

# THE SEARCHLIGHT

SEPTEMBER  
2019





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Final editor: Peter van der Weide, secretary SLO Drenthe	



General Christiansen	Villa Lindenhof, target in Emmen
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6 march '44	The B17 Flakstop on his way to its target: Berlijn.
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Havelte	The airfield in construction is being bombed.
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Ruins in Havelte	1st pilot at Havelte
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Tail of the Suzy Sagtits near Erica.	"Toni" Hackl after his 100th shot aircraft.
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Airguard-tower	one of the few airguardtower of the Netherlands that is restored and accessible.
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# APPRECIATE

Proud to share this fantastic news with you: In September we were pleasantly surprised with the receipt of a special recognition. Air War Research Foundation Drenthe now is an official part of the Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire in the United Kingdom. Air War Research Drenthe Foundation, received this special recognition for all important work we, as a foundation, have done in recent years for the RAF, RCAF and RAAF Bomber Command crew members in relation to the WW2 and in particular for our activities focused on the Bomber Command crew members who fell for our freedom today. We are as Air Force Research Drenthe Foundation are very impressed by this

great and very special recognition and experience this as a big compliment and a great incentive to continue our valuable work and to keep the memory of all these brave crew members alive. We thank David Harrigan and the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Center team for this special recognition and we look forward to many years of close cooperation! Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire is a unique partnership of regional government, defense, commercial and voluntary heritage centers and museums in the county of Lincolnshire, to promote the important military aviation heritage that Lincolnshire has to offer.

**Air War Research Foundation Drenthe, has received this special recognition for all the important work we have done as a foundation in recent years**

Rob Wethly, Voorzitter SLO-Drenthe



# HAVELTE



The Germans were unable to control the water levels when constructing Nachtlandeplatz Norg, the airport for emergency landings near Peest. The ground remained too soggy for a plane to land.

For that reason, the construction of Flugplatz Steenwijk, better known as Fliegerhorst Havelte, was started in October 1942. A Fliegerhorst was the

designation of a German military airport with the status of an independent main airport with extensive facilities. Above the Fliegerhorste stood the two 'Leithorste': Schiphol (Netherlands North) and Gilze-Rijen (Netherlands South). Under the Fliegerhorste stood the Einsatzhäfen, Feldflugplätze and Landeplätze.

The airport at Havelte had to become a Fliegerhorst to relieve Leithorst Schiphol. A complete airport with associated installations and buildings was constructed north of the village. At some distance from the airport, spread over Havelte, were numerous German military buildings, including a lazaret and guard building.

The construction of the airport was carried out by people who were employed, led by a contractor from Havelte itself. The Bauleitung was in the hands of Germans who sat on Overcinge, the possession of the Linthorst Homan family that had been demanded by the occupying forces.

Among the workers were many Jewish men from mixed marriages and also prisoners from Veenhuizen. Many building materials were delivered by ship via the Drentsche Hoofdvaart and a railway line was built that connected to the existing track between Meppel and Steenwijk. At the airport itself there were various narrow-gauge railways that spread the raw materials for the various construction projects across the site.

In the low-lying soils along the Drentsche Hoofdvaart, 93 hectares of grassland were claimed, of which sods were laid and laid on roller tracks. They built sheds, a fire brigade building, a storage place for fuel, a command tower with radio connection, a telephone exchange, a water treatment plant,

hangars, barracks and so on. For the housing of the workers and the Luftwaffe staff, various barracks camps were built and in the vicinity of the Hune House a Labor Bearing was erected for around 1,000 forced laborers.

The officers were mostly billeted in with local families.

Every effort was made to set up the airport in a short time.

In total, around 5600 people worked on the 600-hectare area where the airport should be. Most of the work was on leveling the rough moorland for the construction of the runway and roller tracks.

## OPROEPING

In Hoogeveen and Meppel, all male persons, doctors, "clergymen" and bakers except, have to work for fourteen days at Havelte airport. The mayors had to appoint the people.

*Trouw, 15-02-1944*



Workers with guards.



