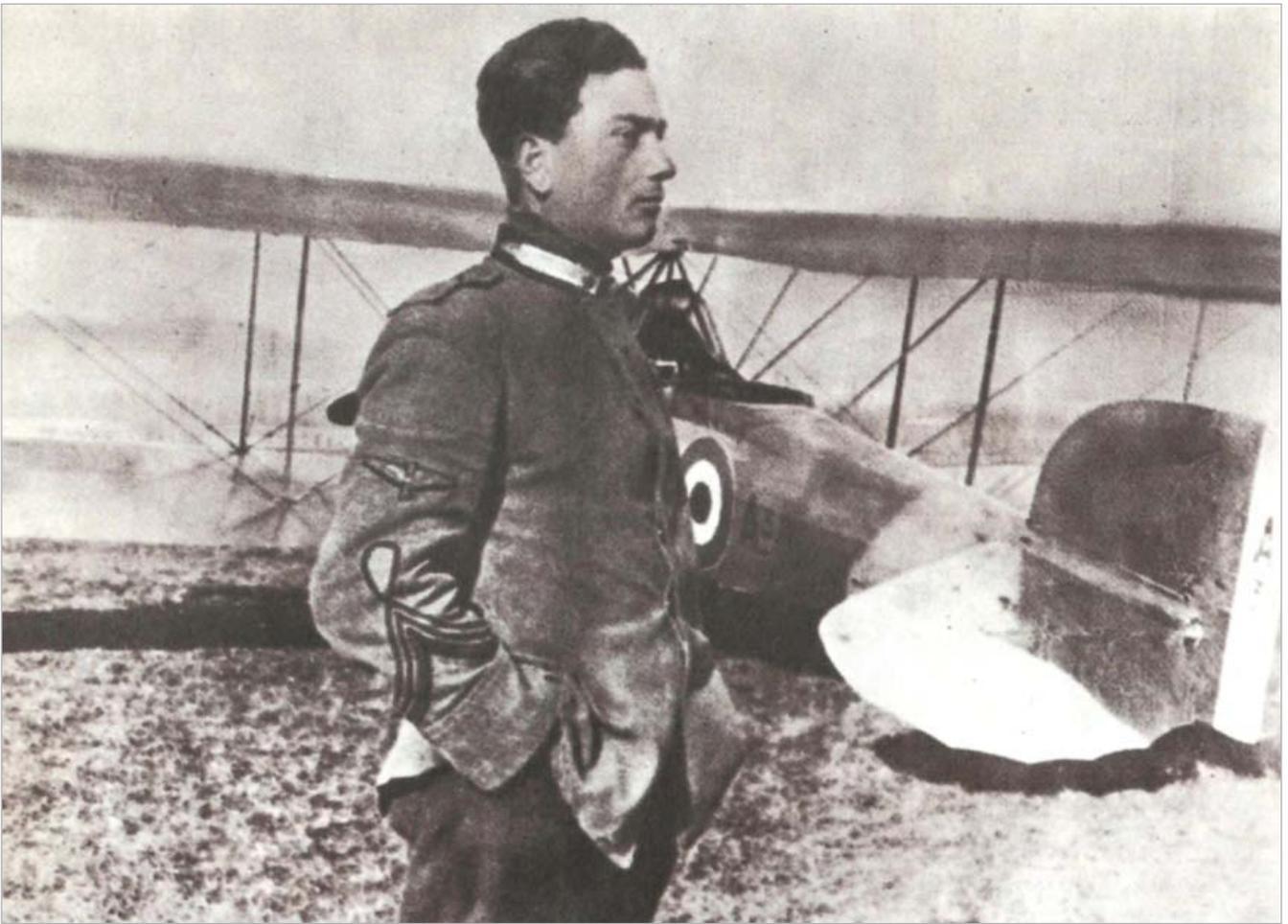




Vice Brigadiere Pilot Bernardo Punta.



Vice Brigadiere Pilot Augusto Roncetti.



Brigadiere Francesco Sanzo.

Brigadiere Luciani Guido
Vice Brigadiere Lugatti Umberto
Carabiniere Maggiolo Cesare
Carabiniere Malvicino Carlo
Carabiniere Mancini Italiano
Vice Brigadiere Marabello Antonio
Brigadiere Marchi Alfredo
Brigadiere Marchioro Gaetano
Vice Brig. Marocco Francesco
Corazziere Marras Paolo
Carabiniere Mascelli Pio
Carabiniere Massobrio Tommaso
Carabiniere Massone Angelo
Carabiniere Mazzeo Amedeo
Carabiniere Menini Leandro
Carabiniere Miccoli Luigi
Carabiniere Momicchioli Emilio
Maresciallo Monnier Luigi
Carabiniere Neri Cesare
Corazziere Omiccioli Antonio

Macchi L.3, No. 7344. 251st Squadron, XX Group, Naval Air Corps. Aircraft of 2nd Chief Bo'sun Ernesto Mattiello and Midshipman Umberto Calvello, Venice San Andrea, May 1917. Illustration by Marco Gueli



*Vice Brigadiere Pilot
Giovanni Satta.*



*Carabiniere Pilot Emilio Tessarolo,
first left.*





Vice Brigadiere Francesco Verza (indicated by asterisk) with other pilots and mechanics.

Carabiniere Panfili Quirino
Carabiniere Pappalardo Gaetano
Carabiniere Parrini Attilio
Corazziere Paterlini Natale
Carabiniere Patrucco Pietro
Carabiniere Peduzzi Francesco
Carabiniere Pennazio Attilio
Vice Brigadiere Perini Rubens
Carabiniere Pestarino Carlo
Vice Brig Pettinato Sebastiano
Carabiniere Pezzola Enrico
Carabiniere Pisello Luigi
Vice Brigadiere Pizzato Marco
Carabiniere Pomi Giacomo
Carabiniere Pravatà Antonio
Brigadiere Puddu Luigi
Carabiniere Punta Bernardo



Maresciallo Putzu Giuseppe
Carabiniere Ragazzoni Giuseppe
Vice Brigadiere Ratto Giacomo
Carabiniere Remotti Pietro
Carabiniere Ricotti Guido
Brigadiere Rivero Giorgio
Carabiniere Rivolo Giuseppe
Carabiniere Rocca Pietro
Vice Brigadiere Roncetti Augusto
Carabiniere Rossetti Vittorio
Carabiniere Rossi Severino
Carabiniere Rubini Augusto
Brigadiere Ruci Alessandro
Brigadiere Sabbadini Luigi
Carabiniere Salvadori Salvatore
Carabiniere Sanpietro Fernando
Brigadiere Santini Nestore
Vice Brigadiere Sanzo Francesco
Vice Brigadiere Satta Giovanni
Carabiniere Savio Paolo
Carabiniere Selvo Efsio
Carabiniere Serafini Luigi
Carabiniere Servo Primino
Carabiniere Sesia Ernesto
Vice Brigadiere Silvestri Carlo
Vice Brigadiere Simioli Arturo
Carabiniere Sirio Luigi
Carabiniere Sommacore Andrea



Carabiniere Francesco Zancudi.



S.I.A. 7 B 1, No. 5803. 36th Squadron, XII Group, Royal Army Air Corps. Istrana (Treviso), December 1917. Illustration by Marco Gueli.

Carabiniere Soro Angelo
Brigadiere Straulino Augusto
Carabiniere Tanganelli Vincenzo
Brigadiere Tasone Ernesto
Carabiniere Tebaldi Luigi
Carabiniere Tessarolo Emilio
Brigadiere Turrini Giovanni
Carabiniere Uberti Umberto
Carabiniere Valla Alcide
Vice Brigadiere Venasco Pericle
Carabiniere Verza Francesco
Vice Brigadiere Vignocchi Pietro
Vice Brigadiere Vittorini Carlo
Carabiniere Zancudi Francesco
Carabiniere Zotto Giuseppe.

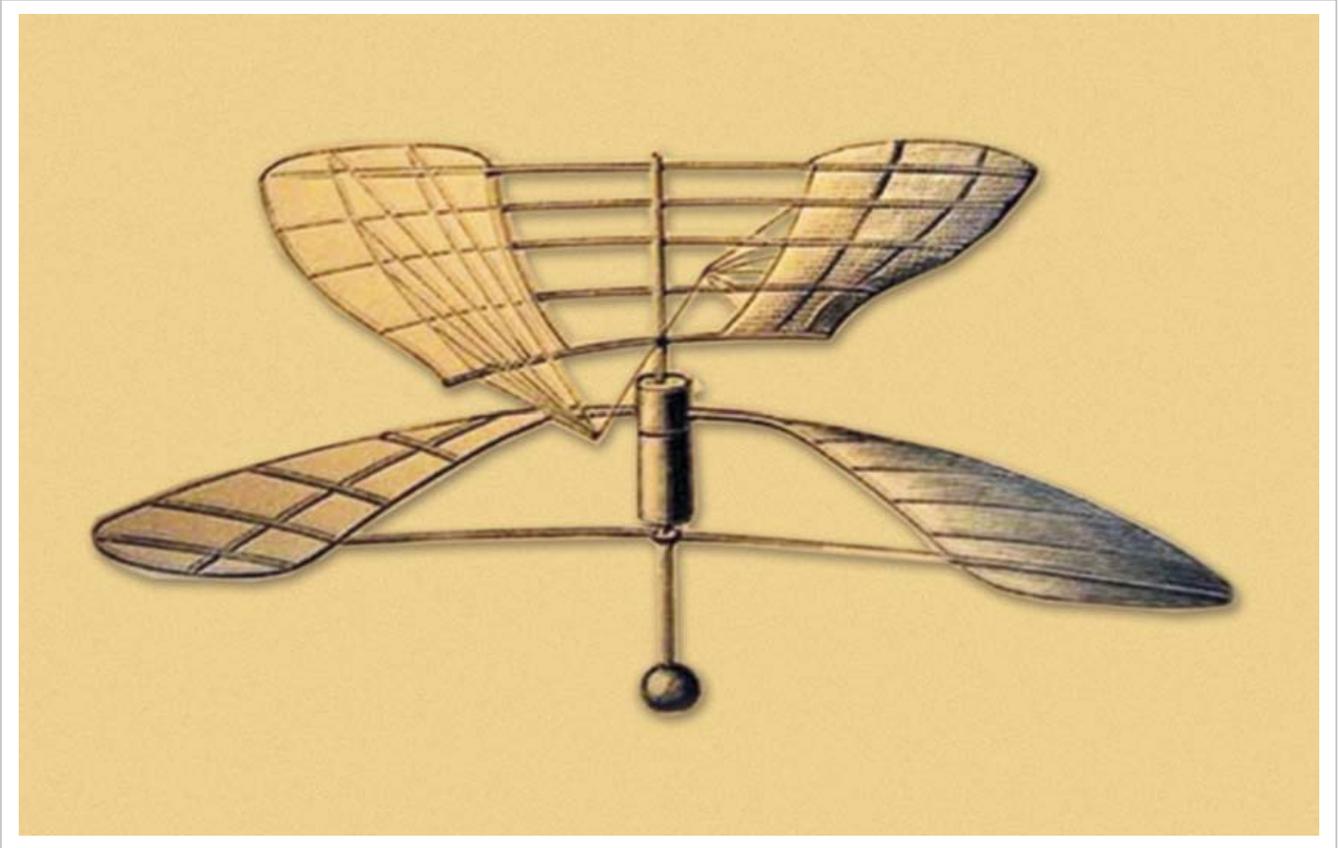
The fallen and the survivors were all members of that large group of Carabinieri who, having transferred from the battlefields to the airfields, gained prestigious victories during the bloody battles over the Isonzo, the Carso and the Piave fronts.

An audacious group of that during the conflict, also flying the new aircraft built by national aviation industries such as Caproni; Macchi, Società Anonima Meccanica Lombarda (SAML), Savoia and the Società Idrovolanti Alta Italia (SIAI), began to take control of the airspace on the front, fully achieved by the Aeronautical Corps in 1918 and contributing decisively, to the favourable outcome of the war.

*Flying gear for pilots of the Great War. Badges of rank and the markings of their affiliated Corps were sewn onto this.
Massimiliano de Antoni Collection.*



THE ARRIVAL OF ROTARY WING AIRCRAFT



Enrico Forlanini's experimental helicopter.

Turin, the cradle of Italian aviation, has always seen scientific and cultural interaction between its Higher Technical Institutions (today the Polytechnic University) and its Military Schools of Application.

Such an intense interaction between the various disciplines can only lead to innovation and progress.

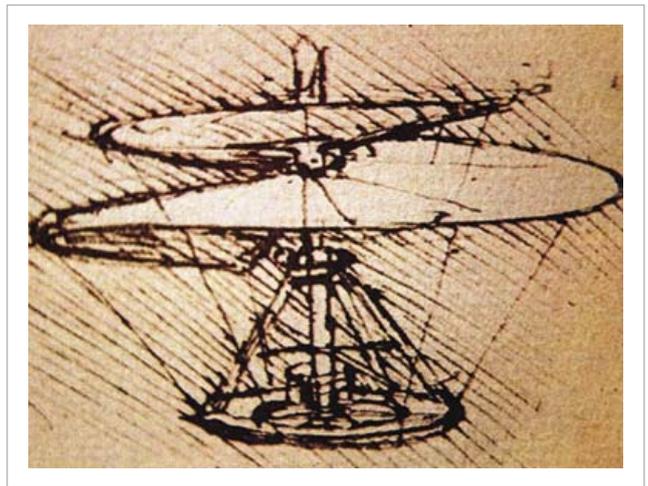
Turin, a prestigious university campus where a significant number of scientists have emerged in the various disciplines, has also a close relationship with the most ingenious of the inventors of the helicopter.

Turin and the invention of the helicopter

Enrico Forlanini and Corradino d'Ascanio are fundamental characters for anyone who wants to retrace the history of the helicopter in Italy. They were among the first inventors of vertical takeoff aircraft.



Enrico Forlanini



Leonardo's "aerial screw".

Enrico Forlanini (1848-1930), born in Milan, grew up and studied at the Army School of Application of Artillery and Engineering of Turin. While at the Engineering workshops of Alessandria, the young lieutenant built a steam-powered helicopter that he successfully experimented with in his home town on June 29, 1877, demonstrating the intuitive correctness of Leonardo's geniality.

*Enrico Forlanini's experimental helicopter of 1877.
(Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Tecnologia
Leonardo da Vinci, Milan).*





Corradino D'Ascanio.

And yet another eclectic engineer, Corradino d'Ascanio, graduated in Mechanical Engineering at what was then the Technical Institute of Turin, and began a military career with the Aviator Battalion in Turin.

Following the conclusion of the Great War, the future inventor of the Vespa began to work for Engineer Ottorino Pomilio, his former superior officer at the Aviator Battalion, now owner of the "Società Anonima per Costruzioni Aeronautiche ing. Ottorino Pomilio & C.", designer/builder of the SP2 (Savoia-Pomilio) aircraft, and who, in 1916, had opened the Torino-Aeritalia Airport for testing his aircraft.

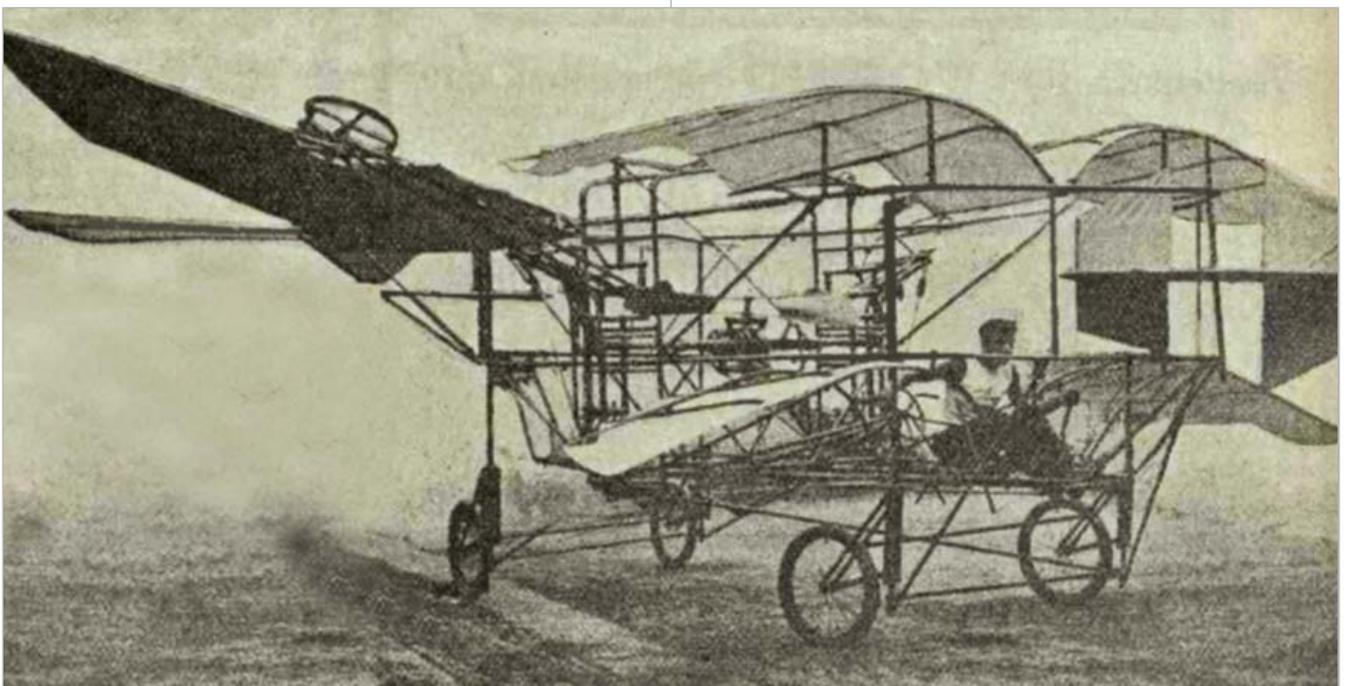


The D'AT3 (D'Ascanio-Trojani-3).

We should also not forget Engineer Franz Miller, builder of Fuseri's ornithopter.

Although other builders and inventors had also experimented with new machines in other regions of Italy and in other parts of the world, Turin's primacy is still indisputable as the City of Science, Technology and Excellence in Mechanics.

The Miller-Fuseri ornithopter



The early days of industrial production of helicopters in Italy

Despite the fact that in Italy there was no lack of experimenting with vertical takeoff aircraft, there was no support with orders from the military hierarchy who preferred to give priority to the production of "normal" aircraft.

In 1949, the Italian Air Force began operating the Bell Model 47D1 helicopters, manufactured in the USA, in an antimalarial campaign in Sardinia.

The start of helicopter manufacturing on an industrial scale in Italy was accomplished by an indus-

trialist from Varese, who on 11 August 1952 obtained a license to build and commercialize the helicopters of the Bell Aircraft Company.

Domenico Agusta, head of the family business, Aeronautical Construction Giovanni Agusta, produced the Italian version of the Bell 47 in the G version that took flight in 1954, flown by their chief test pilot, Ottorino Lancia.

The start of the construction of this aircraft marked the beginning of a long association between the two companies which led to the production of other models in Italy through numerous licensing contracts, all characterized by the acronym AB, or Agusta Bell.



The whole Agusta family with Lawrence D. Bell, owner of the company which conceded the license for the model 47. From left to right: Mario Agusta, Domenico Agusta, Lawrence "Larry" D. Bell, Giuseppina Turreta, widow Agusta, Vincenzo Agusta and Corrado Agusta . It was probably taken on the day of the first flight of the first AB 47 G built in Italy. It is worth mentioning that this was the first model 47 helicopter built in Europe.

Without ever giving up the design and testing of its own original designs of new helicopters, Agusta continued with the licenced construction of the AB 47 G, AB 47 J and AB 47 G3B1 *Super Alpino* models. The AB 204, AB 205 and AB 206 turbine models rapidly followed, typical of the period of the post-war economic boom.

Licenses followed for the AB 212 and, lastly, one for the AB 412 4-bladed model were added.

Around the same time, during the 1960s, Agusta obtained construction licenses from other major US helicopter manufacturers such as Sikorsky (S-61 models in the SH3D and HH 3F versions) and Boeing (Model CH-47 *Chinook*).

But ever since the late 1950s, Domenico Agusta had incessantly promoted autonomous designs for new helicopters, with excellent results in the anti-tank and anti-submarine sectors.

Successes that on August 4, 1971 saw the first flight of the Agusta 109 *Hirundoal*.

This innovative Italian machine soon turned out to be the best helicopter in its class, and is still produced today by the Cascina Costa factory its successively modernized version: the AW 109.



June 22, 1954. The photo shows the first AB 47 G helicopter built in Italy at Cascina Costa.



June 22, 1954. The first AB 47G built in Italy at Cascina Costa. Presentation of helicopter in stationary flight piloted by test pilot Ottorino Lancia, who performed a hovering demonstration during which an operator was able to climb board using a ladder. The old Agusta hangars, as they were at that time, can be seen in the background.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE 1ST CARABINIERI HELICOPTER NUCLEUS



Caserma Bergia in Turin, a historic eighteenth Century building designed by Bernardo Antonio Vittone.

The constitution of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus dates back to October 20, 1966. Aeritalia arranged for and delivered a prefabricated structure to house the offices and logistics of the Flight Department, whose personnel, prior to their transfer to the airport, stayed for some time at the Caserma Bergia, headquarters of the Piedmont Carabinieri Legion Command and Aosta Valley and the first barracks of the Carabinieri since its foundation.



Carabinieri helicopters take off from Turin

From the accounts written by Selenio Tonsini, who at that time was a very young Carabiniere specialist (now a retired Maresciallo) we can see that all the members of the group were newcomers to flight.

Selenio tells us:

Immediately after completing the Helicopter Specialist course I was sent to the Air Force Aircraft Maintenance Group at Centocelle in Rome, for three months of training. It was at Centocelle that I met Brigadiere Giuseppe Cancelli, also a trainee, who would be my Chief Specialist in Turin where we met again on December 27, 1966.

The Helicopter Nucleus consisted of:

1967. AB 47 G3B1. In the background, the building of the Aero Club of Turin with the "Tower" from where ENAV Operators provide information and regulate airport air traffic.



- Pilots Lieutenant Guzzardi and Brigadiere Di Giampietro;
- airframe and engine specialists Brigadiere Cancelli, Brigadiere Caiafa, Carabiniere Stefanelli;
- electromechanical specialist Carabiniere Tonsini;
- drivers Carabiniere Bove and Carabiniere Cantelmo.

The first helicopter, an Agusta Bell 47 J3B, was flown in January 1967 from Pratica di Mare by Brigadiere pilot Angelo Di Giampietro. To my great joy, along with the helicopter came a toolbox with the necessary non-metric spanners. We took the machine to the area that had been assigned to us in the old hangar in the Torino-Aeritalia Airport. This no longer held any aircraft, but only a number of artifacts which testified to the glorious past of Torinese aviation. I remember that shortly afterwards, during a reconnaissance flight, the helicopter lost power and Lieutenant Guzzardi, who was at the controls, made an emergency landing without any damage. We discovered that the full throttle jet of the carburetor had

1967. 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus. From top left: Specialist Brigadiere Caiafa, Brigadiere Scrivano ??, Lieutenant Pilot Guzzardi, Brigadiere Pilot Giampietro, Carabiniere Driver ??, Carabiniere Driver Cantelmo. Below: Carabiniere Driver Bove, Carabiniere Specialist Tonsini, Carabiniere Specialist Stefanelli, Brigadiere Specialist Cancelli. In the background the AB-47 G3B1.



1972. An AB 47 J during its pre-flight check by Brigadiere Valentino Corbo.

become blocked with impurities in the fuel.

Considering the limited performance of the "Juliet" type helicopters, the first helicopter was soon replaced by an Agusta Bell 47 G3B1, given the ident number of CC 14. This aircraft, thanks to its turbo-compressor, could operate in the mountains with performance that in those days we thought was exceptional. However, a few months later, this helicopter tested even Lieutenant Guzzardi's capabilities. During a flight, due to a con-rod breakage, there was a sudden drop in power but once again an emergency landing was performed without further damage to the helicopter.

