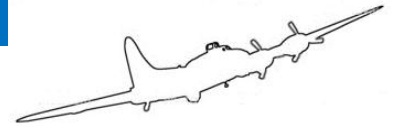


January 30th, 2021

Year 5, number 8

Newsletter

Mission Belle Foundation B-17G Memorial



- Article, placed in the fall issue of the NC Magazine of the National Committee May 4th and 5th.



- The bicycle stands are placed.



- Parachute properly enclosed in a display cabinet.



- Website: www.missionbelle.nl

A new year

The new year actually starts for the Mission Belle board on December 2nd, the day after the crash in 1943. Then began for the surviving crew members a total different phase in their lives. It meant, living in captivity. We will remember them.

We did send best wishes for the New Year to the relatives in America and received warm replies from them. These contacts, who are done by our board member John Heuvelman, give us a proper opportunity to exchange information on several moments.

Memorial and surroundings

A highlight in the last year was the remembrance on November 28th, 2020, a few days before the day on which in 1943 the Mission Belle came down in the river. 'This place is important' said Mayor Seegers of Molenlanden County. That's why, we as board are still busy to give this place a worthy appearance. We want to keep the memorial and the surroundings pretty, decent and accessible. A place for visitors and people passing by to have a rest.

The last adaptation was the placing of some bicycle stands. The money for this we received from the Nieuw-Lekkerland Core Deliberation. We are very thankful for their support.

The original parachute from the Mission Belle, is now properly enclosed in a portable display cabinet. When we can give lectures in the future, we can take the display with us, as a tangible memory of the crash.

Events

The mitigating measures prevented us, on Saturday, November 28th, to remember the crash of the Mission Belle comprehensively. After some deliberation with the Mayor and the regional security board, we got permission for a ceremony, with a maximum of 4 persons at the location. The board was able to arrange a worthy celebration, with short speeches and a wreath laying by Mayor Seegers and 2 pupils from The School with the Bible from Streefkerk. During the playing of the American and Dutch National Anthems, the flags of both countries were risen from half mast to the top. Of this event is a beautiful recording available (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X87tcZbzt1l>).

Visitors

- Number of visitors website 52.288 since the establishment 25-10-2017;
- Number of followers Facebook page 237;
- Every day there are visitors (on bicycle or strollers) at the monument.

Mailing address: Zaling 115, 3356 DJ, Papendrecht, The Netherlands
c/o Peter J. van der Giessen
Website: www.missionbelle.nl

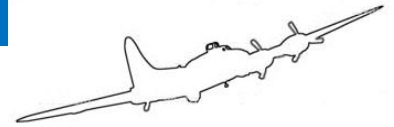
Bank account: NL57INGB0007452668 Chamber of Commerce: 66774977

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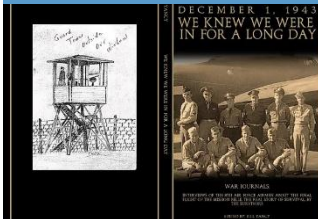
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Communications



- *New edition of 'We knew we were in for a long day'*

We, as board, acknowledge the fact that we have to stay in touch with young and old people about the incident here, as part of the huge effort of our liberation from rule by National Socialism. This newsletter is part of that. On the other side of the ocean people are also active.

The American book, by Bill Yancy 'We knew we were in for a long day', which in 2015 gave us the reason to create our memorial, is reissued, but now with photos and speeches of the unveiling on September 29th, 2018 in Nieuw-Lekkerland.

Our first folder, that was used to attract sponsors and to inform interested people, should be replaced by a new one. We are working on a new text, and after that, the printing shall begin. We want to use the new folder especially to attract new sponsors, so we can take care of the memorial and give lectures at schools. The various celebrations also have their costs.

Stalag-Luft



- *Stalag-Luft I in Barth*

It is also the intention to amplify a certain subject in the newsletter. We don't want the knowledge of the air war and the experiences of the plane crews get lost. In this issue we tell you something about Stalag-Luft, the prisoner-of-war camps where these plane crews were taken to by the German.

The unfortunate men of the Mission Belle were taken to Gouda on the same day, and the next day to Amsterdam. Tully, Sweaney, England and Christensen arrive on December 4th, 1943 in a so called Dulag camp for interrogations. The Germans are looking for information about a new aiming system for bombers. The crew of the Mission Belle don't know anything yet. Nutrition and care are bad in this camp. Especially Tully, who is wounded on his hand and his back, is feeling pretty bad. After the interrogation, transport to Stalag Luft I follows. It is located near Barth, close to the Baltic Sea. The arrival is at December 16th, 1943. They remain there until second half of May, 1945. Life is boring and not very stimulating. The American/British Red Cross regularly sends food packages and indispensable smokers. They make a very welcome trade object for food and other necessities.

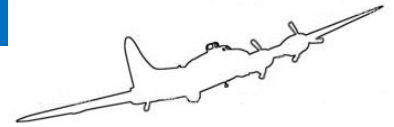
Carano, Culver and Josephson arrive, after a nasty trip, on January 8th, 1944 in Stalag XVII-B. A camp that will grow in the following months to a size of about 4.900 prisoners. Food, drinks, clothing, everything is bad there. No wonder that some prisoners did not weigh more than 100 pounds on liberation day.

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Agenda of the Board

The board has not met for a long time, but does still have to take care of everything that has to do with the memorial, decently. Celebrations, maintenance, furnishing the surroundings, Communications with old and new relations and making a network of memorials in the Alblasserwaard region, ask for the necessary attention.

We would have been the host, last year, of the Assembly of Small Towns in South-Holland (province). This meeting could not take place. We hope that in 2021, the yearly meeting of this organisation can still take place in Nieuw-Lekkerland. As said before, these activities have a price. Your support for that will be very highly valued.

Members of the Board of the Foundation

The board of the Mission Belle B-17G Foundation is made by these persons:

- Andre Hoogendoorn, Nieuw-Lekkerland, chairman and treasurer
- Peter J. van der Giessen, Papendrecht, secretary
- Evert de Bruin, Hardinxveld-Giessendam, member
- Gwendolijne de Bruin-Verheij, Streefkerk, member
- Wim Hasman, Nieuw-Lekkerland, member
- John Heuvelman, Lekkerkerk, member
- Kees Stam, Nieuw-Lekkerland, member

Vacancy:

We as board are still looking for someone who can be our treasurer. If you are interested in this function, please contact our secretary Peter J. van der Giessen.

Contact

- Website: [http:// www.missionbelle.nl](http://www.missionbelle.nl)
- Secretary: Zaling 115, 3356 DJ Papendrecht
- Bank account: NL57INGB0007452668

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