



Newsletter Issue 3, April 2009

Planning for the 100th Anniversary of WWI

American War Memorials Overseas attended a planning meeting in Dormans, France, on 25 April 2009 and heard about some great projects underway in preparation for the Centennial of the Great War. 11 November 2011 is the planned inauguration date for a **new World War I museum** on the hill north of the town of Meaux, France, featuring the 50,000 piece private collection of Jean-Pierre Vernet. The museum will be constructed adjacent to the American memorial. The town of Chateau Thierry finally has firm renovation plans for the **French/American Friendship building**, originally built for them by the American Methodist Church after the war. Demolition of the recent façade will happen this year. Interior renovation will be complete in 2012. An anonymous donor is constructing a **new memorial at the Croix Rouge Farm**. It will be a stunning large bronze statue sculpted by James Butler of a doughboy carrying his mortally wounded comrade, and will honor Alabama's 167th Infantry Regiment, which fought in the Rainbow (42nd) Division there. A picture of the model is in our database (site named Croix Rouge Farm). Finally, the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) is planning a major renovation of the visitor's center at the Oise Aisne American Cemetery. Following the success of its interpretive center in Normandy, the Commission wants to make this the **first interpretive center** for its World War I sites.

Update on American War Memorials Overseas

American War Memorials Overseas received its approval from the IRS as a 501 (C) (3) public charity in November 2008. Our website went online in December. Our database was completed in April 2009, and we are now hard at work documenting memorial sites in the database. We have just gone over 100,000 hits on the website at **uswarmemorials.org**. Our priority now is fundraising so that we can start our programs.

Three Generations of Naval Aviators



WWI Naval Air Station Moutchic-Lacanau, France

There are three generations of Naval Aviators represented in our database of overseas war memorials. In **World War I**, naval aviators were trained at the NAS Moutchic-Lacanau (by Bordeaux, France). A monument at the site honors nine naval aviators who lost their lives there. Much of the air support for Operation Anvil Dragoon in **World War II** was done by naval aviation. Consequently, there are several monuments to naval aviators in the south of France. One of them is a plaque on the town hall of Pennautier which honors the seven man crew of a Navy Hellcat shot down while on a strafing mission on 20 August 1944. Naval aviation once again played a key role in the **Vietnam war**. John McCain was famously shot down over Hanoi in October 1967. A monument on the shore of the Ho Truc Bac Lake in downtown Hanoi commemorates the incident.



Town Hall, Pennautier, France



McCain Monument, Hanoi, Vietnam