



20 May 2013

MEDIA RELEASE

WAR GRAVES PHOTOGRAPHIC PROJECT RECEIVES ROYAL RECOGNITION

A volunteer group that has sourced and archived over 1.7 million photographs of war graves from around the world will be honoured by His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent at St. James' Palace on 23 May 2013.

The Duke, who is President of The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, will present Steve Rogers, Co-ordinator of The War Graves Photographic Project, with a *President's Commendation* in recognition of the outstanding contribution to the work and aims of The Commission.

The Commission's Director General, Alan Pateman-Jones, said: "The Project provides a valuable service to families, scholars and researchers seeking to obtain a copy of the photograph of a grave or memorial – virtually anywhere in the world.

"This service has only been made possible through the efforts of a dedicated group of 900 volunteers, from all walks of life, who recognise the importance for families to see where their loved ones are laid to rest or commemorated. In recognition of this outstanding contribution to the work and aims of the Commission the Project is awarded the President's Commendation."

Steve Rogers from The War Graves Photographic Project said that it was an honour to accept this award on behalf of all the volunteers around the world who have contributed to the Project over the years.

"What initially started out as a hobby has turned into an immense archive of over 1.76 million images which has only been achieved by the effort of many people who felt the need to become involved," he added.

For more details please contact: Peter Francis on 01628 507163 or 07766 255884 or by email media@cwgc.org Photographs are available on request.

Ends

Notes for editors:

1. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org)

- The Commission maintains the graves and memorials of the 1.7 million Commonwealth servicemen and women who died during the two world wars. It also holds and updates an extensive and accessible records archive.
- The Commission operates in over 23,000 locations in 153 countries across all continents except for Antarctica.



- 14-18: A series of high-profile worldwide events will take place to mark the centenary of the First World War, many of which will take place at Commission sites. The Commission will ensure that these sites are maintained at the highest standard and is installing information panels at over 500 sites to enhance the visitor experience. Smartphone users will also be able to access additional information, including the personal stories of some of those buried at the site.
- The Commission provides teachers and youth workers with a comprehensive range of educational resources and support materials so that future generations remain engaged in the work of the Commission and continue to remember those who died in the two world wars.

2 The War Graves Photographic Project (www.twgpp.org)

The War Graves Photographic Project has undertaken the immense task of recording, archiving and making available images of the graves or memorial listings of every service casualty since the outbreak of the First World War. They have been able to photograph and record over 1.7 million named graves and memorials.

3 The President's Commendation

The President's Commendation is a prestigious award for employees, or people who work closely with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, who have demonstrated one or more of the following criteria:

- Shown exceptional achievement or have gone beyond the bounds of duty
- Brought distinction to the Commission and enhanced our reputation
- Displayed moral courage and vision in making and delivering tough choices
- Ensured good maintenance in the face of adversity over a period of time (e.g. in a war zone)