© Luciano Bertolo



1973. Sestriere. Tour of Italy. AB 47 G3B1.

At the end of the 1960s, the new unit received an AB 47 G3B1 Super Alpino Helicopter – CC 24, Military Registration No. 80491.

This was an all-Italian model, an evolution of the Bell 47, the first helicopter produced on an industrial scale by the Americans around the end of the 1940's.

In another chapter we will cover the history of this helicopter which today has been lovingly restored, one which is an important testimonial to the history of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus and, in particular, to the usage of piston engine, rotatory wing aircraft in rescue missions.



1973. Captain Savino Lograno and Brigadiere Elio Pala during a rescue mission to the population affected when the Sesia River overflowed its banks. AB 47 G3B1 - CC 24.



1973. Captain Savino Lograno and Brigadiere Elio Pala during a rescue mission to the population affected when the Sesia River overflowed its banks. AB 47 G3B1 – CC 24.

The G3, as it was called by its users, had sufficient operating altitude for mountain use and could reach, with decreasing performance, an altitude of 9,000 feet.

Once again, Turin, the city that gave birth to the Carabinieri, gave a warm welcome to this small group of Carabinieri aviators who would contribute with pioneering enthusiasm to the development of ways to use this innovative rotary-wing aircraft for police service.

Police operations had been under experiment by the Carabinieri General Command since the late 1950s, initially with observation officers on board the AB 47 G2 helicopters of the Italian Air Force.

The helicopter had in fact demonstrated its excellent potential in countering terrorism in South Tyrol, in services against cattle rustling and in the

fight against organized crime, mainly in support of the units involved in searches related to kidnappings.

This was a modern and bold vision by the Carabinieri High Command, if we consider that only a few years earlier, on May 22, 1954, the first AB 47G helicopter built under licence from Bell had taken off from Cascina Costa in the hands of the Agusta test pilot Ottorino Lancia.

Due to the positive results of this experimental phase, and also to meet the challenges of its complexity, in 1960 the first pilot courses for Carabinieri began at the Italian Air Force Helicopter Flight School at Frosinone while mechanics were trained at the Italian Air Force Specialist School at Caserta.

One of the first helicopters in Carabinieri colours, the AB 47 J, still without its registration marks.





1963. Helicopter Flight School Frosinone. The four Carabinieri officers who attended the first helicopter pilot course. Left to right: 2nd Lt. Palandri, Lieutenant Soppelsa, Captain Telesca, Lieutenant Di Noia. In the background an AB 47G. Photo by courtesy of "Ala Rotante".



1963. Pilots from both the first and second courses. Left to right: Lieutenant Francesco Petruzzelli, Lieutenant Paolo di Noia, Captain Antonio Telesca, Lieutenant Antonio Trabucco, Major Raffaele Marzocca, Italian Air Force pilot, Lieutenant Silvano Saitta, (did not pass the course), an NCO (did not pass the course). Photo by courtesy of "Ala Rotante".



Officer pilots – Left to right: Mario Nunzella, Benito Manti, Francesco Sirimarco KIC, Antonio Trabucco.

Starting from zero, after passing basic training and gaining their wings as series 47 helicopter pilots, the trainees began conversion courses for turbine helicopters.

From 1964 to 1966, the first independent flight units with Carabinieri pilots and specialists were formed. The first Carabinieri Helicopter Unit was opened at Pratica di Mare, followed by the Nuclei of Bolzano, Palermo, Cagliari, Milan and Turin.

Thus along with other armed forces, police bodies and commercial societies, the Carabinieri shared the risks associated with the use of this new rotary wing aircraft, ancient in design but only recently built industrially.

It became an innovative means for both its aeronautical aspects and its equally valuable aspects for Police

1967. AB 47-J.



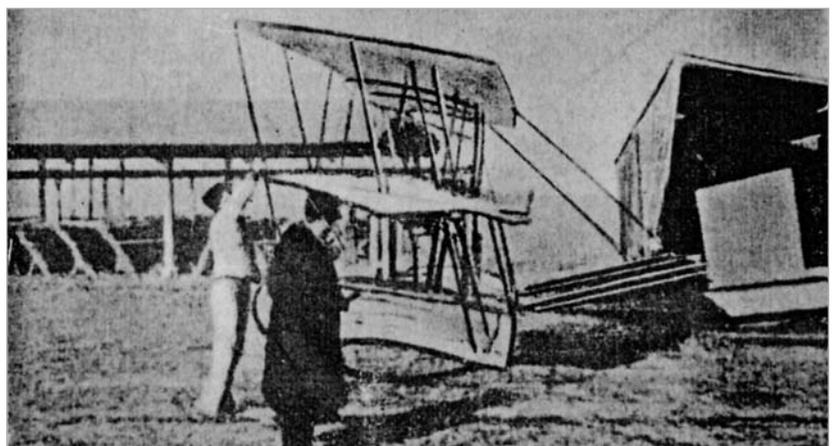


AB 206 B1 – Jet Ranger at Venaria Reale airport during a routine flight.

and Civil Protection Services. Aspects which were faced with the enthusiasm and courage of the pioneers, with the spirit of service typical of the Carabinieri aware of the risks and responsibilities of their mission.

In Turin, Carabinieri are not the only military aviators: the oldest military airport in Italy is located nearby the Military Airport “M. Santi” of Venaria Reale, today the home of the Army’s 34th Group “Toro” Squadron.

The story of Venaria Reale goes back to the spring of 1909 when the Faccioli Triplane was first tested in flight. The aircraft was named after its inventor, the Engineer Aristide Faccioli (a graduate of the Turin Polytechnic) and was flown by his son Mario. It was the first flying aircraft to be completely designed and built in Italy.





An AB 205 in commemorative livery to celebrate a Century of flight at Venaria Reale.

These were the years of the economic boom, and the aviation field also benefited from the dizzying Italian growth.

In 1961, the AB 204 Iroquois, the first turbine helicopter produced on an industrial scale at Cascina Costa, went into production and 1965 saw it evolve into the AB 205.

This type of helicopter immediately entered the Carabinieri fleet.

1967 was also the year that saw the introduction of the AB 206 Jet Ranger, a lightweight and reliable turbine aircraft which radically changed what could be done: the new 206 B1 had a 60-kg Allison 250-C20B turbine engine that developed 420 HP, compared to the 350 kg (when equipped with a volumetric compressor) piston-driven Lycoming engine of the Series 47 helicopters that developed a mere 250 HP. The change was dramatic: it was now possible to carry up to three passengers in addition to the crew.

Since its inception, the helicopter has proved to be a significant multiplier of traditional Carabinieri

resources, extending them with remarkable alacrity in the service of the citizens of Piedmont, Liguria and the Aosta Valley. A growing number of rescue and civil defence missions augmented the institutional missions of territorial control, cooperation with surface units, transport of senior officials etc.

It was a revelation – finally the more isolated areas could benefit from the proximity of State assistance in times of need and receive timely help even during periods when roads were blocked by heavy snowfalls.

It was also of great help to the Piedmont Alpine Rescue service, which did not have its own professional helicopter service until 1989, with the inception of the Piedmont Region Helicopter Rescue 118 service.

The airborne Carabinieri service also extended to the protection of the territory and the environment, fostering collaboration with:

- the Speleological Service of the Piedmont Region for avalanche prospecting flights;



Carabinieri Special Intervention Group – GIS. A moment during a pre-mission briefing at a summit of NATO Foreign Ministers in Stresa. In the background, an A109 Hirundo.

- Universities for studies and environmental protection research;
- Gran Paradiso National Park;
- Municipalities and mountain communities;
- Winter sports and tourism stations.

Transportation of special units proved invaluable for their enhanced mobility. Canine units with police dogs, dogs to search in the rubble of earthquakes and avalanche dogs could be transported faster to where they were required, concentrating in time and space those special units which were limited in number by their very nature.

The mobility of underwater units and teams of the GIS – Special Operations Group of the Toscana Carabinieri Parachute Regiment, of artificers and other special units was similarly enhanced – they could now get to the remotest and hard-to-reach places much faster.

Canine team leaping from helicopter.



Those years, in the second half of the twentieth century, were years which saw the Carabinieri helicopter crews serve with passion, courage and devotion to duty, sometimes at the cost of the supreme and ultimate sacrifice.

Operational activity, structured in aerial surveillance, air support and rescue missions, was geared to support the planned or sometimes emergency requirements of the Carabinieri Territorial units and those of the population.

Mobile checkpoints on the roads as well as reconnaissance services in large rural areas were implemented to detect violations of various types from above – building, environment, common crime, archaeological and cultural heritage etc.

The flying Carabinieri guaranteed an efficient and rapid mobility, accurate observation and airborne support to the daily services provided by the Stations and Companies located in national territory.

They participated in the searches for fugitives, provided support for searches of individual buildings, urban complexes, and isolated dwellings.

They enabled personnel to understand the territory and perform monitoring activities such as photo-cinematographic documentation using increasingly innovative technologies with enhanced voice transmissions and real-time images at the Carabinieri Central Command and provincial Centres.

Gradually, with the increased helicopter transport capabilities, they facilitated the mobility of staff, senior officers, materials, special units and supplies, participating in rescue operations provoked by public and private disasters.

Inside the cockpit of an AB 412 during a night flight



From its foundation in 1966 until 1998, Carabinieri aircrews performed 854 relief missions, largely in collaboration with Piedmontese Alpine and Spelologic Rescue teams, in addition to cooperation with the Italian Air Force, Fire Brigades and units of other armed forces. From 1983 to 1998 they performed 159 transport missions carrying human organs and medical teams between the transplant centre of Bergamo Civic Hospital and the Molinette Hospital of Turin.

With this subsidiary activity (there was no dedicated medical helicopter service at the time), they furthered the development of medical and surgical Centres of Excellence.

Medical transportation frequently took place at night, in helicopters without any fancy satellite navigation systems which make night flying today much safer and easier.

In another chapter of this book I will also cover something which must be considered an all-Piedmontese excellence, that of the 24 hours a day, 7 days a week Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS 118) based at Torino Aeritalia and operated by the Airgreen organization.

Recovery using a winch.





Thirty years of the Pratica di Mare Helicopter Centre. This photo portrays the group of pioneers, pilots and specialists, during the celebrations for the first thirty years of flight of the Carabinieri Air Service.

The characteristic logo of the Carabinieri helicopters with the bee symbol, designed by Captain Mosetti.



Testimonies

Turin, January 20, 1970

To Comando Generale dell'Arma dei Carabinieri – Roma
To Comando del Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri –Torino

I would like to express my thanks as a doctor and citizen for the great success of the rescue missions to the people of the isolated parts of my medical practice in the municipality of Ottone effected by Brigadiere Pilot Cosimo De Nicolò of the Torino Helicopter Nucleus who, with much courage and expertise, was able to bring me to those places on the 15th and 16th of this current month, despite the adverse weather conditions and the difficulty of access to the area.

With Respects.

Dott. Giancarlo Rossi

•••

Aosta, January 24, 1970

REGIONE AUTONOMA VALLE D'AOSTA
PRESIDENZA DELLA GIUNTA

Prot. n. 253/Gab.

To Comando della Legione Territoriale Carabinieri di Torino

Dear Commanding Officer,

I would like to express my personal satisfaction and also that of the Regional Council of the Aosta Valley for the speed, the abnegation, the altruism and the exquisite sense of duty and sacrifice with which the Regional Carabinieri intervened during the afternoon of Sunday, 18th January in support of the victims of a mountaineering disaster that same day, in the upper St. Barthélemy Valley in which four well-known skiers from Turin lost their lives.

I kindly ask you to express our highest praise to the Carabinieri Officers, NCOs and other ranks who worked so hard with courage and generosity during the rescue operations and the recovery of the victims' bodies.

I would highly appreciate that special praise be addressed to Major Gabriele D'Ambrosio, Commander of the Aosta Group, who with unparalleled expertise, most ably organized, coordinated and directed the entire operation.

Please accept my deepest respects, together with my most grateful thanks.

Il Presidente della Giunta
Rag. Mauro Bordon

•••



Genoa, June 5, 1966.

Turin, July 9, 1970

From QUARTO CORPAMILES BOLZANO
To Legione Territoriale CC Torino
PERCO:
to primo Comiliter Torino

Nr. 6126/251.13 di prot. *alt*

I highly appreciated your participation in the search for the Torinese light aircraft which disappeared on the 22nd of this month in the Monviso area *Stop*. Thank you very much for your excellent assistance. *Stop* General Commander *Stop*

•••

Meana, August 14, 1970

We are the parents of the eight youngsters who on August 12th became lost on the slopes of Mount Orsiera. On this occasion, at the request of the Susa station, the Legion command sent a helicopter to the area where the young people were thought to be, in order to search for them.

We therefore gratefully thank you for the rapid intervention made by you in the search for our children.

In particular, we would like to extend our thanks to Captain D'Errico, Commander of the Susa station, who directed the research with the patrols.

Personally, Captain D'Errico also conducted activities of encouragement with the parents throughout the night.

Once again, we would like to express our most grateful thanks to all the members of the Carabinieri who participated in the operation.

With our greatest respects.

•••

Verzuolo, September 5, 1970

To Comando del Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Torino

Respected Commander, I am the boy who fell near the Gagliardone refuge on September 5th; I would like to thank the Captain and the Lieutenant who came to rescue me. Now everything is fine, and I hardly recall that terrible event.

I had always wanted to fly in a helicopter, but when I did, I knew nothing about it.

But please thank those two soldiers for me and tell



1973, Pila (Aosta). AB G3 B1 in medical rescue configuration. Brigadiere pilot Carlo Tofanacchio and Brigadiere pilot Giuseppe Rocco.

them I will never forget them and I apologize for having caused them to make the trip for me.

Please accept my warmest greetings.

I salute them and thank them with all my heart, as do my parents.

Yours, Costamagna Attilio

Cuneo, September 1970

COLLEGIO SAN TOMMASO
GINNASIO – SCUOLA MEDIA
CUNEO

Spettabile Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri
Corso Marche 43 – Torino

Dear Commander,

on 5th September the Gagliardone refuge requested your intervention to carry the young (16 years old) Attilio Costamagna to the Cuneo Hospital after he had fallen from a cliff. He was in a coma for six days, then slowly recovered consciousness and is now well on his way to recovery. He has still some small scars near his eye and ear, and his fractured skull is on the mend, but his memory and mental faculties are as good as before.

All this is thanks to the prompt intervention of your helicopter. I do not remember the name of the captain – I saw his name tag, but at that time I was so worried about Attilio and everything seemed so unreal. With him was Brigadiere Pilot Mino (if I remember rightly). Certainly without them (so the surgeon told me) transport on a stretcher and the length of time necessary by road would have been fatal.

I'm a priest, always with the children, and it's not the first time I've been close to people who have helped me, but it's the first time I have felt the extreme need to save a life.

The Carabinieri have done their duty, but I think they have also experienced much joy in consoling their companions and parents. Jesus also helped the sick and gave much comfort.

Next year we will return to Gagliardone and celebrate a Thanksgiving Mass with the relatives and the boys who were with me. The Lord will reward you, giving you the joy of seeing your children healthy and good.

With much gratitude.

Padre Pietro Boschi

5.09.1970

Egregio Comandante,

sono il ragazzo che è caduto vicino al rifugio Gagliardone il 5 settembre; vorrei ringraziare quel capitano e quel tenente che mi sono venuti a prendere.

Ma tutto è buio, non c'è nessuna attrice che mi ricorda quella disastrosa avventura.

Io avevo una voglia matta di andare in elicottero e quando ci sono andato non lo neanche saputo.

Ma mi ringrazerei quei due militari e gli dica non mi scorderò più di loro e gli chiedo scusa, da parte mia, per il viaggio che gli ho fatto fare.

Gradisca i miei più deboli saluti -

Suo Costamagna Attilio.

Li salutano e li ringraziano con tutto il cuore
i miei e miei genitori.

COLLEGIO S. TOMMASO
CUNEO - TA. 01203
GINNASIO - SCUOLA MEDIA
Regione Piemonte

1 Ottobre 1970

Sign. Comandante,

il 5 settembre scorso, dal rifugio Gagliardone era richiesto il vostro intervento per trasportare all'ospedale di Cuneo il giovane Costamagna Attilio di anni 16, caduto da una roccia. È stato in coma per sei giorni, poi lentamente si è ripreso ed ora è stato dimesso pienamente ristabilito. Rimangono solo piccole cicatrici all'occhio e all'orecchio, due ancora saldarsi l'incrinatura della scatola cranica, però la memoria e l'intelligenza sono come prima.

Tutto ciò grazie al sollecito intervento del vostro elicottero. Non ricordo il nome del Capitano motorista. Ho fatto sulla piastrina di riconoscimento, ma in quel momento ero preoccupato per il ragazzo e tutto mi sembrava così irreali. Con lui il brigadiere pilota Mino (se non mi sbaglio). Certo che senza di loro (con mi ha detto il chirurgo) il trasporto in barella sarebbe stato fatale.

Sono sacerdote, sempre con i ragazzi e non è la prima volta che mi trovo vicino a persone che mi hanno aiutato, però è la prima volta che ne ho sentiti la necessità estrema per salvare una vita.

Hanno compiuto un dovere, ma credo che abbiano provato anche tanta gioia per aver consolato compagni e genitori. Gesù ha aiutato malati e dato tanto conforto.

Un altro anno ritorneremo al Gagliardone e celebrerò una Messa di ringraziamento con i parenti e i ragazzi che erano con me. Vi ricompensi il Signore dandovi la gioia di vedere i vostri figli sani e buoni.

Con tanta riconoscenza
P. Boschi Pietro

Verzuolo, September 10, 1970

Spettabile Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri
Corso Marche 43 – Torino

It is the pleasure of this Saluzzo Unit of the National Alpine Rescue Corps to give heartfelt thanks for the generous collaboration provided by the Carabinieri in the recovery of the young Costamagna Attilio of Borgo San Dalmazzo, injured on September 5th at the *Giuseppe Gagliardone Refuge* in the upper Valley Vallanta, Mon Viso group, Varaita Valley area.

The prompt response to our request for intervention of the helicopter commanded by Captain Mario Barbato and Brigadiere Mario Monti allowed the injured boy to be transported to the Cuneo Civil Hospital in less than two hours.

We praise the skillfulness and generosity of the pilots in the rescue of this rescue service in the high mountain area.

We thank them for their most commendable collaboration.

With greatest respects.

Il Delegato
Mario Abbà

Turin, September 11, 1970

GIOCHI MONDIALI DELLA FEDERAZIONE
INTERNAZIONALE SPORT UNIVERSITARIO FISU – CUSI –
CONI

Subject: Universiade Torino 70
26 agosto – 6 settembre 1970

At the end of these University Olympics of Turin '70 it gives me great pleasure to express my warmest thanks for the help given by the General Headquarters of the Carabinieri for this Sports event.

The men and the means and the helicopter made available have greatly contributed to the perfect organization and success of the Games.

In particular, we would again to express our greatest appreciation for the immense sense of responsibility shown by the men who took part in this service. From the lowest ranks to the Commanding Officers, everyone has dedicated themselves with abnegation and spirit of sacrifice for the success of our Games.

In renewing my most heartfelt thanks, I take the opportunity to send you my most distinguished greetings.

Il Presidente
Primo Nebiolo

C. A. I.
CORPO SOCCORSO ALPINO
14^a Zona - Delegazione di Saluzzo
V. Villanovetta, n° 4 - tel. 80.02
VERZUOLO

Spettabile Comando
Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri
Corso Marche n° 43
Torino

E' doveroso da parte di questa Delegazione del Corpo Nazionale di Soccorso Alpino, porgere un vivissimo ringraziamento per la generosa collaborazione in occasione del ricupero del giovane Costamagna Attilio di Borgo S. Dalmazzo, infortunatosi il giorno 5 settembre scorso al rifugio "Giuseppe Gagliardone" nell'alto vallone di Vallanta, gruppo del Mon Viso zona di Valle Varaita.

La pronta risposta alla nostra richiesta dell'intervento dell'elicottero comandato dal Capitano Barbato Mario e dal Brigadiere Monti Mario hanno fatti si che il ferito fosse trasportato all'ospedale Civile di Cuneo in meno di due ore.

Lodiamo la bravura, la generosità dei piloti nell'adempire questo servizio di soccorso in zona di alta montagna.

Ringraziamo per l'ecomabile collaborazione.

Con doverosi ossequi.

Il Delegato
Mario Abbà

Verzuolo 10 settembre 70

F.I.S.U. C.U.S.I. G.O.N.I.

GIOCHI MONDIALI DELLA FEDERAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE SPORT UNIVERSITARIO

IL PRESIDENTE Torino, 11 settembre 1970.

OGGETTO: Universiade Torino 70 - 26 agosto-6 settembre 1970.

AL COMANDO GENERALE DELL'ARMA DEI CARABINIERI ROMA

Al termine dell'Universiade Torino 70 mi è grato esprimere un caldo ringraziamento per l'aiuto concessoci dal Comando Generale dell'Arma dei Carabinieri in occasione della manifestazione stessa.

Gli uomini ed i mezzi messi a disposizione hanno l'organico contribuito alla perfetta organizzazione ed al successo delle Universiade.

In particolare torniamo ad esprimere il nostro vivissimo compiacimento per l'altissimo senso di responsabilità dimostrato dagli uomini comandati in questo servizio.

Dal militare semplice agli ufficiali preposti al comando tutti si sono dedicati con abnegazione e con spirito di sacrificio per la riuscita dei nostri giochi.

Nel rinnovare il più vivo ringraziamento, colgo l'occasione per porgerVi i più distinti saluti.

P.to Primo Nebiolo.



1967. Pralormo. Helicopter-borne canine unit exercise.

Casorezzo (MI), November 7, 1972

ORDINE DEL CARDO
SODALIZIO INTERNAZIONALE DI SOLIDARIETÀ ALPINA

To 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Torino

Dear Commander, I am pleased to inform you that the Jury for *Alpine Spirituality and Solidarity Awards* has considered you deserving of the STELLA DEL CARDO Award, and it is with sincere pleasure for this well-deserved distinction, I welcome the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus in Turin into our family as:

MEMBER OF MERITO

and I invite you to receive the Alpine Solidarity Award in Milan, at the Hotel Cavalieri (piazza Misori) at 10.30 on Sunday, 17 December

•••

Verzuolo, April 7, 1976

CLUB ALPINO ITALIANO
CORPO NAZIONALE SOCCORSO ALPINO
DELEGAZIONE DI SALUZZO

Egregio Signor Capitano Luigi Amedeo Giuntella,
Comandante Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Torino

Dear Captain,
the timely response to our request for collaboration in the rescue intervention effected on March 29th at the foot of the Visolotto – Canalino Cooldige,

was highly appreciated by us. The surveillance of the area prior to the retrieval and the subsequent transportation of men and materials facilitated our task and made an effective intervention possible.

Thanks therefore to the crew of Maresciallo De Dea and Brigadiere Rocco who with dexterity and ability made everything happen in the best way.

Hoping to see you soon in Turin, thank you and with my very best regards,

Il Delegato
Mario Abbà

•••

Carmagnola, May 8, 1976

To ill/mo Signor Colonnello Pagani Dr. Bruno
Comandante della Legione Carabinieri di Torino

Dear Colonel, on behalf of myself and my wife, it gives me great pleasure to offer our most sincere thanks for the active and heartfelt participation of the Carabinieri in the search for my 16-year old daughter, Maria Russo, who had disappeared without trace on the evening of 19 April 1976, but was then retraced in the afternoon of the following 23rd.

