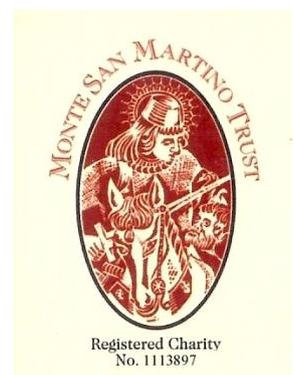


German/Fascist Atrocities in the High Lunigiana 1944-5

An [interactive map](#) is available which links to pages (in Italian) which give full details of the events. The sizes of the red dots on the map are indicative of the relative magnitudes of the atrocities.



The Monte San Martino Trust was founded in 1989 by J. Keith Killby, a former prisoner of war in Italy, together with other veterans of the Second World War. The Trust awards English language study bursaries to Italians, aged 18 to 25, in recognition of the courage and generosity of the Italian people who aided thousands of escaping Allied prisoners of war after the Armistice in 1943. Click [here](#) to access the Trust's home page.



Comune di Aulla (MS)	
Location of the killings	Canova
Date	24 July 1944
List of the victims	<p><i>Number and status of the victims</i> 4 victims: 4 men (2 adults, one elderly man, one man whose personal data & origin are unknown).</p> <p>Nardi Giulio, 31 years old Petacchi Mario, 28 years old Priori Gaudenzio, 72 years old Pietro Morotti, age unknown</p>
Description of events	<p>Description</p> <p>On July 24 a patrol of the Garibaldi Assault Brigade, 340ma Company then known as the "Lino Parodi" (a communist dominated unit), together with some men from the "Falco", attempted to sabotage the Serriciolo bridge. In so doing they clashed with a German motorcade busily transferring a number of logistical units of the 16 Division "Reichfuhrer SS" to the high Taverone area. According to the diaries of the partisan formation, the action resulted in the deaths of 20 Germans and Lino Parodi partisans. In contrast, the 16th Division reported only one death and three serious injuries.</p> <p>Immediately after the clash three Germans undertook a mopping up operation in the area around Madonnina. Pietro Morotti, discovered by the Germans observing events, was killed straight away by a burst of machine gun fire and the village of Canova was set ablaze. Published histories and the recollections of locals lead one to believe that there were perhaps eight victims (excluding Emma Orlandi, machine gunned on the surfaced road between Fosdinovo and Soliera). Such an assessment is not however consistent with the entries made on the death certificates.</p> <p>It is worth noting that according to the diary of the "Lino Parodi" partisan formation, on July 26 the same partisans ambushed and killed a German captain and a soldier on the Carrara-Fivizzano roadway. Fortunately, this event did not trigger a reprisal.</p> <p>Responsibility <i>German</i> German documentation reveals the presence in the region of a unit belonging to the 16 Division Reichfuhrer SS.</p>
Bibliography	<p>130. Galletto Lido, Dal Bardine all'Aulella. Chronicle of the war of the partisans in the year 1944 within the lower Lunigiana, Ceccotti, Massa 1997, 121 pp.</p> <p>General Bibliography</p>

Location of the killings	Pallerone
Date	24 July 1944
Details of the victims	<p><i>Number and status of the victims</i></p> <p>2 victims: 2 men whose personal data and place of origin are unknown.</p> <p>Salvatori Odino, age unknown Valerio Giuseppe, age unknown</p>
Description of events	<p>Description</p> <p>The episode is not well remembered by local people. Jona describes it in terms of the execution of two young men by firing squad carried out by a detachment of "Monterosa" republicans: but the motive is not known (it is probable, however, that the two had failed to report for military service) and in the absence of sources, Italian responsibility cannot be confirmed.</p>

Comune di Bagnone(MS)

Location of the killings

[Bagnone](#)

Date

30 June - 7 July 1944

List of the victims

Number & status of the victims

47 victims: 42 men (one child, 37 adults, 2 old people and 2 age unknown), one woman of age unknown, 4 unknowns.

