

FOLLOW-UP ON MISSION BELLE STORY

Why I Love What I Do

By Patrick Schmeier

Photos provided by members of Mission Belle Memorial committee

news worthy

Back in March this year, we ran a story on Hollytree residents Paul and Cyndy Josephson and the story about Paul's father, Carlton Josephson, who was on the Mission Belle crew. Like many residents, the Josephsons asked me if they could have a few extra copies. I personally always like to meet residents, especially if they ask for some extra copies. I love hearing your stories, and I, of course, love to hear feedback on the publications. There is a lot of work that goes into your monthly publications from our entire staff, and, of course, our business sponsors love hearing that you are enjoying them as well, and often it is the fuel that pushes me forward.

Paul and Cyndi were so welcoming when I showed up at their door, as I was now meeting them for the very first time. Once again I felt so blessed to be a part of this great community in Hollytree where everyone has been so friendly in welcoming me so many times into their homes. We talked about his father who was part of the crew that flew the Mission Belle that crashed that day on December 1, 1943, in the river Lek in Holland. They even showed me two books that were also written about this crew and their plane.

You see for me, the older I get, the more I appreciate the history that is a part of all of us. I have traveled to Eastern Europe six times already, and each time I love it even more than the last time as I travel to different cities each time. The events that happened on the other side of the world affected everyone around the globe. Of course, the reason this memorial was built, was to honor this crew for

their sacrifice, and they are just one contributing part in the entire war, but certainly a vital part. For this small town in Holland, this committee built this memorial because they wanted to show their appreciation for America's part in the war and for keeping them freed of being captive to Germany.

I visited with Paul and his wife, Cyndy, for about 45 minutes and truly felt welcome in their home as we continued to visit in their family room. Then as I was saying goodbye and walking out the door, I turned around and said, "I'm curious, what are you wanting to do with the 12 additional copies?" Paul then said, "The committee that built the memorial had asked for some copies." I thought, how cool is that, and then I quickly asked him, "You know what would really be cool? If they could hold the *Hollytree Life* publication up in front of the memorial and take a photo?" Paul quickly assured me that I'm sure that wouldn't be a problem. A few weeks later I received some photos in my email, and I was thrilled. I even received a phone call from John in Holland telling me thank you and that he was going to be sending a few more photos when he got some more of the committee in front of the memorial. This made my day as you can imagine. Not only did *Hollytree Life* make it to Holland to be photographed in front of the memorial that we featured in the March issue, but John Heuvelman called me personally from Holland to thank me. It is for moments like this, **why I love what I do!**



Disclaimer: Some of the committee members involved with the planning and building of this memorial might not be featured in photos in this article.



Kees Stam



Gwen Verhey



Andre Hoogendoom



Evert de Bruin



John Heuvelman



Theo Jansen