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**ROMANIAN MILITARY****HOMAGE PAID TO THE HEROES OF THE 21ST MOUNTAIN BATTALION****Special points of  
interests:**

- **Homage paid to the heroes of the 21st Mountain Battalion**

- **Handing over - taking over military ceremony in Afghanistan**

- **Romanian and American pilots met 66 years after their air fight**



US Ambassador, Mark H. Gitenstein, handing in the medal to the Major Vasile Unguras's wife

A Memorial of the soldiers of the 21st Mountain Battalion killed in the theaters of operations was unveiled during a military ceremony held at the unit HQ in Predeal on Thursday, January 28. During the ceremony the US Ambassador in Romania, Mark H. Gitenstein, awarded the "Bronze Star" medals to Major (post mortem) Vasile Iuliu Unguras and Second Lieutenant (post mortem) Claudiu Chira.

The military ceremony was also attended by the Minister of National Defence, Gabriel Oprea, the chief of General Staff, Admiral Gheorghe Marin, the relatives of the heroes and the personnel of the 21st Mountain Battalion.

Mr. Oprea, the Minister of National Defence, expressed his high consideration for the initiative of the US Embassy in Bucharest to award post-mortem the two heroes from of the 21st Mountain Battalion: "I can assure you that the Romanian Armed Forces and the families of our companion-in-arms who were handed in these medals see this gesture as a sign of consideration and gratitude from the American Armed Forces and people for those who, through their last sacrifice and devotion, fight for fulfilling the humanity's ideals of liberty and justice".

During his speech, Minister Oprea mentioned the solemn meeting organized for the celebration of 151 years from the Unification of the Romanian Principalities, where medals have been awarded, as well, to all 14 Romanian military killed in Western Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan TOs.

"We may never call that we have done enough for the our heroes' families but we will do our best for them to feel they are part of the Romanian Armed Forces. We are and will always stand by the children, wives and parents of our heroes and make them feel our tendance", stated Minister Oprea



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## HANDING OVER—TAKING OVER MILITARY CEREMONY IN AFGHANISTAN

The handing over-taking over military ceremony between the 280th Mechanized Infantry Battalion from Focsani and the 33rd Mountain Battalion "Posada" from Curtea de Arges was held in in Lagman base, Afghanistan, on Monday, January 25.

The Commander of the Regional Command South, Major General Nick Carter, the Governor of Zabul Province, Mohammed Ashraf Nasser, the chief of Staff of Joint Operational Command, Commander Costel Avramescu, commanders of Police and National Afghan Armed Forces and commanders of Romanian detachments deployed in Afghanistan attended the ceremony. It started with a solemn moment held in the memory of the troops killed in missions in Afghanistan.

Major General Nick Carter expressed his appreciation for the activity the soldiers of the 280th Maneuver Battalion during their six month mission.

The Governor of Zabul Province, in his speech, thanked to the troops of the 280th Infantry Battalion for the security in the Province, welcoming the 33rd Mountain Battalion "Posada" and expressed his willingness to cooperate with them, too. Commander Costel Avramescu conveyed the message of the National Defence Minister, Gabriel Oprea, speaking highly of the courage and devotion in missions of the soldiers from Focsani and wished the soldiers from Curtea de Arges good luck in their future actions.

The Mountain Troops will have to secure their area of responsibility, to achieve the military missions together with the Afghan forces, to conduct the humanitarian missions and patrol and escort of convoys.



Commander of the 33rd Mountain Battalion  
"Posada" next to the fighting Colours

## ROMANIAN AND AMERICAN PILOTS MET 66 YEARS AFTER THEIR AIR FIGHT



Aspects from the meeting

Museum of Aviation hosted on Saturday, January 23, a unique event: two veteran pilots from the Second World War, Air Flotilla General (R) Ion Dobran and US Colonel (R) Barrie Davis met face to face, for the first time. On June 6, 1944 the two pilots engaged in air combat and the US pilot was forced to land, finally.

The Romanian and the US officials, war veterans, their families and friends participated in the meeting, too.

June 6, 1944 is an important date in our history: one of the most powerful US air attacks against the Romanian oil fields and airdromes, with the mission to bomb the cities like Bucharest, Ploiesti, Brasov, Craiova, Pitesti, Ramnicu Valcea and Galati. The air fight between the two pilots took place over Galati city.

Barrie Davis, a 20 years old young Pilot Officer, in the 325th Fighting Group was flying a P51 Mustang and had numberless missions of escort of bombers in air raids over Romania. On June 6, in such a mission he was attacked by a Romanian airplane and forced to land in Ukraine, the plane being seriously affected.

The A F Lieutenant Ion Dobran was the commander of the 48th Air Flotilla, the 9th Fighting Group, deployed in Tecuci airdrome; he was pilot on a Messerschmitt 109. His unit was designated to the front in Moldova (against the Soviets) and till June the 6th, the day he met Barrie Davies he never fought against the Americans. In that air fight, a DOGFIGHT, Lieutenant Dobran was at his turn wounded by Davis' fellow member and was forced to land, too.