**The constructions of the fist runway.**

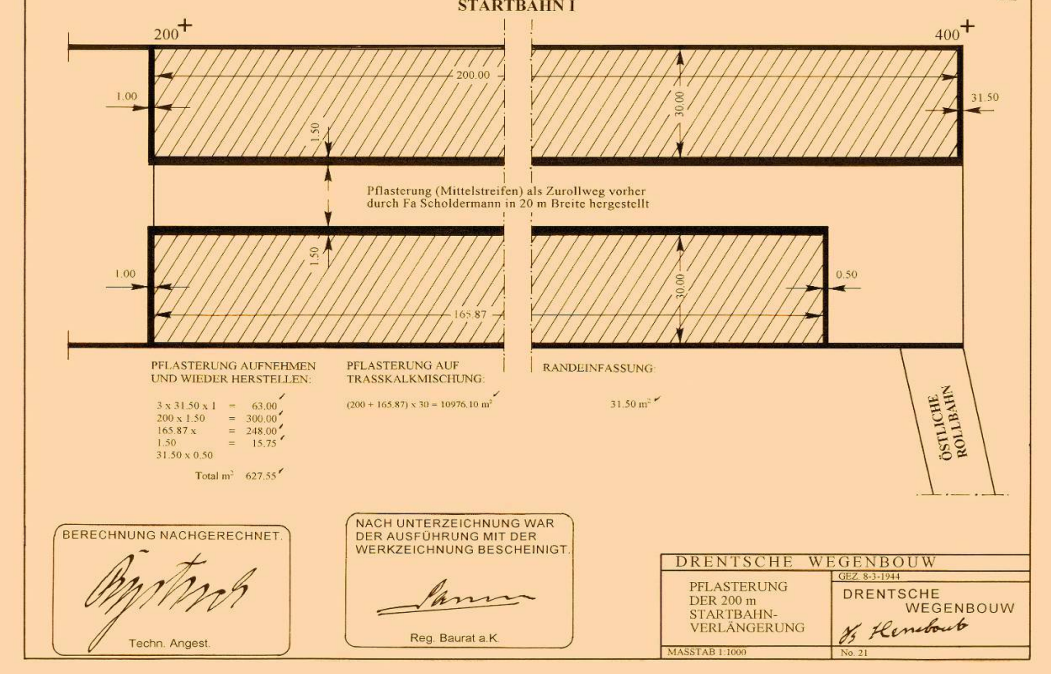
The first runway of the airport was horizontal on the Nieuwe Ruitersweg and is still present in its entirety. Construction of this Startbahn I started in 1942 and was completed in 1943. This track had a width of 80 meters and a length of around 1400 meters. The entire track was provided with a double layer of bricks on which a layer of grass was laid on camouflage.

After the war, the approximately 1 million paving bricks reused for various reconstruction projects.

At the bottom of the track there was a large roller field, which was surrounded by the main taxi way. There were various hangars and buildings on this roller conveyor that served as command centers for flight control and the weather forecast service. There were also command centers here and there was a fuel depot and a fire station. Nowadays there is a modern residential area at this location and there is virtually nothing left of the Wachtgebouw, which was located at the former gate of the airport.

**The second smaller runway.**

The second runway of Fliegerhorst Havelte was approximately 2 kilometers away from lane 1 and had a length of 750 meters (70 meters wide). This track is



smaller by the 'early' ending of the war. It had never been used and was still under construction in May 1945. On the left side of the track, a long roller track ran from the runway to the present-day Van Helomaweg, which was widened by the Germans and also served as a runway.

