

# 442nd Regimental Combat Team Monument Hill 555 Restoration and Augmentation Bruyères France

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A proposal to renew and augment the 1947 monument built by the City of Bruyères in honor and memory of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

# 442nd Regimental Combat Team Monument Hill 555 Restoration and Augmentation Bruyères France

## Project Description

### Background

No community in France has devoted more energy and resources to honor a small group of American World War II (WWII) soldiers than has the City of Bruyères. Located in the Vosges Mountains in the Alsace-Champagne-Ardenne-Lorraine region, Bruyères, along with its neighboring cities of Biffontaine and Belmont, became the site of one of WW II's most savage battles – a battle fought largely by Americans of Japanese descent. In mid-October of 1944, members of what would become WW II's most highly decorated combat unit, liberated Bruyères, Biffontaine and Belmont from some of Germany's most experienced and fanatical soldiers (Schutzstaffel (SS) Police Regiment 19, among others) who were deeply entrenched in the dense forested hills surrounding these communities.

The 100/442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT), along with supporting units that included the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion (FAB) and the 232nd Combat Engineer Company (CEC) not only liberated these communities but went on to rescue, at great cost, the "Lost Texas Battalion" that had been encircled by the enemy and faced imminent annihilation.

To their everlasting credit, the people of Bruyères have never forgotten the sacrifice these young men made and the terrible conditions under which they fought. Memorials and monuments are found along the difficult track taken by the liberators -- each step having been paid for dearly in blood and lives.

Visitors from around the world come to Bruyères and the surrounding communities and learn of the exploits of these young soldiers who fought heroically in spite of the fact that many had left their families confined within the barbed wire of American internment camps.

In 1947, the grateful but still ravaged City of Bruyères, built on Hill 555 a simple stone monument in honor of their liberators. **(Exhibit 1)** This historically important monument is now showing the effects of its age, exposure to the weather and occasional vandalism. It is this historic monument that interested parties in the United States (U.S.) seek to renew in the memory of all those who sacrificed in this great effort. In particular, we are inspired by one of the members of the 522<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Battalion, Private (Pvt.) Kiyoshi Ono of B Battery **(Exhibit 2)** who, along with his fellow soldiers, fought to wrest the region from the German invaders and return it in peace to the people of France.

In addition to the restoration of the existing monument, these same interested parties in the U.S. also seek to augment the current monument on Hill 555 with an additional memorial element using locally quarried native stone. A licensed architect has prepared a proposed design (**Exhibit 3**) for consideration by the City of Bruyères.

#### Project: Part I Restoration

Goal: It is the goal of Part 1 of the project to restore, using local craftsmen, the existing 1947-built monument on Hill 555 to a state as close to its original condition as possible and to add features that will enhance security at the location.

Using local selected craftsmen, we propose that the following work be completed:

1. Remove debris and high-pressure wash the entire monument.
2. Remove, strip, repaint and re-erect the two existing flag poles. Install new pulleys, cleats and wire halyards, as well as lockable halyard security boxes 3 meters above the current monument.
3. Restore existing rock work and replace missing stones and concrete.
4. Strip, prime and repaint all railings.
5. Remove, restore (or replace) and reinstall commemorative plaque.
6. Strategically install a long range wireless solar powered security camera accessible via Internet Protocol (IP). (see **Exhibit 4**)
7. Install signs in French and English advising visitors that the monument area is under constant police video surveillance.
8. Reinstall, in a highly secure manner, a donated WW II helmet.
9. Install a small brass plaque on one side of existing monument that reads in French and English,

“The restoration of this monument was undertaken in 2016 in loving memory of Pvt. Ki-yoshi Ono (Serial Number - 39931140) and his fellow Artillerymen of Battery B, 522<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Battalion”

#### Project: Part II New Monument Element

Goal: It is the goal of Part II of the project to add a new element to the current site that tastefully augments the existing monument and projects the rugged strength, determination and sacrifice of those who liberated Bruyères, Biffontaine, Belmont and the surrounding region.

Using locally selected craftsmen, we propose that the following work be completed:

1. Select, quarry, cut, and carve a new monument element and base of appropriately 6.0 metric tons from locally available granite (or other suitable stone) as illustrated in **Exhibit 5**.
2. Prepare and pour a reinforced concrete foundation, capped with stone and centered five meters directly behind the pedestal of the existing monument.

3. Attach a brass plaque to the base that reads in French and English:

***“In grateful honor of the gallant men of the 100/442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team, the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion and the 232nd Combat Engineer Company who sacrificed to liberate the Cities of Bruyères, Biffontaine and Belmont from the German invaders. Dedicated to their sacred memory and to the freedom for which they fought by the City of Bruyères on October 24, 2016”***

4. Transport, place and secure the new element at the prepared site.
5. Pour a pathway connecting the current monument to the new element
6. Plant three Japanese maple trees (Acer Palmatum Bloodgood), one behind and one to each side of the new element.
7. Install LED up lighting at the base of the new element powered by a solar panel array.