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend our thanks to the Pralormo Canine Unit, who for three days participated in the search; the Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus of Turin, the Carabinieri of Carignano and the Commander of the Moncalieri Carabinieri Company who sent the special units and reinforcements, to Carabiniere Antolini of the Carmagnola Station who despite the late hour offered to

help me to look for her, and all the military of the station who participated so actively in the subsequent search; to Maresciallo Bovino of the Stazione di Carmagnola who, even though still on leave due to the death of his father, learned of the case, and with a true paternal spirit returned to service two days before his leave expired. On his re-entry, he organized and gave new impetus to the search by arranging for the intervention of the Municipal Police, Firemen and volunteers. He also coordinated the participation of volunteers from INAM, to which I myself belong, and personally took part in the various searches.

To all the Carabinieri, who have shown me such solidarity, in harmony with the principles of the premise of the General Regulations of the Carabinieri, the institution in which I served for more than 27 years, a family to which I still feel to be part of, I send my Fraternal greetings along with that of my family.

Your Devoted Subordinate
Maresciallo Capo nella Riserva
Russo Vincenzo

•••

Venaria, July 7, 1976

CLUB ALPINO ITALIANO
SEZIONE DI VENARIA REALE

To Comando della Legione Carabinieri – Servizio Elicotteri

With regard to the alpine rescue intervention in the Lanzo Valleys by your helicopter on July 4th, the Venaria CAI, the Refuge manager Daviso and the Alpi Graie Alpine Rescue Volunteers, who participated in the rescue operation, offer their grateful thanks for the generous contribution by the Carabinieri.

Il Presidente

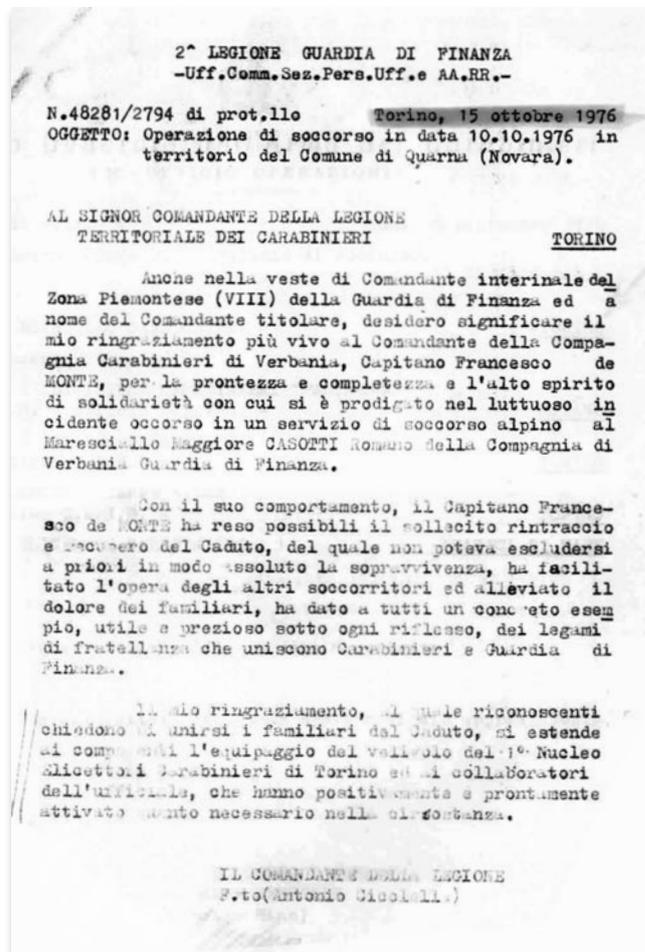
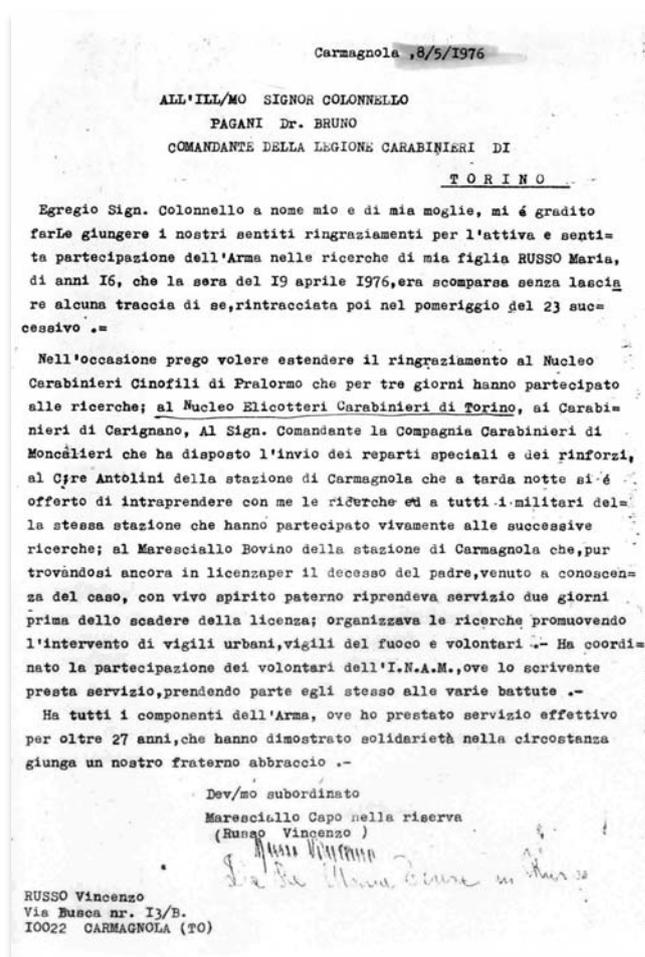
•••

Turin, October 15, 1976

2^a LEGIONE GUARDIA DI FINANZA

To Signor Comandante della Legione Territoriale Carabinieri di Torino

In my capacity as temporary commander of the Piedmontese Zone (VIII) of the Guardia di Finanza and on behalf of the Commanding Officer, I would like to express my most grateful thanks to the Commander of the Carabinieri Company of Verbania, Captain Francesco De Monte, for the readiness, completeness, and great spirit of solidarity with which he acted following the fatal accident of Maresciallo Maggiore Casotti Romano of the Verbania Company of the Guardia di Finanza during an Alpine rescue operation.



With his actions, Captain Francesco De Monte made the discovery and subsequent recovery of the fallen man possible, and since he could not exclude his possible survival, facilitated the work of the other rescuers and relieved the pain of his family, giving a concrete example to all, useful and precious in every way, of the ties of brotherhood that unite the Carabinieri and the Guardia di Finanza. My gratitude, and that of the members of the deceased man's family extends to the members of the helicopter crew of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus of Turin and to the collaborators of the officer who positively and promptly did that was necessary in the circumstances.

Il Colonnello Comandante della Legione
Antonio Cicotelli

•••

Usseaux, January 28, 1978

COMUNE DI USSEAU
PROVINCIA DI TORINO

To Comandante Generale dell' Arma dei Carabinieri –
Roma

In my capacity as Mayor of the Municipality of Usseaux, it is my duty to inform you that during the exceptional snow storm that in the second decade of this month hit the upper Chisone valley and the nearby valleys, your Carabinieri particularly distinguished themselves for solidarity and altruism.

In a brief space of time, some three metres of snow fell, isolating all the inhabited parts of this municipality and its surroundings.

On behalf of myself, the Civic Administration and the people, I thank all of your Carabinieri who worked so hard to help and relieve the difficulties of the inhabitants of my municipality.

Special thanks go to Captain Vitagliano, Commandant of the Pinerolo Company, for the immediate and rapid rescue interventions and to the men of the Helicopter Nucleus of Turin who made sure that the population was supplied with food and medical supplies,



AB 47 G3B1 on the parking rose at the initial base of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus, at Torino Aeritalia.

and especially Maresciallo Carlo Marciano, Commandant of the Fenestrelle Station and of the Carabinieri of the Station itself who, with great sense of duty, spirit of abnegation and altruism, worked day and night for more than a week, despising fatigue and discomfort to bring relief to the people and especially to the ill, gaining the unanimous admiration and gratitude of my administration and the population itself.

I thought it appropriate to point out the above in order to compliment you for the humanity, the capacity and the solidarity of your men of the Carabinieri, ever more worthy of the accolade of "Benemerita".

Il Sindaco

•••
Mantua, April 22, 1978

To Comandante del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Torino

Dear Sir,

you will surely excuse and understand the delay with which I undertake my duty to express to you, the Officer Commanding the Helicopter nucleus, and to the men of the Gressoney Carabinieri Station, the grateful thanks of my family and myself for the excellent, humane, caring, and resolute way in which you conducted the helicopter rescue search on Monte Rosa for my son Ugo and three other three skiers from Mantua.

Along with my thanks, I would like to express my good friendship and deference to the Carabinieri.

Believe me, I think the world of them.

Avvocato in Mantova
Alberto Scalori

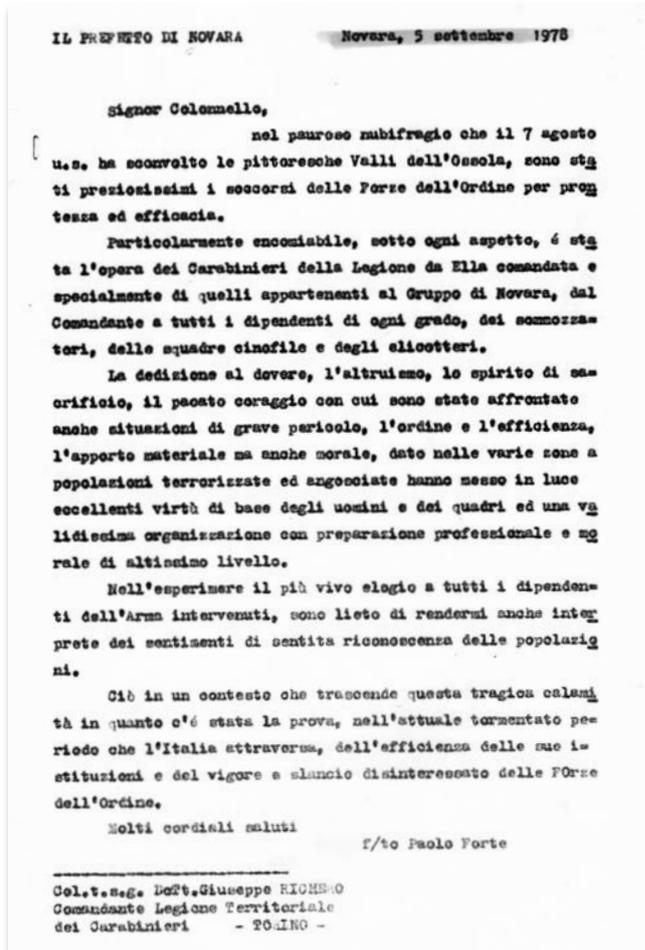
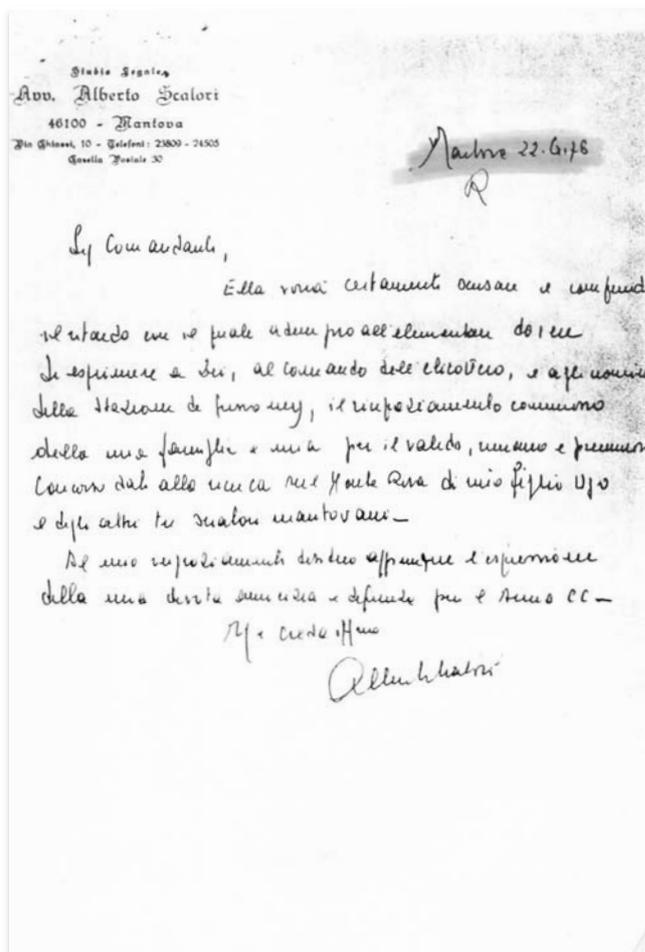
•••
Novara, September 5, 1978

To Col. t. SG Richero dott. Giuseppe
Comandante della Legione Carabinieri di Torino

Dear Colonel, following the fatal thunderstorm that overtook the picturesque Ossola Valleys last August 7, the aid provided by our organization was precious for its readiness and effectiveness.

The performance of the Carabinieri of the Legion under your command was particularly commendable in all respects, especially those belonging to the Novara Group, from its Commander to all his subordinates, to the underwater experts, to the canine units and to the helicopter crews.

Their dedication to duty, altruism, spirit of sacrifice, the calm courage with which serious situations of extreme danger were faced, their order and efficiency, their material but also moral contribution, provided in the various areas with a terrified



and distressed population have highlighted the basic virtues of men and officers and an efficient organization with the highest standards of professional and moral preparation.

In expressing the most ample praise to all the members of the Carabinieri involved, I am pleased to also be the interpreter of the feelings of immense gratitude expressed by the people.

And this is in a context that transcends this tragic calamity, in itself the proof, in this current tormented period that Italy is going through, of the efficiency of its institutions, and the unselfish vigour and drive of the Forces of Order.

With most cordial greetings.

Il Prefetto di Novara
Paolo Forte

•••

Carcoforo-Borgosesia, 9 settembre 1978

Telegramma
From COMUNE DI CARCOFORO
to Comando del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Torino

The townspeople of the Municipality of Carcoforo greatly thank the Carabinieri for the rapid helicopter rescue. *stop*

Sindaco Bertolini

•••

Turin, September 6, 1978

REGIONE PIEMONTE

Egregio Signor Colonnello Giuseppe Richero
Comandante della Legione Carabinieri di Torino

Dear Colonel,

following the severe natural disaster that recently struck a number of zones in the Ossola area, causing the loss of numerous lives and severe damage to material, it is my duty, on behalf of the Piedmont Regional Government, to express our most heartfelt gratitude to the Carabinieri and to their units which have contributed so unselfishly to the restoration of normality.

I therefore kindly ask you to be the interpreter of the sincere gratitude of the people for the speedy operations carried out by the Carabinieri who worked so unsparingly in the Ossola disaster.

I would also like to underline the positive cooperation reconfirmed in this context between the Carabinieri and the Piedmont Region; In this spirit I ask you to kindly accept my warmest greetings.

Il Presidente
Aldo Viglione

•••

Turin, June 19, 1979

C. A. I. SEZIONE DI TORINO
SCUOLA DI ALPINISMO GIUSTO GERASUTTI

To Ten Falcucci del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Torino – Corso Marche, 43 – Torino

I have the honour to express the most grateful thanks in the name of the G. Gervasutti School of the Turin C.A.I. for the prompt and efficient operation of your helicopter in the rescue of our student, Gianfranco Irione, injured in a mountaineering accident on June 3, 1979 near the *Questa* Refuge in the Maritime Alps.

I kindly ask you to extend our thanks to the splendid crew of the helicopter involved in the rescue operation. Please accept my most cordial greetings.

Il Direttore
Accademico del C.A.I.
Ugo Manera

•••

Ivrea April 13, 1980

CLUB ALPINO ITALIANO
CORPO NAZIONALE SOCCORSO ALPINO
XII DELEGAZIONE

Consegna alla Brigata Carabinieri – 1° Nucleo Elicotteri di Torino

These Testimonies of Merit are awarded for the activities generously conducted to save many lives.

TO THE STATION COMMANDERS

- of Ivrea
- of Cuorgné
- of Ceresole
- of Valprato

Il Delegato
Il Direttore

•••





June 1983, Rescue of an alpine skier from the "Canalone delle Capre" of the Pian della Mussa.

Pragelato, May 1980

COMUNE DI PRAGELATO
PROVINCIA DI TORINO

To Comando del Nucleo Elicotteri e del Nucleo Cinofili Carabinieri
omissis

To the Headquarters of the Helicopter Nucleus and of the Canine Nucleus of the Carabinieri – *omissis* – I would like to express my personal gratitude and that of the Municipal Council gathered here tonight for the prompt and qualified intervention, for the numerous and active participation, for the commitment demonstrated during the rescue of those hikers caught by the landslide.

If the mountain has once again demanded its victim, this was certainly not due to either delay in the rescue nor lack of will or expertise of the rescuers nor deficiency in the intervention.

You were all magnificent: we are deeply grateful to you.

Il Sindaco e Il Consiglio Comunale

Turin, May 2, 1984

FEDERAZIONE ITALIANA SPORT INVERNALI
COMITATO ALPI OCCIDENTALI

III.mo Comandante della Brigata Carabinieri di Torino

At the end of this 1980-1984 Olympic Games cycle, the Western Alps Committee of the FISU wishes to award a memorial plaque to the Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus in Turin, as an indication of thanks and gratitude for the services they provided during the winter seasons.

Services that proved to be of immense worth dur-

ing international and national sports events, in particular for avalanche prospecting and assistance and rescue during the Alpine ski races. The plaque will be consigned on Saturday, June 2, at the Cassa di Risparmio Research Centre, on the occasion of the Western Alps Members Assembly.

Please accept our most heartfelt thanks,
Cordially yours.

Il Presidente F.I.S.I. – AOC
Dr. Roccia Gian Maria

Ivrea, August 9, 1984

CLUB ALPINO ITALIANO
CORPO NAZIONALE SOCCORSO ALPINO
XII DELEGAZIONE

To Comando del Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Torino in Volpiano

I would like to thank the Locana Carabinieri and the Helicopter Nucleus for their valuable contribution to the Alpine Rescue volunteers in their search for the two German tourists, Paulus Petter and Valande Suse, who on in the evening of July 31, 1984, had not returned from their excursion as forecast to their hotel manager. Delighted with the success of the rescue I would again like to thank the helicopter Carabinieri of Volpiano for their instant readiness and enthusiasm in the search, always ready to give support wherever needed. I also wish to thank the Brigadiere Commandant of the Locana Carabinieri Station who, like his helicopter colleagues, demonstrated personal abnegation and true sense of duty in the service of the community.

Il Vice Delegato
Brogliatti Ruggero



The President of the FISAI – Western Alps, Gian Maria Rocchia, consigns a commemorative plaque to the Carabinieri Helicopter Headquarters for their avalanche prospecting activities.

Turin, May 8, 1985

FEDERAZIONE ITALIANA SPORT INVERNALI
COMITATO ALPI OCCIDENTALI

N.H. Gen. Mario Cucci Comandante Brigata
Carabinieri di Torino

I would like to thank the Carabinieri for the safe conduct of the various sporting events of the winter season 1984-1985. The Italian Winter Sports Federation wishes to award the Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus of Turin in Volpiano, a diploma as a tangible expression of our gratitude for the services and rescues performed. Consignment will take place during the Annual Assembly which will take place at a date and place to be communicated as soon as possible. Once again, on behalf of all the Ski Clubs and all the winter resorts of Piedmont, our thanks for the precious services rendered.

Il Presidente F.I.S.I. – AOC
Dr. Rocchia Gian Maria

...

1986, Valle Stretta (Bardonecchia). 3th CNSA, XIII Delegation of Turin during the celebration of thirty years since its foundation. Delegate Mauro Marucco on an AB 412. Exercise.



© Giampiero Baima

0010

Al Comandante La Legione
Carabinieri di Torino,
e p.e. al Comandante la Stazione
Carabinieri di Cantorice (val di Susa)

Mi rivolgo alla S. V. Ill.^{ma} per un
devero ringraziamento che a mezzo
Suo vorei trasmettere all'Anima dei
Carabinieri.

Più specificatamente al Brigadiere
Comandante e ai militi della Sta-
zione di Cantorice, e alla Brigata
Elicotteri di Volpiano, per il soccorso
organizzato e portato a mio figlio
Roberto ferito accidentalmente sulle
montagne di Chialamberto.

Tale incidente, di una certa gravità,
si è poi risolto felicemente al C.T.O.
a Torino, dove mio figlio è stato
ricoverato.

Sarebbe mio desiderio effettuare un
nostro versamento di L. 100.000,-
a favore di un fondo ammortuale
dell'Anima e sarà grato se mi sarete
incomunicare le modalità necessarie.

/

Esprimendole i sensi della stima
e considerazione per i difficili com-
piti che l'Anima è chiamata quo-
fidianamente a svolgere, con orgoglio,

Carlo Piglia

attualmente e per tutto il mese
di Agosto presso
Albergo Albergo Fiorito
Chialamberto -
residenza in Torino - via Leonardo 4
tel. 28.36.38

Torino, 25-7-85

dov'è
/

Turin, July 25, 1985

To Comandante la Legione Carabinieri di Torino

I kindly ask you to convey my most grateful thanks to the Carabinieri, specifically to the Commandant Brigadiere and the Carabinieri of the Cantorice Station and the Volpiano Helicopter Nucleus, for the rescue they organized and effected for my son Roberto who was injured in an accident in the Chialamberto Mountains.

This accident, of a certain gravity, was resolved happily thanks to the rapid admission of my son to the CTO of Turin. I would like to make a modest payment to the welfare fund of the Carabinieri Orphans and I would be grateful if the necessary information could be communicated to me.

I would like to expressing my esteem and consideration for the difficult tasks that the Carabinieri are daily called to perform,

With respects

Carlo Piglia

Cuneo, August 1985

SOCCORSO ALPINO PIEMONTESE
DELEGAZIONE DI CUNEO XV ZONA

Signor Comandante 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri Via
Brandizzo 275 - Volpiano

With regard to your intervention for the rescue of the climber Claudio Cali on the Corno Stella on August 1, 1985, we would like to thank you and your men for the rapid and effective intervention. The transport of our Volunteers to the area, the subsequent recovery of the unfortunate climber and his transport downhill enabled us to resolve the action effectively and safely.

We believe that the new helicopter you have available, coupled with your enthusiasm which has always been a feature of these operations, can only lead to the improvement of a service of great human solidarity.

We are pleased to give our very best regards to you and your Carabinieri.

Il Delegato
Mario Molineris

Turin, August 30, 1985

To Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Volpiano

Dear Commandant,
the writer is the father of young Maria Letizia Faletti who on the 16th August was transported in conditions of extreme urgency by your helicopter from the Hospital of Giaveno to the CTO in Turin.



An exercise with the underwater unit.

With these few lines I want to thank you and your colleagues, also on behalf of my wife and my daughter, for the timely intervention and for everything that was done to ensure her urgent transportation.

Please accept my most cordial greetings.

Luigi Faletti

•••

Biella, February 26, 1986

CLUB ALPINO ITALIANO
CORPO NAZIONALE SOCCORSO ALPINO
ZONA XXII – DELEGAZIONE DI BIELLA

To Comandante del Nucleo Elicotteri della Legione Carabinieri di Torino

We would like to thank you for the prompt intervention of your helicopter during the search for the alpine skier Roberto Audo who had become lost in the Oropa – Monte Cucco area, and for the extensive collaboration once again competently offered to us.

With the greatest cordiality, on behalf of all the volunteers, I shake the hands of all the helicopter Carabinieri of Volpiano.

Il Delegato
Leonardo Gianinetto

•••

Saluzzo, May 12, 1986

CLUB ALPINO ITALIANO
CORPO NAZIONALE SOCCORSO ALPINO
DELEGAZIONE DI SALUZZO

To Signor Comandante Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Volpiano

The Service of Assistance provided by the crew of your helicopter during the 1st Alpine Ski Tour of Mon Viso was highly appreciated and above all productive for those competitors in difficulty and lagging behind on the challenging route.

Both the prevention and the interventions made were essential for the successful conclusion of this challenging sports event, which was valid for international qualification.