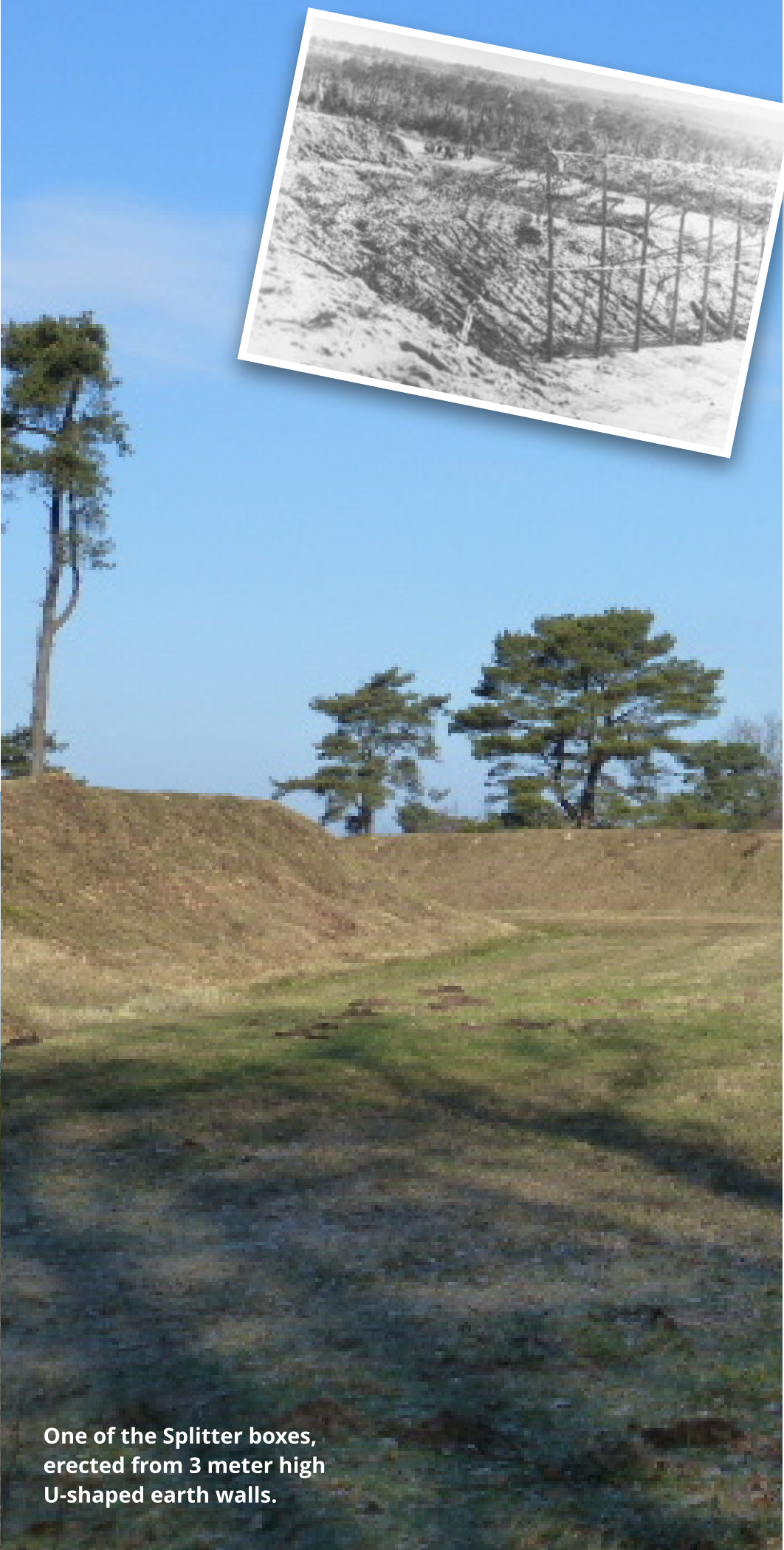
On this road were also the hangars and parking places for the planes that would use the runway. The foundation of 1 of the hangars is still present, but for the rest there is hardly anything in the area that remembers the airport. The lower part of the runway is still present in its original state and is used by defense personnel practicing in this area. The upper part of the runway has almost entirely been redone with street pavers and is now called Schipslootweg.

As a deception, 2 fake airports were constructed aswel around Fliegerhorst Havelte, the first of which was located near the Frisian town of Wold and the second was built in the town of

Zorgvlied. The resistance newspaper VOD, Information Service of Je Maintiendrai even talked about 4 mock fields. In addition to the Frisian Wold (in the old Willem near Diever) and Zorgvlied, they also mentioned Norg and Wapserveen.



The runway at the current military training of defense.



One of the Splitter boxes, erected from 3 meter high U-shaped earth walls.

**Splitter box**

The three outdoor hangars that can still be seen today are very special. These are large open spaces with an earthen wall around a few meters high. These were covered with branches and other camouflage material to hide the planes from view.

In a northerly direction, the runways entered the forest where a number of aircraft could be concealed in so-called Splitter boxes. These were large raised U-shaped and 3-meter high earth ramparts in which aircraft could be parked (Abstell boxes of the Ypenburg Halle type). These were largely open hangars that were hidden from view by means of camouflage nets. At the end of these Splitter boxes was a large shed that possibly served as a workshop and hangar. The pointed roofs are clearly visible on old aerial photos. But even today, the remains from the field can be seen again.

The Splitter boxes can be divided into 2 groups, each consisting of 6 boxes. Of the first group almost all boxes, whether or not completely overgrown, have been preserved in good condition. The boxes belonging to group 2 have almost completely disappeared.





