Archéologie et Patrimoine: Telling the story of a B-17 crash in France through visual display

by

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Dedication Page

This project would not have been possible without the time and dedication of several of the most passionate people I know, some who have become good friends. To these people I extend my most heartfelt thanks, for I would not have been able to do this work without you.

To Morgane, our project translator who was vital in ensuring that my display was respectful and appropriately translated for the local French community. You kept me from giving up more than once, and along this journey I've gained a dear friend. Mille mercis, mon amie.

To my advisors, Dr. Fracchia and Dr. Saul, who introduced me to the project in the first place. This project, this work, has influenced me in ways I could never have anticipated a year ago. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be a part of something so much bigger than myself.

And to my dear husband Richard, who had no idea of the scope of a thesis project when this started. You navigated me through my dark nights of the soul, steered me through doubt and sleepless nights, and gave me the courage to get this project finished. My muse and inspiration, thank you. I promise I'll get you that coffee mug.

Acknowledgements

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the assistance of three key individuals. With their help, I was able to perform the research, translation, and coordination I needed for this project to succeed. Their efforts reveal the value of international collaboration and partnership for community-based projects such as this.

Morgane Durieux, the project translator and interpreter, aided in the translation and localization of all written text for the trifold display and artifact identification cards. In addition, she also served as the French liaison between stakeholders throughout the duration of the project. Morgane's skills with translation, interpretation, and collaboration were influential for both the archaeological and display projects.

Bryan Nicholson, a U.S. volunteer living in France and aviation subject matter expert assisted with the identification and correct naming of all artifacts chosen for the display, both in English and French. During the previous year's excavation he had provided invaluable insight into the different components of the plane, allowing finds to be put into context. His passion for the subject and desire to see the display completed emphasized the importance of including multiple voices in the research and design process.

Jean-François Lafosse, a French volunteer and aviation subject matter expert, assisted with coordinating communication between American project members and the town, as well as providing knowledge about the town and the crash where applicable. Decades of experience combined with a true passion for understanding and teaching the subject made Jean-François a key resource throughout the research process.

Delivering and setting up the display had far more of an impact than I could have anticipated at the start of this project. While tightening the screws that would secure the lid of the artifact case into its base, my hands trembled with an emotion that was too immense to place. This work was no longer a sketch in my notebook, no longer just a file on my hard drive. Suddenly, it was viscerally real- and overwhelmingly important. Until the moment I stepped back and viewed the completed display for the first time, I shook with terror that I had somehow failed to deliver the project that I had worked so hard on, and that many other stakeholders were counting on me for. Seeing the display, hung up and polished, felt like seeing one of my dreams pinned up on the wall. A physical manifestation of a year of hard work, collaboration, and learning, suddenly real. When I stepped out of the town hall, leaving the display behind for the community, it felt like I was ending a chapter of my life and stepping into a new one.

Throughout the year spent working on this thesis, I have learned many things, both about myself and about international collaborative work. At the onset, I approached this project from the standpoint of a designer, an outsider providing a service. Over the course of the project timeline, as revisions were made, connections were established, and research was conducted, I began to feel like more of an insider. I was fully enmeshed in this work, part of the collective memory that I had a hand in creating. By the time the display was completed and set up in France, it almost felt as though I had been woven into the community's history, leaving my mark on the town and being marked in kind. This work has been humbling, and I feel changed by it in ways I am sure I will continue to discover as the years go on.

Abstract

This project aims to commemorate a B-17G airplane crash that took place in France in 1944, to commemorate the impact this event has had on both American and French citizens, to acknowledge the ongoing recovery efforts being conducted in the field, and to represent those experiences in a respectful manner. Using a visual display and including historic information and artifacts collected at the crash site during archaeological recovery, this project details information about the crew, their mission, and how both French and American partners are currently involved in cooperative work. These visual elements, along with thoughtful research, highlight the importance of involving local communities in excavation.

List of Figures

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

When American wartime casualties occur overseas, it is not uncommon for a memorial to be constructed in the location where the service members lost their lives. The American Battle Monuments Commission works on behalf of the United States Federal Government to upkeep and care for 24 cemeteries and 25 memorials that honor fallen Americans overseas, but "they have neither the authority nor the resources to care for thousands of other sites honoring Americans" (American War Memorials n.d.a). In France alone there are an estimated 903 American memorials for World War II casualties (American War Memorials n.d.b) many of which have been maintained by the local communities in which the memorials are located. By upkeeping and caring for these memorials, local communities honor the memory of fallen service members and aid in the preservation of a collective memory between America and the host country.