Thanking you again for your availability and taking this opportunity to send you our very best regards.

Il Delegato
Mario Abbà

•••

Turin, May 16, 1986

ESERCITO ITALIANO
SCUOLA DI APPLICAZIONE

N.H. il Gen. B. Sergio Colombini Comandante della I Brigata Carabinieri – Via Cernaia 23 – 10100 Torino

Dear Colombini,

following the finding of our young soldier, who disappeared in the Po on the 8th of May, let me express my gratitude to you and my admiration for your Helicopter and Underwater Carabinieri have done during these days.

Engaged in thankless and dangerous work they spared no effort, working with dedication and expertise.

So thank you, dear Colombini, on my behalf and all of the School of Application. With a fraternal embrace.

Il Generale Comandante
Gen. D. Sergio ONNIS

•••

Settimo Torinese, May 28, 1986

CLUB ALPINO ITALIANO
SOTTOSEZIONE DI SETTIMO TORINESE

To 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri, 275 Strada Brandizzo, 10088 Volpiano

I have been informed that the rescue flight which on March 29, 1986 recovered the mountaineer Rino Martini, injured at Punta Pian Spigo in the municipality of Chialamberto, came from this Nucleus.

On behalf of all members of the C.A.I. of Settimo, I express my gratitude to the crew who effected the timely rescue of our member, decisive in avoiding more serious consequences.

I also thank you for the sense of security and gratitude that has been instilled with this feeling of solidarity between our sport and the Armed Forces.

Thank you and greetings to all concerned.

Il Presidente
Luigi Cocco

•••

Cuneo, June 16, 1986

SOCCORSO ALPINO PIEMONTESE
DELEGAZIONE DI CUNEO XV ZONA

To Comandante del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Volpiano

It is my duty to thank you and your Carabinieri for the intervention on the 12th of this month in the Valle Gesso. Despite the adverse weather you have demonstrated great ability and above all your usual willingness to operate.

Thank you!
Sincerely

Il Delegato
Molineris Mario

•••

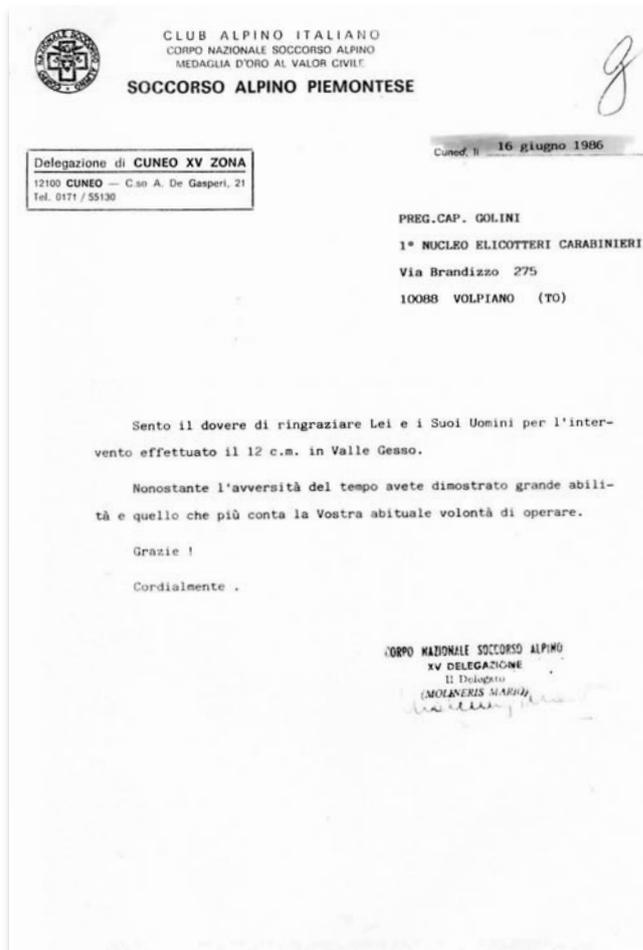
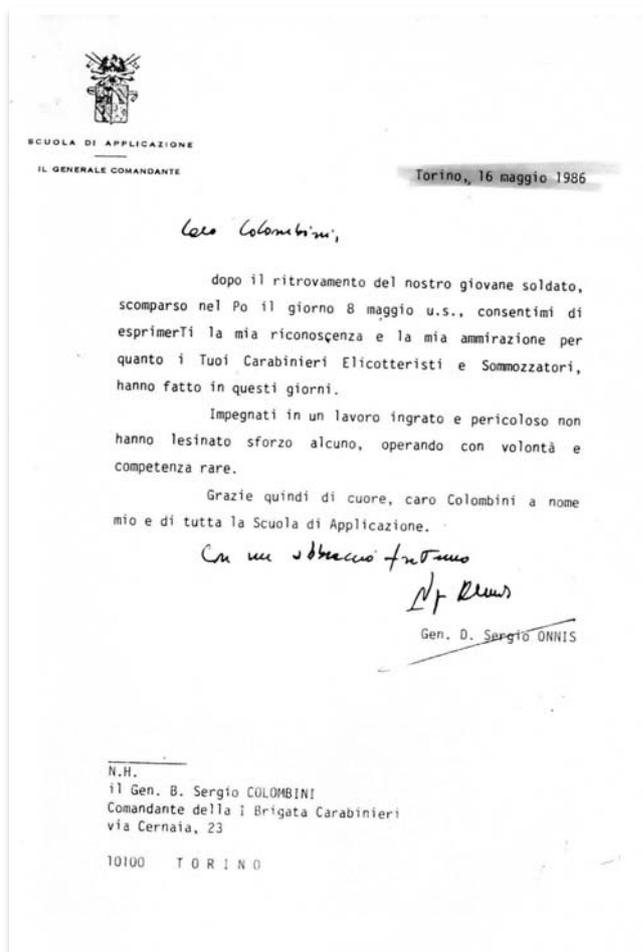
Biella, August 13, 1986

CLUB ALPINO ITALIANO
CORPO NAZIONALE SOCCORSO ALPINO
ZONA XXII – DELEGAZIONE DI BIELLA

N.H. Il Comandante del 1° Elinucleo della Legione Carabinieri di Torino – Volpiano

With heartfelt thanks – thank you in the name of the volunteers and THANK YOU in the name of the injured Mr. Ferrando who thanks to the Carabinieri helicopter, was saved the aggravating consequences of a bouncy and lengthy ride on the stretcher if we had had to take him along the difficult *Coda Refuge* track, even although the vehicle was duly equipped with chains.

My compliments also for the ability and teamwork of the crew, who were seen to be efficient and comprehensive in all respects. I can only say how satisfied we were with your timeliness, punctuality and precision at all times during this rescue operation.



Hoping we never to have to resort to you except for exercises and for friendly updating and reciprocal teamwork meetings, we cordially send you our very best wishes.

Il Delegato
Leonardo Gianinetto

Ivrea, August 1986

To Comando Carabinieri Soccorso Elicotteri di Volpiano

To the Headquarters of the Carabinieri Rescue Helicopters of Volpiano and to the Headquarters of the Agusta Helicopter Group (Fiamma), to the personnel of the Ivrea Hospital and all the Obstetric Staff.

Grateful thanks to the Staff who gave Emergency treatment on July 30, 1986, to my pregnant daughter Piera Martinetti and to little Fiammetta born at dawn at Alpe Monbarone but died following arrival at the Ivrea Hospital. In any case, I would like to thank all the people who helped and have been close to my daughter Piera Martinetti.

Thanks to everyone (the newsgents, "La Stampa Sera", "La Sentinella del Canavese", and the magazine "Il Canavese".) I sincerely thank you and wish you every good fortune for your missions.

Please forgive me for being unable to thank you any sooner, due to the landslide which occurred on April 8, 1986, as I am still unable to return home.

La Mamma Casassa Anna in Martinetti

Vercelli, August 18, 1986

To Comando del Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Volpiano

Subject: Intervention by your helicopter on August 13.

With this note, I would like to wholeheartedly thank you and congratulate you for the rapid and efficient intervention by your helicopter and the Carabinieri specialists who rescued and transported my son Attilio to Biella. Due to a fracture of his left ankle, he was unable to continue while we were returning from an excursion to the Coda Refuge along the Garisey ledge, on the slopes of the Elvo.

Attilio will undergo an operation on Wednesday 20th since the fracture was very complex and had damaged all the ligaments of his foot. We hope everything goes for the best and that he can go back to work as soon as possible.

Thanks again to the climbers who gave the alarm to the volunteers of the Alpine Rescue and in particular to the two Carabinieri of the helicopter.

With Best regards.

Carlo Ferrando

CLUB ALPINO ITALIANO

Corpo Nazionale Soccorso Alpino

ZONA XXII - DELEGAZIONE DI BIELLA

POSTI DI SOCCORSO: SERIO SCANDARI al Lago del Mucrone - BOPPO BALCOCCO a Predalzano

13051 BIELLA - VIA Q. BELLA, 31 - TEL. 0 (015) 351435

13051 Biella, il **13 agosto 1986**

Delegato: **LEONARDO GIANINETTO**
Biella - Via Q. Bella, 48 - Tel. (015) 21.777

Egr. **N.H.**
Sign. Comandante l' ELINUCLEO
della Legione CARABINIERI DI TORINO

VOLPIANO (Torino)

Oggetto:

Grazie di cuore, grazie a nome dei volontari e GRAZIE a nome dell'infornuto sign. Ferrando, che così, grazie all'elicottero dei CARABINIERI, non ha dovuto "attendere" sino a molto tardi ... e non ha ricevuto tutti gli scossoni che il trasporto in barella, sul sentiero del Rifugio Coda, pur opportunamente attrezzato con catene, avrebbe comportato.

Complimenti infine per l'abilità e l'affiatamento dell'equipaggio dimostratosi efficiente e comprensivo sotto tutti i punti di vista.

Altro non so dire per manifestare la soddisfazione per la tempestività, puntualità e precisione in ogni momento dello svolgimento di questa operazione di soccorso.

Augurandoci di non dover mai ricorrere a Voi se non per esercitazioni e per amichevoli incontri di aggiornamento ed affiatamento reciproco, cordialmente ossequiamo.

CORPO NAZIONALE SOCCORSO ALPINO
XXII DELEGAZIONE BIELLESE
Il Delegato

Leonardo Gianinetto

Copia di questa lettera viene inviata, per opportuna conoscenza, alla Direzione del SOCCORSO ALPINO PIEMONTESE in TORINO, via Barbaroux 1

Riferimento ad intervento in favore di FERRANDO effettuato il 13.8.86 alla piazzuola per elicotteri dell' H20 (denominazione alpinistica) sul versante Elvo della Cresta del Carisey..

Agosto 1986

Con riconoscimento

Al Comando Soccorso Carabinieri e al Comando Gruppo dell' Elicottero Agusta (Fiamma) e al personale dell' Elicambulanza dell' Ospedale Civile Ivrea e tutto il personale Ostetrico. Un grande ringraziamento alle Persone di Pronto Intervento, avvenute il 30 luglio 1986 alla figlia Piera Martinetti, e alla piccola Fiammetta, deceduta poco dopo all'ospedale di Ivrea (all' Alpe Monbarone). Dunque ringraziare a tutte le Persone del Pronto Intervento e al Soccorso Alpino. Ringrazio di cuore a tutte le persone che sono state vicino alla figlia Piera Martinetti e ringrazio a tutte (Le Echole La Stampa Sera, La Sentinella del Canavese e la rivista Il Canavese.

Con fede Ringrazio Saluti e Auguri per le vostre Missioni.

La Mamma Casassa Anna Martinetti
Via Cu
Carema (P.Z.)

Non potendo ringraziare prima a causa della Prana avvenuta il giorno 8 aprile 1986, essendo ancora Elicottero.

Turin, November 12

Dear Commandant,

In sending my most sincere apologies to yourself and to the entire complement of the glorious Carabinieri 1st Helicopter Nucleus for not having been able to attend the 20th Anniversary celebrations, I thank you both for the courteous invitation and for the souvenir medallion (kindly brought to me by Cav. Casabona); this was highly appreciated and will be preserved among my most precious mementoes.

I send my most affectionate and fraternal greetings to yourself and all personnel.

Yours very truly,

Maresciallo Gian Piero Ferrero

Turin, September 4, 1986

LEGIONE CARABINIERI DI TORINO
GRUPPO DI TORINO

N. 154/28-I di prot.

Subject: The search for young Luca Ricci, lost in the mountains above Ceresole.

For the participation by the military who took part in the search, the parents of Luca Ricci, the boy who was lost on August 11, 1986 in the Ceresole Mountains, would like to convey their greatest gratitude to the men of the Carabinieri who participated in the search for their child.

Turin, January 6, 1987

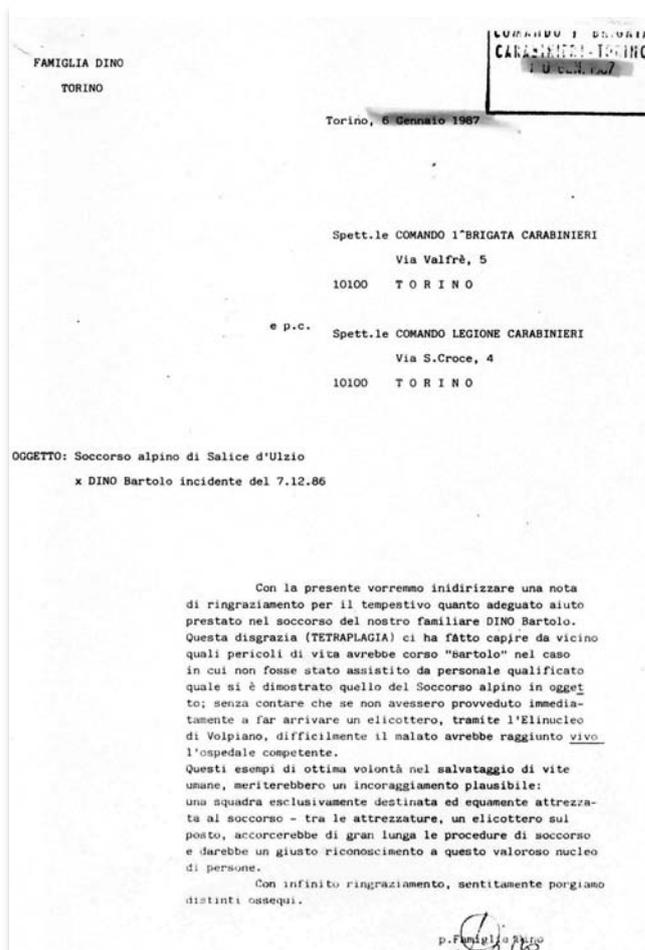
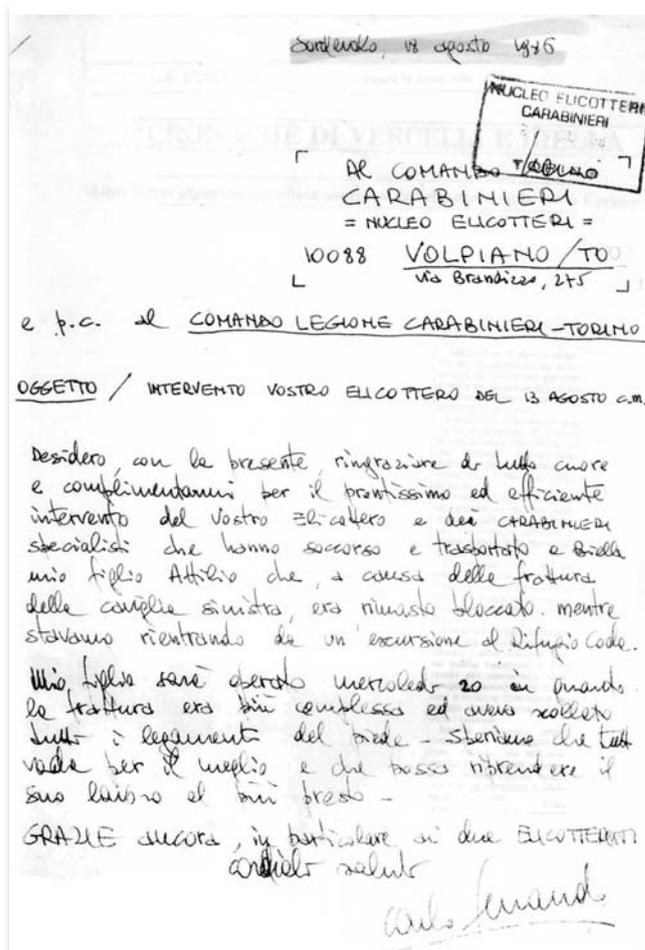
To Comando della 1^o Brigata Carabinieri di Torino Via Valfrè, 5

To Comando della Legione Carabinieri di Torino Via Santa Croce, 4

Subject: Alpine Rescue at Sauze d'Oulx of Dino Bartolo, accident of December 7, 1986.

With this letter we would like to thank you very much for the timely as well as opportune help given to our family member Dino Bartolo. This situation (resulting in TETRAPLEGIA), brought fully home to us the danger that Bartolo would have been in if he had not been aided by highly qualified personnel such as those of the Alpine rescue team; not to mention that if they had not immediately sought helicopter assistance from the Carabinieri of Volpiano, the patient would have been very lucky to have reached the hospital alive.

These examples of excellent capacity in saving lives, deserve much more encouragement: an exclusively designated and suitably equipped rescue team – with equipment and a dedicated helicopter, would



facilitate the rescue procedures and give appropriate recognition to this brave Corps of people.

With our infinite thanks, we send our very best wishes.

Famiglia Dino

•••

Vinovo, January 17, 1987

GRUPPO AMICI DELLA MONTAGNA
VINOVO

For the professionalism demonstrated towards a mother in need of care due to premature childbirth on the slopes of Mount Mombarone and in remembrance of Fiammetta, the Friends of the Mountain Group, Vinovo confers on

CAPTAIN GOLINI FRANCESCO

on behalf of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus:

The Solidarity Award 1986

•••

Montalto Dora, January 21, 1987

Preg. Soccorso Alpino di Biella

The Managers of the *Rosazza Refuge* send their grateful thanks to yourself, the President of the Alpine Rescue Corps, and to all those who worked so hard during the rescue service on Saturday, January 17, 1987, and in particular to the CREW of the CARABINIERI helicopter.

In the hope that we will be able to arrange a get-together at the *Rosazza Refuge*, we send our respectful thanks and greetings.

Gianotti Maria Luisa e Crestani Livio

•••

Biella, January 27, 1987

CLUB ALPINO ITALIANO
CORPO NAZIONALE SOCCORSO ALPINO
ZONA XXII – DELEGAZIONE DI BIELLA

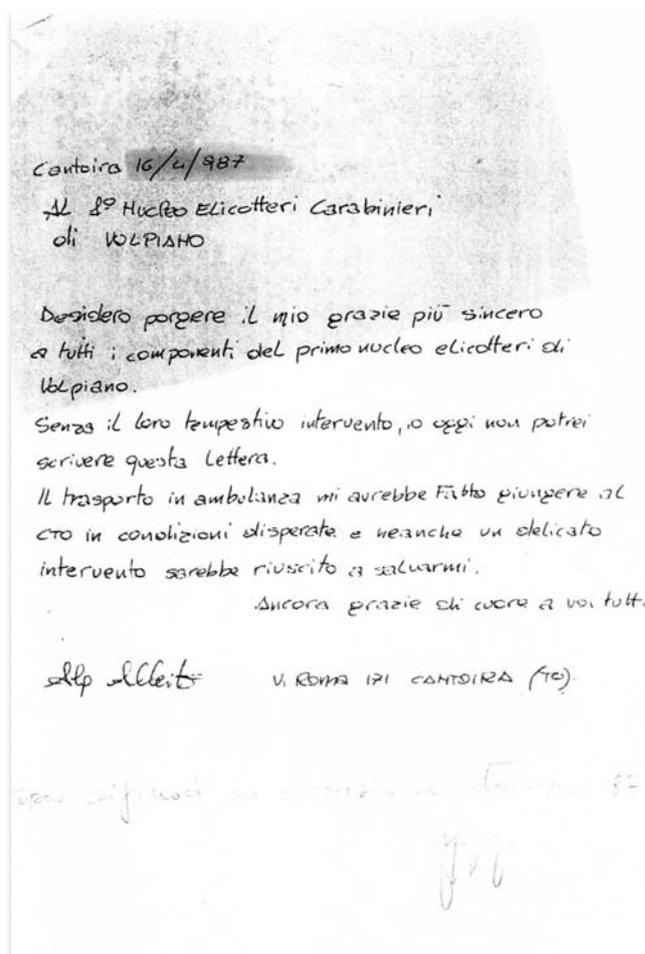
I attach here a photocopy of the letter of thanks sent by Silvio Crestani and Maria Luisa Gianotti for the intervention carried out on 17 January near the Rosazza Refuge.

To their thanks I add those of the CNSA Biella Delegation, grateful for the speed of your intervention.

With best regards.

Il Delegato

•••



Cantoira, April 16, 1987

To 1^o Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di Volpiano

I would like to give my sincere thanks to the personnel of the Volpiano 1st Helicopter Nucleus. Without your timely intervention, I would not have been able to write this letter today.

By ambulance I would have arrived at the hospital in a desperate condition, and even a delicate operation might not have saved my life.

My grateful thanks again to you all.

Ala Alberto

•••

Florence – Palazzo Vecchio, 14 November 1987

ISTITUTO SCUDI DI SAN MARTINO
FIRENZE

The Mayor of Florence Massimo Bogianckino and Roberto Lupi, President of the Istituto Scudi di San Martino, confer the 1987 Benevolence Shield on the Carabinieri 1st Helicopter Nucleus of Volpiano. The award will be presented by the Vice-President of the Institute, Mrs Sara Borgiotti and General Angelo Nannavecchia M.A.V.M. The award will be accepted by Captain Francesco Golini, M.B.V.M.

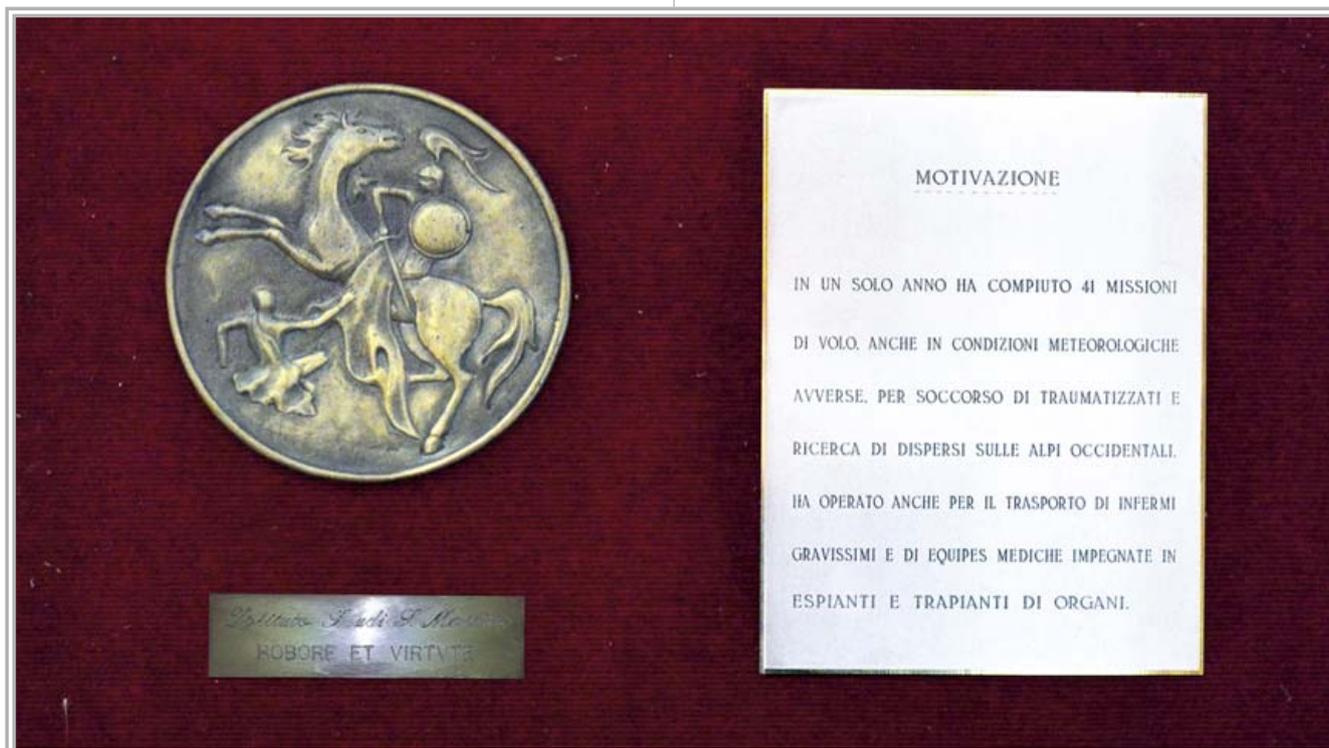
MOTIVATION FOR THE AWARD

In just one year, they have completed 41 flight missions, often in adverse weather conditions, to rescue the injured and search for those lost in the Western Alps. They have also operated for the transport of the the seriously ill and for medical teams engaged in organ removal and transplants.