Angella Enrico, 37 years old
Angella Francesco, 49 years old
Baldini don Lino, 28 years old
Bertocchi Battista, 32 years old
Bertocchi Ermenegildo, 32 years old
Bertoli Antonio, 48 years old
Bertoli Erminio, 11 years old
Caneri Angelo, 34 years old
De Cesari Ettore, 43 years old
Donati Anselmo, 43 years old
Donati Mario, 21 years old
Faggioni Paolo, age unknown
Fiori Edoardo, 28 years old
Forni Virginio, 54 years old
Fortunato Raffaele, 21 years old
Giannarelli Ermenegildo, 27 years old
Giannotti Giuseppe, 40 years old
Grandi Mario, 39 years old
Guastalli Settimio, 30 years old
Guidotti Giuseppe, 21 years old
Matellini Pietro, 20 years old
Medici Alcide, 30 years old
Mori Giuseppe (o Leopoldo), 56 years old
Piagnero Emiliana, age unknown
Ricci Luigi, 41 years old
Righi Luciano, 52 years old
Russo Francesco, 25 years old
Salveti Giuseppe, 23 years old
Sardella Giovanni, 32 years old
Sardella Vincenzo, 39 years old
Sassi Lidio, 20 years old
Saudei Remigio, 32 years old
Sbarra Guerrino, 17 years old
Tiradani Giuseppe, 45 years old
Travaglini Amelio, 22 years old
Travaglini Pietro, 68 years old
Turchi Terenzio, 38 years old
Vinciguerra Giovanni, 31 years old
Vinciguerra Lino, 25 years old
Vinciguerra Pietro, 28 years old
Zebra Amleto, age unknown
Zoppi Alfredo, 30 years old
Zoppi Pierino, 29 years old

4 bodies were not identified

Description of events

Description

During the extensive anti-partisan search and destroy operation known as Wallenstein I the communities of Bagnone, Comano, Filattiera and Licciana Nardi paid a high price in blood. Until recently the exact number of civilian casualties was unknown, but the total was believed to be in the region of fifty.

On June 30 1944 the semi-retarded and deaf bell ringer Ettore De Caesari was killed because he rang the church bells; the German thinking that the gesture was a pre-arranged signal agreed with the partisans bombarded the building, damaging it badly. On July 2 in the area bounded by Pieve di Bagnone, Gabbiana and Lusana, various executions were recorded as the search progressed. Among the victims was the not yet seventeen-year-old Guerrino Sbarra. He had been investigated by the authorities, cleared of liability for military service and freed, but when he returned to his village he was shot by a German patrol. Lidio Sassi, together with a companion, was also killed in this phase; although considered by his father to be a partisan, a report by the Bagnone Carabinieri certified him as failing to report for military service, guilty only of presenting himself to the German commander for the purpose of replacing his father, arrested earlier.

The searches were completed; by the evening of June 30 about forty men had been arrested, amongst them some priests and doctors from the area. These individuals were taken to the nearby Castello di Bagnone, accused by the Commander of collaboration with the partisans and condemned to be transferred to the detention camp at Bibbiano in the province of Reggio Emilia. There the prisoners underwent rigorous interrogation but were released immediately thereafter. Returning home, the Pontremolesi were stopped yet again by the Germans who blocked their way because the search for partisans was still in progress. On July 4 they went back to Bibbiano and from there they were transferred to the care of the lesser seminary of Parma, a conference centre for those in religious orders working within the dioceses of Parma, Reggio & Piacenza from where they were unexpectedly released on July 21 after the start of the allied bombing and the intervention of the bishop of Pontremoli.

After the initial phase of targeted arrests, the Germans placed machine gun nests at strategic points and fired upon anything that moved. On July 3 they received the order to take no more prisoners, but instead to kill all those trying to evade the search. That day, on the cobbled floor of an ancient church at Pieve di Bagnone, seven young people were murdered; in the evening the mother of the local parish priest was at the well with a friend in the vicinity of Gradile when they were surprised by soldiers in German uniform who killed them with pistol shots. The same day, five young people discovered in a Dobbiana farmhouse were transferred to Ponticello and shot in the church square in front of villagers who had been rounded up and forced to watch. Another two, shot the evening before at Villa Bandini in Villafranca Lunigiana were strung up in the town square at Filattiera.

By the close of search operations on July 4 there had been five killings in Bagnone (around Mochignano), and at Camporaghena in the commune of Comano four residents had been killed, including the parish priest Don Lino Baldini, discovered in possession of a radio and accused of complicity with the partisans. At Panicale Dr Giuseppe Giannotti was killed, suspected of collaboration with the partisans or perhaps shot by mistake.

On July 5 in an area above Lusana an unidentified young person was shot and injured by a German machine gun and left dying for two days.

On July 7 a certain Giuseppe Tiradini was killed – he was accused of collaboration with the partisans but probably marked out by the fascists as a communist sympathiser. His body was then hung from a tree and photographed by German soldiers. At the close of the day's search four unidentified bodies were found on Monte Busco, near the Church. In addition, a body identified as that of Amleto Zebra of Sarzana was found near Fontana Murta.