There is value in involving impacted communities in the memorialization process; "It allows for the voices and opinions of those being commemorated and their families to be incorporated in an honest and respectful way" (McCracken 2014). This is true for all involved communities, not only for those who lost loved ones. Members of the local community who have spent decades incorporating the crash into their lives deserve to be treated with the same respect. In the case of disaster events such as plane crashes, involving the community is even more vital. By working with the local community, one can gain their perceptions of the event and, from there, understand how it impacted their lives. Memorialization efforts that are community driven give voices to the community itself, allowing those who live there to speak their histories and honor those who have fallen. These memorials can serve not only as a place of remembrance, but also as a

physical manifestation of local history and culture; “Community based commemorative projects can have a positive impact on a community while teaching powerful lessons of history and place” (McCracken 2014). Those who visit the memorial learn not only about the fallen, but about the place that chooses to commemorate the fallen. This shared history can be powerful, a force that unites distant communities through respect and memory.

This project was conceptualized following the author’s participation in an excavation performed in France during the summer of 2022 as part of the MTSU Signature Study Abroad Program *Forensic Aviation Archaeology.* Over the course of the summer, a team of professional archaeologists, students, and volunteers worked in partnership to excavate a B-17G aircraft that had crashed there in 1944. The impact this event had on the community became evident as the season progressed. The town had incorporated stories of the crash into its local history. Some community members and French volunteers had spent years becoming experts on the B-17 and other historic aircraft and were invaluable resources throughout the excavation. Out of the desire to unite the history of the crash, the excavation, and the impact to the local community, this project was conceived.

Due to the sensitive nature of our work, and out of respect for the privacy of surviving family members awaiting answers regarding the recovery of their loved ones, specific details of the site location cannot be disclosed in this discussion. This confidentiality is required and essential for partnership missions with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), the Department of Defense entity responsible for the recovery, repatriation, and identification of all unaccounted-for U.S. service

personnel. In order to maintain confidentiality, limited information regarding the specifics of the aircraft and crew are presented here.

The purpose of this thesis was to create a commemorative display in collaboration with the local community and, in the process, understand the impacts memorials can have on the communities in which they are built. The creation of a commemorative and informational display involves many stakeholders. For the town, this project provides a visual representation of an element of their local history and heritage, a form of material culture that can be shared with others. For the excavation teams from the past three years at this site, this project provides a way to acknowledge the ongoing recovery efforts being conducted in the field. Both the display and ongoing cooperative work with the town can be used to demonstrate the value in collaborative projects with partnering communities, both to local and international agencies.

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

For this thesis, information about the crash, the crew, and the town were gathered prior to beginning the design portion of the project. A review of historic documents and relevant literature from fields that study the impact of American war memorials on French communities was conducted. In order to ensure the accuracy of all information presented on the display, official reports (Fennell 2013, Fracchia and Saul 2022, 2021) from previous excavations at this site were utilized to verify the written portions of the display were correct.

Throughout the research phase, meetings were held with subject matter experts (SMEs) who could provide guidance on what information would be most appropriate to include on the display. These experts included my faculty co-director Dr. Adam Fracchia and French aviation SMEs Jean-François Lafosse and Bryan Nicholson. With the guidance of these experts, information that respectfully detailed the crew, their mission, the aircraft, and ongoing archaeological efforts was compiled.

Design Methods

Once all written information was finalized, I began to consider how that information should best be formatted for the display. It was important to me that all the information be displayed in a respectful manner, while still being eye-catching enough to draw visitors in. Letting my experience as a graphic designer guide me, I began researching displays from war museums and taking notes on the different stylistic and construction choices they had incorporated into their displays.

Prior to the use of any design programs, meetings were held with Dr. Adam Fracchia to determine how both the trifold and the artifact case should be formatted. It was agreed that both pieces should meet a series of criteria in order for the end product to be considered successful. These criteria are as follows:

- They must be large enough for any text or display pieces to be adequately viewed or read without assistance.
- They must fit together in a functional and aesthetically pleasing manner befitting a professional display.
- They must be transportable via airplane, as they would be constructed in the United States before being delivered them to France.
- They must be sturdy and able to withstand long-term contact with the public.

After these conditions were agreed upon and sizes for the display chosen, an initial sketch (Figure 1) was drafted of the trifold.

