

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF HISTORIC PROPERTY ADVERSE EFFECT

Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery and Fort Douglas Post Cemetery – Removal of (3) historic headstones

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) of the United States (U.S.) Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is proposing to remove and replace historic headstones from the graves of two (2) German prisoners of war (POW) at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, 1520 Harry Wurzbach Road, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas, and one (1) historic headstone from the grave of a German POW at Fort Douglas Post Cemetery, Fort Douglas Boulevard, Salt Lake City, Utah 84113.

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended and 36 CFR 800, NCA in consultation with the Texas and Utah Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) finds these undertakings will have an adverse effect on the two national cemeteries, which are historic properties listed the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

In order resolve these adverse effects pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.6, NCA has proposed mitigation as follows:

- Install interpretive signs at all 21 VA cemeteries* where foreign-enemy POWs are interred to provide historical context to the interment of foreign nationals and POWs from World War I and World War II in these cemeteries. (** This number will increase to 24 sites by the end of 2020.*)
- Develop online exhibit content to be published on the NCA History Program, Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, and Fort Douglas Post Cemetery websites to explain the history of World War I and II POW camps in the United States and context of this headstone and its replacement.
- Develop a booklet – connected to the 75th Anniversary of the end of World War II – on foreign-national burials in NCA cemeteries that will include a section on the burial of enemy POWs. The booklet will be available in print and digital formats.
- Preserve the historic headstones as part of its History Collection and seek partners, such as the Fort Sam Houston Museum and Fort Douglas Military Museum or other suitable organizations, to exhibit them as part of a contextual theme.

Any person or group wishing to submit comments regarding the Adverse Effect to either historic property may do so in writing by September 4, 2020. Comments should be directed to Ed Hooker, Historical Architect, National Cemetery Administration, at William.Hooker@va.gov.