

**Memorial dedication to 42-29971 and the crew of Vernon Cole
14 October 2017, Beek, Kingdom of the Netherlands.**



Beek, Netherlands
Visitor's Center



Memorial to Vernon Cole crew and 42-29971 inside visitor's center
(bench donated by SSMA)



2016 073A MONUMENT "GEDONDER IN DE HEMEL" OUDE PASTORIE BEEK dd. 06.02.2017



Artist rendering of memorial next to Beek Visitor's Center
(outline of a B-17 to full scale)



Aerial view of Memorial to 42-29971, low metal wall outlines the left fuselage and wing
(Beek Visitor's Center in background)



42-29971 Memorial
(Beek Welcome Center in background)



Mr. Roy Gottgens who initiated the project to erect a memorial to 42-29971 addresses the audience at the dedication ceremony 14 October 2017



Mayor of Beek



U.S. Charge d' Affaires



NATO officers and dignitaries in attendance





Left fuselage and wing outlined by a metal wall, inscription reads:
"vrijheid is niet vanzelfsprekend" (we cannot take freedom for granted)



“We cannot take freedom for granted”
(holes spelling out the words of the inscription represent bullet holes)



Mary Louise Highfill and Lois Partridge (93 year old wife of copilot Robert Partridge)
place a wreath at the wall



Susan Linton, daughter of Sgt. Robert Folk



Dick Folk, son of Sgt Robert Folk



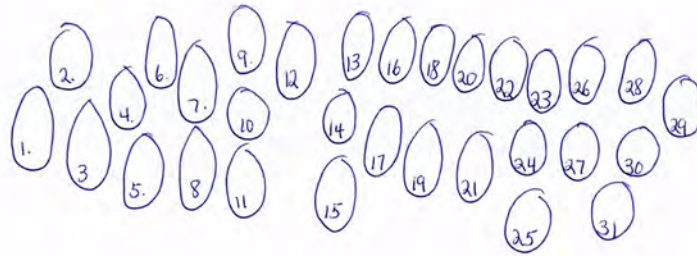
A final salute



Unveiling the memorial plaque



The plaque with crew listed, "Gedonder In De Hemel (Thunder in Heaven)"



- | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Amy Trombley | 10. Holly Zumpf Haas | 20. Deanne Folk | 31. Sarah Hegamyer |
| 2. Mike Johnson | 11. Marilyn Uzdavines | 21. Brenda Parker | |
| 3. Wayne Wright | 12. Steve Haas | 22. Mike Linton | |
| 4. Nevaeh Trombley | 13. Dick Folk | 23. Chris Highfill | |
| 5. Bill Wright | 14. Sandra Partridge Landgraf | 24. Lourdes Highfill | |
| 6. Tom Landgraf | 15. Joy Johnson | 25. Mia Highfill | |
| 7. Caleb Trombley | 16. Jan Folk | 26. Keith Highfill | |
| 8. Michael Uzdavines | 17. Lois Partridge | 27. Mary Louise Highfill | |
| 9. Richard Bjornson | 18. Jim Linton | 28. John Highfill | |
| | 19. Susan Folk Linton | 29. Keith Devine | |
| | | 30. Teresa Devine | |