Lazerette, German hospital in Heimatstyle.



Barack Luftwaffehelferinnen.

**Barracks and housing**

On the Meeuwenveen and the Konijnenbergen a barracks camp was erected for the Reichsarbeitsdienst consisting of around 15 buildings. On the terrain nowadays referred to as the Meeuwenveen are three buildings, which in the first days were intended for the Luftwaffehelferinnen. This was a female branch of the Luftwaffe who worked in the nearby ammunition workshop. These buildings were later used to house the Luftwaffe pilots. The buildings are still in good condition and used by a company.

There is also a German transformer house between the alloy buildings. At a few hundred meters distance, a few German buildings stood at the Konijnenbergen, all of which were demolished after

the war. It concerned here various alloy buildings and buildings for personal hygiene. There was also a water treatment plant at this location from which parts of the brick sewer and wells can still be found at various points.

**German Hospital - Eursingerlaan**

Outside the borders of the airport there was a German Hospital on Eursingerlaan.

This building is still present and is used for social services. In Steenwijk, a number of existing buildings were also set up as a hospital, where one of the buildings still shows a red cross on the roof, which was affixed by the German occupiers.



The red cross is still visible on the roof.



3000 BOMBS



Pilot Weitzberg on Fliegerhorst Steenwijk (Havelte)

**Emergency landings**

The airport was operational for much earlier. But the Germans hardly stationed any units there for a long time. The first unit was the Nachtjagd unit 4./NJG 1 equipped with Messerschmitt BF 110. Furthermore, the Luftwaffe used Havelte for intermediate and emergency landings.

**Thousands of bomb craters**

A few hunters have actually taken off and landed, but the airport has never become operational. The runway was disabled in a RAF bombing in the fall of 1944. After this, the occupying forces rushed to transform one of the roller tracks into a runway, but a new bombing followed in March 1945 that completely dismantled the airport. When the liberation of Havelte did not take long, the Germans exploded many buildings. Shortly after the liberation, it became clear what had happened. A total of 20 km of roads were broken and 40 km of cycle paths were destroyed. The number of bomb craters was certainly 2,000. 60 buildings were left behind as ruins at the airport.





# LUFTWAFFE GENERAL IN EMMEN



where the exit was. He led them to the exit and got cigarettes. What the Germans did not know was that this was a person in hiding.

It is not known why this general had chosen Emmen to camp, but his presence here had already had serious consequences in February 1945. On February 22, 1945, English planes bombed the housing block at the station where this man's staff quarter was located. They were the advanced houses of the Schrage and Van Veen families. The general came out unscathed, but a few houses were destroyed and 6 civilians died.

A small flying strip was laid out on the heathland between the Roswinkelerweg and the Emmerdennen. The flight strip was intended for the plane with which Christiansen could quickly escape in an emergency. A special salon wagon was also waiting for him on a sideline from the railway to Weerdinge.

The general had suddenly left on Sunday, April 8, 1945, in his salon car of the "Cie." Internationale des Wagonlits.

His presence and of other senior officers were another reason for the Allies to bombard the Spoorstraat on 22 February.



Emmen became one of the last defensive bastions of the Germans in the last year of the war. On January 2, 1945, General F.C. Christiansen, supreme commander of the German Wehrmacht, his headquarters in the Lindenhof villa at Zegering Hadders, next to the zoo. That led to separate situations. The Germans enjoyed visiting the zoo and used the park as a walking park. At a certain moment the general walked with his staff through the park and lost their way while discussing. The Germans asked someone at work if he knew





# ON 30-4-44 A TRAIN WAS ATTACKED IN ZUIDBARGE

Similar train, this one is at Hoogeveen.



May 30, 1944

Zuidbargo

On May 30, 1944 at

1.39 pm, nine

American P38

Lightnings attack train

3666 near the former

Zuidbargo station.

This train left Emmen

for Zwolle at 1.31 pm.

The train consists of a

locomotive, a postal

car, an E wagon, a

luggage car and 8

passenger cars.

After the attack on the train, both train

conductors make the

following statement to

the on-duty Chief of

the military police of

the Emmen group.

At a distance of 150 to

200 meters from the

Zuidbargo Station, we

saw 9 aircraft. These

were planes of

American or English

nationality, so-called

double tails. The

aircrafts approached the train in a dive and started firing. It was 1.39 pm then.

