



### **Boeing B-17G 'Mission Belle' (serial number 42-31097)**

**On December 1st, 1943, the 'Mission Belle' flew back to Ridgewell Airfield, after a mission over Leverkusen, Germany.**

**The plane was under fire by anti-aircraft guns and German fighter planes, whereby the tail gunner got killed. Once over Holland, the plane was severely damaged.**

**The pilot decided to make an emergency landing onto the Lek river. The pilot and belly gunner, both of them badly injured, drowned. The other seven crewmen became prisoner of war until the end of the war.**

**The 'Mission Belle' belonged to the 535th Squadron of the 381st Bombardment Group USAAF.**

**On September 29th, 2018, a monument near the crash site was unveiled by relatives on the dike near the Lek river in Nieuw-Lekkerland.**