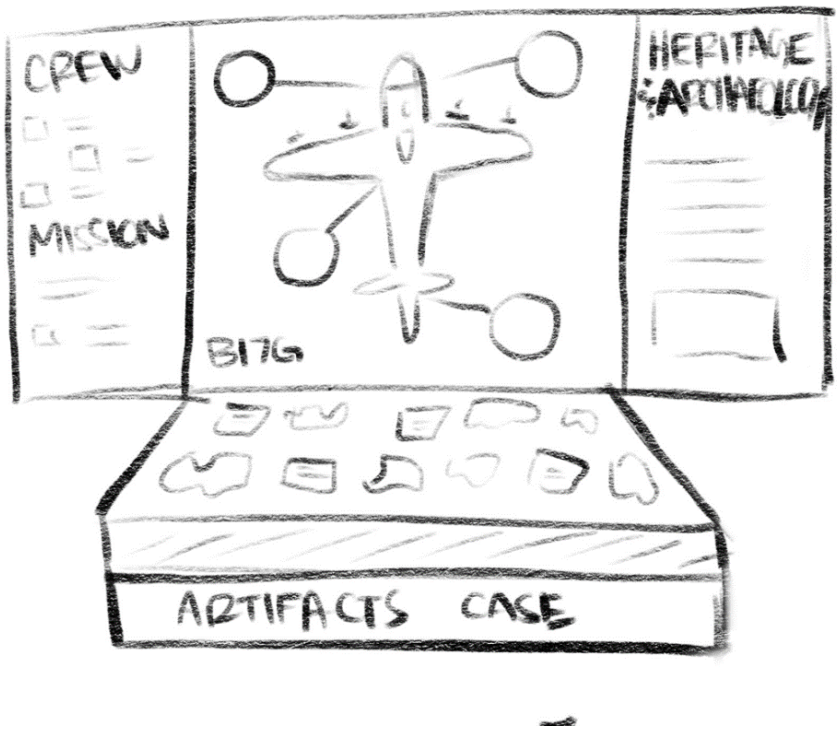

Figure 1: Rough draft of the trifold and artifact display case.

Once all informational research was completed, drafting of the visual elements of the trifold display commenced. Programs used for the designing process include Adobe Illustrator (Version 27.7) and Adobe Photoshop (CS5.1) on PC and Procreate (Procreate 5.3) on iPad Pro. Adobe Illustrator was used for the majority of the design process, including the arrangement and formatting of all text, images, and graphics. Adobe Photoshop was used for photo editing and cropping on several of the photographs included in the final display, such as the crew photographs. Procreate was used in the designing and creation of the graphic elements as it is easier to utilize for "drawing" techniques. Throughout the design phase, changes were made in Adobe Illustrator, exported and submitted to all appropriate parties for approval, and revised until a final design was agreed upon.

The Display

While initially drafting the display, I referenced a list of design principles I had compiled to guide my work. These principles, learned over years of experience as a freelance artist, helped provide parameters for my design process and kept my work on track. Similar to the criteria drafted with Dr. Fracchia, these guidelines considered readability, accessibility, and quality to be key factors. The design principles are as follows:

- Colors utilized for both the text and background must be sampled from the aircraft and must be complimentary. Colors must be muted enough to convey a respectful tone, but not too dark as to make the display unreadable.

- The trifold must be formatted using the rule of thirds, a design principle that guides the viewer's eyes throughout an image or text and creates a sense of balance.
- Fonts must be distinct enough to be readable at a distance (for large text), and not easily corrupted when compressed or shifted (for small text). Fonts must not be too stylistic, such as having too many serifs, curls, or "wingdings." Font must be easily exportable across platforms and must not require a purchase to use.
- Text and photographs must be equally balanced, with appropriate margins present on each panel to avoid the appearance of cramping.
- All design files must be easily exportable in multiple formats. Final design files must be shareable across multiple platforms and color profiles.
- The artifact case must be visually accessible from all topmost sides, utilizing an acrylic or glass lid. The base must be painted dark enough to emphasize the details of the artifacts without obscuring them.
- The artifact case must be sized appropriately to fit neatly within the middle portion of the trifold and will sit directly underneath it to guide the viewer's eyes.

With these principles in mind, I was able to complete a functional, accessible, high-quality display. Receiving input from stakeholders was a critical component of the design process, and only through collaborative effort was the display successfully completed.

Choosing the Artifacts

Another key aspect of designing the display was choosing which artifacts would be included. Using photographs that had been taken in the previous year, I coordinated

with subject matter experts, including Dr. Fracchia, Mr. Lafosse, and Mr. Nicholson, to choose artifacts that would best convey not only the history of the crash, but also how archaeology is an act of recovery and preservation. Artifacts were chosen based on their size, condition, unique details such as words or serial numbers, and the connection they shared to the crew or the plane, such as their position within the aircraft. See Appendix A-1 for photographs of the artifacts and Appendix A-2 for a list of the artifacts chosen and the reasoning for their use in the display.

Translation

Translating the display into French was the first step in the coordination process. The translator for the project, Morgane Durieux, agreed to assist with the proofreading and localization process. After completing a rough translation, a more comprehensive and localized translation of the display text was completed by the translator. For the historically accurate vocabulary, such as certain crew positions or terminology used during WWII, translations were provided by Mr. Nicholson, who had assisted in previous years and was knowledgeable about both the aircraft and historic terminology. Mr. Nicholson and Ms. Durieux assisted with the translation of the artifact names and descriptions as well. After all translations were completed and the visual design was formatted, proofs were sent to town officials, including the mayor, for approval.