The train stopped immediately and we requested the passengers to leave the train and to hide in the rye.

**The aircrafts approached the train in a dive and started firing. It was 1.39 pm then.**

The planes made 4 attacks on the train and then disappeared in a westerly and north-westerly direction.

On checking, it appeared that the apprentice driver on the machine had died, while the driver was badly injured. Several travelers had also received gunshot wounds, some of them were seriously injured. The locomotive and the luggage trolley were riddled with bullets in such a way that they had to be taken out of service asked.

In addition, 5 coaches were seriously damaged. A locomotive that is still in Emmen has towed the remains of the train. A total of 13 injured people were transported to the hospital in Emmen. One of the wounded dies on the way to the hospital and the other dies early in the evening. A total of at least 3 people were killed in

this shooting. Documentation from the Dutch Railways shows that the driver dies of his injuries later.

**The locomotive and the luggage trolley were riddled with bullets in such a way that they had to be taken out of service.**



A P38 shoots a steamtrain.



A P38 in flight for a train.



# 'THE AIRWATCHTOWER IS AIRWAR ASWEL.'

ROB WETHLY, CHAIRMAN SLO-DRENTHE

AS AIR WAR RESEARCH FOUNDATION  
DRENTHE, WE ARE ALSO CONCERNED  
ABOUT MONUMENTS FROM THE 'COLD'  
AIR WAR.

TOWER 7Z3-SCHOONEBEEK-SLO DRENTHE

## MARCH 6TH 1944



The B17 Flakstop on his way to his target; Berlin.

On March 6, 1944 my father: Hendrik Peters (25-1-1933 / 4-10-2003) saw the following happen in Zwartemeer:

*It was very busy and noisy in the air and shooting was taking place everywhere. In the afternoon it became very serious and the master had to crawl under the school desks from underneath the school desks looking outwards. In the South East I saw pieces of airplane coming down with parachutes in between. When*

*the school was over, it turned out that a large bombers had landed at Noordersloot on Puritveldje, and we ran towards it like lightning and were on the spot half an hour after the crash. There were no German soldiers then. The large dark green plane lay flat on the peat and lacked a wing, part of which landed in a pine tree, right next to Grandpa Aole Besse's house. We looked through a hole in the plane and saw 3 dead crew members, one of whom still had a machine*

*gun. One of the men lay a little way forward where the hull lay a little deeper and where water had entered. His long hair was weeping through the water, they didn't seem injured. The entire floor of the aircraft was covered with empty bullet shells. A short distance from the plane was another fourth deceased person and at the border was another crew member who had fallen into the peat through the thin layer of frost 40 cm.*

Harrie Peters, secretary SLO-Drenthe



# MARCH 6TH 1944



On Monday, March 6, 1944, the 8th US Air Force flew from Bases in England with more than 700 bombers a major day attack on Berlin to flatten industry and infrastructure. Between half past noon and noon, the bomber stream was in the vicinity of south-east Drenthe and the Emsland. At 12 o'clock there was a large air fight in the vicinity of Haselunne in an easterly direction, whereby the German fighter planes succeeded in shooting down about 20 bombers. All the way to Berlin, the bombers were shot at by the German hunting groups and above Berlin by the fierce FLAK. On the return flight to England, things got a bit calmer at first, but in the Emsland / South-East Drenthe border area, the bombers again suffered heavy attacks from German Messerschmitt and Focke wulf hunters.

At half past two in the afternoon, 4 Focke wulf 190s took off at Oldenburg Air Base to also participate in the interception of these bombers.

These four aircraft were flown by: Major Anton Hackl, Oblt Hugo Frey, Fahnrich Karl Friedrich Lange and Uffz Karl Gluttig.

Around 2:50 pm they came into contact with the bomber stream that was south of Meppen / Ems. These four pilots concentrated their attacks on the 388 BG at the back of the large formation flew from the 45th Combat wing and at the low risk position.

Always attacking head-on, Oblt Hugo Frey managed to shoot a bomber burning out of the formation with each pass, accompanied and protected by his wing man Karl Gluttig. Hauptmann Hackl with his wing man Karl Friedrich Lange on the other hand were disturbed in the attack every time by the intervention of American P-47 Thunderbolt's, who tried to force them into an air fight. They did not succeed in bringing down a B-17 at that time.