Responsibility

Responsibility

German

Although German documentation makes no specific reference to the killings, there can be little doubt that the units responsible were the same ones as those involved in the search operation "Operation Wallenstein I" acting under the orders of [Flak-Regiment 131](#). One of the units that took part in this operation was the Luftwaffen-Jäger-Bataillon zbV 7 (a unit of men disciplined for military/civil offences or thought otherwise unsound) that had previously operated in Naples during the popular revolt, in Western Piedmont from December 1943 to January 1944, and then at the Anzio front (Nettuno). They were involved in the operations of:

- a) police units that were stationed along the main roads;
- b) the Brigade garrisoned at strongpoints within the La Spezia area and the Garfagnana which they supported by taking positions along the roads of the Passo di Cento Croci and the Passo della Cisa, in which role they experienced the heaviest fighting of the anti-partisan campaign; and finally
- c) a group of [Sicherheitspolizei](#) (Secret Police) led by SS captain Herbert Andor.

Despite the name, during 1944-5 Luftwaffen-Jäger-Bataillon zbV 7 consisted of ground forces operated under army command, but in 1943 it had been an air force fighter battalion stationed in Southern Italy.

Bibliography

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[103](#). **Mosti Emidio**, *The Apuan Resistance: July 1943 - April 1945*, Longanesi & C., Milano 1973, 277 pp.

[General Bibliography](#)

Comune di Pontremoli(MS)	
Location of the killings	Pontremoli
Date	22 June 1944
List of the victims	<p><i>Number & status of the victims</i> 2 victims: two adult men.</p> <p>Martinelli Albino, 46 years Martinelli Emilio, 20 years</p>
Description of events	<p>Description The two men, who had been condemned to death by the Military Tribunal for failing to report for military service and for desertion, were executed by firing squad.</p> <p>Responsibility <i>Italian</i> The death sentence was handed down by the Military Tribunal of Florence: it is therefore an atrocity to be laid at the door of the fascist republic.</p>
Bibliography	<p>84. Giuliani Manfredo, Ten months of German and fascist terror in the Magra valley. Victims and martyrs of the civilian population, Stamperia Apuana, Carrara 1945, 15 pp.</p> <p>86. Sismondo mons. Giovanni, The 20 months of German domination (1943-1945). Episodi, Artigianelli, Pontremoli 1946, 31 pp.</p> <p>88. Necchi don Pietro, The round-up and subsequent slaughter at the Pieve di Bagnone. July 1944, Artigianelli, Pontremoli 1948, 20 pp.</p> <p>92. Tassi Mino, Snippets from Pontremoli. Chronicle of the deeds of the resistance with regard to the territory of Pontremoli during the period July 1943-April 1945, Artigianelli, Pontremoli 1957, 3 vol.</p> <p>General Bibliography</p>

Comune di Licciana Nardi (MS)

Location of the killings	Licciana Nardi
Date	7 April 1945
List of the victims	<i>Number and staus of the victims</i> 3 victims: 2 elderly men and a female child. Burroni Vincenzo , 71 years old Ferdani Linda , 12 years old Ferrari Ercole , 63 years old
Description of events	<i>Description</i> The three were killed whilst looking out of the window of their home and following the movement of German troops that were passing through the village in retreat. The episode is difficult to reconstruct because of the absence of archive and bibliographic sources; it seems to be but one in a trail of "killings of the final days".
Bibliography	87. Ricci Iginio , The Germans in the upper Taverone valley (July 1944-April 1945), Tipografia Bertocchi, Pontremoli 1947, 16 pp. General Bibliography

Location of the killings	Zeri
Date	21-22 January 1945
List of the victims	<p><i>Number and status of the victims</i></p> <p>5 victims: 5 adult males <i>21 January:</i> Rubini Domenico, 50 years old Losa Antonio, 55 years old</p> <p><i>22 January:</i> Gerisoli Battista, 31 years old Filippelli Alfredo, 30 years old Filippelli Icilio, 24 years old</p>
Description of events	<p>Description</p> <p>The killings were perpetrated in the course of an anti-partisan search and destroy operation undertaken between 20 and 25 January 1945 in the Zerasco area. The search was in response to numerous actions undertaken by local partisan formations and was carried out by more meagre forces than were used the previous August, deployed from the the Pontremoli-Zeri arterial road.</p> <p>The Nazi/Fascist raid hit the partisan formations hard: on 21 January around fifteen partisans belonging to the group led by Ronato Pierini were killed in the Francolini di Adelano area. The number of civilians involved was small although, as noted by the local CLN, the enemy requisitioned large quantities of supplies and were guilty of several rapes.</p> <p>On 21 January Domenico Rubini and Antonio Losa were killed in the vicinity of Adelano and Tecchia respectively. The three victims of 22 January were cut down in the area of Merzò. According to the <i>Liber Chronicus</i> of Don Lorenzelli, parish priest of Zeri, these last three were shot by the XL Brigade Nere "Vittorio Ricciarelli" Apuania (a Fascist paramilitary group operating under the auspices of the Italian Social Republic).</p>
Bibliography	<p>Bibliography of the Province of Massa Carrara</p> <p>General Bibliography</p>