Meeting Needs

Throughout the review and revision process, it was key that all the needs of the community were heard and met. Meeting the needs of stakeholders, including town officials, locals, and the DPAA was a challenging process, but a vital one. Ensuring the

translation of the display was accurate and was adequately localized was a primary concern. Confirming display arrangements, including how the trifold would hang on the wall, where the artifact case would sit, and if either piece would need to be moved at some point, were all addressed points throughout conversations with the officials in the town hall. It was vital that the display and research portions were respectfully representing not only the crew, but the town and their commitments to memorialization.

Sourcing and Vetting Vendors

Researching vendors to construct both display pieces involved contacting several different departments, both on and off the MTSU campus. After being informed that MTSU print facilities would not be capable of constructing a product that would fit project needs and standards, private design companies were considered. Private vendors were evaluated based on recommendations from the Tennessee State Library and Archives, who regularly create educational displays, for credibility and overall value. Private design companies were used for both the trifold and artifact display.

ARCHAEOLOGY

As stated previously, this thesis was created following excavations performed in 2021 and 2022. While specific details of the excavation cannot be shared due to the confidential nature of our work, I can provide general information about B-17s, our work in the field, and other ongoing research that help put the archaeological component of my work into context.

What is a B-17?

Initially called "Project 299" by Boeing, the B-17 (Figure 2), was built as an answer to the request for a plane that could withstand long-distance overseas patrol flights ("Boeing B-17G 'Flying Fortress'" n.d.). The B-17G was the penultimate model, known for having a defining chin turret that set it apart from other models ("Boeing B-17G 'Flying Fortress'" n.d.). The B-17, also known as the "Flying Fortress," was designed by Boeing in the late 1930s and was "the first Boeing military aircraft with a flight deck instead of an open cockpit and was armed with bombs and five .30-caliber machine guns" ("Historical Snapshot" n.d.).

