

Message by Dr Roderick Bailey, representing the Special Forces Club, London, on the occasion of the opening of the memorial in Greifenburg for victims of Nazi persecution.

Among the names commemorated by this memorial are those of several men connected with the wartime work of the British Special Operations Executive. Known as SOE, this was a secret paramilitary service that conducted operations in support of resistance in countries occupied by the Axis powers.

These men performed different roles. One, Lieutenant Hubert Mayr, was an officer of the British Army and a trained SOE agent. Others were couriers and guides who provided important local assistance: Rudolf Moser; Georg Dereatti; Stefan Hassler; Johann Hassler; Ludwig Hassler; and Robert Schollas.

All undertook this work willingly, knowing that they risked death, because each of them, for his own reasons, wanted to play a part in liberating Europe from the Nazi occupiers. Finally, these men, who had been united in their courage and dedication to the freedom of Austria and the freedom of Europe, were also united in death.

We have come to Griefenburg today to celebrate their courage; to assert that the sacrifices they made for the freedoms we now enjoy in Europe were not made in vain; and to ensure that they will always be remembered.