During the same ceremony, Lt. Col. Leonid Petrovic Teljatnikov, Head of the Kiev Fire Department, will receive the San Martino Shield award for emergency rescues during the Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster.

...

Istituto Scudi di San Martino. Florence, Palazzo Vecchio, 14 November 1987.



Cantoira, January 8, 1988

Egregio Signor Comandante della Legione di Torino

I would like to bring to your attention a fact that will remain important to me for the rest of my life. My name is Albert Ala, I am 27 years old, an ENEL employee, resident in Cantoira (Torino) a village in the Lanzo Valley, and fond of mountain climbing.

It all happened on January 3, 1987, at about 11.40 am, while I was climbing a cliff face with a friend; it in a fraction of a second, something happened and an accident overtook me.

A fall of some 15 metres put an end to the game, if game it can be called. The Carabinieri of the local station came quickly to the site of the accident and coordinated the initial phases of the emergency rescue. They called for the intervention of a Carabinieri helicopter which took me aboard and flew me to the hospital.

Here, after a rapid visit I was diagnosed as having cranial trauma with internal bruising; the prognosis was reserved, and in a very short time, I went into a coma. I underwent an emergency operation but everything has gone well for me after a long convalescence.

Now I am almost fit again, and send grateful thanks from myself and my family to the Carabinieri above all, and in particular to those who saved my life.

Ala Alberto

•••

Rome, March 3, 1987

SENATO DELLA REPUBBLICA
FRANCO MAZZOLA

To Generale Mario Cucci Capo di Stato Maggiore dell'Arma dei Carabinieri – Viale Romania – 00100 Roma e per c.

To Generale Ercole Rocchetti Comandante della Legione CC di Torino – 10100 Torino

Dear General,

I would like to give my most grateful thanks to the Sauze d'Oulx Carabinieri Alpine Rescue Ski Patrol consisting of Brigadiere Ulderico Eusepi, Carabiniere Luca Cerra and Carabiniere Luca Ribetti who on Sunday, March 1, 1987, due to the serious conditions of young Marco Cerati, who had suffered a fall on a ski piste, promptly saved the boy by calling the Carabinieri 1st Helicopter Nucleus of Volpiano, commanded by Captain Francesco Golini.

The aforementioned Captain with Maresciallo Michele Maccotta and Brigadiere Franco Garelo, promptly transported the young man to the Turin CTO, saving his life.

For the aforementioned reasons, I would like to give my warmest thanks to all these men for their efficiency and the remarkable professional skill they demonstrated in the performance of their duty.

With best regards.

Franco Mazzola

•••



Early 1980's. Turin-Aeritalia. Line-up of 1st NEC helicopters.

Turin, May 28, 1987

COMANDO I BRIGATA CARABINIERI
UFFICIO OAIO

nr. 33/6 di prot.
Subject: Letter of Praise

To Comando del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri di
Volpiano
and copy
To Comando della Legione Carabineiri di Torino

For the participation of the personnel concerned, I transmit copy of the letter Ref.13 / 24-1 / GC of 22 May 1987, in which the Commandant of the North-west Military Region expresses his thanks and appreciation for the rescue work carried out by the Carabinieri following a serious accident on 19 May 1987 in Cortereggio di Lusiglié (Turin).

Il Generale Comandante della Brigata
Sergio Colombini

•••

Turin, May 22, 1987

COMANDO REGIONE MILITARE NORD OVEST
SEGRETERIA DEL GENERALE COMANDANTE

13/2441/GC – Ringraziamento

To Colonnello Ercole Rocchetti Comandante della
Legione Carabinieri di Torino
and copy
To Comandante della Brigata Carabinieri di Torino

I would like to state my gratitude for the endeavours made by the men of your Legion on the occasion of the recent tragic event that has so sadly marked the life of the 1st Supply Department of Alexandria.

Particular acknowledgment goes to those who so solicitously intervened after the accident, allowing the timely evacuation of the surviving NCO and the containment of the injuries he received.

I therefore send you my most sincere appreciation and gratitude for the work done in these circumstances, and ask you to kindly pass this on to all those who took part.

Il Comandante
Gen. C.A. Domenico Corcione

•••

Turin, August 24, 1987

COMANDO I BRIGATA CARABINIERI
UFFICIO OAIO

33/10-1 – Ringraziamento

Al Signor Comandante del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri
Carabinieri di Volpiano

For the legitimate satisfaction of all concerned personnel, I transmit a copy of the letter of thanks from the Alderman for Tourism of the City of Susa.

Il Generale Comandante della Brigata
Sergio Colombini

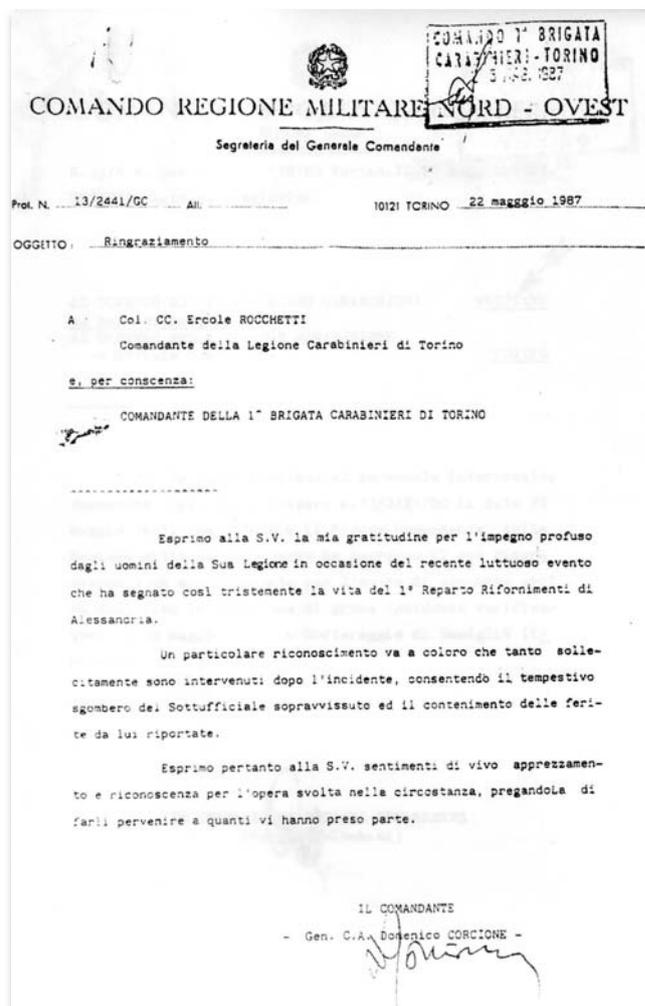
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CITTÀ DI SUSÀ
L'ASSESSORE AL TURISMO

The collaboration by the Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus during the Susa – Moncenisio automobile race was crucial and indispensable.

A Thank You is essential.

The event brought the Valley a well-merited ex-



posure at international level and its perfect success is also the work of the Carabinieri.

With best regards,

Marco Canavoso

•••

Turin, November 4, 1987

COMANDO I BRIGATA CARABINIERI
UFFICIO OAIO

N.33/16-1 di prot. Oggetto: Lettera di elogio

To Comando del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri –
Volpiano

With my request to inform all concerned personnel, please find a copy of the letter of September 11, 1987 from the Honourable Paolo Caccia, Vice-President of the House of Deputies Defence Committee.

Del Titolare
Il Colonnello
Comandante Int. della Brigata
Claudio Blasi

•••

Rome, September 11, 1987

IL VICE PRESIDENTE DELLA COMMISSIONE DIFESA
DELLA CAMERA DEI DEPUTATI

Dear Jucci,

following my return from my visit to the Valtellina area, which was tremendously damaged in July, it is impossible not to convey to you, the Commandant of the Carabinieri, my gratitude as a Member of Parliament of the Italian Republic and Vice President of the Defence Commission of the House of Deputies, for everything that your personnel have been able to do in those sad days among the people of the Valtellina.

Once again they have proved, though it is perhaps superfluous to repeat it, to be among the people and with the people whenever the problems are greatest, the injuries are most painful and the moments of suffering are at their most tragic.

The people of the Valtellina have once again seen: from Gen. Assumma to Col. Tafuro, but especially from Lt. Col. Bazzan to all the Officers, NCOs and Carabinieri, how prepared they are for sacrifice, as well as performing their service without asking anything except a smile from the people.

All this does honour to the Carabinieri and strongly reinforces the close ties between the Italian People and the Carabinieri themselves. Indeed, those who have lived through those days know how much your men have done to maintain tranquility, connections,

and security between the people of the Valtellina and the Rescue Organizations, as well as ensuring law and order in these dangerous days.

For this reason, I ask you to extend my gratitude and appreciation to all the Carabinieri personnel who were involved, as I have already done during the special meeting of the Environment and Public Works Committee of the Chamber. The same will come from me at the next meeting of the Defense Commission.

I take pleasure in the circumstance to send you my very best wishes.

Paolo Caccia

•••

Turin, September 15, 1987

GEN. ROBERTO JUCCI
COMANDANTE GENERALE DELL'ARMA DEI CARABINIERI
VIALE ROMANIA, 45
ROMA

Comando I Brigata Carabinieri
Ufficio OAIO

To Comando del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri

Please find a transcript of the telegram received by the Commandant of the Carabinieri Group of Novara from the Prefect of Novara, asking him to divulge its contents to the staff of this Nucleus who operated in the Val Formazza.

Ref. No. 5154 / 20.s / gab. Following the conclusion of the admirable rescue operation conducted in favour of the Upper Novarese population, severely affected by the recent calamitous events, I would like to express my appreciation and grateful thanks to you for the very effective action performed, and ask you to extend my sentiments to all units involved. *Period.* Cordially Stop
The Prefetto Giovanni Rossano.

•••

Turin, October 2, 1988

COMANDO I BRIGATA CARABINIERI
UFFICIO OAIO

Riferimento f. 94/2-15 del 2 ottobre 1987
Subject: Concession of Solemn Encomium
to Brigadier Fazzino Giuseppe.
Allegati: Un modello 104, Un attestato

To Comando della Legione Carabinieri di Torino
To Comando del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri
Volpiano

In accepting the proposal mentioned in the reference document I have:

- Conceded the award to Brigadier Fazzino Giuseppe of a simple commendation with the motivation as in the attached attestation;
- Expressed my satisfaction to Captain Gianni Domenico, to Maresciallo Ordinario Maccotta Michele and to Brigadiere Magnaguagno Ferruccio.

The General Headquarters Operations Office has confirmed (ref. 1071 / 4-1 of December 22, 1987), stating that the commendation will be published in a forthcoming Carabinieri official bulletin.

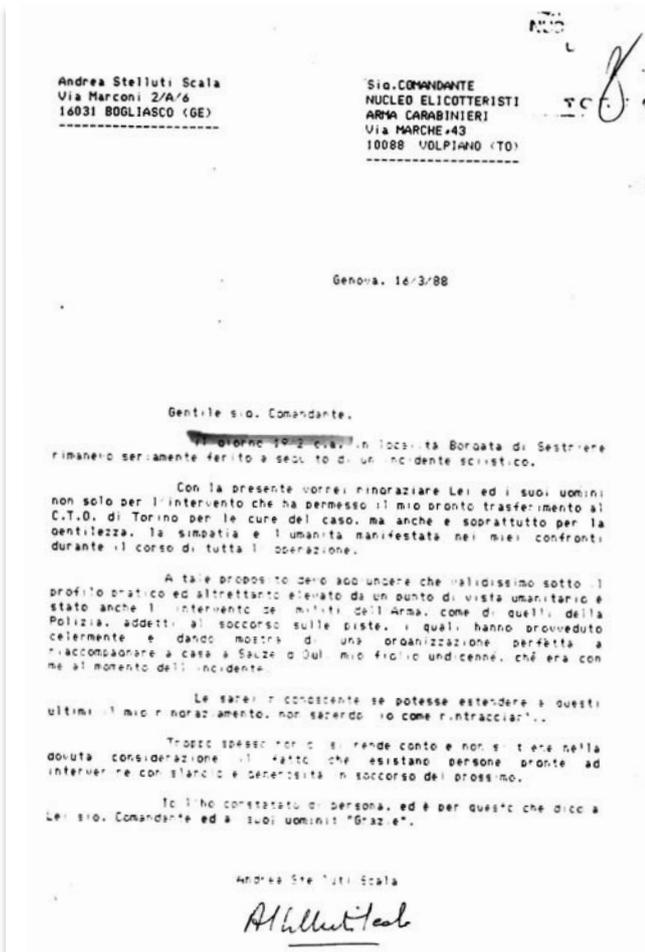
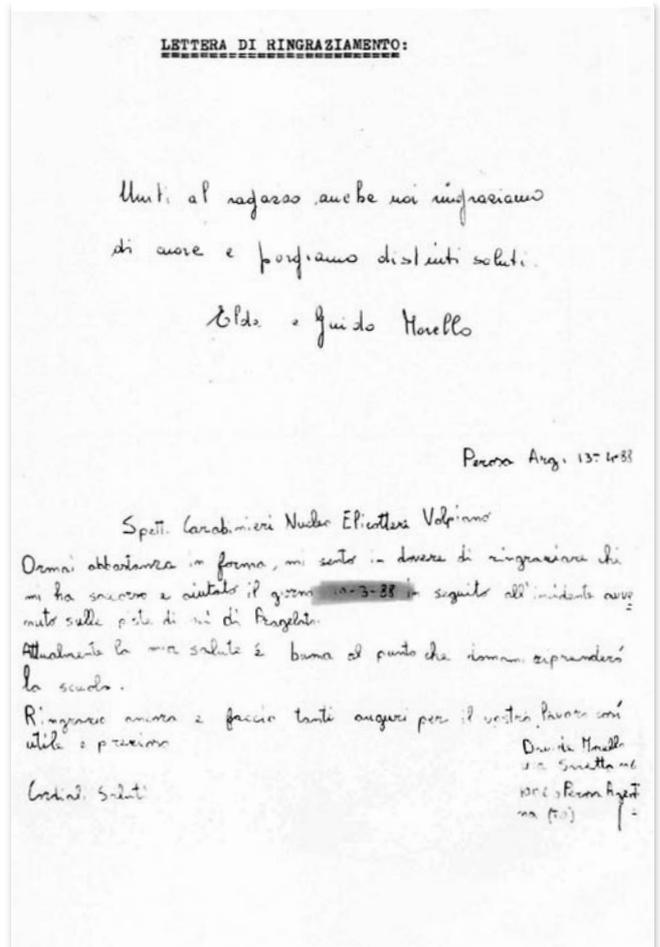
Please arrange accordingly.

Il Generale Comandante di Brigata
Sergio Colombini

Genoa, March 16, 1988

Sig. Comandante Nucleo Elicotteristi Arma Carabinieri
Via Marche, 43 – 10088 Volpiano (To)

Dear Commandant,
on 19.03. 1998, at Borgata di Sestriere, I was seriously injured following a skiing accident. I would like



to thank you and your men not only for the intervention that ensured my immediate transfer to C.T.O. Of Turin for the necessary car, but also and above all for the kindness, sympathy and humanity shown to me during the course of the whole operation.

In this regard, I must add how valid from a practical profile and also equally appreciated from the humanitarian point of view was the intervention by the Carabinieri and by the Police, who formed the rescue personnel on the slopes, and who quickly and with a demonstration of perfect organization accompanied my 11-year-old son, who was with me at the time of the accident, to Saule D'Oulx.

I would be grateful if I you could extend my thanks to them, not knowing how to trace them. Too often, one does not realize, or tends not to give sufficient consideration to the fact that there are indeed people prepared to intervene with skill and generosity in the rescue of others.

I have been able to personally verify the truth of this, and that is why I offer a grateful "Thank you" to you, Mr. Commandant, and to your men.

Andrea Stelluti Scala

Perosa Argentina, April 13, 1988

Spettabile Carabinieri Nucleo Elicotteri Volpiano

As I am now feeling much better, I am able to thank those who rescued me and aided me on 18 March 1988 following my accident on the Pragelato ski slopes.

At present, my health is now good enough to allow me to return to school tomorrow. Thank you again and I send you my very best wishes for your work which is so useful and valuable.

Best regards.

Davide Morello

We add our heartfelt thanks to those of our son and send you our very best regards

Elda e Guido Morello

•••

Turin, March 30, 1988

Spett.le

Nucleo Carabinieri Eliporto di Volpiano – Via Brandizzo
275 – 10080 Volpiano

In connection with the loss and subsequent recovery of our club member, on Sunday March 27 last, during the club outing to the Cima della Fascia, we would like to express our most grateful thanks for your immediate intervention.

In appreciation of your perfect organization, allow us to send you our kindest regards.

Club Alpino Italiano Sezione di Torino
Il Presidente
Rag. Ugo Grassi

•••

Turin, May 4, 1988

Rosina Marchisio, with her daughters Carla, Paola and Cristina, gratefully thank the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus for the timeliness and courage demonstrated by Commandant Marchisio and his fellow airmen during the rescue action.

At a difficult and painful time for us, we particularly want to tell Maresciallo Cubeddu that his generosity and his abnegation were of great comfort, and therefore were not in vain.

Rosina Marchisio

•••

Rome, May 6, 1988

COMANDO GENERALE ARMA DEI CARABINIERI
II REPARTO – SM – UFFICIO OPERAZIONI
N.297/37-1DI PROT.

To Comando 1° Elinucleo Carabinieri Volpiano
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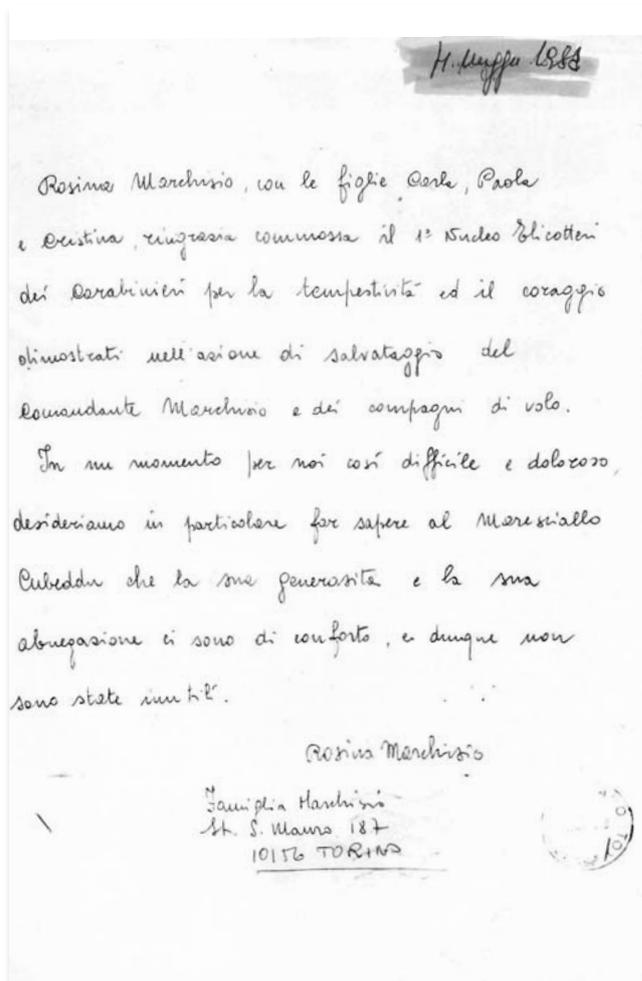
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in data 4 corrente della Compagnia di Venaria.

I would like to express my appreciation to Maresciallo Pietro Cubeddu, Brigadiere Mauro Rivano and Carabiniere Giovanni Battista Caddia.

•••

Usseglio, June 4, 1988

The family members of the late Angelo Armari who died tragically on May 29, 1988 on the slopes of the Grand'Uia , an imposing mountain in the upper Usseglio Valley, wish to show their immense gratitude for the work done by the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus of Volpiano in their speedy and effective search for the victim. We would also particularly like to thank the Helicopter pilot, Captain Francesco Golini, for the professionalism, ability, sensibility and skill which he demonstrated throughout this unfortunately sad occasion. I would be extremely grateful if you could kindly arrange, if possible, for the exposition



of this letter of thanks on a public message board or anywhere else that you consider to be more appropriate, so that in the hearts of men like Captain Golini, Maresciallo Maccotta, and all those who in one way or another participated in the tragedy, an indispensable flame of sacrifice and altruism continues to burn – one that leads them to be anywhere and at any time when the presence of the Carabinieri is required.

*I Familiari, gli Amici, il Soccorso Alpino Locale,
i Valligiani, i Cittadini tutti*

•••

Condove, August 25, 1988

COMUNE DI CONDOVE

Prot. nr. 4053

Subject: Emergency intervention at Alpe Tomba di Matolda; A Thank You.

On August 22, 1988, following a lightning strike that struck a flock of sheep in the Alpe Tomba mountain pasture, 34 animals were killed and another 3 were injured.

The municipality was faced with the urgent need to ensure the safety of the area, which required immediate action according to the Chief Veterinary Officer of the Susa Medical Unit 36 and the local Commandant of the State Forestry Corps.

The intervention was in difficult terrain and it was necessary to ensure that the burials were in a suitable place to prevent pollution of the underlying water table. In collaboration with the local Detachment of the Fire Brigade, an intervention was requested by the Volpiano Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus.

This was timely and resolutely performed in full compliance with the prescribed hygiene/sanitary provisions.

With this present letter, we gratefully thank: the Commandant and the members of the Condove Carabinieri Station who first dealt with our request, contacted the Helicopter Nucleus and participated in the entire operation; the Carabinieri of the 1st Helicopter Nucleus from Volpiano for their timely, rapid and precise intervention which effected the recovery and transportation of the dead animals to the site designated for their burial in the most functional way, without risk to anyone.

I take this occasion to send my very best regards.

Per il sindaco – L'assessore alla Montagna
Luciano Medellino

•••

Turin, September 14, 1988

To Comando della 1^a Brigata Carabinieri – Via Valfré,
5 – Torino

We are the children of Giovanna Dudda Camerano, who died on August 8, 1988 following an accidental fall in the woods of Villa di Prali (Turin) and was only found after eight days of intense search by the Carabinieri canine units and helicopters from Volpiano, Carabinieri from the Perrero Station, the Pinero-lo Alpine Troops, local Alpine Rescue teams, inhabitants of the valley and holidaymakers.

Although we are deeply distressed by the loss of our dear mother, we cannot but acknowledge the sacrifice and discomforts faced by the aforementioned personnel, especially those of the Brigadiere Commandant of the Perrero Station, who never stopped searching for a moment, even in his time off, and also used his own car at personal expense, providing us with every moral comfort and helping us with the bureaucratic aspects regarding the recovery of the body.