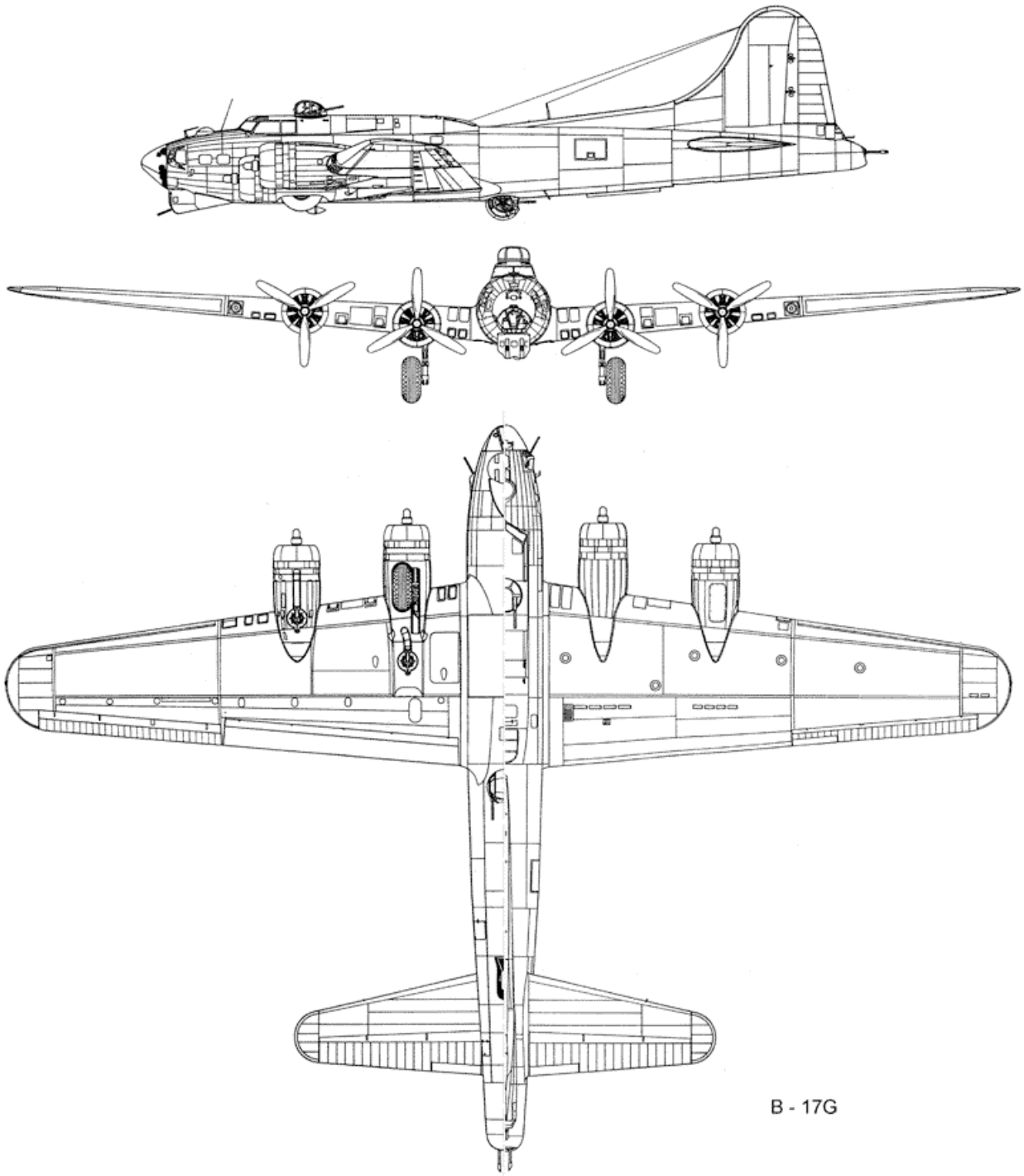

Figure 2: Diagram of a B-17G from different views (*Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress* n.d.).

Archaeology and Recovery

Archaeology is the systematic and scientific study of the past through material remains. The distinction of *systematic and scientific study* is what sets archaeology apart from relic hunting and the improper movement or removal of artifacts from sites. If material evidence is removed from a site without proper documentation, it loses its provenience, the location where it was originally found, and, therefore, its context within the site; by excavating artifacts where they are found, in context, we can understand how or why past events occurred (Butler 2007).

During the 2021 and 2022 excavations of the aircraft crash site, the team employed archaeological methods and tools such as a survey grid, metal detectors, and total stations to perform systematic, scientific studies of the site. By using a survey grid, the team was able to record the location of any objects horizontally and vertically as they were found in the site. Knowing the exact location of recovered objects is crucial in archaeology for being able to date objects in time- knowing when and where they came from- and piecing together the nature of the site. By using the grid alongside keeping detailed notes, the team was able to use recorded data to estimate the location of aircraft wreckage throughout the site.

Adhering to scientific methods is especially key in repatriation archaeology. Detailed data and careful excavation methods allow archaeologists to put remains and artifacts in context; by examining how artifacts relate to each other, and how they relate to the site, archaeologists can form a picture of how and when they may have been used (2007). This context can be used to answer questions about the nature of the burials, and as such the sites themselves must be protected. Archaeological sites involving burials are

often the target of relic hunters seeking to find high-value artifacts, and protections must be put in place for these sites in the form of confidentiality or physical security; because burial sites, or sites with remains, tend to include elaborate and substantial artifacts, they often become targets for relic hunters (2007).

Because of the sensitive nature of the site, and to prevent relic hunting, details of the excavation, such as its location, finds, and data, cannot be shared publicly. By maintaining confidentiality, we hope to preserve the crash site and archaeological record.

DISCUSSION

Delivering the Final Product

The final phase of the project was the delivery and setup of the display, including the trifold and artifact display case. I had determined early on that it would be easiest to transport the display to France by plane, but finding a case in which to transport the artifact display proved to be difficult. A mockup of the artifact display (Appendix A-1) was made to verify all the artifacts would still fit within the dimensions of the new case before the request was sent to the vendor.

After both the trifold and display case had been completed and picked up from the vendors, they were carefully packaged for transport. The trifold was wrapped in layers of bubble wrap and cardboard before being zipped into a large canvas carrying bag. The artifact display was similarly wrapped in bubble wrap before being lowered into a foam-lined plastic tough-box, and extra padding in the form of pillows and blankets was added for extra security. Both travel cases were equipped with Apple Air Tags so they could be tracked during the journey overseas.

Once I arrived in France with the display, I first collaborated with my advisors, Drs. Fracchia and Saul, as well as the project translator Ms. Durieux, to coordinate a setup time with the mayor. Once a day had been agreed upon, I brought the display to the town hall to be arranged for the public unveiling.

While setting up the finished display, hanging the trifold and precisely placing each artifact, I could feel a deep connection to the town, to the crew, and to the history that was shared between everyone involved in the project. As each artifact was delicately placed in the display case, the past became the present, and the culmination of a year of work, of decades of work, became viscerally real. The exhibit ties together the physical landscape with local memory to create an experience that can be shared and remembered.

Community Reception

Even before the display had been revealed to the public, the impact this project was having on the community could be seen. In the nearby campsite and town hall, flyers (Appendix B) advertising the grand reveal of the exhibition had been posted inviting community members to attend and view the display. When the display was temporarily set up for photographs the Mayor came into the room to view it, stating his happiness.

