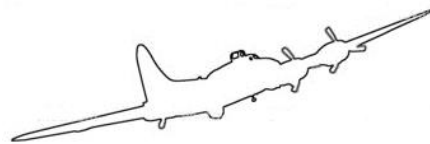


# Mission Belle, B-17G Memorial Foundation



Keeping the memory alive...

## Newsletter 1

### Establishment and purpose of the Foundation

From July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, there is a new foundation, named Mission Belle, B-17G Memorial Foundation. The name is taken from the American bomber of the type B-17G, serial number 42-31097. This plane was part of the 381st Bombardment Group and came down on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1943 in the river Lek between the two villages Nieuw-Lekkerland and Streefkerk of the Netherlands.

The goal of the foundation is to create a monument near the location where the plane crashed. Meanwhile, the foundation so far has a design of the monument and the fundraising is very active to realize this goal. Sponsorship takes place among other things by selling the book about the Mission Belle and financial donors. We give these donors a certificate, so they can be a partial owner of the monument they helped to create.

The board of the foundation wants to keep the remembrance of this B-17G alive. But also to pay tribute to those who fought for our freedom. After this crash, some inhabitants of Nieuw-Lekkerland and Lekkerkerk played an important role. Both during the rescue of the crew from the wreckage as with the (medical) care of them. We would like to place this monument with, -and for the society over here.

### The board

The current board consists of seven persons and they are all very active to realize the goal mentioned above. Let us introduce them to you:

André Hoogendoorn (chairman)

Theo Jansen (treasurer)

Gwendolijne Verheij (secretary)

Kees Stam (member)

Wim Hasman (member)

John Heuvelman (member)

Evert de Bruijn (member)

Thanks to a thorough research by John and Wim, we found out a lot about this B-17G and its crew. The book about the Mission Belle we published a few months ago, originated after the translation of two books, written about the experiences of bombardier O.D. Tully (by Bill Yancy) and radio operator Steve Carano (by Kay Sloan), supplemented with information from various other sources.

## Consultation with the neighborhood about the location of the monument



The initiative to create a monument was discussed at a meeting with the people who live in the neighborhood where it shall be placed. The reactions on our proposal were pretty excited. The foundation will be supported by this neighborhood through advice and work. We discussed the design and possible location with the people who live nearby. There were also people from the county, the office of the Water Board and the company that made the design of the monument.

## Presentation Historical Society



On March 22<sup>nd</sup> the project of the Mission Belle was presented, under great interest. The Historical Society of the Western Alblasserwaard Region organized this event. About 120 people came and the chairman of the foundation gave the first book to the mayor of our county, Mr. van der Borg and the editor of the book, Mrs. Barry Ouweneel.

## Entrepreneurs Association

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, some members of the foundation were guests at the local Entrepreneurs Association event. After they told the story about the Mission Belle and our goal to create a monument, some of the entrepreneurs spontaneously offered us some help to realize that.

## Book “The story of a B-17G and its crew”



You can buy the book with the title ‘Mission Belle, we knew we were in for a long day’ for \$ 9,95. The sales result will be used for the monument. It’s available at various locations, including our website at:

<https://hazy.home.xs4all.nl/MissionBelle.html>

### First certificate for Mission Belle Memorial in Nieuw-Lekkerland



Chairman André Hoogendoorn of our foundation gave last Friday the first certificate for the monument to Aad den Boer from the town of Nieuw-Lekkerland. Aad came with the idea to give the people who donated more than \$ 50,00 a certificate. You could see this document as partial ‘ownership’ of the monument.

### America



There is a lot of interest from America for the project, especially from relatives of the crew of the Mission Belle. That is shown by the first donations we received from that part of the world.