With this letter addressed to the Headquarters, we wish to sincerely thank that Carabinieri Brigadiere for his incredible kindness, as well as all the people who participated with him in the search.

His behaviour and actions bring honour to the entire Carabinieri Corps.

We cannot thank you enough,

*Camerano Wanda,
Camerano Francesco,
Camerano Laura*

•••

Vinovo, January 1989

PREMIO DI SOLIDARIETÀ¹
G.A.M. VINOVO

Dear Captain Domenico Gianni, we are pleased to inform you that the jury of the Friends of the Mountain Group of Vinovo, have conferred on you the "ALPINE SOLIDARITY AWARD – 1988", for the intervention of August 9, 1988 on the Bessanese peak.

*Gruppo Amici della Montagna di Vinovo
Patrocinio della Sezione C.A.I di Torino*

•••

¹ Il correlato premio in denaro è stato devoluto all'O.N.A.O.M.A.C.



© Mario Solero

1972, Balme. Preparations for the rescue of the late Tomasa Mura.

Interview by Mauro Marucco

Balme, February 21, 1972

Evacuation of Mrs Tomasa Mura in advanced state of pregnancy using the helicopter of the Carabinieri from the Municipality of Balme to the Maurizian Hospital in Lanzo Torinese.

During the winter of 1971-72, the Piedmontese alpine region was characterized by copious and intense snowfall, and a number of Alpine Valleys remained isolated due to numerous avalanches. The bad weather continued with copious snowfall and the snow removal machinery could be employed, due to the continuous danger of avalanches. During this exceptional winter, it was calculated that the total snowfall in the mountainous area was between 13 to 16 metres .

The municipality of Balme (in 1972, inhabited by around 240 people) is located in one of the Lanzo valleys in the province of Turin at an altitude of 1500 metres and at that time remained isolated for more than three months. The situation was considered

disadvantageous but was not considered as being an emergency. The inhabitants were accustomed to coexisting with those exceptional weather events that occur in mountainous territory even though some apprehension could be felt.

Mrs. Tomasa Mura, in an advanced state of pregnancy, was monitored with the presence of doctors, and as the telephone communications were interrupted, amateur radio equipment was always in contact with the Municipality of Ala of Stura for any emergencies that might occur in Balme.

If necessary, the helicopter of the Turin Carabinieri was made available and was in radio communication with Ala of Stura. They would have sent the aircraft, but weather conditions were always adverse, making it impossible to fly.

On May 4, 2016, some 40 years later, Mrs. Tomasa kindly allowed herself to be interviewed to recount an event that involved her personally:

Q. How did you feel, what was your state of mind?

A. I felt reasonably well, and although there was some apprehension and concern, I was almost at the



end of my eighth month of pregnancy and I understood that I could begin to have the birth pangs at any time, but my biggest concern was at having to leave my husband and our first three-year-old son in Balme to go to the hospital.

Q. Did you know there was a Carabinieri helicopter ready to take you there?

A. Yes, I was aware of that, but during that winter there were very few days of good weather and when it was not snowing there were always low clouds with poor visibility. The helicopter had already tried to get to Balme several times. I did not know it was for me, but thought it was trying to bring food and medicine, but it had always had to give up. The best it could do was to reach the Mondrone district of Ala di Stura at 1200 metres. I would like to point out that while I knew about the existence of a helicopter, no one told me that I could be transferred by that to Lanzo, I had never even thought about it.

Q. Anyway, you were ready to leave for the hospital in Lanzo.

A. Certainly, the inhabitants of Balme and Ala of Stura always brought me some of the necessities in case I needed to go, and everybody was waiting for the helicopter, but the adverse weather conditions did

not. In the meantime, I moved from my house to another in the village of Albaron, near the provincial road, ready to walk to Ala di Stura. I knew that the men of Balme and Ala Stura's Alpine Rescue Corps were prepared the helicopter landing area every day by packing down the snow that always fell copiously.

Q. What were you thinking while you were waiting to go to the Lanzo Hospital?

A. During the day I did not have much time to think, I was busy getting ready to leave and checking that I had everything I needed without forgetting anything, while in the evening and at night if I woke up, there was some fear, but I hoped that everything would go well, especially for the unborn child.

Q. Did you have to wait a long time before you could leave?

A. I was convinced that I would leave by ordinary means, even on foot if necessary, even although everybody had been waiting, unknown to me, for three days for the helicopter to arrive.

Q. When the helicopter finally arrived what day was it?



© Mario Solero

A. A. When I heard the helicopter arrive and land on the prepared ground near where I was, I was happy because I thought, finally here comes the bread for all Balme, but instead people came to tell me to hurry up because the helicopter was waiting for me and they brought me right to it. It was February 21, 1972.

Q. What were your feelings at the start? Were you a little afraid?

A. No, I did not feel any fear, I was more concerned about my husband who had gone to the hospital on foot. They put me in a stretcher in a sort of sarcophagus that was attached to one of the skids and when they lowered the lid my vision became very limited as there was only a small window in front of my face and all I could see was sky. The helicopter took off for Lanzo and the only thing that made me suffer was the cold I felt on my feet during the trip. Other than that, all went well.

Q. When you finally got to Lanzo where did you land?

A. The helicopter landed at the Sports Field where they helped me out of the sarcophagus. I was very surprised because an elderly gentleman who had approached made the sign of the cross, and was convinced that it held a corpse. Instead I was well and lively and an ambulance took me to the Maurizian Hospital in Lanzo.

Q. Tell me about your stay in the hospital and your return to Balme. How did that take place?

A. In the hospital I was fine and very relaxed. Teresa was born on March 16, 1972, and on March 21 I was discharged, and with the baby, the midwife and my husband, left in a rented car for Balme. Having gone as far as we could with the car, we got out and began to walk (the midwife was in tears – terrified by the strange environment) while I was happy to get home to my son who was waiting for me). Near the graveyard we rested in the scoop of a snow-clearing truck and finally got home.

Q. Anything else you would like to add?

A. I would like to thank the Alpine Rescue of Balme, Ala di Stura and all the inhabitants who have always been friendly to me and always ready to bring comfort and assistance to all those who needed it. A special and affectionate thanks to the pilot and co-pilot of the Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus of Turin – who knows how many times they risked trying to reach me. I do not remember the names of all those who helped me, but THANK YOU ALL, I am very grateful.

The Castagneri family of Michele and Tomasa still live happily in Balme, now with two grandchildren and with their son Agostino and her daughter Teresa who, since 2014, is the Deputy Mayor of Balme.

Testimony by Vincenzo Cocco

COLLABORATION WITH THE 1ST CARABINIERI HELICOPTER NUCLEUS OF VOLPIANO (TORINO) AND THE PIEMONTE REGION

TECHNICAL PREVENTION SERVICES DIRECTORATE
GEOLOGICAL SERVICES

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Collaboration with the 1st Helicopter Nucleus of the Carabinieri began episodically in October 1977 and became more structural with effect from November 1983. It consisted of two specific activities: avalanche prospecting and reconnaissance flights during the initial stages of hydrogeological emergencies.

This collaboration was temporarily interrupted in 1984 following the tragic accident that occurred on March 13 of that year to a Carabinieri helicopter in the Chisone Valley.

It is also worth remembering that in the summer of 1988, the hypothesis of a feasibility study for the use of the Volpiano Nucleus helicopters for medical emergencies in the Piedmont Region was first put forward. The idea of this study was amply shared by Sergio Marchini, at that time Regional Assessor, as well as by the Minister of Defence, Valerio Zanone.

The Carabinieri HQ, however, expressed their support for the establishment of a dedicated medical service managed by the Piedmont Medical Authorities, while still remaining available for participation in the event of major accidents and / or natural disasters.

AVALANCHE PROSPECTING FLIGHTS

Between the end of April and the beginning of May 1986, a number of serious avalanche events oc-



Valerio Zanone, Minister of Defence, visits the 1st NEC in Volpiano.

curred, in particular in the northern parts of Piedmont, with numerous flights over the provinces of Vercelli and Verbania to carry regional geologists for reconnaissance and documentation of avalanche damage, particularly along the roads of the Valsesia, Valle Anzasca and Alto Formazza, interrupted in several places.

On March 10, 1993, heavy snowfall provoked avalanche damage, particularly to the central and southern sectors of Piedmont (requiring flights in the Stura, Gesso, Chisone and Germanasca Valleys).

An intense and prolonged snowfall at the beginning of January 1996 caused numerous avalanches in the southern parts of Piedmont (flights in the Cunean Alps with regional geologists for reconnaissance and documentation of phenomena).

Between 1987 and 1993 there were numerous flights to support the installation of the regional automatic snow measurement network:



Helicopter line in service at 1st NEC based at Volpiano. From the left: an AB 206 B1, an A109 and an AB 412. The photo on the next page shows an AB 412.



- Reconnaissance during the winter preceding the installation to verify the significant aspects of the sites, previously equipped with snow-measuring rods;
- Checks and manual acquisition of stored data, in particular at Colle della Lombarda (Vinadio), Pian delle Barache (Sampeyre), Colle Barant (Bobbio Pellice), Gastaldi refuge (Balme) and Piano dei Camosci (Formazza).

The Meteorological Radar of the Bric della Croce was renewed in 1997. The Helicopter Nucleus was provided with a terminal allowing access to real-time data for experimentation concerning Flight Safety. This collaboration ended in the year 2000.

RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS DURING THE PRIMARY STAGES OF HYDROGEOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES

Major interventions

October 6, 1977. Rainfall in the catchment area of the Tanaro-Orba basins and tributaries exceeded 300 mm causing significant flooding and large number of landslides which in particular affected the village of



Monserito in the Municipality of Gavi. Helicopter intervention: Flights to allow site inspections by regional engineers, for assessment of damage and situations of greatest criticality.

August 7-8, 1978. A violent thunderstorm hit the Ossola valleys, particularly the Vigezzo valley. This caused sudden and devastating river flooding and a great number of landslides in which 15 people lost their lives.

Helicopter interventions: rescue flights, logistics support to the affected populations and flights for measurements by regional engineers.

August 29, 1985. In the area of Frua, Municipality of Formazza, a landslide struck the valley road, hitting three vehicles, causing the death of three people and injuring seven others.

Helicopter interventions: overflights with regional engineers to carry out an analysis of the conditions of the cliff walls.

August 24-26, 1987. The Ossola was again hit by a major hydro-meteorological event that caused



widespread damage to the area, especially in the Antigori and Formazza valleys.

Helicopter interventions: overflights with regional engineers to check critical situations.

June 10, 1992. A landslide affected a group of houses at Campo della Vigna in the Noalesa (Torino) area. Three families would later be transferred.

Helicopter interventions: Overflight with regional geologists for detailed verification of the situation.

January 8, 1992. Reactivation of the historical landslide of Baio Dora at Borgofranco d'Ivrea (Torino).

Helicopter interventions: Overflight with regional geologists to check details of the slope conditions.

August 6, 1992. A sludge and debris landslide affected the provincial road and a campsite at Ceresole Reale (Torino).

Helicopter interventions: Overflight with regional geologists to check details of the slope conditions above the affected area.

September 22-23, 1993. A downfall of vast proportions struck central Piedmont in the north and

south-east, causing significant effects along the rivers and slopes.

Helicopter interventions: flights for logistical support to the affected population and survey flights for regional engineers.

November 2-6, 1994. Another flood involved 750 municipalities, most of central and southern Piedmont, causing more than 60 victims.

Helicopter interventions: rescue flight, logistics support to the affected population and survey flights by regional engineers.

October 13-15, 2000. A violent flooding affected much of the Piedmont Region with floods, landslides and significant infrastructural damage.

Helicopter interventions: rescue flights, logistics support to the affected population and survey flights by regional engineers.

It is worth remembering that during the intervention of August 29, 1985, the re-entry of the AB 412 helicopter from Domodossola to Turin took place at night under instrumental flight conditions.



Testimony by Roberto Testi

I woke up in a bed with a splitting headache. I looked around, seeing that I was in a ward in an unknown hospital, with 5 other bed-ridden patients, of whom I do not have the strength to ask anything.

I was, at that time, a (not very brilliant) medical student and an almost professional ice hockey player, but also and above all, a young, fearless parachutist, in love with flight and that sensation of perfect freedom that you get when the noise of the aircraft fades and the sound of the air during free fall takes over.

Slowly, my memory returned: it was a Sunday in January and the airfield was closed due to a dense mist, something not uncommon for our city. We were anxious to make the first launch of the year and when, immediately after lunch, we saw (or wanted to see) the bell tower at the far end of the runway, we hired the first pilot willing to take us up. The engine failed immediately after take-off, and we made an impossible attempt at an emergency landing between farm buildings and high tension cables. The pilot and one of us were killed, but I did not know this because I was unconscious.

I vaguely recall, although I do not know if it was just a dream, the face of a boy about my age, looking almost familiar, smiling and calmly asking me how I feel. I see a gray flight suit but, above all, I see the symbol that for me, since the time of my first communion, when my godfather lived in the Cernaia Barracks, represents the most noble aspect of our society: the Alamari (badge of office of the Carabinieri).

I tell him that I think I've broken my back because I cannot move my legs, and then I think of something that only a stupid parachutist could think: *good, this will be my first helicopter flight!*

Then I went into a coma full of dreams!

When I finally managed to talk to my roommates, they told me that on the day of my arrival they heard the sound of a helicopter and saw the reflections of the landing light through the mist, but they were unable to see the slim shape of the helicopter (an AB 206)!

From my window, on the 8th floor, to the landing area, the distance is less than 200 metres. I often wonder how these pilots were able to reach the CTO in those conditions of poor visibility.



The Carabinieri Climbers of the Aosta Group during a break following an exercise in the Gran Paradiso park. From the left: Maresciallo Climber Michele Maurino, Dr. Roberto Testi, Captain Francesco Golini, Captain Domenico Gianni, Brigadiere Sebastiano Ciccio, Carabiniere Climber Maurizio Carrara. Behind them is an AB 412.



Maresciallo Maggiore, Military Alpine Instructor, Leader of the Aosta Carabinieri Alpine Rescue Team

I knew the Carabinieri of the Helicopter Nucleus because their base was right behind the parachute cabin at the historic Aeritalia flight field. We would see them at the aeroclub café: kind and always smiling, although we never went beyond that cordiality characteristic of those who fly.

I am passionate about flying and when they tell me how they reached the CTO I think: *Wow!* (not exactly that term), *these guys really have got balls!* Months later, with that minimum amount of alcohol in the blood that facilitates confidences among friends, they told how they landed at the CTO: they managed to see the antenna and the roof of the 16-storey building through the fog then descended vertically, counting the floors from 16 to 1. And to think I had felt safe when I saw that the Carabinieri had come to help me!

Obviously, as soon as I could move, despite the bulky plaster cast that protected my two broken vertebrae, I went to find them, to meet them, to thank them and to offer them a drink, as parachutists do when they have escaped danger, when they make an emergency landing or win a competition. Or for any one of the endless excuses that paratroopers find to justify a celebration.

Later, we also organized a few football matches that we lost systematically because those cunning helicopterists reinforced their (rather weak) team with

real footballers who were doing National Service at the Carabinieri School in Turin! The pilot of the helicopter which helped me was Francesco Golini, then a Lieutenant.

It was impossible not to be fascinated by Franco's personality since, in addition to being recognized as a true legend in the Carabinieri Air Service, had a life and service experience that made him unique: enlisted as a simple Carabiniere he had become a pilot, Flight Instructor and then an Officer, with time as a parachutist in the *Tuscania* battalion, awarded a military medal for a gunfight at Termini station in Rome worthy of the screenplay of an action movie.

The second pilot, whose friendly face I saw after the crash, was Claudio Galliano, then Brigadiere, originally from Dronero and a man of vast culture, cultivated in a life always searching for the deeper values of man and which had brought him from the Seminary to the School for Non-Commissioned Officers of the Carabinieri and today, after demobilization, sees him in Africa involved in cooperation projects, to which he contributes with characteristic generosity and altruism.

It was not only gratitude which gave birth to this bond of deep friendship, but the sharing of values and ideals. Solid friendship, as often happens in the special world of flying, from the unconditional love of everything that occurs once you leave the ground. Above



AB 412 taking off from the base of Volpiano.

all, Franco and the other pilots loved mountain flight, something which puts man and machines to the extreme test, with little or no margin for error. At that time there only the AB 206 and the A109 were in use, helicopters not particularly suitable for flight among the mountains. In our valleys, the apparently unattainable reference was the French Gendarmerie using the *Alouette III*, an ideal machine for Alpine rescue.

I was on the brink of getting my medical degree and many times wondered what could have been done in the field of rescue with a suitable helicopter, but it seemed impossible and, above all, there was neither culture nor organization that would allow it .

A tragic flight accident on March 13, 1984, where Captain Fausto Paniconi, the then Commandant of the Nucleus, Maresciallo Nibaldo Bianchini and Brigadiere Fausto Bertacchini were killed, saw command of the Helicopter Nucleus being assigned to Franco Golini.

He was the right man who came to the right place but in the worst way that this could happen. With its heart still filled with pain, the Nucleus then began its most significant period of professional growth. The base was transferred to Volpiano and after a few months, the most advanced helicopter that the Carabinieri had just put into service, the AB 412, arrived in Turin.

In an unforgettable autumn evening, Franco called me and invited me to Volpiano to see the new arrival.

Obviously I went immediately and entered a mist-

enshrouded hangar in which the lights of the halogen lights gave the blue 412 a breath-taking powerful and threatening air. All the pilots and mechanics were there, despite the fact that their hours of service were long finished, enthusiastically commenting on the new helicopter. I immediately saw the winch on the right hand side, essential for mountain rescue and I felt Franco's hand on my shoulder as he simply said to me: "Everything that we have ever thought about can be done with this".

An unbelievable, unforgettable period began, something which in my life represents one of the moments of greatest human growth. Franco and the men of the Nucleus were incredible, and achieved things that at any other historical moment would probably not have been possible. The fantastic project to carry the wings of the Carabinieri into the Piedmontese valleys was supported by many people, including Giuliano Valsania and Mauro Marucco of the Piedmontese Alpine and Speleological group, , Osvaldo Napoli, the mayor of Giaveno, who procured us the necessary mountain equipment, the MP Raffaele Costa and Valerio Zanone, the then Minister of Defence, who understood the usefulness of the helicopter in the mountains, along with many other directors, volunteers and Carabinieri personnel.

The French Gendarmerie was the example which inspired us: superb flight professionals, excellent mountaineers and above all, equipped with helicopters that seemed to have been made for use in the mountains. In addition, they had a doctor on board, which



meant an early aid to the injured, which on occasion, could make the difference between life and death.

But using a helicopter like the AB 412 in our valleys was not easy: the pilots studied a powerful and complex machine, one whose flight manuals did not even consider its behavior and performance at the altitude at which it was supposed to operate.

Passion, enthusiasm and training have enabled rapid growth of the unit's operational capabilities and deeper knowledge of the use of the machine, consolidated by frequent exercises with Alpine and Speleological Rescue technicians, with the Italian Air Force and with the Carabinieri Alpine Training Center of Selva di Val Gardena.

I think that those who have lived through those years of the "HeliNucleus", as we called it, cannot but have become different and better persons. For those who, like me, worked in the civilian world, it was amazing to be in an environment where competition, healthy, honest and always cheerful, meant trying to do better and more work, not trying to avoid it. Work for those who fly is a somewhat relative concept: to fly is the realization, aimed at something useful, perhaps of an innate instinct, but above all of a dream, which has been ours since we were small, or perhaps it is in the genetic heritage which has been transmitted to us. Flying is all this and much more, but it is not a job. With regard to this, I heard once Franco say after he had retired for the Carabinieri: "Now I have really started to work, because when I was in service, all I had was a magnificent hobby".

There was a large whiteboard in the operations room, where each pilot marked up the flight hours that he had achieved, making a distinction between operational and training hours. The goal was to ensure that all crews achieved the same operational level, but that whiteboard hid a merciless race to reach the end of the month with more flying hours than others. It was occasionally animated by the hilarious tricks and subterfuges that each pilot dreamed up in order to appear in debt for hours – and thus be able to fly more. There were many rescues, some simple, some complex and sometimes exceptional. These will al-

ways remain in the minds of those who lived through them, but there were also many awards through the years, testimonies and dozens of memories which filled the recreation room of the Volpiano base.

So many different rescues; many times with anxiety and feverish activity to keep the injured person alive, sometimes the only need to warm him up and comfort him. Sometimes there were quiet flights on sunny days, sometimes with wind, turbulence, and clouds, but a number of intense emotions were always the same.

First of all, the adrenaline that stems from the passage in only a minute or two, of relaxed conversation between friends to an operational rescue flight, without knowing exactly what would need to be done, but being sure of doing what was best.

Then there is that absolute trust in companions felt when everyone relies completely on the others, knowing that it is the same for them; the confidence that allows you to concentrate only on what you have to do and that, in the end, fills you with the pride you feel of being part of a crew.

In the end, there is a strange feeling of lightness when, having offloaded the injured, going back along the Po towards Volpiano, with that mild euphoria which follows the tension, leads you to immediately start to joke about danger, about fear and, it must be said, about death, which on occasion, you have come to see at first hand.

My last rescue I remember with melancholy, but also with pride. The A 109 of the ACI 116 service was already operational by then, and the Nucleus no longer received any rescue requests, but I often spent the weekend in Volpiano with my friends. One Sunday, the 116 HQ requested an intervention at altitude in the upper Lanzo valley, motivating this with the fact that the target was at a higher altitude than that possible for their helicopter, thus requiring intervention by the more powerful AB 412 of the Carabinieri. We were in the operating room when Maresciallo Magnaguagno relayed the request, but we were immediately aware that our AB 412 was at Pratica di Mare (Rome) for maintenance and that at Volpiano

there was only an A 109 available. We looked at each other, wondering what to do, and Captain Domenico Gianni, who at that time was our “Boss” (Squadron Commander), said with a smile: “They can’t go with their 109, but we will”, and so we went.

The mission went perfectly, at the limit of the machine’s ability and physically challenging because, not having a winch, we had to bring the patient, a cowherd with a heart attack, to where it was possible to land the helicopter. Then we flew him to the CTO, landed and got him into the ambulance.

A few minutes later, having switched off our engines, there was our 109 right next to the ACI Rescue Helicopter on the CTO helipad. The duty pilot and the anesthetist were nearby and asked us about the mission, knowing full well that this was the one they had refused. The doctor asked if our helicopter was more powerful because it was a military one. At that moment I felt a mixture of sadness and anger but calmly replied: “Look closer at them – they might seem to be the same, but in reality they’re different – because our one bears the magic word – CARABINIERI”.

In that moment, my eyes filled with tears as I realized that a pioneering and marvelous epoch had come to an end, one in which I had had the honour

of having a small part. I console myself when I think that today, the 118 Helicopter Rescue Service operates with standards of absolute excellence both in the aeronautical and medical fields. It is worth mentioning that the subsidiary Helicopter Rescue service guaranteed by the Carabinieri was the precursor of the Helicopter Emergency Medical System (HEMS) and that this service, operated by AIRGREEN ELICOTTERI of Robassomero, is certainly an all-Piedmontese excellence. Two former Nucleus pilots, Claudio Galliano and Francesco Golini, after their retirement from the Carabinieri, collaborated in various ways up until 2015 with the Regional 118 helicopter rescue service, contributing with their diverse responsibilities to achieving today’s results.

I would like to think that the path was traced by the Flight Unit in which they served, in one of these fortunate coincidences that transform dreams into reality, when a group of young courageous, cheerful, determined men, united by the bond of strong friendship, are brought together with the same intention of ensuring the best expressions of active citizenship like that of the Alpine Rescue Volunteers. A friendship that is strengthened by the profound values inspired by the Carabinieri, by Airmen and by all those who love the Mountains.



Main awards received in recent times

April 13, 2001

Commendation from the Specialized Unit HQ for the activities performed by the NEC from the 14th to 29th October 2000, during the disastrous flooding in Piedmont and the Aosta Valley.

