

News story: WW2 fusilier's grave rededicated 74 years after his death

The World War 2 resting place of Edward Graham, a Soldier of 1st Battalion, Royal Irish Fusiliers, has finally been identified. A new headstone has been installed and a rededication service has taken place today (4 October 2017) in a moving ceremony at Catania War Cemetery, Sicily, attended by the twin sons Fusilier Graham never had the chance to meet.

The service was arranged by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) and led by the Regimental Chaplain of the Royal Irish Regiment.

In 1935, Edward joined the Territorial Army as a Private in the Durham Light Infantry and attended the annual camp for the following 3 years. He signed on for a further 2 years, but at the outbreak of the war, he joined full time on 1 September 1939. He was then promptly transferred to the Royal Irish Fusiliers and posted to Ballykinler in Northern Ireland. It was while he was stationed here that he met and married Eveline McBride.

On 22 November 1942, the regiment embarked for service overseas, going initially to North Africa and then on to land in Sicily 1943. During the advance through Sicily, near the small town of Maletto, Edward was posted missing on 13 August 1943, presumed killed in action. The final resting place of Fusilier Graham was unknown until recently.

Tragically, unknown to Edward, 22 days before his death, his wife gave birth to twin sons, Edward and Sydney. It was these sons who have been instrumental in finding the final resting place of their father.

How was Fusilier Graham identified?



Sons Edward Graham and Sydney Graham, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

The identity of the graves was discovered when one of Edward's sons, Edward Graham, began researching into the final resting place of his father. Further research was completed by the MOD's JCCC to corroborate the evidence and the identification of the "Unknown Soldier" grave was found to belong to Fusilier Edward Graham.



Sons Edward Graham and Sydney Graham, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Edward's son, Edward Graham, was able to attend the service and travelled from his home town of Prudhoe in Northumberland with his twin brother, Sydney. Edward said:

It was a very emotional service and the culmination of years of hard work and research. We are very grateful to everyone involved who made today so special.

Nicola Nash, from the Joint Casualty & Compassionate Centre (JCCC), said:

We feel privileged to bring some closure to Edward and Sydney after 74 years.

RED ARROWS' DYNAMIC DISPLAY MARKS UK'S HISTORIC TIES WITH OMAN

CLOSE links between the United Kingdom and Oman have been celebrated with a display in Muscat by the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team, the Red Arrows.

Aircraft from the world-renowned display team performed a precision show of loops, rolls and close-passes in front of thousands of people lining a coastline of the capital and also a reception for senior government officials.

The display is part of a five-week overseas tour by the Red Arrows supporting UK interests.



The visit to Oman, which also includes a number of ground events showcasing British excellence in engineering, education and innovation, marks the close relationship between the two countries.

Wing Commander Andrew Keith, Officer Commanding, Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team, the Red Arrows, said: "Displaying in Oman and for the people of Muscat is a clear demonstration of the UK's close links with the country, particularly among our Armed Forces.

"The Red Arrows have a vital role when visiting locations overseas, being versatile ambassadors for the UK and able to promote – in a bold and dynamic way – the very best of British across a range of sectors and industries.



"The display in Muscat is just one of the activities we are able to carry out to support these interests – a number of the Red Arrows' technicians are due to visit a local college this week to highlight to young people the importance of the so-called STEM subjects of science, technology, engineering and maths."

Known as Exercise Eastern Hawk, the Red Arrows' five-week deployment overseas follows a busy domestic season in which the aerobatic team performed for millions of people and more than 60 times across the UK.

The team has already visited France, Greece, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar as part of the tour.



Following Oman, the Red Arrows will display in Pakistan and Bahrain before a flypast in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and then will return home.

One of the Red Arrows' key roles is supporting UK trade, business, education and industry and working as part of the GREAT Britain campaign.

The campaign is the Government's most ambitious international marketing campaign ever and showcases the very best of what the whole nation has to offer in order to encourage the world to visit, study and do business with

the UK.

It focuses on China, India, Brazil, USA, the Gulf, France, Germany, Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey and Emerging Europe and is also active in more than 144 countries worldwide.



Famous for flying British-built BAE Systems Hawk fast-jets in a Diamond Nine formation, the Red Arrows are based at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire.

For more information about the team, follow @rafredarrows on Twitter, see the latest images posted on Instagram by following rafredarrows, like RAF Red Arrows on Facebook or visit HYPERLINK “<http://www.raf.mod.uk/reds>”
www.raf.mod.uk/reds

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[News story: UK team returns following major success at the Invictus Games](#)

The 90-strong team of wounded, injured and sick (WIS) Service personnel and veterans returned from Toronto yesterday with an impressive 87 medals and over 170 personal bests. The haul of medals included 26 golds, 34 silvers and 27 bronzes.

The eight-day sporting event ran from the 23 to 30 September and saw 550 individuals from 17 nations compete across 12 sports including archery, wheelchair rugby and sitting volleyball.

Highlights for the UK Team included: sitting volleyball team captain Sgt Netra Rana, Royal Gurkha Rifles, leading his team to a silver; former musician with the Royal Marine Band Service, Poppy Pawsey, winning an unexpected bronze in the Womens 100m swimming freestyle race; and two golds in golf.

For the majority of competitors, their success at the Games was achieving an individual goal specific to their recovery such as setting a new personal best, or performing in front of a large audience under pressure.

