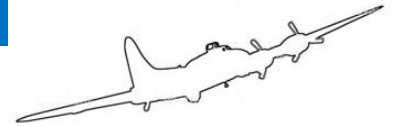


September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021**Newsletter**

Year 5, number 9

**Mission Belle Foundation B-17G Memorial**

Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed  
Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en  
Wetenschap

- Website Dutch Cultural Heritage:

<https://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/over-ons>

**Give the future a past**

For this 9<sup>th</sup> Newsletter we'll get back to the motto of the National Service for the Cultural Heritage: 'Give the future a past'. What do we mean by that? That the past matters, for today and for tomorrow. First are there the facts, hard facts even. A plane that is forced to make an emergency landing in the Lek river. Three casualties, seven survivors, care, imprisonment and war. A culture of the short tempered, how is that in 2021? The monument doesn't leave us in the dark about this question.

**Celebrations are behind us**

With respect, as Board we remember the ceremonies at the monument on May 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021. We had to do that with a small group. The flag ceremony and lying of the wreath, as we know it from previous occasions, took place with a few people who live nearby and with Kees Stam, assisted with his granddaughter Nellieke Stam. Followed by the national anthems.

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, the day people in America remember all victims of war: Memorial Day. Again the showing of flags. Lying of the wreath was done, in the presence of some Board members, by former Board member Theo Jansen. Our own flag poles proved to be of good service at remembrances and celebrations.

**Eye-witness Pleun de Groot passed away**

- April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Pleun de Groot passed away

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Pleun de Groot passed away at the age of 86 years. He was eye-witness of the fight in the air and the emergency landing of the Mission Belle on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1943. He was from the beginning very emotionally connected with the realization of the Mission Belle Memorial. During the unveiling on September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018, he made all the people present, including the 36 American guests, part of the traumas of that day. May he rest in peace.

**Visitors of the monument**

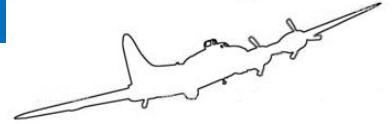
No day goes by, or there are some people who take a pause in their trip at the monument on the dike at the Lek river. The ornamentation of the surroundings over there does invite you to do so. A lady, from The Hague, told us she was making a road trip on her bicycle along the big rivers. She likes to be surprised, like this time at the Mission Belle Memorial. It was totally new for her. Especially now on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021, which is Dutch Memorial Day.

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## Mission Belle Foundation B-17G Memorial



### New flyer

It's really time for a new flyer. The previous edition was made before the monument was created. A lot has changed, not so much the monument itself, but way more of the surroundings. Also some of the addresses of the members of the Board have changed. On the inner page the monument tells her own history. In this new flyer we will place a call for a yearly contribution to keep the monument and its surroundings in good conditions.



### Engagement adoptive school Streefkerk

As you know, the Mission Belle Memorial was spontaneously adopted by the School with the Bible from Streefkerk. It means that Group 8 (final year of that primary school) will help us with the yearly remembrance around December 1<sup>st</sup>. Every year there is also a guest lesson about the B-17G in the teaching program. Thursday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 it was time again. Evert de Bruijn gave the guest lesson. Together with his colleague Bert de Jong he came to school in an original Dodge Command Car from 1943, dressed in an original flyer's outfit. The guest lesson got attentive interest and the discussion after gave it new connecting factors for a new presentation.



- Silk escape map

### Printed flyer's shawl

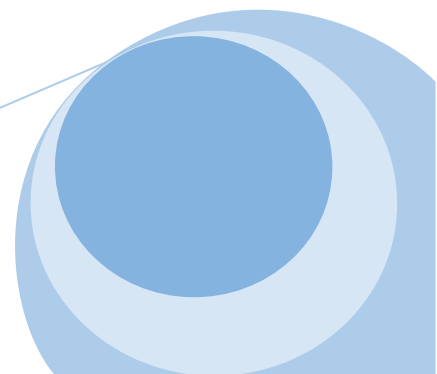
Part of the equipment of the flying crew was a silk shawl, printed with the maps of Belgium, The Netherlands, France and Germany. If it was a paper map, especially in humid conditions, it could get unreadable pretty quickly. The quality of a silk shawl would guarantee permanent readability. For those times it was a great example of graphic design, which the visibility of roads, cities and villages could compete with the current roadmaps.



- Erik de Ridder, treasurer

### New treasurer

For quite some time we had a vacancy for the function of treasurer in our board. Thankfully this function is now taken by the spontaneous entry of Erik de Ridder. Erik lives in Nieuw-Lekkerland and is independent entrepreneur in the electro- and installation business.

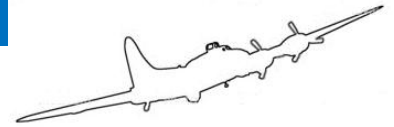


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## Newsletter

### Mission Belle Foundation B-17G Memorial



## Agenda for November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021

The official remembrance of the emergency landing of the Mission Belle is for 2021 planned on Saturday November 27<sup>th</sup>, the Saturday closest to December 1<sup>st</sup>. Depending the Corona rules of that period, we as Board hope to get a ceremony with dignity. We hope to welcome everybody again. With the help of the papers De Klaroen, Het Kontakt, Nieuw-Lekkerlands Nieuws and Klokradio you will be informed on time and about the possibilities of that moment.

## Attention for durability

Within the Board we have thought about the theme of durability, related to the monument. With three granite columns and a RVS plane model, there is of course a durable construction. The maintenance of the street furniture and the flag poles is organized in a way that damage to the environment can't happen. The flag poles, the monument and the street furniture will be taken care of twice a year, as a mark of appreciation by Robbie van der Veen of Glas Washing and Total Cleaning Schoonmaak, cleaned with distilled water. Weeds will be removed by hand as often as possible.



## Other monuments in the Alblasserwaard region

In this, and following newsletters we will also pay some attention to other monuments in the Alblasserwaard region. First the monument for the crashed Hawker Typhoon in Alblasserdam and the pilot who got killed. It's a tribute to the Belgian R.A.F. pilot Jean-Noël Vandaele. He got killed on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 1944 in the Korteland polder.



The monument is placed at the Kortelandsche Kade, close to the crash location in Alblasserdam.

You can find more information on Facebook and other media, under this name: Hawker Typhoon Memorial Alblasserdam.

## Jubilee

On September 29<sup>th</sup> it will be 3 years ago that our monument was unveiled. A day with a lot of emotions, special memories and new friendships. Time goes fast.