



Newsletter Issue 32, July 2016

Spanish Tragedy



Our only monument in Spain is in the Port of Barcelona. It commemorates the tragic night of 17 January 1977. Both the USS Guam and the USS Trenton were anchored in the outer harbor, and the sailors and Marines were being shuttled to shore and back on liberty boats. A 56-foot launch carrying 130 Americans was run into by the 380 ton Spanish freighter “Urbea” at 2:30 am, just as it was rounding the pier to head back to the ship. The launch overturned and 49 of the 130 seaman drowned in the murky waters. Some seaman were able to swim to shore. Some were trapped under the capsized vessel for hours, breathing in a 1-1/2 foot space until Spanish tugboats could right the stricken craft. Over 30 were hospitalized, some with serious injuries. A year later, on 18 January 1978, a monument was dedicated commemorating the fallen and to thank the Barcelona rescuers for their role in helping the US Navy.



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About American War Memorials Overseas

American War Memorials Overseas was once again heavily involved in overseas Memorial Day ceremonies. The American Overseas Memorial Day Association, in conjunction with the American Battle Monuments Commission, plans and hosts a Memorial Day ceremony in every American overseas cemetery. This year American War Memorials Overseas board members acted as the Master of Ceremonies for four of these events. The ceremonies are always very well attended by local citizens and help keep the memory alive.



What guidebook do we use?

We are often asked if we publish a guidebook about American war memorials—we don't. But we use them! The series that we find most useful, accurate and thorough are written by Tonie and Valmai Holt, a British couple that have published over 30 books. Particularly interesting for American monument seekers are their D-Day, Market Garden, and Western Front South books. They just released a greatly expanded Somme 100th Anniversary edition, which is already on our bookshelf.



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