80 years later, Rosignano remembers Operation Herring with the 185th RAO Folgore

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Today, eighty years after the last wartime parachute mission on European soil, Italy solemnly and gratefully remembers **Operation Herring**, one of the most glorious – yet least known – pages of our military history. A bold, risky, and deeply patriotic action that saw **226 volunteer paratroopers** from the **1st Reconnaissance Squadron "Folgore"** (**Squadron F)** and the **Centuria Nembo**, part of the reconstituted Italian Army in the spring of 1945, as protagonists.

6:00 PM on April 20, 1945: Italian Paratroopers board the truck heading to the Rosignano airport

Between **April 19 and 23, 1945**, in anticipation of breaking through the **Gothic Line** and liberating Northern Italy, these men embarked from the **Vada** area, specifically from the **Due Casoni** airfield, to infiltrate enemy-controlled territory – in the provinces of **Bologna, Modena, Ferrara, and Mantua** – with orders to **hold out for 36 hours**, sabotage, disorient, and hinder German movements until the arrival of Allied troops. **31 were the fallen**, young Italians who gave their lives for the freedom of the Homeland.

9:00 PM, April 20, 1945: flying towards the drop zone

The commemorative ceremony of the **80th anniversary** takes place **today, April 3, 2025**, right at the **Due Casoni di Vada** (via Aurelia Sud 48/52), the place from which that historic mission departed. Present are the **civil and military authorities**, local schools, military associations, and numerous citizens. Paying tribute, as every year, is the 185th Reconnaissance

Target Acquisition Regiment “Folgore”, awarded honorary citizenship by the Municipality of Rosignano in 2021 in memory of Operation Herring.

German prisoners captured by Italian paratroopers of Operation Herring (Poggio Renatico, April 1945)

The celebrations will begin with a **training parachute drop** in memory of the men of Operation Herring, followed by the **official ceremony** with honors to the fallen, the blessing, the **paratrooper's prayer**, and speeches by Mayor **Claudio Marabotti** and **Colonel Marco Margutti**, commander of the 185th RAO “Folgore.”

Since June 2015, the 185th RAO "FOLGORE" Regiment has adopted the insignia of the 1st Reconnaissance Squadron "Folgore" (Squadron F), in honor of Operation Herring.

The mayor also wanted to involve the younger generations, inviting all schools to participate in the ceremony in recent days, to preserve the memory of one of the most valiant missions in our history. This day, we add, represents a link between historical memory and the present: an opportunity to remember **the contribution of 226 volunteers** in an Italy still scarred by

conflict. Their gesture continues to represent an example of dedication and sense of duty, values that institutions and new generations are called to preserve and pass on.