Morgane Durieux, the French translator for the excavation and this project, gave an introduction to those gathered, sharing information about the display, the crew and their mission, the excavation, and inviting the community to come explore the exhibit. Individuals gathered around to read the display, viewing the artifacts and asking members of the excavation team questions about the findings. The archaeologists in attendance were delighted to answer questions about their work, and community members who grew up hearing about the crash were intrigued to know details about the event. Throughout the room, the collective memory between stakeholders and community members was apparent.

The importance of having a physical representation of local history, and of collective memory, is evident in this small town. Not only does the exhibit act as a connection between the past and the present, it also serves as a persevering form of memory of the crash, the town's heritage, and a collective history of respect and remembrance. Those who visit the exhibition will be able to learn about the event, and about the town itself, in a way that simply visiting the town would not provide; "The experiential quality of material culture, like monuments whose messages are inherently wrapped up in their locations, should not be underestimated" (Lemay 2018, 47).

By having a physical representation of the event, a memorial or cemetery, a visitor is provided with a connection point to that location's history. This connection takes the viewer to a temporal crossroads, a place where they simultaneously exist in the past, when the event occurred, and the present, when the effects of the event are felt and seen within the community. By creating a crossroads, a memorial can "evoke different moments of time, relating historic time to the present moment, achieving different effects for different viewers" (69). In the case of the display, this crossroads effect allows the viewer to simultaneously exist in the past, understanding the history of the crash and the crew, and in the present, seeing how the community has been impacted, the ongoing excavations, and the display itself.

Memorialization

In the years following the crash, the community chose to focus on ways to honor the memory of the deceased crewmen. A memorial was constructed in the nearby town that lists the names of the crew and provides brief information about the crash in French. More than just a placard, the memorial acts as a landmark, a location that can be visited

and interacted with. By presenting a place tied to both the history of the crash and the local community, a material form of collective memory is created.

Although there are many memorials dedicated to the remembrance of fallen American soldiers throughout France, they are often not under the care of the American government and tend to fall into disrepair unless they are adopted by a local community. Memorials that are adopted or built by communities, like this one, tend to last. American veterans have built many memorials for fallen soldiers over the years, some of which have vanished due to disrepair, but memorials that are under the sponsorship of a French town tend to last the longest (Lemay 2018). That these adopted memorials last longer shows the respect and dedication paid by French locals and the shared history present in many parts of the country.

The display provides a visual representation of the history of crash, the community's heritage of memorialization and respect, and the shared history that has been carefully preserved throughout the years by the many involved groups. In addition to serving as an educational exhibit, the display also acts as a memorial. By seeking to preserve the memory of the crash, the crew, their mission, and the event's connection to the town, the display functions as a memorial site, a place where location and history are tied. The artifact display case, containing artifacts from the crash itself, emphasizes the physical connection.

Both the memorial stone and the display project function as more than just ways to honor the deceased. They provide a way to represent the past, and the present, by uniting the memories of all those involved in the memorialization process; Collective

memory is dependent on local landmarks and the history at sites, and as such can function across borders, influencing international relationships (2018).

These memorialization efforts, as a form of collective memory, reframe a tragic event into one of partnership and collaboration, of community and respect.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis was to create a commemorative display in collaboration with the local community and, in the process, understand the impacts memorials can have on the communities in which they are built. Over the course of a year, I worked in collaboration with French community members, local officials, volunteers, advisors, and vendors to create an informational display.

Both while in France and the United States, I could feel the connection the community shares with their history. Working with French subject matter experts and the translator provided a bridge to the community even while abroad, and their passion for this project, and for their work, emphasized the importance of creating a high quality, respectful display. Their cooperation was critical as the project increased in complexity and included more stakeholders; As more people become involved and community input needs to be managed, timelines can increase and easily fall out of the span of control (McCracken 2014).

The delivery, setup and reveal of the display showed the impact this project has on the community, and the depth of the shared history and collective memory present between French and American partners and community members. Everyone who gathered in the town hall the day of the reveal, from community members to students to archaeologists, was part of a shared history through their connection to the crash and the memorials. This alone shows the value of international collaborative projects, especially those involving memorialization. American memorials abroad provide a deep connection that transcends borders; Because these memorials reside in foreign nations, they are considered a material representation of American values and beliefs, making them highly

valuable (Lemay 2018). Not only has this project yielded a material product, the display, it has also furthered the relationship between French and American stakeholders, one of mutual respect and shared history.