### Project Funding

The project will be paid for by the family and friends of those who served in the 100/442 RCT, the 522 FAB and the 232 CEC and through contributions by interested individuals and organizations. There will be no direct costs to the City of Bruyères however; it is proposed that, if approved, the City designate a volunteer Project Coordinator and a volunteer City Historian to represent the City's interest during the two phases of the project.

Donated funds will be secured in a separate bank account (**Bruyères Hill 555 Monument Restoration and Augmentation Fund**) under the control of a volunteer Accountant who will maintain accounts and make wire transfers to the City of Bruyères based on invoices submitted. All donors will be identified and a list of contributors will be provided to the City of Bruyères. Any funds remaining after completion of the entire project will be donated to the City of Bruyères with a request that they be used to maintain the site for as long as the funds permit.

No funds will be used for any personal purposes by anyone associated with the project.

### Estimated Project Costs

It is estimated that Part I of the project can be completed for approximately U.S. \$15,000 (€13,280).

It is difficult to estimate the total cost of the proposed project as a significant portion of Part II involves stonecutters, artisans and a locally designed and installed monument foundation. However, Part II is expected to cost approximately U.S. \$20,000 (€17,700).

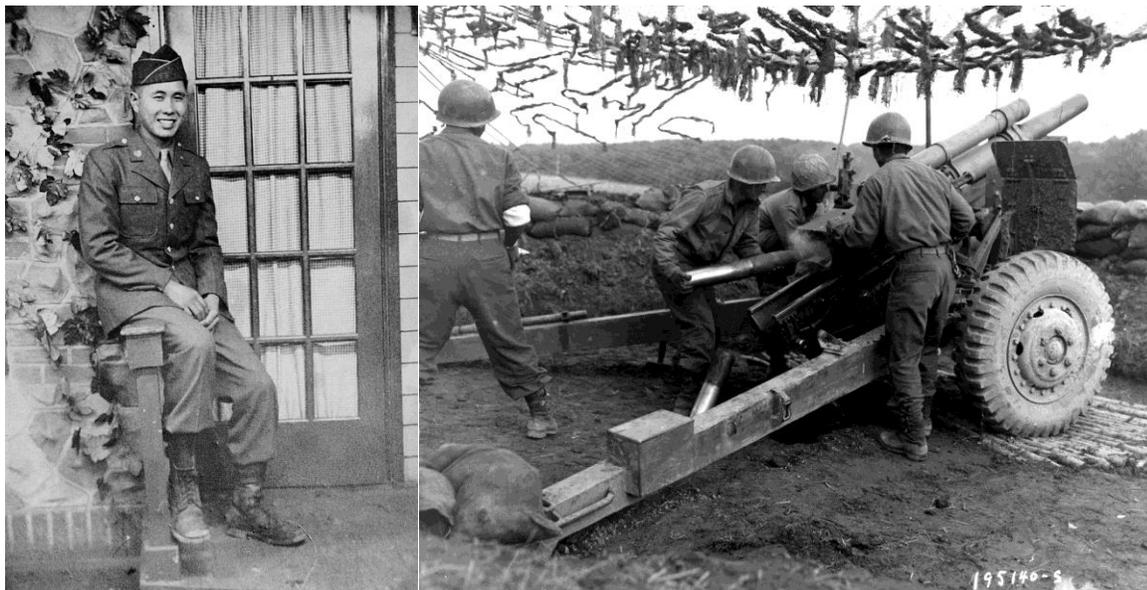
The total cost for the project is estimated to be \$35,000 (€31,000). This estimate is based on the assumption that the stone quarried for the new element in Part II will be donated by the City of Bruyères. A contingency fund of U.S. \$5,000 (€4,425) will be maintained. Total funds required for the project and the reserve: \$40,000 (€35,400).

## Exhibit 1



Existing Hill 55 Monument honoring the 100/442 built in 1947. This simple and beautiful monument was among the first expressions of gratitude to the liberators of Bruyères and because of its historic significance deserves to be refreshed and maintained. Its simplicity and use of local materials speaks at once to the limited resources that the City faced at the time of its construction and to the determination of the City to remember those brave men who sacrificed to liberate and restore freedom to the region.

## Exhibit 2



**Pvt. Kiyoshi Ono, B Battery,  
522nd Field Artillery Battalion**

Kiyoshi Ono was born in January of 1922 to Ryosuke and Matsuno Ono in Walnut Grove, California -- one of four children, which included two brothers (Shigeo and Masao) and one sister (Harue). His father, Ryosuke, born in Japan (Hiroshima-Ken) in 1879 immigrated to the United States in 1906 and worked in San Joaquin County as a farmer. Kiyoshi's mother, Matsuno, was born in Japan (Hyogo-Ken) in 1896 and arrived in the United States in 1919.

