

RCMP Plant a Tree to Remember the Internment of Italian-Canadians



On September 18, at an official ceremony in Ottawa attended by children and grandchildren of internees, the RCMP formally acknowledged its role in executing the coerced removal and encampment of 600 men of Italian origin. At the beginning of WWII, these men were taken from their families and sent to labour camps until September 1943, when the Fascist Government fell, and Italy ceased to be at war with Canada. Villa Charities and the Columbus Centre join the families of the internees and the entire Italian-Canadian community to express their appreciation for this formal acknowledgment by the RCMP.

This dark moment in the history of the Italian-Canadian community was studied, documented and presented in exhibitions both at the Columbus Centre and around Canada through a multi-year research and archival project led by the Columbus Centre. Two permanent installations are dedicated to the memory of these men: a sculptural monument on the grounds of the campus by artist Harley Valentine and a permanent memorial wall in the Joseph D. Carrier Art Gallery bearing the names of all the internees.

The result of this comprehensive research project developed by the Columbus Centre is available online at italiancanadianww2.ca