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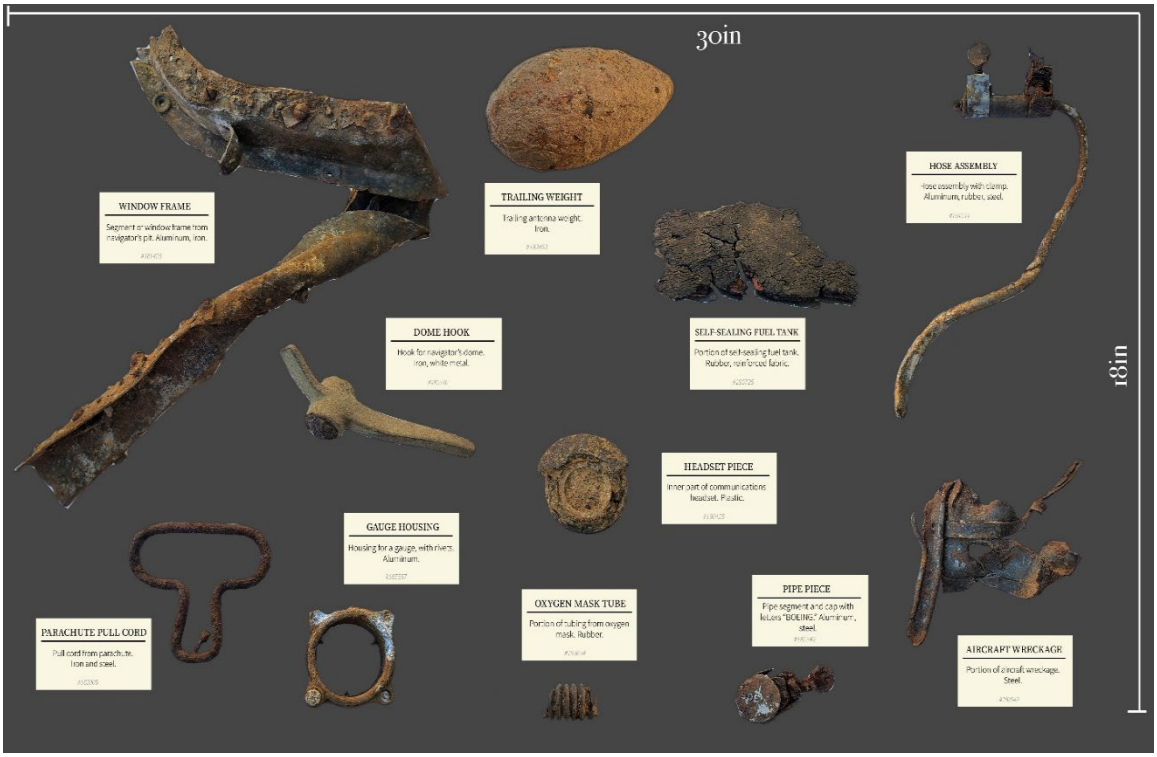
Appendix A: The Artifacts



Appendix A-1: Proof of the layout of the artifact case with identification cards.