## SUZY SAG TITS

The first aircraft that landed for Oberleutnant Hugo Frey's 20mm guns was the B-17G 42-31135 "Suzy Sag Tits" controlled by Lieutenant Monty D Givens.

Both starboard engines of this aircraft were set on fire by Oblt Hugo Frey. The crew had enough time to jump and all but one came alive on the ground. The right waistgunner sergeant Mc Gee was already fatally hit in the air and his body was found on the ground between the wreckage.

Wireless operator Gerachty had a bullet wound in his thigh and Sergeant Tom Foulds the ball turret gunner had a broken foot and some shard wounds.

The crew completely landed on the Amsterdamsche and Schoonebeker fields and were all imprisoned after hours.

The plane itself crashed opposite the Griendtsveen peatfactory between Weiteveen and Erica slide opposite the current Narrow Gauge Railway Museum.





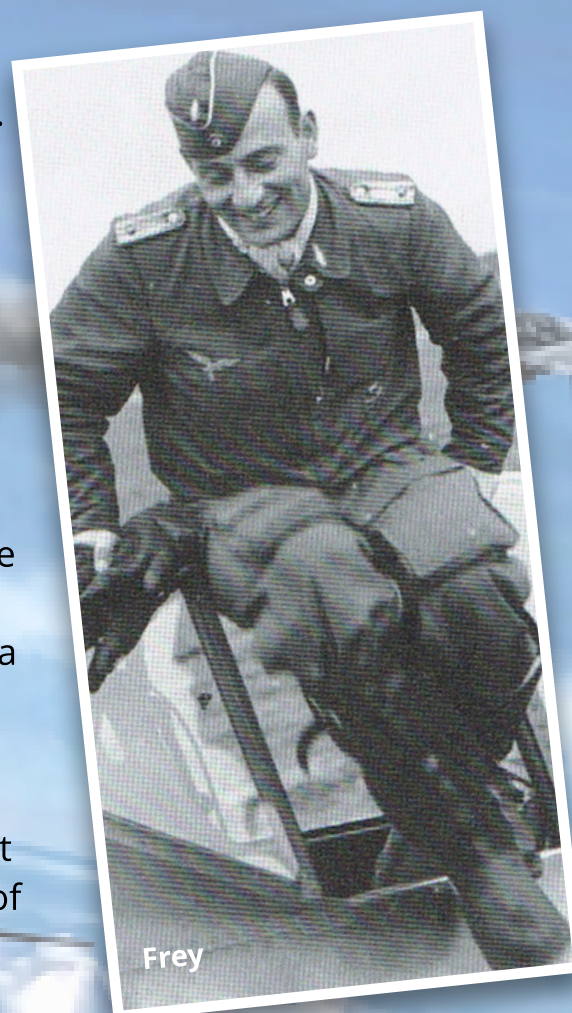
# FORGOTTEN

The second aircraft hit by Hugo Frey was the B-17G 42-31194 called "Duches of Dixie" controlled by the pilot Lt Grindley. There are still a number of question marks in the crash of this device. It has always been assumed that this aircraft exploded in the air above Schoningsdorf and that the parts rained down between this village and the Dutch border there, this has also been described in various books and reports. However, the truth is very different. Namely, this plane came to the ground in its entirety in the Ruhlermoor. A very swampy peat area that has not yet been mined. The aircraft was completely sunk there in 2 days in the 4.5 m thick peat layer and the directional rudder protruded about 2 m above the peat. The 2 dead in the aircraft could be salvaged in time. These were the waistgunner Sgt Tucker and the tailgunner Sgt Thompson. The 2nd pilot Lt Alander was badly injured in the cockpit and more or less unconscious pushed the device. He did

not use his parachute and crashed between Schoningsdorf and Twist in the peat. Sgt Liebmann, the ballturret gunner, was taken seriously injured to a lazaret in Lingen where, after amputation of his left arm, he died a few days later due to a heart attack.

The complete wreck of the B-17 remained in the peat near the Backersweg in the Ruhlerveld, it could not be recovered and was "forgotten". Since the 1950s, a large German oil company has explored the area, building oilpumps for oil extraction, and roads have been built in the area. One of those roads was close to the sunken plane, but the corner where the aircraft was kept was unprocessed and "secret." Even the tail rudder protruding above the ground was covered with peat, which after some time overgrown with blackberry bushes and birch. In 1998, a U.S. air force delegation on the spot together with some high-ranking people from the oil company and it was agreed that the piece of peat in which the aircraft was located would be

excavated around 2007 and a storage facility could then take place. However, it did not come that far, because before the official salvage could take place the complete wreck was stolen by so-called poachers or professional souvenir hunters with cranes and trucks. They removed the plane and successively disappeared without a trace. This was reported and a police / defense investigation was launched, but the perpetrators were never caught.



