

October 31, 2017

Greetings Donors,

We are back from France and all we can say is you should have been there! We hope that many of you will be able to visit Bruyères soon and in particular in October 2019, the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the city. We urge you to visit the Hill 555 site and view the new monument. The Mayor, his family and the people of Bruyères were extremely gracious and the new monument is a wonderful tribute to the Nisei of the 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Attached is a brief report of the ceremonies and our visit to the Epinal Cemetery. Please don't miss the photos at the end of the report!

The following is a news clip that, while it is in French, is easy to follow:

<https://www.vosgestelevision.tv/info/info/Singuliere-ssVf0nAttG.html>. We will have a more complete video to share with you soon.

We can't thank you enough for your support of this effort. Without any corporate and only minor organizational support you have created a fitting and much deserved tribute to the Nisei. Please pass along the report to friends and family.

With immense gratitude, we thank you,

Carl ad June (Ogawa) Williams  
827 Crestwater Ln.  
Sacramento, CA 95831  
916-233-8069 (Mobile)

## HILL 555 PROJECT – REPORT TO DONORS

October 31, 2017

On 15 October 2017 at around 10:30 in the morning, the Mayor of Bruyères France, Yves Bonjean, stood before a large gathering on Hill 555. Among the tall evergreens, American and French flags flew above the crowd and the seven-man Color Guard from the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion Veterans of Hawaii stood at rigid attention as a band played the Star Spangled Banner. The City had turned out for the 73rd Anniversary of the liberation of their City by the Nisei of the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team. The Mayor and other dignitaries placed flowers on the restored 1947 monument. Following a brief speech to the gathering, the Mayor and Carl Williams unveiled the new monument in honor of those brave Nisei who had sacrificed for the freedom we all now enjoy. At the moment the monument was unveiled, a collective gasp came from those assembled. Someone in the respectful audience said “Wonderful!” The unveiling was met with vigorous applause by the viewers.

The torch of liberty, based on the regimental shoulder patch and originally created by Mitch Miyamoto, bursts in bold relief from the pink granite – granite harvested in the Senones area just 30 miles from Bruyères. The beautiful monument stands nearly 9’ tall and weighs more than 3.5 tons. The architect, David Onodera was unable to attend however the sculptor, Daniel Petitgenet, stood proudly beside the monument he had worked on so diligently. The sculptor had cut sharp points along the inside rim of the monument to symbolize the pain, death and suffering required to maintain freedom – a poignant reminder of what it took to free Bruyères and return it to its citizens. Our daughter, Mariko, read the names of all those who our donors asked to be remembered – an appropriate and touching rollcall of the honored. A copy of her comments can be found on Facebook.com/hill555project. We urge you to view the video clip created by the local Vosges Television station:

<https://www.vogsestelevision.tv/info/info/Singuliere-ssVf0nAttG.html>. While it is in French, it is easily understood. A more complete video is being prepared and will be made available shortly.

We were again reminded of the sacrifice made by the Nisei when on the following day the Mayor, the Color Guard, and our family and friends gathered at the Epinal American Cemetery and formally honored the men of the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup> who still rest in French soil. In a solemn and formal ceremony, each grave was decorated with fresh flowers and leis. Later that day, we returned to Hill 555 and placed the more than 3,000 cranes that had been prepared, along with the leis, by women’s groups in Hawaii. Enclosed with the cranes was a statement from the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion Veterans which was read to those assembled. We are exceptionally grateful and deeply indebted to the 100th Battalion Veterans and in particular to Jayne Hirata who organized this effort.

Those who contributed can be very proud of the exceptionally beautiful monument to those who made the ultimate sacrifice on our behalf. It stands as a bold statement of the quiet determination that the Nisei brought to their duty as citizen-soldiers and speaks of their exceptional strength, loyalty and courage that went well beyond the sacrifice so many made.

We thank each contributor for helping us complete this effort. We remain just short of our goal by about \$2,000 and ask those who have contributed to pass along this information to friends and family. The Mayor of Bruyères has indicated that he is content to wait for the payment for the work thus far completed and he has committed to shortly finishing the remaining details at the site. Those who would like to contribute can do so by mailing a check made out to the “Hill 555 Project” to Carl Williams, 827 Crestwater Ln. Sacramento, CA 95831 or donors may go to hill555.org where electronic donations may be made. The following photos provide a brief view of the monument you helped create and our visit to the Epinal American Cemetery.



The completed monument, inscription and pedestal.



Inscription in French and English honoring the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup> RCT.



The sharp edges symbolic of the price of freedom.



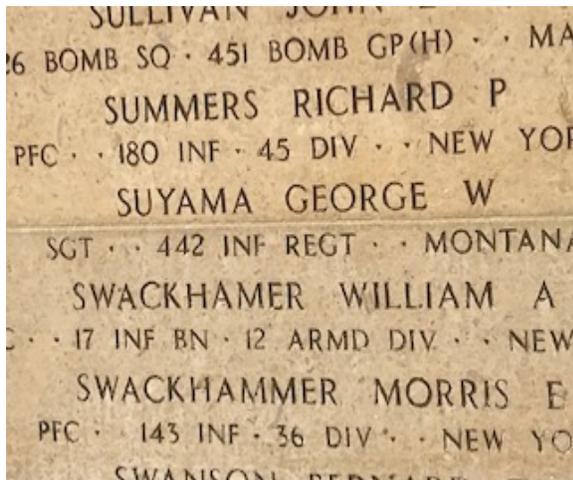
The men of the 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion Veterans Color Guard



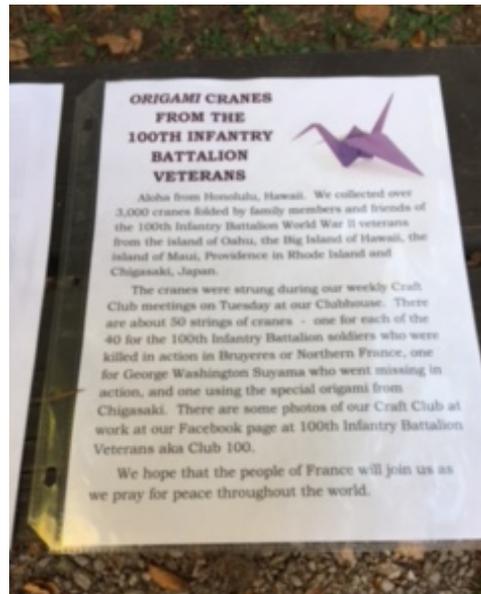
One of the 14 Heroes honored.



Placing the Leis and flowers. L-R C. Williams; June Williams; Mayor Bonjean; Mariko Williams; A. Amekouar (Assistant Superintendent)



Sgt. George Washington Suyama, Sole 100th MIA.



The 100<sup>th</sup> Btn Vets letter read at the placing of the cranes.