July 23, 2007

Simple Commendation by the Specialized Unit HQ for the activities performed by the NEC, from September 2002 to March 2006 on the occasion of the preparation for and conduct during the XX Winter Olympics.

January 31, 2013

Thanks from the HQ of the Carabinieri Aircraft Group for the activity of the NEC during 2012 to contrast the cultivation of Indian hemp.

XX Winter Olympics , Turin 2006.





XX Winter Olympics , Turin 2006.



FROM SUBSIDIARY HELICOPTER RESCUE TO THE MEDICAL HELICOPTER SERVICE



1965. An Italian Navy Sikorsky H-34 / S-58 carries an injured patient to the Torino CTO Hospital.

On March 13, 1988, an experimental helicopter medical service was inaugurated in the Province of Cuneo. The need for a First Aid and Immediate Resuscitation Service using helicopters has become obvious.

The diversified experience in Europe and the positive results achieved in other Italian regions have justified the establishment of a medical helicopter base in the Province of Cuneo. It has become clear that the valuable ancillary activity by Carabinieri and Police helicopters are able to conduct in the event of public or private accidents are insufficient to meet a need that is essentially medical, and thus requires a dedicated service.

The Piedmont Regional Health Council formed a working group to promote the most rational Helicopter Rescue system possible without ignoring the experience so far matured. Commandant Claudio Galliano, a pilot recently retired from the 1st NEC was a member of the Commission. This 118 Helicopter Rescue Technical Commission was set up in 2006 and was coordinated by Major Francesco Golini until December 2014.



A 109 with medical personnel.

(Photo: Archive D.I.E.S.T. 118)

The example of the nearby French Gendarmerie who carry medical teams aboard their helicopters was not adopted in Italy, which chose the path of creating a dedicated and autonomous medical emergency service, giving birth to the HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical System).

There was a need to respond to the requirements arising from road accidents, work-related accidents in both agricultural and industrial activities and those of Civil Protection.

Additional requirements for the transportation of the ill and injured also arose from the decision to centralize a number of pathologies in specialized regional centres, e.g. burn units.

The service was operated with the collaboration of all the national health service centres in the province of Cuneo as well as the anesthesia and resuscitation services.

The operations centre was set up at the Savigliano Hospital, and was active from seven in the

morning until sunset. Having evaluated the technical feasibility of the intervention, it had an Ecureuil 350 helicopter available to transport the medical crew consisting of a doctor, a resuscitator and two nurses.

An arrangement was made to respond to the specific requirements of the National Alpine Corps and also to perform those interventions coordinated and integrated across all technical and medical personnel that require to interact in cases of emergency-urgency, from severe accidents up to public calamities. From then on, the hospital would come to the patient even where ambulances could not go.

The helicopter is an extraordinary multiplier of medical resources and is a versatile instrument that can deploy the resuscitation unit over a vast territorial scale with times that are finally compatible with their needs. The service is also economically viable and profitable, considering the high number of human and technological resources that would



116 Helicopter Rescue Center.

(Photo: Archive D.I.E.S.T. 118)

be needed to deliver an equally effective and timely response using surface-borne medical units.

In addition, the helicopter also promoted the diffusion of the mobile resuscitation unit, being clear from the experience of the pioneers of the helicopter rescue service that more than any others, a medical resuscitator possesses the manual dexterity required in typical cardiopulmonary resuscitation interventions, in anti-shock assistance, comatosis and has the ability to discriminate between the current conditions and the consequent hospital destination of the patient.

The motto which was adopted AGAINST TIME FOR LIFE testifies how thanks to the speed of the helicopter, the primary objective of the new service, i.e. to bring an expert medical team to people with serious injuries or illness as soon as possible, can be achieved.

Very often only a specialist and timely intervention can guarantee survival or to avoid the subse-

quent occurrence of highly disabling and dramatic handicaps.

By June 1988, one hundred days after it became active, the medical helicopter service had performed 99 interventions and transported 117 injured people.

Coordinated by the Savigliano Operations Centre, it had brought aid, in particular, to 34 road accidents, 4 of which were on the Torino-Savona highway.

Now, Dr. Danilo Bono, the then Regional Coordinator of the Helicopter Rescue Service and now the General Manager of ASL2 in Cuneo, the other 16 resuscitation doctors and the 40 nurses see their dream come true and hope for an extension of the service to the entire Piedmont Region.

In the meantime, in other Italian regions, similar experiences are taking shape, unfortunately with the typical disadvantages of any pioneering phase.

In 1988, only in neighboring Lombardy, two

Rescue Helicopter accidents occurred. The first was near Vigevano and occurred during landing, when the blades struck a high tension cable. The five crew members sustained serious injuries and the helicopter was destroyed.

The second occurred to an Agusta 109 which had to effect an emergency touchdown on Lake Iseo. The passengers were unhurt because they jumped into the water before the helicopter made contact, while the pilot who had completed the emergency maneuver with notable expertise was seriously injured.

These incidents attracted the attention of the aviation authorities which contributed to the improvement of safety by accelerating the issuance of directives to regulate helicopter rescue operations, the now internationally-defined HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical System) and to improve the safety of helicopter landing areas used by medical teams.

Agusta 109 equipped for medical intervention.

Throughout Europe, seminars and studies on HEMS were being intensified. The risks did not curb the determination of the health workers, or that of the Administrators of the Province of Cuneo and the heads of the Piedmontese health service, thus the "Corriere Medico" of July 16, 1988 stated:

Piedmont, which with Lombardy has the highest road traffic density in Italy, will soon have a heli-ambulance service entrusted to the Automobile Club of Italy. The experimental phase of the project (estimated duration of one year at a cost of about 4.5 billion lire) will be launched on 20 July 1988.

Dr. Danilo Bono reported in a note dated August 2, 1988:

On August 1, 1988, the bases became operative at the following times:

- TORINO ORE 09,00
- CUNEO/LEVALDIGI ORE 10,00
- BORGOSIESA ORE 11,00
- NOVARA ORE 12,00

(Photo: Archive D.I.E.S.T. 118)





A medical version of an Agusta 109 with snow skis, in the livery of the Piedmont Region and of ACI, overflies the city of Turin (Photo: Archive D.I.E.S.T. 118).

The PIEDMONT RESCUE HELICOPTER SERVICE created by the Piedmont Region's Department of Health, the first and currently the only one of its kind in Italy – a medical service offering full coverage of the regional territory, is coordinated by a single Operations Centre.

The Carabinieri of the 1st Helicopter Nucleus, despite being less involved, participated when required in joint missions, while providing the Region with the advice required to develop the service and the network of hospital and territorial helipads in accordance with full criteria of safety.



*Commandant Attilio Tossini and the medical crew
(Photo: Archive D.I.E.S.T. 118).*

Rescue helicopters today (Photos Airgreen Archive)



Helicopter rescue, thanks to the experience gained during the experimental period in the Province of Cuneo, also includes the National Alpine Rescue Corps technicians both in the operational center and in the HEMS bases and in the helicopter.

The medical team consists of medical professionals in anesthesia and resuscitation as well as professional nurses who have undergone specific training. The organization and management of the service was entrusted to an agency, ACI ELISOC-CORSO, with a single operational headquarters responsible for a single emergency number throughout the region: 116.

All this was four years in advance of the institution of the National telephone medical emergency number "118" established with the Presidential Decree of March 27, 1992.

The Piedmontese medical helicopter rescue service innovated and optimized the Emergency-Urgency Medical Service paving the way for that day-to-day reality called HEMS 118 (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) of the Piedmont Region, which today, after more than five years of activity, can be considered as an excellence, and not merely Italian.

The Piedmont Region's HEMS inaugurated night flying on November 1, 2014 after a trial phase, taking advantage of the latest European legislation that allows landings in areas with dimensions equivalent to those of a soccer field, even at night.

This state-of-the-art service, together with ENAC, ENAV and AGUSTA-WESTLAND, led to the certification of the specific instrument procedures for the network of HEMS 118 Bases and the Hospital Helipads in the Piedmont Region. This project allows an ever-greater fruition of the service to the benefit of the population, and also ensures economy of service management.

This Piedmontese example of Savoyan efficiency in which, taking into account the increased speed and performance of helicopters, has gained efficiency by reducing the number of bases and promoting the use of the most modern aeromedical technologies.

This is an example that could also be followed by those organizations which instead prefer to cut costs by limiting training, employment, and renouncing the modernization of the flight line, thus shutting the doors to research, to innovation and to the potential of this extraordinary multiplier of resources that is the helicopter.





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March 2017. AW 169 HEMS.



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1ST CARABINIERI HELICOPTER NUCLEUS – VOLPIANO



Aerial view of the Volpiano base.



Operations centre.



Most of the photos in this chapter were taken by Brigadiere Goffredo Borreni.



As of October 10, 1983, the Unit was definitively transferred to its current headquarters of Via Brandizzo 275, Volpiano and at the same time became equipped with the first twin turbine helicopter, the A 109 *Hirundo*.

At the same base there is also a Canine Nucleus, often employed in joint operations with the Helicopter Nucleus, as a valuable aid to the various departments of the Carabinieri during the accomplishment of its institutional services and for public emergencies.

After the introduction of the 109 A, the unit had to wait until 1985,



Caselle, policing operations.

the 15th of June to be precise, when it became equipped, on a permanent basis, with the more powerful AB 412 Grifone, a twin-engined aircraft with considerable load and operational capabilities.

Today, the flight line at the 1st Volpiano Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus consists of AB 412s.

On September 1, 1992, the Unit, after periods of dependence from the Legion and Brigade of Turin, was transferred to the direct dependence of the Aircraft Section of Pratica di Mare (Rome). In August 1998, with the opening of the 15th Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus in Villanova d'Albenga (Savona), the territorial competence of Volpiano over the Liguria Region came to an end.



Inside an AB 412 in flight over Sestriere.



AB 206 in flight over Turin.



Recovery by winch in the mountains.

In flight over the Susa Valley





From 1966 to today, the Unit, in addition to the qualified and intensive support activities provided to the territorial Carabinieri units in the Piedmont and Aosta Valley Regions during the numerous natural disasters that have affected the Regions within its remit, has participated in countless Rescue missions as follows:

- 1968 flooding in Piedmont;
- 1978 flooding in Alessandria;
- 1993 flooding in Liguria;
- 1994 flooding in Piemonte;
- 2000 flooding in Piemonte.



The flood of 1994.

AB 412 Grifone.



COMMANDING OFFICERS		
Ten. GUZZARDI Antonio	29.10.1966	30.07.1969
Ten. BARBATO Mario	31.07.1969	03.10.1970
Cap. LOGRANO Savino	04.10.1970	18.02.1974
Ten. GIUNTELLA Luigi	19.02.1974	18.10.1977
Cap. LOGRANO Savino	19.10.1977	08.07.1978
Ten. Col. CANCELLIERI Giorgio	09.07.1978	28.07.1980
Ten. FALCUCCI Sandro	29.07.1980	19.05.1981
Cap. PANICONI Fausto	20.05.1981	13.03.1984
Cap. GOLINI Francesco	14.03.1984	19.01.1989
Cap. GIANNÌ Domenico	20.01.1989	20.08.1992
Cap. GRILLI Stefano	21.08.1992	29.08.1994
Magg. CATTALINI Paolo	30.08.1994	14.12.1998
Magg. GARELLO Franco	15.12.1998	30.08.2007
Magg. SACCOCCI Stefano	31.08.2007	17.05.2012
Cap. TRIGGIANI Cristian	18.05.2012	09.02.2013
Ten. Col. GARELLO Franco	10.02.2013	Oggi

1988. A moment during a briefing for helicopter-transported personnel.



© Goffredo Borreni

OPERATIONAL SECTION LEADERS		
Ten. FALCUCCI Sandro	1978	1980
S.Ten. – Ten. GOLINI Francesco	1980	1984
Ten. GIANNI Domenico	1984	1989
Ten. GRILLI Stefano	1989	1992
Ten. TERRONE Francesco	1992	1995
M.A.S.Ups MACCOTTA Michele	1995	2001
Ten. – Cap. ADINOLFI Amedeo Maria	2001	2002
Lgt. MACCOTTA Michele	2002	2002
Ten. – Cap. MOGLIA Andrea	2002	2007
Lgt. MACCOTTA Michele	2007	2008
Ten. – Cap. TRIGGIANI Cristian	2008	2013
Lgt. TAPPA Massimo	2013	Oggi

TECHNICAL SECTION LEADERS		
Mar.Ca. CANCELLI Giuseppe	from 1966	
Mar. MONTALI Angelo		
Mar. ROMEO Aurelio		to 1979
M.A. C.S. GALLUZZI Giuseppe	1979	1996
M.A.S.Ups CAPRIOLI Michele	1996	2001
S.Ten. AUCELLO Saverio	2001	2002
Cap. RONCARI Paolo	2002	2003
Lgt. CAPRIOLI Michele	2003	2003
Magg. RONCARI Paolo	2003	2007
Lgt. CICCIO Sebastiano	2007	2007
Cap. GALVAGNI Gianfilippo	2007	2012
Lgt. CATTANEO Luca	2012	To date

Unit photo – 2007.



Flight accidents

On March 13, 1984, an A-109 helicopter, CC 89, crashed near Inverso di Pinasca – Val Chisone (To). Killed in the crash were Brigadier-General Mario Sateriale, Commandant of the 1st Carabinieri Brigade, Captain Fausto Paniconi (Pilot), C.O. of the 1st Helicopter Nucleu, Maresciallo Capo Nivaldo Bianchini (copilot) and Brigadiere Mechanic Mario Bertacchini.

La Stampa 4-03-1984

UN GUASTO AI COMANDI E SUBITO DOPO LO SCHIANTO

I quattro corpi dei carabinieri ritrovati a quota 1200 metri. Non si esclude che il pilota abbia perso il controllo per la nebbia. Domani i funerali

Quattro famiglie di carabinieri in lutto, da ieri. Quattro vedove, sei orfani, dei quali cinque bambini ed un ragazzino di 23 anni. È questo il bilancio della tragedia di Clout di Pinasca, dove l'«Elirondo A 109» del Nucleo elicotteri dell'Arma è precipitato alle 9,30 di una mattinata piena di nebbia, a bordo un generale, un capitano, un maresciallo, un brigadiere. Accomunati dalla morte che non distingue strisce sulla manica.

Il generale Mario Sateriale era a Torino da meno di due anni. Partendo da Palermo, a conclusione di un lustro di lotta contro la mafia, aveva detto: «Vado a stare un po' tranquillo». Finì, almeno in apparenza, gli «anni di piombo». Torino era tornata ad essere il paesone pigro di sempre, dove la lotta al crimine, in fondo, segue schemi tradizionali. Aveva 56 anni, Sateriale, ormai vicino alla pensione.

Con lui sono morti il capitano Fausto Paniconi, 33 anni, una bimba di sette mesi; il maresciallo Nivaldo Bianchini, 38 anni, due figli di 14 e 12 anni; il brigadiere Mario Bertacchini, 27 anni, una figlia, Michela.

Una tragedia che non è soltanto la morte di quattro uomini, ma che si perpetua nella sofferenza di quattro famiglie, di così tanti affetti spazzati. Una tragedia accolta non durante una difficile missione, non durante un'operazione contro il crimine, ma piombata d'improvviso in mezzo ad una giornata in fondo di «relax», diversa dalle altre, una «gita» a Bousson, in valle Susa, per vedere all'opera i ragazzi della «Taurinense» impegnati nelle esercitazioni sulla neve.

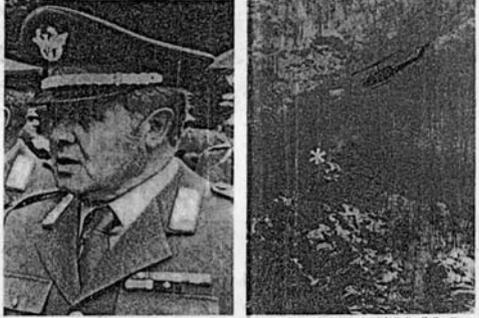
Erano partiti circa mezz'ora prima da Torino, il volo si svolgeva con regolarità. Poi la nebbia, le prime difficoltà. Difficile, adesso, stabilire le cause della sciagura, quasi impossibile. Si parla di un guasto al rotando che con-

sente agli elicotteri di spostarsi sul piano orizzontale, ma non è dimostrato. Così come non è dimostrato che ci sia stato il ritorno di fiamma del quale si era detto ieri, né l'impatto contro la montagna causato dalla scarsa visibilità.

Ora è stata predisposta un'inchiesta, che farà il suo corso. Nel frattempo ci saranno i funerali. La camera ardente è stata adibita alla Cernaia, poi le salme verranno trasportate in duomo per la cerimonia funebre. Sono arrivate a Torino le condoglianze del presidente Pertini e di altri personaggi del mondo politico ed economico.

Domani mattina, quando alle 10,30 le esequie saranno celebrate, ci sarà certamente folla davanti al duomo. C'è da augurarsi che venga risparmiata quella prassi ormai purtroppo diffusa dell'appianno al passaggio delle bare. Già in occasione dei funerali delle vittime dello Statalto, Torino dimostrò di aver compreso che una cerimonia funebre non è uno spettacolo folkloristico e seppur circondare quegli attimi di un silenzio più prezioso di ogni altra manifestazione di affetto.

Al funerale saranno presenti anche gli alti gradi dell'esercito e dell'Arma dei carabinieri e, probabilmente, una rappresentanza del consiglio comunale, che ieri sera ha osservato un minuto di raccoglimento in memoria delle vittime. Al termine della cerimonia le quattro salme partiranno per i rispettivi paesi di origine, dove saranno tumulate. Ma pur se quello sarà l'ultimo atto di questa sciagura, l'inchiesta dovrà pur rispondere alle molte domande ancora in sospeso, che cosa l'ha causata? Si sarebbe potuta evitare? Occorrono risposte precise che sgomberino il campo da ipotesi, anche minuziosamente formulate. Occorre che l'ombra di un attentato mafioso, legato al passato del generale Sateriale in Sicilia, venga del tutto allontanata.



Il gen. Sateriale - L'asterisco indica lo sperone di roccia contro cui è finito l'elicottero





Il capitano Paniconi Il pilota Bertacchini Nivaldo Bianchini

On December 14, 1988, an A-109 helicopter, CC 86, crashed at Volpiano near the base of the 1st Helicopter Nucleus. Killed in the crash were Brigadier-General Franco Romano, Regional Commandant of the Carabinieri, Major Paolo Cattalini (Pilot) C.O of the 1st Helicopter Nucleus, Maresciallo Capo Gennaro Amiranda (copilot) and Maresciallo Mechanic Giovanni Monda.

Torino, comandava l'Arma in Piemonte e Valle d'Aosta. La strage durante il decollo

Muore in volo il generale Romano

Il ghiaccio fa cadere l'elicottero con altri 3 carabinieri

ALL'INTERNO

SLITTA IL BOLLO AUTO
Pagamento forse a febbraio Tariffe, l'Antitrust boccia i commercialisti
di Vanni Cornero A PAG. 17

LA NESTLE' NON RIPRENDE
Ancora ferma la produzione a Verona, sospetti su alcune confezioni
di Vincenzo Tessandori A PAG. 13

IL POOL DA PRODI
Vendita Sme, il 2 dicembre Colombo e la Boccassini dall'ex primo ministro
di Chiara Beria di Argentine A PAG. 8

TORINO. Trenta secondi di volo: «Decollo avvenuto, siamo in rotta». Poi il motore che perde colpi. L'elicottero ancora in fase di decollo si abbassa sui primi alberi di una campagna ovattata dalla nebbia, li urta e stacca di netto il rotore di coda. Ancora un istante, lungo secoli per gli occupanti dell'Agusta Bell 109, poi lo schianto al suolo e l'esplosione. L'elicottero precipitato alle 9,40 di ieri, a un chilometro dalla base di Volpiano, s'è portato via quattro vite. Quelle del generale Franco Romano, 59 anni, comandante della Regione carabinieri Piemonte e Valle d'Aosta; del maggiore Paolo Cattalini, 38 anni, da 4 comandante del nucleo elicotteristi; e di due sottufficiali dello stesso reparto: il maresciallo capo Gennaro Amiranda, 36 anni, secondo pilota, e il maresciallo Giovanni Monda, 33 anni, specialista di bordo. Forse l'avaria è stata causata dal ghiaccio.

Bialo, Bramardo, Conti, Favro Giacchino e Poletto ALLE PAG. 2, 3 E IN CRONACA



Il generale Romano: comandava la Regione carabinieri Piemonte e Valle d'Aosta



Memorial plaque to Brigadier General Mario Sateriale, Captain Fausto Paniconi, Maresciallo Capo Nivaldo Bianchini and Brigadiere Mechanic Mario Bertacchini erected at the scene of the accident by the National Alpine Rescue Corps.



© Goffredo Borreni

Monument to the memory of General Franco, Major Paolo Cattalini, Maresciallo Capo Gennaro Amiranda and Maresciallo Mechanic Giovanni Monda.

Unit photos

1966



1972



1984



© Goffredo Borreni



1988

© Goffredo Borreni



1991

*1993 Visit of the
Commandant of the
Piedmont and the Aosta
Valley Carabinieri
Legion, General Paolo
Bruno Di Noia and of the
Provincial Commandant
of the Carabinieri of
Turin, Colonel Roberto
Cirese, both pioneers of
the Carabinieri air
service.*



© Goffredo Borreni

1995



1996



1996



Unit photos

2001



2007



2008



2009



2012



2014





Captain Savino Lograno speaking to school children during their visit. An AB 47 G3B1 carrying a canine unit can be seen behind them. In flight



Tricolour formation.

1974. From the left: Giuseppe Cancelli, Maurizio Pozza, Carlo Tipaldi, Michele Caprioli, Ferruccio Gabrielli.





1983. Volpiano air base. The ENAV radar operators (in civilian clothes) who conducted the English-language radio transmission certification courses for the 1st NEC aircrew.

1988. Caselle Airport. His Holiness Pope John Paul II thanking the crew of the 1st NEC at the end of his pastoral visit to Turin on the occasion of the centenary of the death of St. Don Bosco.



1987. Commandant of the Carabinieri General Roberto Jucci presents an award to the members of the Helicopter Nucleus, to the Canine Nucleus and to the NORM Helicopter-borne Unit of Turin for their intense activity of territorial control.



From the left:
Cap. Sergio Raffa,
Col. Giulio Castellani,
Col. Ercole Rocchetti,
Brig. Gen. Sergio
Colombini, Col.
Giuseppe Caiaffà (IAF);
Lt. Col. Ferdinando
Bonsegna, Lt. Col.
Maurizio Albieri.



With the encouragement of the Commandant General Roberto Jucci, a party was held inside the hangar with family members. On the tricolour table, the greeting "VI CARABINIERI" (Long Live the Carabinieri) was constructed with 300 vases of primroses.

© Bruno Vitrotti



Formation in flight over the hunting palace of Stupinigi

Launch of tricolor brochures over the Carabinieri anniversary day parade at the Cernaia Barracks in Turin.





1988. Visit by the Defence Minister Valerio Zanone to the 1st NEC and to the Canine Nucleus.





Carabiniere dog handler Elio Bertei with his dog Ennio involved in a test of ability and courage.

1988. Carabinieri Anniversary Day. General Mario Rocchietti March reviews the parade.





June 1988. Lt. Col. Giampaolo Sechi presides over the twinning between the Helicopter Nucleii of Turin and Bergamo

1992. Visit by Gen. Lemée of the Gendarmerie.



THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1ST NEC AT AERITALIA



TORINO 1966-2016 VOLPIANO

PRIMO NUCLEO ELICOTTERI CARABINIERI

In Turin, with the echoes of the Bicentenary of the Carabinieri (1814-2014) still resounding, and coincident with the Centenary of the Torino-Aeritalia Airport (1916-2016), the 50th anniversary of the Constitution of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus of Turin (1966-2016) took place; today the Nucleus is based at Volpiano.

