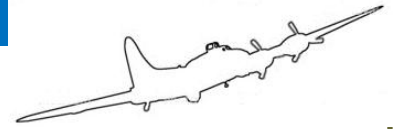


May 14th, 2019

Year 3, number 5

Newsletter

Mission Belle Foundation B-17G Memorial



Continued attention for the monument



- Commemoration, May 4th, 2019



- Flowers from visitors



- Jim Keeffe III with a B-17G model

To give the Mission Belle Memorial a lasting place in the memory of everybody, we of the Foundation have decided to join the yearly May 4th and 5th memorials.

On May 4th the Dutch and American flag will fly half-mast and on May 5th the flags will be used by our national rules.

There will also be flagging on the last Monday in May, which will be this year on May 27th.

On that day it will be Memorial Day in America, so we will show sympathy for our liberators.

On the last Saturday in November or the first Saturday in December we

organize a short public ceremony at the monument, to remember the crash of the Mission Belle on December 1th, 1943.

For 2019 is chosen for Saturday November 30th. If possible, the local schools will be included in this event.

Visitors from near and far

We are glad with the visitors, who are regularly seen at the monument. It is striking if you see their attention for the beautiful design of it.

Considerable is the number of visitors of our website: the counter is going to 8,000, an average of 16 per day.

Our member John Heuvelman is keeping regularly friendly contacts with the next of kin of the crew of the Mission Belle. Through our website well keep them up-to-date with information about the monument on the dike near the Lek river.

A very special visitor came to the monument last March 28th, when Jim Keeffe III with wife and daughter and their guest-family from Papendrecht, Sjaak and Pleunie Korteland where here. Jim is the son of the American pilot James Keeffe, who jumped from his plane on March 8th, 1944, above the Westeind near Papendrecht and was hidden by the Korteland family. During the first part of his escape he was helped by Marinus Veth and Johannes Verdoorn. Thanks to them he managed to reach, via Dordrecht, Rotterdam and could stay out of the hands of the Germans for 5 months. After this, he wanted to get back to England, via Belgium, but by betrayal he got trapped in Antwerp. Just like the crew of the Mission Belle, he survived the war in a Stalag-Luft P.O.W. camp. There are still close contacts between the Keeffe and Korteland families. Jim gave a impressive presentation for a sold-out hall on March 27th, 2019 in Papendrecht about the adventures of his father. The next day, John Heuvelman gave them at the B-17G-Memorial, an explanation about the crash, the salvation of the survivors and the salvage of the victims. On behalf of the Mission Belle Foundation, Kees Stam gave to the Keeffe family our book with the phrase 'We knew it would be a long day'.

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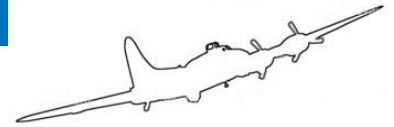
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Environmental design of the monument

Although the monument 'stands like a rock', we are not yet satisfied with the looks of the surrounding terrain. To make sure that during the yearly memorials and for the visitors who will be there (on a daily basis), will have a more relaxing atmosphere, we would like to make extra pavements and place two benches. The company Den Hollandsche Memorial Signs from Elst has given us a nice view of it, as you can see below this text.

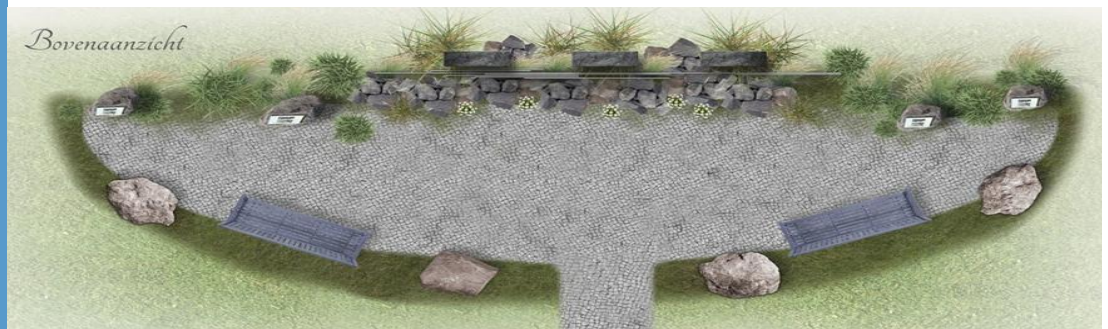
The Water Board, who owns the land, has given us a positive reaction for our request to change the license. De tiles needed for this are already given to us. The SSN Foundation gave us a great donation for the 2 benches.

The gardening company of Jan Gaal offered us to place the benches and do the paving.

Four extra boulders will be given to us by the Boer tile business.

Currently it will be checked if the basalt rocks could also be given to us. Again we are overwhelmed and grateful for this spontaneous cooperation.

The Den Ouden family from Middelharnis has given us the parachute, which was the only item left over from the salvage of the Mission Belle in 1955. We are looking for a definitive location for this precious relic.



Film

The unveiling of the monument on September 29th, 2018 by PST Videography is now available on DVD. A beautiful DVD with great pictures and, don't forget, great speeches. They will cost about \$ 20,00 each (including mail to the U.S.A.).

Departure of Theo Jansen as Treasurer

Our treasurer Theo Jansen has decided to make his role as treasurer available, now the monument is finally there. We thank him as Board and Foundation, not only for his correct running of the finances, but also for his publicity efforts about the monument (folder and book), contacts with the press and his work for the unveiling.



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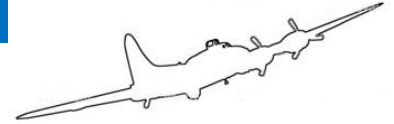
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Agenda of the Foundation

With realizing the B-17G Memorial, our first goal has been achieved. But now there will be a job for the board to keep the memory alive. Despite the yearly memorials, as written on page 1, we as board would like to continue with:

- Keeping presentations at schools and other organizations,
- To exchange knowledge and information with local and national organizations who run crash-monuments,
- To work together with five historical societies in the Alblasserwaard region for the development of a cycling- and car route along all war monuments in the region,
- On October 30th we, with realizing the Mission Belle Memorial, are one of the frontrunners of the Village Price 2019. An award that is created by the provincial authority for small towns for projects that have a positive influence in a village community. We are doing this together with the Nieuw-Lekkerland Reflection Group.

Website bilingual

Meanwhile, our website is almost completely bilingual (so also in English). With this, the American (or other English speaking) visitors can follow the developments better. From the moment on that the website was launched until today we have had more than 8,000 unique visitors. You can also find all the speeches and photo's of the September 29th, 2018 unveiling and the December 1st, 2018 Memorial.

Download de nieuwe Oorlogsmonumenten-app

1. Zie direct welke oorlogsmonumenten zich in uw buurt bevinden
2. Deel uw persoonlijke verhaal bij oorlogsmonumenten
3. Meld herdenkingen aan



De database Oorlogsmonumenten van het Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei is vanaf nu via app te downloaden op tablets en smartphones. In de app vindt u informatie over meer dan 1.800 oorlogsmonumenten die herinneren aan de Tweede Wereldoorlog of oorlogscriminaliteit en infokostenloos online. Deze monumenten worden te zien vertoond op de smartphones van lokale, nationale en internationale rivier.

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