Kiyoshi attended McClatchy high schools in Sacramento, CA where he met his future wife, Violet Masuhara. Prior to World War II, Kiyoshi worked as a truck farmer, photographer, and electrician.

When WWII was declared, Kiyoshi was one of 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry who were sent to relocation camps as required by the Presidential Executive Order 9066. After a brief stay at Tule Lake Relocation Camp, Kiyoshi was transported to Granada Relocation Camp in Amache, Colorado, along with his mother and siblings. Kiyoshi's father was relocated to the Rohwer Relocation Camp in McGehee, AR, where he died in November of 1943. Kiyoshi's future wife and her family were sent to Tule Lake Relocation Camp and then to Minidoka Relocation Camp in Hunt, ID.

In spite of being confined to a Relocation Camp, Kiyoshi on July 21, 1944, volunteered and enlisted in the U.S. Army. The Army sent him first to Fort Logan, Utah and subsequently to Camp Shelby, Mississippi. While he was initially classified as a Photographer and Sharpshooter, he was subsequently trained as an artilleryman in the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion. The 522nd supported the 442nd RCT in Italy and France where Kiyoshi fought in the battle to liberate Bruyères, Biffontaine and Belmont. He subsequently participated in the liberation of the Dachau Concentration Camp in Germany. Honorably discharged on July 3, 1946, Kiyoshi was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, WWII Victory Medal, and Army of Occupation Medal. In later years, Kiyoshi often said that his most lasting memory was seeing the Statue of Liberty as his ship entered New York harbor at war's end.

After the war, Kiyoshi returned to Sacramento where he worked on a farm with his family. In 1954, Kiyoshi and Violet married, purchased a home, and in 1956 had their daughter, Linda. Kiyoshi was a quiet man who enjoyed gardening, photography and a "good steak dinner." Although always unassuming, Kiyoshi loved to get together with his extended family during holidays and birthdays. In his later years, he was very active with local senior community organizations, including volunteering to help with weekly senior lunches and organizing bus trips.

Despite the hardships and challenges Kiyoshi endured during his lifetime, he was always positive, kind, and grateful for the opportunities life had offered him. He was very proud to have been part of what has been called the "Greatest Generation" and believed that he had done his part to demonstrate that Americans of Japanese descent were as worthy of being called "Americans" as anyone else. He spoke little of his military service but others admired the courage he and others like him had demonstrated. He never expected recognition or honor for doing what he saw as his duty but those who knew him and understood what he had done remain eternally indebted to him.

Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior (1933-1946) said, "The members of the [422nd] Combat Team have made a magnificent record of which they and all Americans should be proud. This record, without a doubt, is the most important single factor in creating in this country a more understanding attitude toward the people of Japanese descent." Pvt. Kiyoshi Ono was one of those heroes of whom he spoke.

### Exhibit 3



### New Monument Element with Suggested Placement

The proposed addition to the existing monument was designed by Architect David Onodera who created the element in the rough shape of the shoulder patch worn by the members of the 100/442 Regimental Combat Team. The new element was designed to demonstrate the rugged and unyielding determination and strength of purpose these men exhibited in their dedication to liberty and freedom. While the image above includes Japanese cherry trees, on the advice of a landscape architect, we propose to substitute Red Japanese Maple trees (*Acer Palmatum Bloodgood*) which symbolize the peace for which these young men fought, the blood they shed and the poignancy of their great sacrifice – sacrifice willingly made in spite of the fact that many of their families remained behind barbed wire in Internment camps.