The event was also commemorated during the Centenary celebrations for the Torino Aeritalia Airport by the static exhibition of an AB 47 G3B1 helicopter – CC 24, Ser. No. 80491.

The adventure of restoring this historic helicopter began at the Villa Agusta in Gallarate, home of the Agusta Foundation Museum and meeting place for the members of the former employees Group.

It started with the desire to unearth documents, testimonies and images from the earliest days of the rotary wing in Italy at a meeting between flight enthusiasts and custodians of the history of this aero-

nautical company which was the first in Italy to contribute to the development of vertical takeoff aircraft.

Formerly on the inventory of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus, CC 24 was initially donated by the Agusta Foundation to the National Carabinieri Association of Turin, which provided for its conservative restoration and subsequent transfer of ownership to the Preservation of Carabinieri Historical Vehicles Group, within the Canale Section of the National Association of Carabinieri, to complete the restoration, preserve the aircraft and pursue the organization's social function.

luglio
dicembre
2016
anno XXIII° n° 2

LO SPECCHIO

periodico d'informazione
dei Gruppi Lavoratori AGUSTA Seniores
Agusta MV - Caproni - Siai - Elicotteri Meridionali
<http://www.glaagusta.org> - e-mail: lospecchio@glaagusta.org



In questo numero...

Museo Agusta - Arma dei Carabinieri Restauro dell'elicottero AB47G

Il nostro Museo è stato coinvolto dall'Associazione Nazionale Carabinieri per il restauro di un elicottero AB 47 G3G1- CC 24 – M.M. 80491 che è stato il primo elicottero Agusta consegnato all'Arma al nascente Gruppo elicotteristico di Torino nell'anno 1969. L'elicottero fu poi radiato nell'anno 1988 con l'ultimo volo da Torino a Salerno effettuato solo con scali tecnici, al comando del Maggiore Francesco Golini che è poi stato l'artefice della ristrutturazione del velivolo. Il giorno 24 settembre, a Tortona, nell'ambito di una manifestazione dell'Arma dei Carabinieri nel ricordo di un Carabiniere tortonese, è stato presentato nella piazza della città l'elicottero ottimamente restaurato, come ben visibile dalle fotografie che ho scattato per l'occasione, dal Gruppo Automezzi storici dell'Arma di Canale (Cuneo).

A seguire nell'Auditorium Comunale un ricordo, anche con filmati d'epoca, di questo elicottero da parte del Maggiore Francesco Golini e la consegna di un attestato di benemerita e di ringraziamento al Museo Agusta per la collaborazione fornita in questo restauro, consegnato allo scrivente, quale Presidente di Fondazione Museo Agusta. Ho naturalmente ringraziato, sottolineando come la Fondazione sia onorata di aver contribuito a conservare la storia di questa nostra grande Azienda, riportando agli antichi splendori questa macchina che all'epoca rappresentava davvero un salto di qualità veramente grande rispetto il passato per l'Arma dei Carabinieri, e non solo.

Un ringraziamento anche al Generale Eugenio Morini, ex Ufficiale dei Carabinieri, che per anni ha lavorato come Responsabile della Sicurezza Industriale presso la nostra Azienda, per la collaborazione e disponibilità fornita nella gestione dei rapporti fra il Museo e l'Arma.



Gianluigi Marasi
presidente Fondazione Museo Agusta

The Restoration of the Agusta Bell 47 G3B1 Super Alpine CC 24

Shortly after its inauguration, the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus was assigned an Agusta Bell 47 G3 B1 "Super Alpino" helicopter (due to its outstanding performance at altitude).

During the 1960's, the G3 was considered as being the best piston engined helicopter that the aeronautical industry could produce.

It was a 100% Italian evolution of the Bell 47 G series, the world's first industrially-built helicopter – a three-seater equipped with a volumetric turbocharger and capable of being equipped with two stretchers for carrying the injured or two lateral containers for transporting police or avalanche dogs and bulky equipment.



1967. Intervention in the mountains together with the volunteers of the National Alpine Rescue Corps.

1968. Helicopter transportation of a canine unit.



Up until the time when turbine-engined helicopters entered service in the '70s, the "dragonfly" always conducted itself honourably despite its limited payload, allowing the Carabinieri crews to intervene in the case of public or private accidents, as well as guaranteeing close aerial support to Carabinieri units engaged in manhunts or searches by making useful reconnaissance flights.

One of these, CC 24 itself, remained in service until July 6, 1982, when Lieutenant Francesco Golini, Head of the Flight and Operations Section, and Marshal Giuseppe Galluzzi, Chief Mechanic, took off from "Turin Aeritalia" headed for "Salerno Pontecagnano" taking the machine to the depot for helicopters withdrawn-from-service.

Taking into account the autonomy of the helicopter, the flight plan provided for legs not exceeding 135 minutes with refuelling stops at the airports of Genoa, Pisa, Viterbo and Frosinone.

In fact, taking advantage of favourable weather conditions, no leg exceeded 120 minutes of continuous flight.

Thus, having taken off from Turin at 06.00 in the morning, after four refueling stops and a total of 9 hours and 30 minutes flight time, CC 24 arrived at Salerno, making a full autorotation landing.

ALE VT 0761 - 25 0444

DESTINAZIONE	DISTAN.	TEMPO	TEMPO	PRUA
TORINO				
GENOVA	70NM	75'	75'	125°
GENOVA				
PISA	85	100'	175'	110°
PISA				
VITERBO	105	120'	295'	135°
VITERBO				
FROSINONE	73	32'	377'	133°
FROSINONE				
SALERNO	100	120'	497'	127°
SALERNO				
P. CAGNANO				

Flight plan.

AB 47G-3B-1 Super Alpine CC 24 still in service in Turin and subject to restoration.



The helicopter touched down gently on the grass, silently, almost as if to underline the solemnity and its own insignificance in presenting itself to the majesty of that wonderful hangar by the Master Architect Pier Luigi Nervi which would be its future home, along with many other piston-engined helicopters also withdrawn from service.

CC 24 was assigned as Gate Guardian to the entrance of the 8th Helicopter Nucleus at Pontecagnano until the year 2000, when it was taken to the Agusta Museum in Gallarate.

In 2016, veterans of the 1st Helicopter Nucleus, looking for historical data concerning the history of the Unit, went to Villa Agusta, the headquarters of the Agusta Museum Foundation, whose enthusiastic associates meet each Tuesday to share and promote the activities of the Institute.

During the visit, someone noticed a few dissembled parts of CC 24. A lucky find: it was the very first helicopter which had been assigned to the 1st NEC!

Both the Carabinieri General (Reserve), Eugenio Morini, formerly responsible for security at Agusta Westland, and Dr. Gianluigi Marasi, the Director of the Museo Agusta Foundation, agreed to the project to transfer the helicopter to the Veterans of the 1st NEC of the National Association of Carabinieri for its restoration, and to give new life to one of the oldest Agusta and Carabinieri aircraft.



2015. Helicopter CC 24 in the deposit of the Agusta Museum Foundation.



Middle and bottom photos. 2016. Start of the restoration. Phases of transportation of helicopter parts for restoration.

The Restoration

The pitiless corrosion caused by 20 years of exposure to all weather conditions precluded the possibility of restoring the aircraft to a flying condition, but would not prevent, although with some concern, the possibility of static and conservative restoration.

It would be necessary to find the means, the spare parts and the resources needed for such a challenging enterprise.

This Perplexity was bravely faced and overcome through recourse to Passion, Love for Flight, and Spirit of Initiative of the working group formed for the occasion. It was a heterogeneous group but made up of people driven by a powerful engine: the passion for Carabinieri Aviation.



Chief Helicopter Mechanic, Luogotenente Michele Caprioli at work.



At this point, it is necessary to thank all those who have in various respects made the restoration of the historic helicopter possible, fully aware that a thank you is little compared to the joy experienced in all epochs by those who have contributed to the realization and the development of mankind's mythical dream - Flight.

We veterans still have the dream of completing the restoration of the cabin plexiglass that had been irretrievably damaged as seen in the photo below, and cannot be found on the international market, since the 47G3 has a wider cabin than those installed on the more popular 47G and 47G2 models.

In fact, the "Super Alpino", designed to hold three people in the cabin, was a version produced exclusively by Agusta, and unfortunately, their manufacturer of plexiglass cabin canopies ceased production in the late 1980s.



Helicopter Mechanic Luogotenente Sebastiano Ciccio at work.



Thus, the rather complex problems of transferring, transporting, identifying the hangar for the work, the search for the necessary equipment, and the training of the team of specialists capable of completing the restoration in time for the exhibition of the 2nd and 3rd of July, 2016, during the Centenary of Torino-Aeritalia Airport, were overcome.

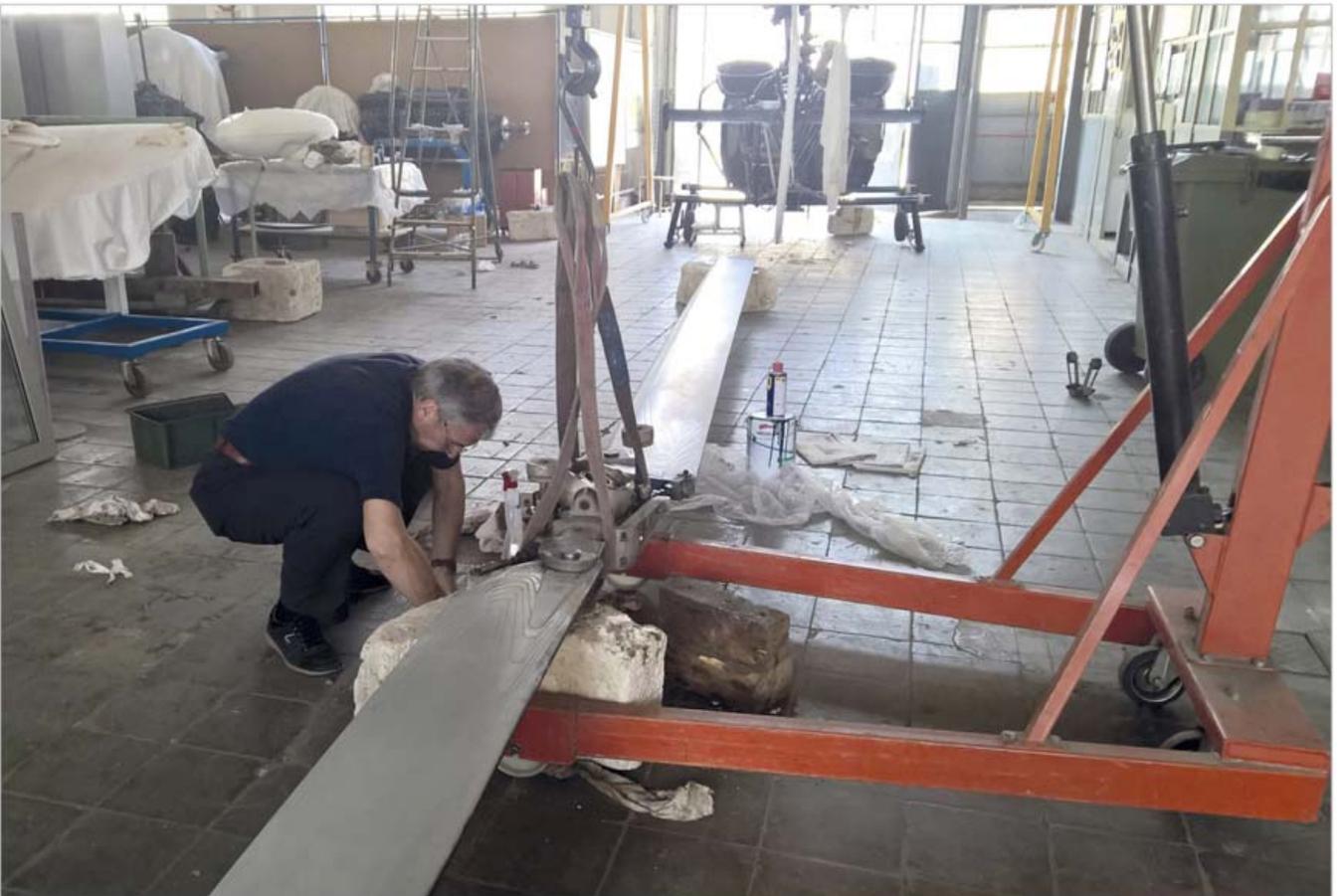


The interior of the cabin before restoration.

The photos on the next page show some moments during the restoration of CC 24 by veterans of the GAVS of Turin and of the 1st NEC.



The Restoration





The Restoration



From among the various options, we chose to donate the helicopter to the Historic Vehicles Group of the National Carabinieri Association section of Diano d'Alba, a circle of enthusiasts who have formed a mobile column of historic Carabinieri vehicles and which will guarantee the continuation of the restoration, conservation and exhibition in harmony with the social aims of the organization in the years to come.



Poster of the event.

July 1, 2016.
Lucia Dentis of the Dentis Azienda Agricola coordinates the loading operations for the transport of the helicopter to the Centenary of the Torino-Aeritalia Airport.



100 anni
1916-2016
AEROPORTO TORINO-AERITALIA

50 anni
TORINO 1966-2016 VOLPIANO
PRIMO NUCLEO ELICOTTERI CARABINIERI

ALL'ASSOCIAZIONE NAZIONALE CARABINIERI
GRUPPO AUTOMEZZI STORICI DELL'ARMA
SEZIONE ANC - CANALE - PIAZZA ITALIA, 20 - 12043 CANALE

Oggetto: Cessione Elicottero Storico AB 47 G3B1 al Gruppo Automezzi Storici Arma - Sezione ANC di Canale (CN).

1. GENERALITA'
Il 2016 è l'anno in cui ricorre il:

- Centenario dell'ingresso del Carabiniere Ernesto Cabrana al Battaglione Aviatori del Regio Esercito avvenuto nel giugno 1916;
- Centenario della morte eroica del Brigadiere dei Carabinieri M.A.V.M. Albino Mocellin, già Guardia del Re e primo Aviatore dei Carabinieri caduto in combattimento nella Prima Guerra Mondiale.
- Centenario dell'inaugurazione dell'Aeroporto Aeritalia da parte delle Industrie Aeronautiche Pomilio, prima fabbrica di aerei a Torino;
- Cinquantenario della costituzione, presso l'Aeroporto di Torino Aeritalia - Campo volo di Collegno, del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri, oggi in Volpiano.

2. LA CELEBRAZIONE DEL CENTENARIO AERITALIA - CINQUANTENARIO 1° NUCLEO ELICOTTERI CARABINIERI
Per celebrare degnamente queste ed altre ricorrenze l'Aero Club di Torino ha organizzato una manifestazione che si è svolta presso l'aeroporto il 2 e il 3 luglio 2016, con l'esposizione di aerei e auto storiche civili e militari e con l'esecuzione di varie anshov conclusosi con l'esibizione delle Freccie Tricolori.
L'Associazione Nazionale Carabinieri, rappresentata nel Comitato d'Onore dall'Ispettore della Regione Piemonte e Valle D'Aosta Gen. B. (r) Franco Cardarelli, ha aderito all'iniziativa anche attraverso il determinante impiego dei volontari di più Sezioni ANC, in particolare:

- a **Sezione ANC di Torino** "Gen. M.O.V.C. Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa", ha promosso:
 - il restauro e l'esposizione in mostra statica di un elicottero d'epoca - il velivolo storico, **AB 47 G3B1 - CC 24 - M.M. 80491**, già appartenuto al 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri e ceduto dalla "Fondazione Museo Agusta", all'ANC di Torino, nella persona del Magg.(r) M.B.V.M. Francesco Golini, che ha coordinato il restauro, (Riserva di produrre la documentazione relativa al restauro)
 - la pubblicazione di un volume dal titolo "Carabinieri Aviatori a Torino" per ricordare il generoso contributo dei 173 Carabinieri Aviatori nella Grande Guerra, commemorare i piloti caduti, e il Carabiniere nativo di Tortona, Pilota Ernesto Cabrana Medaglia D'Oro al Valor Militare. L'opera ricorderà la costituzione del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri carabinieri presso l'Aeroporto di Torino Aeritalia Campo Volo di Collegno (1966) e la meritoria attività svolta dai Carabinieri con tenace passione e spirito di sacrificio, talvolta estremo e doloroso. L'album storico descriverà altresì con fatti ed immagini la storia dell'elicottero restaurato, L'AB 47 G3B1 CC 24, dalla data della sua assegnazione al nucleo elicotteri di Torino, alla sua radiazione dalla linea elicotteri dell'Arma sino al suo restauro e alla sua esposizione all'Aeritalia.
 - la partecipazione, unitamente ai volontari delle altre sezioni ANC dell'Area Metropolitana di Torino, alle attività volte allo svolgimento in sicurezza della manifestazione nella quale sono stati impiegati oltre 400 volontari di varie associazioni ed ha visto una eccezionale partecipazione di pubblico (Oltre 150.000 persone nella giornata conclusiva).
- b **Sezione ANC di Canale - Gruppo Automezzi Storici dell'Arma**, su proposta della **Sezione ANC di Collegno** ha effettuato venerdì 1 luglio la sfilata dei propri veicoli storici per le vie della Città di Collegno, sostando presso il palazzo civico, ricevuti dal Sindaco e dalle altre autorità militari e civili prima di rischierarsi nel padiglione riservato ai carabinieri presso l'aeroporto, dove la "**COLONNA MOBILE**" è rimasta in mostra statica per i due giorni della manifestazione unitamente all'"**ELICOTTERO STORICO**" in corso di restauro e alla "**GIULIA QUADRIFOGLIO**" del NORM di Milano.

3. CESSIONE DELL'ELICOTTERO STORICO
Terminate le celebrazioni del Centenario dell'Aeritalia e del Cinquantenario del 1° Nucleo Elicotteri Carabinieri e nelle more della presentazione al pubblico dell'album "Carabinieri Aviatori a Torino", compendio delle commemorazioni in argomento e che sarà pubblicato con il contributo della "Fondazione CRT di Torino", si procede con la **presente alla consegna formale dell'Elicottero AB 47 G3B1 - CC 24 - Matricola Militare 80491**, per il completamento del restauro, la conservazione, il possesso in via definitiva ed il perseguimento dei fini sociali del sodalizio, all'Associazione Nazionale Carabinieri Gruppo Automezzi Storici dell'Arma - Sezione di Canale (CN). A corredo dell'elicottero vengono consegnati, usati, una tenuta personale da pilota in versione estiva, anni 70, con cintura in canapa e borsa di navigazione in pelle completa di accessori (Non sono compresi Casco, Armi, Occhiali, Orologio in dotazione di reparto). La consegna verrà ricordata in una cerimonia, organizzata dall'ANC di Canale - GASA, da tenersi in Tortona il 24 Settembre 2016 presso la sala della Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Tortona.

Il Presidente
Gen. B. Antonio Schirosi

Torino 7 Settembre 2016

The Air Show 2-3 July 2016

To celebrate the Centenary of one of the oldest airports in Italy, the Aero Club of Turin reserved a place for us in the static Historic Vehicle and Aircraft exhibition in memory of those Carabinieri Aviators who fought in the Great War and to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the constitution of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus at the Turin-Aeritalia Airport in 1966.

At the ANC stand, one of the main attractions was the Alfa Romeo Giulia Quadrifoglio (over 500 HP) of the Milan Radiomobile Nucleus donated by FCA to the Carabinieri and present at the event thanks to the good offices of Dario Deledda.

The National Association of Carabinieri stand which was set up for the Centenary of Torino-Aeritalia Airport.



© Sergio Festa



In the foreground, personnel of the 1st Carabinieri Regiment of Piedmont in service for the security of the event.

An AIB volunteer brings some welcome relief to spectators

© Sergio Festa



© Sergio Festa



Vice-Brigadiere Salvo D'Acquisto. General Carlo Alberto dalla Chiesa with his wife Emanuela Setti Carraro. In the sky above, the "Frece Tricolori" National Aerobatic Team.

© Sergio Beltrami





24-25 September 2016. Exhibition in the Cathedral square of Tortona during the ceremony to commemorate the Centenary of Ernesto Cabruna's Brevet as a Pilot.



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- Archivio personale Goffredo Borreni.
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Ispettorato Associazione Nazionale Carabinieri Piemonte e Valle d'Aosta
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For their contribution in the restoration of the helicopter

AGUSTA BELL 47 G3B1 – CC 24

Airgreen Elicotteri

Alenia

ANC Collegno - Sergio Sodero

ANC Collegno – Vicepresidente Brig. Giuseppe Barraco

Fondazione Museo Agusta

Azienda Agricola Dentis Oreste

Carrozzeria Schiafone Rivoli

CO. BR. RAD Grugliasco

Plexiglass LPT Rivoli

GASA – Sezione ANC Canale (Cn)

GAVS – Gruppo Amici Velivoli Storici di Torino presso Alenia Aeronautica Torino

Gen. B. CC Eugenio Morini

Dr. Gianluigi Marasi

Ing. Roberto Carlo Garberi

Veterano Agusta Tobaldo Cesare

Luogotenente ANC Michele Caprioli

Luogotenente ANC Sebastiano Ciccio

Veterano Savoia Cavalleria Sergio Sodero

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2016. Aeritalia Airport. The group of veterans of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus and their wives who participated in the 50th Anniversary. celebration dinner.

Associations which contributed to ensuring the safety of the Torino-Aeritalia Airport Centenary and the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the 1st Carabinieri Helicopter Nucleus, an event categorized as “of considerable local impact” by the Civil Defence system, and which involved over 400 volunteers.

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International Police Association Delegazione Regionale Piemonte
Via Carlo Giordana, 5 • 10128 Torino (To)

Associazione Nazionale Vigilanza Aeronautica Militare
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Associazione Nazionale Polizia di Stato
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Coordinamento Volontari UGAF
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Sezione di Canale
G.A.S.A.
Gruppo Automezzi Storici dell' Arma

With particular thanks to
Andrea Carestiato
per l'editing dei filmati della manifestazione

FRANCESCO GOLINI



Gaeta, March 21, 1965. The author receiving his insignia from the Comandant of the Carabinieri Training School in Rome.



Frosinone, December 4, 1970. The author in an AB 47 G2 at the Helicopter Flight School on "First Solo" day.

The Carabinieri Aviators in Turin. An Album of memories, illustrations, testimonies

The Turin Section of the National Association of Carabinieri has given its full support to the publication of this Historical Album intended as a tribute to the Carabinieri and to their Founding City of Turin and also to the Piedmontese people as a collection of memories, testimonies and previously unpublished photographs.

The first part of this volume addresses the glorious pages of history written by Carabinieri airmen during the earliest days of the Italian Air Arm, while the second part documents the unsolicited testimonies of citizens, organizations and institutions which over the last fifty years have manifested their appreciation and attested to the merit of the Carabinieri helicopter service, a service animated by the values enshrined in the "Premise" to the *Carabinieri General Regulations*, i.e. Freedom of Action, Acceptance of Responsibility, Spirit of Initiative and Solidarity.

Francesco Golini – grandson, son, uncle, brother-in-law and father of Carabinieri – is married and has two children and four grandchildren. In 1964, as a seventeen-year-old, he entered the Carabinieri Training School in Rome, resigning in Palermo with the rank of Major more than thirty years later. During this time, he operated with the Carabinieri Legions of Lazio, Sardinia, Tuscany, Piedmont and the Aosta Valley, Apulia and Sicily, the *Tuscania* Carabinieri Paratroop Regiment and the Carabinieri Air Service. He gained a military paratroopers brevet, a military helicopter pilots licence, and was awarded the Military Bronze Medal for bravery and the Order of Merit after being wounded in a gunfight with criminals. As a civilian, he became a Service Company Director, being Head of Security for the Turin 2006 20th Winter Olympics, holding similar responsibilities in companies partly owned by the Municipality of Turin, and until 2014 was Coordinator of the Piedmont Region's Emergency Helirescue Technical Commission. He is a Commander (for merit) of the Italian Republic.



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