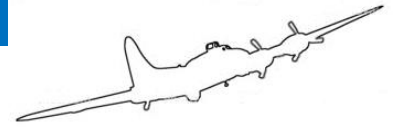


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• School of the Bible,
July 5th, 2019



Adoption of the monument

To our surprise, the School of the Bible from Streefkerk came to us spontaneously for the yearly adoption of the monument. This means that they will, at school and at the monument, give attention to it during the May 4th and 5th commemoration. On May 4th we remember all the fallen (military and civil) and the 5th our liberation.

This year they already have laid flowers at the monument with their teacher Koen Visser. We as Foundation appreciate this initiative very much and hope for a fruitful cooperation. It highlights the fact that during the crash on December 1st, 1943 the schoolchildren from Streefkerk also came to that location quickly.

Village Power Prize ZHVKK

On October 30th, 2019 we, as Mission Belle Foundation B-17G Memorial, contended in the city of Den Bommel for the Village Power Price 2019, an event that was organized by the Zuid-Hollandse Vereniging van Kleine Kernen (ZHVKK). In English, this organization is called the Southern-Holland Assembly for Small Towns.

Andre Hoogendoorn, the chairman, showed a colorful presentation, where the history and realization of the Memorial came out very good. Especially the spontaneous cooperation of the people and companies from Nieuw-Lekkerland were mentioned. And of course the role of the City and Rivierenland Water Company.

There were also two other projects presented; it was an exciting moment when the jury gave her final judgment.

It seemed that we, with the Mission Belle Project, won the first prize, well for an amount of € 600,00 (Euro's). Together with the administration of Nieuw-Lekkerland are we chosen to organize the next presentation competition in 2020. A good opportunity to give extra attention to our beautiful monument.



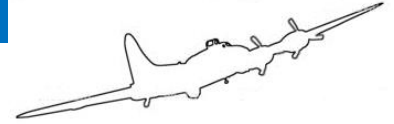
• 1st prize for the
Mission Belle
Monument

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Maintenance of the monument's environment

After obtaining indispensable permissions and necessary materials, we have worked very hard to finish the environment of the monument. The result was great. Some members of our board showed themselves, under guidance of the gardener Gaal, together with the 'neighbor next door' Dimmen van Eckeveld, as professional road workers. The by SNS donated benches got their final place. Most materials were given to us by some sponsors for free. Better than many words, the added photos show that digging and road work were in capable hands. Of course were the junior-keepers of the het monument, Dirk-Jan and Jacco van Eckeveld also there. Mrs. van Eckeveld took care of the coffee with some cookies and also a very royal lunch.



Commemoration on November 30th, 2019

The ceremonious commemoration of the crash, always held on a Saturday as close to the day of the crash (December 1st), took place on November 30th, 2019. At about 13:30 dozens of guests and a lot of visitors gathered around the monument, where an ensemble of the Apollo Music Group played some choral music. As Board we strive this event to be a ceremony with military character.

Re-enactors of the Delaware Company created an atmosphere of reality with original army vehicles and military clothes from World War 2, remembering that fatal day. After a moment of silence, when Taps was played, first the American flag was hoisted from half mast to top and after that, the Dutch flag. When that happened, both national anthems were played.

Mayor Van der Borg of Molenlanden county and Army Chaplain, Major van Driesten laid a wreath. Four children of the School of the Bible from Streefkerk recited a fitting, self-made poem. They were brought to the monument in an Army truck. The Molenhoeve farm was helping us for free again to receive the guests. We have also many thanks for the 3 taxi-drivers of the Molenhoeve, who took care of the transport of the guests to the monument. As in 2018, we as Board of the Mission Belle Foundation B-17G, look back at an impressive event, favored by pretty sunny weather.

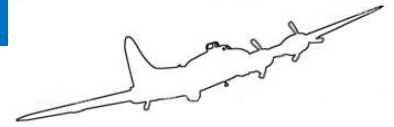


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[Lancaster Monument
in Brandwijk](#)



[Lancaster Monument
in Papendrecht](#)



Regional monuments route

Five Historical groups from the Alblasserwaard region have joined up for creating a monuments route along places of remembrance, connected with the dramatic events during World War 2.

Each of these monuments has its own history of loss and survival. There is good hope that in 2020 this route will be implemented.

Visits to the Mission Belle Monument popular

Website

It delights us that the website www.missionbelle.nl is visited very often. The numbers below will give you an impression of the amount of visitors until December 2019.

- November 2019 counted 1.843 unique visitors;
- From the day when this website got online, on October 25th, 2017, until now, it has seen a total of 14.811 unique visitors;
- 17% of the visitors came from America, 8% from England.

Monument

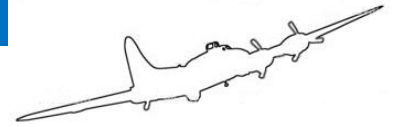
From the World Heritage Site Kinderdijk, almost daily a touring car starts a trip with American tourists through the Alblasserwaard region. This trip is combined with a visit to the cheese farm Booij in Streefkerk or to cheese- and dairy farm Kuiper in Giessenburg. When the time allows it, on the way back, as a surprise, the bus will stop at the monument. This will be appreciated by both sides. Wederzijds wordt dit op hoge prijs gesteld. In the spring of 2020 there will be some next of kin of the Mission Belle crew from America.

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Boards agenda

Website

The agenda of the Board has, beside matters that keep the monument in good order, especially subjects that keep the memory of December 1st, 1943 alive. The wish is there to expand the monument with two definitive flag poles, so the location will be more highlighted. It will make the organization of events easier when there is a flag-ceremonial. Meanwhile, a sponsor has promised us these flag poles. Some lectures and presentations are planned for 2020.

The cooperation with schools in Streefkerk and Nieuw-Lekkerland asks for a creative and well thought interpretation. Of course shall the organization of the ZHVKK prize-presentation (June 2020) been taken care of.

New Year's Greetings

We wish the readers of this newsletter good and blessed Christmas days and a prosperous 2020.

