



## Newsletter Issue 50, January 2021

### COVID Strides for AMWO

Do you need some good news after months and months of Covid agony? American War Memorials Overseas has been making great progress in researching and adding to our database—our researchers have lots of time on their hands! We have reached some significant milestones in the last quarter: we have just surpassed **2000** memorials, **1500** sites, **2500** units, and **25,000** people in our database. So in our **50th** newsletter we would like to feature each of them for you. A special thanks to Angelo DeCecco, Mark Esller, and Robert Walton for their time and passion in these past months.

#### 1500th site: Old Cemetery, Cobh

The Old Church Cemetery is an ancient cemetery on the outskirts of the town of Cobh, County Cork, Ireland which contains a significant number of important burials, including three mass graves and several individual graves containing the remains of 193 victims of the passenger ship RMS Lusitania which was sunk by a German torpedo off the Old Head of Kinsale during the First World War in May 1915 with the loss of more than 1,100 lives. Our interest is the memorial erected by the officers and crew of the USS Wainwright to two of their fallen shipmates. The destroyer patrolled the waters of the Irish Sea against German U-boats in 1917 and 1918. James Bush accidentally drowned and William Baker was lost at sea, and both are remembered today in Cobh.

#### 25,000th person: PFC Olivo Boer



Private First Class Olivo "Tony" Boer was born in Prata di Por-denone, Italy in January, 1916. He emigrated to the United States in the 1930s so was bilingual in English and Italian when he enlisted in 1942. He served with Company E of the 337th Infantry Regiment, 85th Infantry Division in Italy during the war. He was killed in operations against the Gothic line north of Florence, Italy in September 1944. A brother of Olivo, Attilio, served with Patton's Third Army in the 2nd Armored Division, while two other brothers, twins Umberto and Mario were unable to depart Italy before the war started and were drafted into the Italian Army serving in Montenegro; both later emmigrated to the US. After the war, PFC Boes' next of kin asked that his remains be repatriated to their family plot in Prata di Por-denone, where he rests today as an Isolated Burial.

#### 2000th Memorial: Bombers Collide

A plaque in the woods near the Forsthaus Heldenstein in Germany honors the crews of the B-24 "Pregnant Peggy" and B-24 "Bomber's Moon", both of the 844th Bomb Squadron, 489th Bomb Group, who died during after the planes collided during a bombing run in 1944. On Oct. 19, 1944, the planes were enroute to Mainz to bomb a railroad yard when Pregnant Peggy got caught up in the prop wash of another bomber and the pilots lost control in the ensuing turbulence. As they struggled to maintain control of the 33,000-pound plane packed with thousands of pounds of bombs, the Pregnant Peggy struck the tail section of the Bomber's Moon with its left wing tip. The wing disintegrated and the engine and prop fell off the Pregnant Peggy. Both planes fell from over 20,000 feet and crashed into the woods near Forsthaus Heldenstein at Edenkoben, Germany.



#### 2500th Unit: Royal Navy Reserve

In the floor of the Old Royal Navy College in London is a plaque to the 22 Americans who joined the Royal Navy between 1939 and the bombing of Pearl Harbour in 1941. They were all assigned to the Royal Navy Volunteer reserve. This unit was created in 1903 to allow volunteers with no naval experience to also join the Royal Navy as reservists. (The Royal Navy Reserve consisted of professional civilian sailors, the Volunteer Reserve was open to all.) By 1945 there were over 40,000 officers in the RNVR, including our 22 Americans. They wore a distinctive insignia on their sleeves, resulting in the nickname "The Wavy Navy."