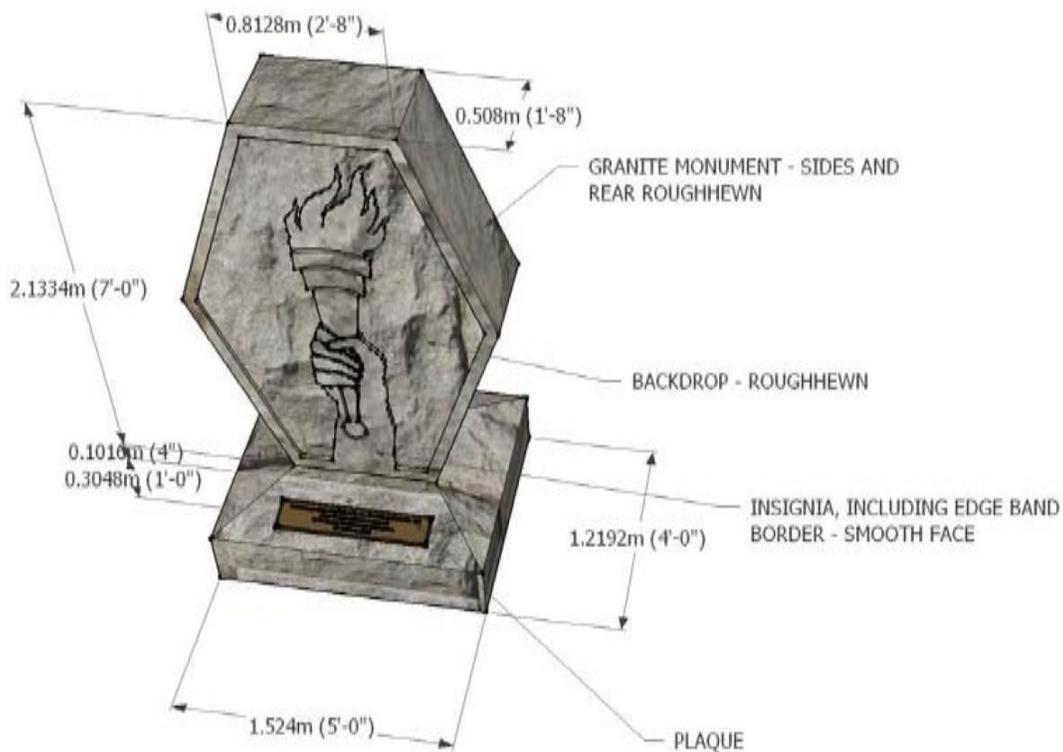
#### Exhibit 4



#### Recommended Solar Wireless Long Range IR Camera System (Reference photo only)

The solar powered system includes a motion-activated function and excellent Infrared (Low light) capability. The system is capable of live recording at the site for up to 10 days (depending on resolution desired and activity level) and will transmit real time images via radio to radio communication. Radios located on Hill 555 will transmit by line of sight to a receiver radio located in the City of Bruyères. The received signal may be viewed in real time via IP and recorded and stored for future use. The system has a 5 day reserve battery life. In the Hill 555 application, the security camera and the photoelectric panels/radio will be mounted on different poles so as to allow an unobstructed field of view of the entire monument site while ensuring maximum exposure to sunlight as well as a direct view of the City below. The solar panels/radio and the camera locations will be connected by secured underground cable in conduit. A small LED light at the base of the new element could also be powered by a solar array.

## Exhibit 5



### New Monument Element and Base – Details

The proposed new element is composed of two parts, the “Torch” section weighing approximately 3.7 metric tons and the Base weighing approximately 1.9 metric tons. It is proposed that the element be designed in locally quarried granite (or other suitable stone) and that it be placed on a locally engineered foundation of reinforced concrete. It is further proposed that the foundation (including a cap stone if used), the Base and “Torch” sections be bored so as to accept a steel reinforcing pipe or rod that is in turn anchored into the foundation. It is further proposed that a brass plaque be recessed into a carved space in the base and that it include the following in French and English:

***“In grateful honor of the gallant men of the 100/442nd Regimental Combat Team, the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion and the 232nd Combat Engineer Company who sacrificed to liberate the Cities of Bruyères, Biffontaine and Belmont from the German invaders. Dedicated to their sacred memory and to the freedom for which they fought by the City of Bruyères on October 24, 2016”***

## Plan Amendments

It has come to our attention that there are a couple of donor concerns with the original plan. First, on page 1 where it reads:

*“Visitors from around the world come to Bruyères and the surrounding communities and learn of the exploits of these young soldiers who fought heroically in spite of the fact that many had left their families confined within the barbed wire of American internment camps.”*

This statement should read and is revised as follows:

*“Visitors from around the world come to Bruyères and the surrounding communities and learn of the exploits of these young soldiers who fought heroically in spite of the fact that many from the continental USA had left their families confined within the barbed wire of American internment camps.”*

Similarly, on page 6 where it reads:

*The proposed addition to the existing monument was designed by Architect David Onodera who created the element in the rough shape of the shoulder patch worn by the members of the 100/442 Regimental Combat Team. The new element was designed to demonstrate the rugged and unyielding determination and strength of purpose these men exhibited in their dedication to liberty and freedom. While the image above includes Japanese cherry trees, on the advice of a landscape architect, we propose to substitute Red Japanese Maple trees (Acer Palmatum Bloodgood) which symbolize the peace for which these young men fought, the blood they shed and the poignancy of their great sacrifice—sacrifice willingly made in spite of the fact of their that many of their families remained behind barbed wire in Internment camps*

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Finally, on page 2, item 9 where it reads:

*Install a small brass plaque on one side of existing monument that reads in French and English,*

*“The restoration of this monument was undertaken in 2016 in loving memory of Pvt. Kyoshi Ono, (Serial Number-39931140) and his fellow Artillerymen of Battery B, 522nd Field Artillery Battalion”*

This item is deleted from the plan.