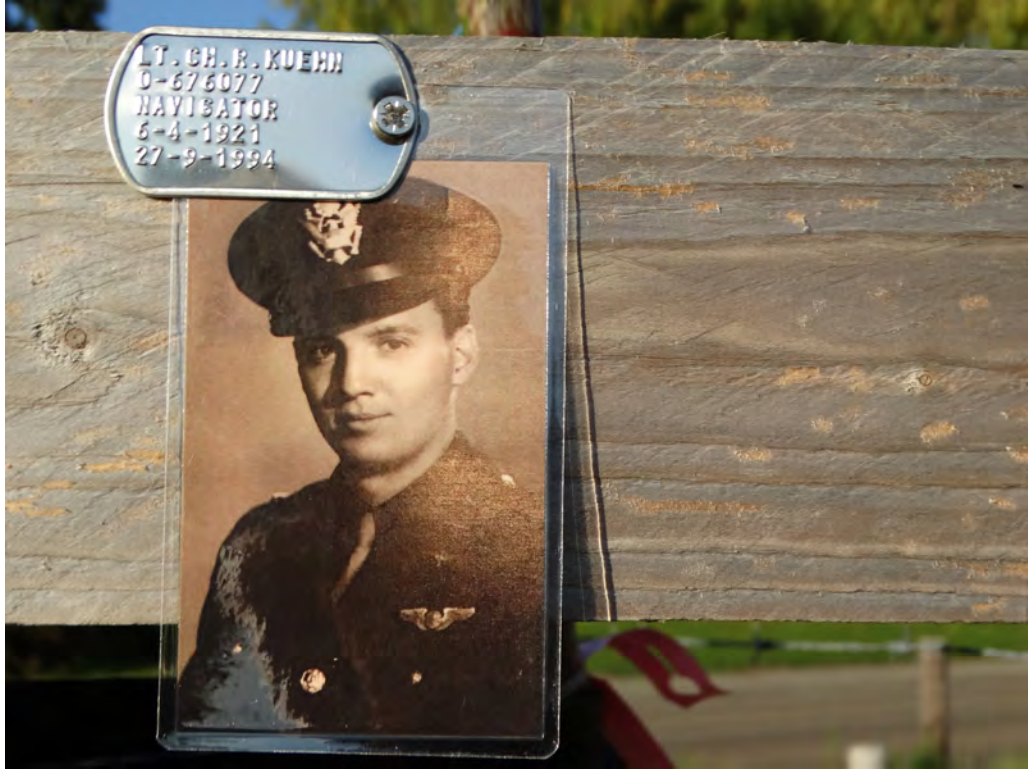
Cole crew relatives attending the memorial dedication

The Cole Crew











The First Memorial to 42-29971 Crewmembers

In 1969 Beek erected a memorial in the town center to all those who had lost their lives during WWII, including 42-29971 crewmen Donald Richardson, Robah Shields, and Frederick Zumpf



The small stepping-stone engraved with names of the three men of the Cole crew found in the wreckage of 42-29971 at the base of the original Beek War Memorial

Excerpt from Echoes article

(regarding the efforts to erect a proper tribute the crew of 42-29971)

Soon after beginning his research, Mr. Gottgens solicited local authorities hoping to find a location in Beek, raise funds for, and have a memorial erected and dedicated to all of the men in Cole's crew. His target was to have the dedication ceremony on October 14, 2016, the anniversary of the crash of 42-29971. Roy soon had the local town authorities onboard with his idea and the project soon grew in scope with organizations on the national level becoming involved, including the Dutch National Trust which was experienced in erecting such markers and who also owned the land where the memorial was to be placed. In July 2017 it was decided to postpone the dedication to 14 October 2017 to allow for further in depth planning.

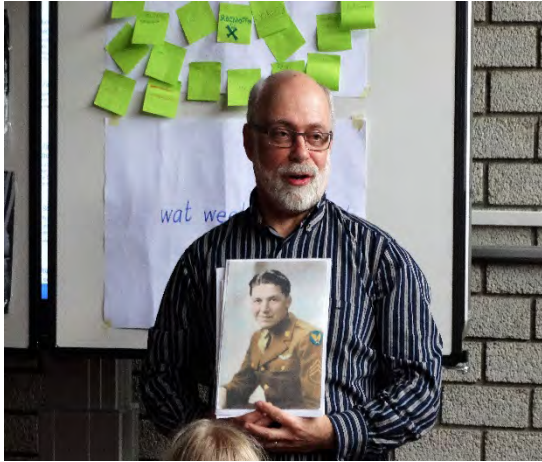
The sight selected for the memorial is located at the place where the aircraft crashed, just 100 yards from an old medieval farmhouse that Beek was restoring as a visitor's center for their town. It was also decided to involve local school children as a lesson in history for them. On March 15, 2017 school children received lessons about what had happened in the air war of WWII, and what had happened to the crew of 42-29971, including a "live" presentation of the story of Robert Folk. The children then planted ten fruit trees at the sight of the memorial, one for each of the crew. Four schools and six officials each adopted a tree. A contest was organized for the children to write an eleven word phrase or poem about what they had learned with the winning eleven words to be inscribed on the monument. The winning phrase/poem: ***"Airplane, soldiers went to the ground, therefore we walk freely around."***

Mr. Roy Gottgens



Educational program and fruit tree planting event March 15 2017 project "Thunder in Heaven"

1. Teaching: "freedom is not for free"



The story of Robert Folk



Explaining of the meaning of the project



Movie: "the Mighty 8th"



What do you know about WW2 ?



The story of Robert Folk



What did you learn today ?

2. Fruit tree planting event: “we take the fruits of their suffering”



The location: visitor center in Beek



Ready for digging



Participation of two American airmen



Digging and digging (where are the boys ?)



Hard child labor !



The after party with chips and drinks