Frey

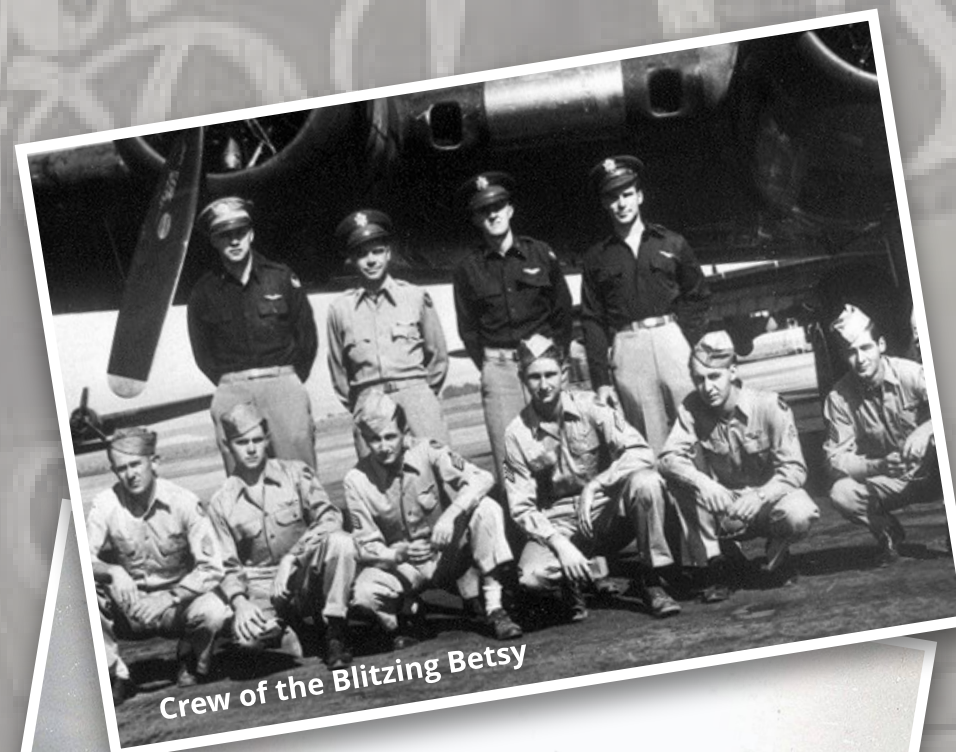
The third aircraft hit by Oblt Hugo Freys frontal attacks on the engines and cockpit was the B-17g, 42-37886 called "Blitzing Betsy" and was flown by Lt Lowwell Watts. The starboard inside engine burned including the adjacent fuel tank in the wing. It also burned under the cockpit floor and this fire was fed by leaking fuel and oxygen pipes.

Lt Watts instructed his crew to jump, which some also succeeded. These 4 crew members landed near Weiteveen. Some were slightly injured and were taken to the monastery in Weiteveen. Lt Watts in the meantime, could not get the plane under control and the cockpit was full of smoke. Due to an unfortunate maneuver, the aircraft collided with the underside of the B-17 flying above him, and this collision destroyed both aircraft.

Large pieces of metal were knocked out of the hull and wings of the B-17 with serial number 42-40054 by the heavy propeller blades called the "Jinny" and which was flown by Captain Job. This collision meant the end for both aircraft. The "Blitzing Betsy" came down like a leaf

while falling down, the burning fuel tank exploded and the starboard wing broke down. During this explosion, 3 more crew members were blown out of the aircraft, 1 of them (Sgt Hess) with unopened parachute slamming on the ground next to the aircraft. The other 2 landed on the ground. When the aircraft crashed on the peat moor of

the Puritveenderij on the Noordersloot between Zwartemeer and Weiteveen, it turned out that there were 3 dead crew members on board. The 3 killed men on board were the gunners Sgt Brassfield, Sgt Sweeney and Sgt Taylor. The other crew members were all taken prisoner.



