



Newsletter Issue 8, July 2010

A Belgian Town's Bittersweet Liberation

American aviator SSGT John Mahoney of Connecticut (700th Bomber Squadron, 445th Bomb Group-H) was shot down near Waregem, Belgium on 22 April 44. He was hidden by the Belgian family of Michel Vandembroucke in their farm home for five months until the liberation of the town on 6 September. The townspeople celebrated the liberation a bit too soon, however, as there were still some German patrols in the area. The retreating Germans executed 7 people during the confused celebrations, including John Mahoney. Today, a monument stands on the spot where the executions occurred, and honors SSGT Mahony, two Englishmen (also servicemembers in hiding), and four Belgians who lost their lives that day. SSGT Mahoney, who was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, is buried in the Ardennes American Cemetery in Neupre, Belgium. Many thanks to Christopher Sims for sharing his research.



American War Memorials Overseas Update:

American War Memorials Overseas has its first college intern. Talor Tulchin from Santa Monica, California, is an Art History Major at Pitzer College. She has been helping us to expand our database this summer. If you are interested in intern opportunities with American War Memorials Overseas, please contact us.

Fountainbleu Monument Renovation

Thank you to the Souvenir Francais for their renovation work on the monument memorializing Patton's crossing of the Seine River near Fontainebleau.



On the Track

In a horrible incidence of fratricide, on August 6, 1944, a train carrying 40 Allied POWs suffered a strafing attack by allied planes in the train station in Langeais, France. On the evening of 2 August 44, these POWs were loaded onto a train which departed Rennes at 2:00 am on August 3. The following day at 10:00 am General George S Patton's Third Army entered Rennes and liberated the city along with the hospital and POW camp. But the train continued to travel East along the Loire River passing through Angers. However, when the train reached Langeais on August 6, it halted—unable to advance as a result of the destroyed tracks from an Allied bombing attack. While stopped at the Langeais Station, Allied fighter planes strafed the train. On August 8, 1944 five of Allied POWs that were injured were transported to a hospital in Tours in the back of a truck and the remaining POWs were force-marched to St. Pierre de Corps. There they boarded a train and proceeded to Germany. The casualties of this attack were buried in the Langeais Cemetery on 8 August 44. Today this train car memorial honors all deportees, including the nine Americans that were killed or injured during the attack. We remember Reuben Anhorn, Barney Arnold, Matt Donald Campbell, Cyril De Vay, Robery Francis Kiley, Alexander Kowalski, Sidney Magaziner, Gordon Norwood, Walter D. Solomon, John D Taylor, and John Edward Wonnig.

