

## Chronology of Events – Malta

### 1940

- 11<sup>th</sup> June 1940 Italy declares war on the United Kingdom.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1940 First six Hurricane fighters arrive on Malta to join the three Gladiators in the Malta Fighter Flight.
- November 1940 10<sup>th</sup> Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment arrives on Malta.

### 1941

- January 1941 7<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Brigade formed under command of Brigadier N. V. SADLER.
- 11<sup>th</sup> January 1941 H.M.S. Illustrious (aircraft carrier) limps into Malta's Grand Harbour for urgent repairs.
- 16<sup>th</sup> January 1941 Large German air-raid by about seventy Ju87 and Ju88 aircraft attacks Grand Harbour targeting H.M.S. Illustrious.
- 17<sup>th</sup> January 1941 Second large air-raid on Grand Harbour.
- 19<sup>th</sup> January 1941 Third large air-raid on Grand Harbour. Only one minor hit on H.M.S. Illustrious.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1941 H.M.S. Illustrious sails for Alexandria.
- 31<sup>st</sup> January 1941 Brigadier Cecil John WOOLLEY, M.C., assumes command of the 7<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Brigade.
- February 1941 Series of daylight and then night raids commence attacking Malta and the airfield at Luqa and Hal Far in particular.

18<sup>th</sup> April 1941 Anti-aircraft defences reorganized with the formation of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Brigade (Brigadier D. A. H. HIRE) which took under command all the heavy anti-aircraft regiments leaving the 7<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Brigade (Brigadier C. J. WOOLLEY) commanding the light anti-aircraft and searchlight units.

June 1941 German air forces in Sicily and Southern Italy reduced by redeployment to operations against the Soviet Union.

November 1941 German air forces again deployed to Sicily and southern Italy. New phase of air attacks against Malta begin.

## 1942

8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> March 1942 Malta endures over twenty-one hours of continuous air attacks.

April 1942 German air attacks started targeting the anti-aircraft gun batteries. Casualties in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Brigades reached 149 killed and 290 wounded.

7<sup>th</sup> May 1942 Lord GORT arrived on Malta to assume his appointment as Governor-General. He brings with him the George Cross on behalf of His Majesty The King to be presented to the people of Malta.

June 1942 The level of air attacks reduce.

October 1942 Another air offensive starts focusing on the airfields and defences.

## 1943

January Air attacks reduce significantly to periodic fighter bomber sweeps by German fighters.

March-April No air attacks reported.

July Two air raids mounted against British Naval shipping in the Grand Harbour. Allied forces invade Sicily.

- August 1943                      No further air attacks on Malta, and the British forces on the island begin to be scaled down.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1943            Allied forces invade Italy. The Italian government agrees to an armistice.
- 8<sup>th</sup> September 1943            Italian armistice announced to the public.