Crew of the Blitzing Betsy



The Blitzing Betsy near Zwartemeer



# FACTS



The "Jinny" landed on Kanaal A in Schoonebeek (next to the Veldkamp shed) and there were 6 people killed. These were Captain Job 2nd pilot Liechowski Navigator Duprey Radio Opp Blatz (first wounded and later died in a lazaret.) and airgunners Pfanner and Reed  
The remaining 5 men were taken prisoner. These were 1st Pilot Lt Brown, bomb aimer Gill, flight engineer Joyce, right waistgunner Moyer and tail gunner Marcario.  
It was the gunturret of this device that was found in 1978 during paintwork work on the center line in the direction of Weiteveen where the point 50s were stolen. Ballturret gunner Pfanner was the dead person found near the border, where he had fallen into the peat without a parachute. It has been established that as a result of the collision the ballturret including the Pfanner fell out off the plane.

- The aircraft parts that fell over the Griendtsveen peatmoor in Schoningsdorf near the Dutch border came from the 2 colliding aircraft.
- The collision occurred approximately above the Sud-Nordkanal
- The parachutists who hung in the air were from the 3 planes that were shot .
- In March 1946, Mr. Wegkamp from Weiteveen reported to the police in Emmen about two field graves of American pilots who died in March 1944 at the border there.
- Oblt Hugo Frey shot 3 aircraft that day. Some war historians think that a Focke Wulf cannot shoot 4 aircraft during 1 flight because of his ammunition stock. This day there were also 3, but he could write the fourth device as a by-catch.
- The German pilots Anton Hackl and Karl Friedrich Lange were able to land their aircraft on a German basis.
- Oblt Hugo Frey was hit by B-17 gunmen somewhere between Erica and Nieuw-Amsterdam during one of his next frontal attacks and crashed with fatal consequences at the Oosterlangen in Erm, as discussed in detail in an earlier edition of the floodlight.
- Uffz Karl Gluttig, the fourth pilot of the German group disappeared without a trace after the first attacks on the B-17 formation and must have landed here in the German / Dutch border area. In his memoirs, Lowell Watts describes a Focke Wulf 190 which turns towards him while he is hanging on his parachute at an altitude of about 2 km. Lowell Watts thought he would be shot in his parachute at that time, but the German aircraft continued its turn and crashed into the ground "not far from where I landed," said Lowell Watts after the war. This could not have been the device of Oblt Hugo Frey but possibly that of Uffz Gluttig
- Karl Friedrich Lange managed to shoot the already damaged B-17G Flakstop at Staphorst. Before landing anywhere in Germany with almost empty tanks. This has also been described in an earlier Searchlight edition.

Harrie Peters, treasurer SLO-Drenthe



Frey



Lange



Hackl



Hackl

Scene from Red Tails 2012



# CANDLES ON GRAVES

Christmas Eve 2019, would you like to help us to light candles again at the Commonwealth war graves in Drenthe and at other locations?

How can you help us?

We ask for a small donation to help pay for the candles.

We are also looking for volunteers who want to place a candle at Commonwealth war graves in their immediate neighborhood on Christmas Eve.

Stichting Luchtoorlog onderzoek Drenthe

IBAN: NL45 RBRB 0706 5726 37

Specifying: Lights 2019

Register as a volunteer or for questions, please send an email to:  
[info@slo-drenthe.nl](mailto:info@slo-drenthe.nl)

ST GROUWINGEN.  
NEN/ TEL. 6.

VERBAAL  
van een Engelsch-  
er) in den avond van  
Zwartemeer, gemeente Emmen,

Naar aanleiding van het op Woensdag 22 Maart 1944, te on-  
gevoer 21,30 uur, neerstorten van een brandend Engelsch Vlieg-  
tuig (bomwerper) aan de Westzijde van de Kamerlingewijk on-  
der Zwartemeer, gemeente Emmen, heb ik -  
Sietze van der Hoek, Hoofdwachtmeester, behorende tot opgesteld  
Groep, na bekomen opdracht van mijn Groepscommandant een onder-  
zoek ingesteld.

Bij aankomst bleek mij, dat het onlaag gestorte Engelsch  
Vliegtuig was een vier motorige bomwerper, waarvan de wr-  
stukken over eenige honderden meters verspreid lagen.

In verschillende doelen daarvan woude een hevige  
Bij het vliegtuig werden geen brijant- of brandbom-  
gevonden.

De motoren en de overgroote deel van de wrakstukke  
onder het vliegtuig en over het veld lagen ver-



SLO Drenthe