The Invictus Games, founded by HRH Prince, demonstrate the power of sport to inspire recovery. Getting involved in sport provides significant physical and mental health benefits including increasing self-confidence. At the closing ceremony on the 30 September, Prince Harry said:

To the thousands who filled the stands this week, and the millions who watched at home, let me issue you a challenge. Don't just move on from these games with happy memories. Instead, make an Invictus goal for yourselves. Let the examples of service and resilience that you have seen, inspire you to take action to improve something – big or small – in your life, for your family, or in your community.

The fourth Games will take place in [Sydney](#) next year with 500 competitors from 18 nations competing from the 20 to 27 October 2018. WIS members of the British Armed Forces and veterans who have been inspired to get involved in sport are invited to [register their interest](#) in the 2018 Games. Registration of interest will remain open until 1 December 2017.

The UK Team Captain, Bernie Broad, former Army Major in the Grenadier Guards, said:

Invictus lit a spark in my belly and at the end of the Games it has become a raging fire. It has kick-started a new phase in my recovery journey and one that will continue for a long time. I have a renewed purpose and it's brought back my determination and confidence.

What it has done for me it will do for many others. So apply for Sydney and potentially watch your life change in ways you couldn't imagine.

The Ministry of Defence worked in partnership with Help for Heroes and The Royal British Legion to deliver the UK Delegation for Toronto 2017.

The Ministry of Defence is a partner in the [Defence Recovery Capability](#), a programme which helps wounded, injured and sick Service personnel either return to duty from injury or provides a mechanism to help them back into civilian life.

[News story: Defence Secretary announces Armed Forces Covenant and Veterans Board](#)

Co-chaired by Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon and First Secretary of State Damian Green, and reporting to the Prime Minister, the board underlines the Government's enduring commitment to the Armed Forces

community.

Meeting biannually, the Board will drive forward the existing Armed Forces Covenant commitments community across all Government departments responsible for delivery, with a specific focus on the priority areas of healthcare, including mental health. Housing, education, and employment opportunities are also other areas which will be covered.

In addition, the Defence Secretary and the First Secretary of State will meet separately with leading Service charities and the single Service Family Federations to discuss the Covenant on an annual basis. This will ensure the views of the wider Armed Forces Community are represented in government decisions.

Government initiatives delivered to date through the Armed Forces Covenant include:

- The Forces Help to Buy scheme (MOD), which has allowed thousands of Armed Forces personnel and their families to borrow up to half their salary to get on the housing ladder.
- The Armed Forces Covenant Fund, which provides £10M per annum to support mutually beneficial projects and programmes being delivered by organisations across the UK in partnership with the Armed Forces Community.
- The Job Centre Plus Armed Forces Champions (DWP) helps current and former members of the Armed Forces and their families access Jobcentre Plus services
- The Transition, Intervention, and Liaison (TIL) veterans' mental health service (NHS) acts as a front door to a range of mental health services across the health and care system for veterans.
- The Service Pupil Premium (DfE), which is paid to schools to engage with service children to mitigate any adverse impact of family mobility and parental deployment.

The Board will also seek to maximise the potential of the Armed Forces Community through mutually beneficial partnerships with businesses, as well as with local communities throughout the UK.

[News story: Cadet Forces increase social mobility and help disadvantaged kids reach potential, report finds](#)

Updated: pictures

The independent report, compiled by the University of Northampton, undertook research across the entire cadet programme and found that joining the cadets offers a range of benefits to individuals involved and the wider community.

Speaking at the launch of the report at the Albion Academy in Manchester, itself a school which has a Cadet Force, Sir Michael also announced the approval of 31 new cadet units in state schools across the country under the Cadet Expansion Programme. The new units also include the first school cadet unit to be approved under the programme in Wales.



Sir Michael meets with cadets at the Albion Academy.

The benefits outlined in the report include increasing social mobility, contributing directly to the Prime Minister's vision for a 'shared society' and helping kids from disadvantaged backgrounds.

More specifically the report found that:

- The social impact of Cadet Forces is vastly greater than the annual cost of the cadet programme to the defence budget.
- Cadet Forces help children receiving Free School Meals achieve their potential.
- Children excluded from school who join the Cadets are more likely to have improved attendance and behaviour on their return to school.

- Cadet Forces help make communities more inclusive by helping people to overcome disadvantages in the way school does not.
- Serving soldiers who used to be in the Cadets are four times more likely to be a senior non-commissioned officer or an officer.



The Defence Secretary observes cadets during a lesson at Albion Academy.

Meanu Bajwa-Patel, Senior Researcher, The Institute for Social Innovation and Impact, University of Northampton said:

The evidence so far has been overwhelmingly positive and demonstrates that the Cadet Forces can make a huge difference to social inclusion, social mobility and the mental wellbeing of young people. More research on the Cadet Expansion Programme and Cadet Forces across the devolved nations is planned, allowing us over the next three years to evaluate the social impact further.

The report also found that Cadet Forces help to develop an individual's communication, confidence and leadership skills, as well as increasing their awareness of the Armed Forces and improves respect for veterans.

The new cadet units, established under the MOD and Department for Education's Cadet Expansion Programme is backed by £50 million funding from LIBOR fines, which pays for set up costs, the cadets' uniforms, equipment and training.

The full report is available here

<https://www.northampton.ac.uk/research/research-institutes/institute-for-social-innovation-and-impact/social-impact-resulting-from-expenditure-on-cadets>