



Newsletter Issue 37, October 2017

WWI Legacy of the 5th Division repaired



Activated on 11 Dec 1917, the Fifth Division arrived in France on 1 May 1918 and spent 104 days in the front line, suffering 2,120 killed and 6,996 wounded as they fought across St Mihiel, Frapelle, and the Meuse Argonne. Immediately after the WWI armistice, soldiers of the Fifth Division in France erected a series of 28 small concrete obelisks on all of the battlefields where the division had been fighting.



They all include the distinctive red diamond insignia of the division, as well as a metal plaque giving details of the fighting in the area. Almost a century later, the years have not been kind to these field memorials, as pictured on the left found on the Route de Loupy by Juvigny. But thanks to a recent local initiative, most of these sites have been thoroughly researched and completely renovated. Mr. Jean Marie of Dun-sur-Meuse has spearheaded this extraordinary effort conducted entirely with local volunteers and funds. The before and after pictures of the memorial shown are a testament to his efforts. He runs a remarkable private museum in his home town of Dun-sur-Meuse which is well worth a visit.

The Liberty Road: Utah Beach to Bastogne

About AWMO



September 18th marked the 70th anniversary of the dedication of La Voie de la Liberté (The Liberty Road), which stretches 1145 kms from Utah Beach to Bastogne and traces the advance of Patton's 3rd Army in 1944. The entire route is marked every kilometer by a *borne* designed by sculptor Francois Cogne which features the flame from the Statue of Liberty rising out of the water and 48 stars around the top. The original concrete bornes were 48 inches high and weighed 960 pounds, and such roadside objects are now considered hazardous. So most have been replaced for safety reasons with fiberglass sculptures of the same design. Originally conceived by French Army Colonel Guy de la Vasselais after his tour as tactical liaison to the XX Corps in the US 3rd Army, the dedication ceremony for the entire route was held in Fontainebleau on 18 September 1947.

Michelin Tire published a special map of the route (Carte No 105) which they have reissued in recent times and is still available for purchase. Borne number 0 (pictured above) was installed in front of the town hall of Ste Mere Eglise. Later, Borne number 00 was installed on Utah Beach, where Patton came across in July 1944. We do not list all nearly 1200 bornes in our database, but do list them if they are in a significant location and particularly noteworthy.



We are very pleased to announce that American War Memorials Overseas signed

an official partnership agreement with the Souvenir Français in Paris this month. The Souvenir Français is a large and well-developed association with over 200,000 members worldwide with a vocation of keeping alive the memory of those who have fought and died for liberty and France and a mission of maintaining commemorative sites and organizing ceremonies and educational events. We are excited to cooperate with them as our missions are so closely aligned and they have such an extensive network of volunteers.