

Pieter Valkenburg's Speaking Notes For

Elmer Bagnall Muttart Celebration

March 10, 2018 at Borden-Carleton Legion

For those of you who don't know me, I'm Pieter Valkenburg. In 2016 I began researching the names on the Cenotaph outside this Legion.

I'd like to thank Lori Eggert for organizing this event. It's so heartwarming when a family member of one of the soldiers takes such an interest. Many of you have heard me request photos and information in the past, or you may have read about the research in the County Line Courier, or on our blog. There is also an article in today's Journal-Pioneer.

The story of Elmer Muttart is very dear to me as I'm originally from Holland, and I served in the Dutch Air Force. This summer my wife and I travelled to Holland, Belgium, Germany, and France to pay our respects at the graves and memorials of those soldiers on the Cenotaph who are buried or honoured there.

We of course visited Elmer's grave, and the farm where his plane came down in October 1941. He had sacrificed his life in order to steer his plane past the village of Wons. He also made sure his

crew all managed to parachute out. They spent the rest of the war in Prisoner of War camps.

Elmer's story was so extraordinary that I wanted to see if we could have a place of honour for him and his crew at the crash site. I contacted the Missing Airmen Memorial Foundation, a non-profit organization in The Netherlands, and they agreed with me. Now we are working hard to make this happen.

Here in Canada, the Tryon & Area Historical Society is accepting donations to the Muttart Memorial Project. Any donation made is a charitable donation, and Jack Sorensen is here today to gladly take your money for this project.

I'm also intending to give presentations about the Cenotaph Research Project in order to honour all of the soldiers mentioned on the Cenotaph, as well as Elmer Muttart, to help raise funds for the memorial plaque. I have already accepted a speaking invitation at the United Church in Breadalbane later this month.

Thank you.