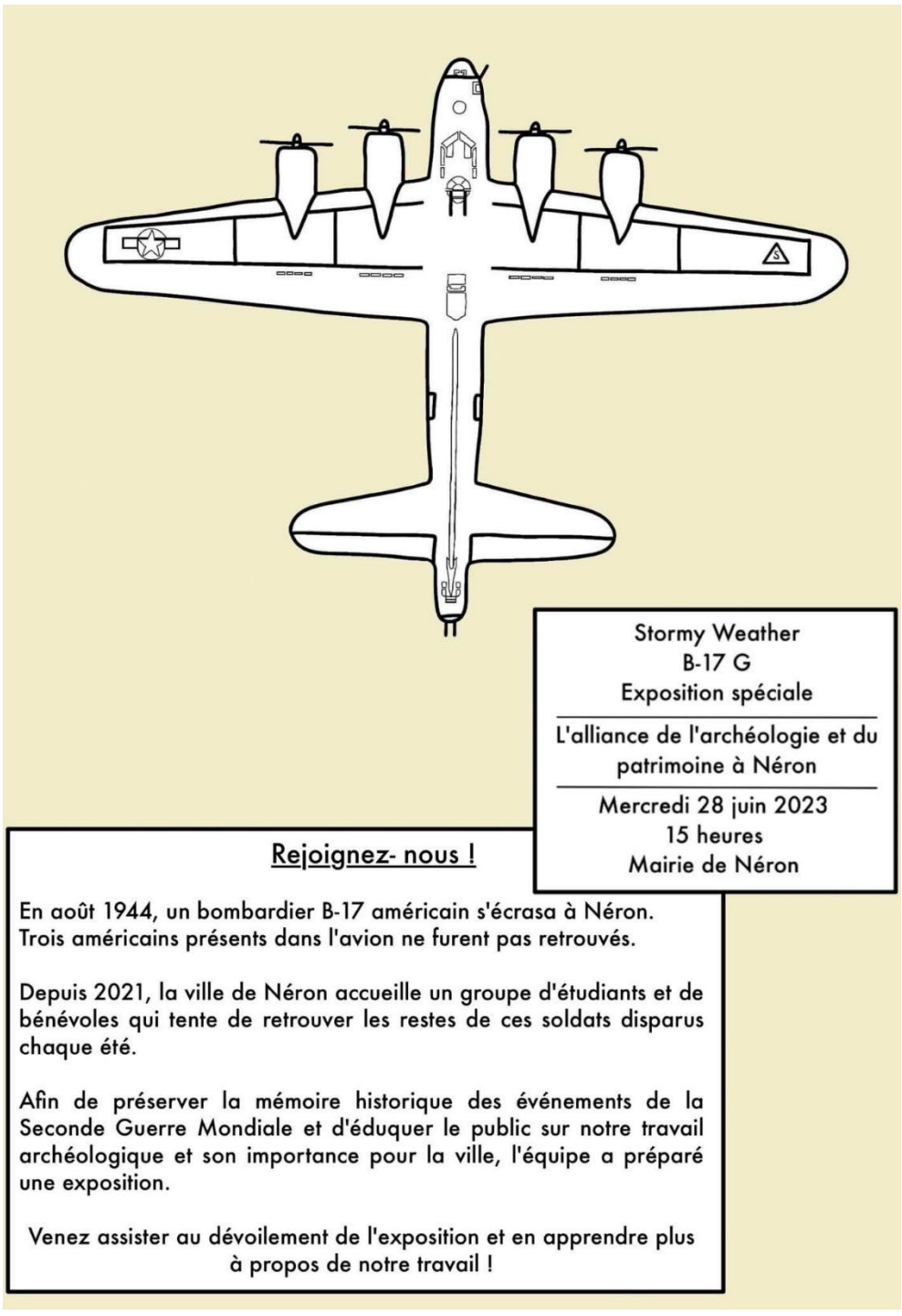
Appendix A-2: Table with artifact names and descriptions.

ENGLISH	FRENCH	COMPOSITION	RELEVANCE
Parachute pull handle	Boucle provenant d'un parachute	Iron and steel	A pull handle used to deploy a parachute.
Navigator dome handle	Une poignée pour la fenêtre de navigation	Iron, white metal	This handle was used to open the navigator's dome atop the aircraft.
Oxygen mask tube	Tube d'un masque à oxygène	Rubber	A small segment of rubber tubing that would have been part of an oxygen mask.
Part of communication headset	Pièce d'un casque de communication	Plastic	Part of a headset used for communications. This piece was likely from the portion that sat over the ear.

ENGLISH	FRENCH	COMPOSITION	RELEVANCE
Hose assembly with clamp	Assemblage de tuyaux avec collier de serrage	Aluminum, rubber, steel	A hose assembly with a clamp at one end. The clamp has two twist screws that still turn.
Housing for a gauge, with adjusting knob and mounting screws	Un cadran pour une jauge avec des vis et une molette de réglage	Aluminum	A gauge housing with two mounting screws. Inside are prongs that would have held the gauge in place.
Self-sealing fuel tank	Réservoir à carburant auto-obturant	Rubber	A portion of the self-sealing fuel tank. This type of fuel tank is used in aircraft to prevent fuel leakage if the tank is damaged.

ENGLISH	FRENCH	COMPOSITION	RELEVANCE
Trailing antenna weight	Poids d'antenne de secours	Iron	This egg-shaped weight was used to hold tension on the aircraft's trailing antenna if it was unspooled.
Aircraft wreckage	Débris d'avion	Steel	A portion of destroyed metal from an undetermined section of the aircraft.
Window frame	Encadrement de fenêtre	Aluminum, iron	A segment of a window frame with some screws still visible.
Cap on pipe with the word "BOEING"	Segment dun tuyau avec son bouchon comportant le mot "BOEING"	Aluminum, steel	A small pipe with a cap and twist screw. The cap has the word "BOEING" etched into it.

Appendix B: Exhibition Announcement Flyer



Appendix B-1: Flyer advertising the public unveiling of exhibit at the town hall.

Translation below.

Appendix B-2: Poster translation

B-17 G

Special Exhibition

The alliance of archaeology and heritage in Néron.

Join Us!

In August 1944, an American B-17 bomber crashed in Néron.

Since 2021, every summer the city of Néron has welcomed a group of students and volunteers who try to find the remains of these soldiers who disappeared.

In order to preserve the historical memory of the events of the Second World War and to educate the public about our archaeological work and its importance for the city, the team has prepared an exhibition.

Come and watch the unveiling of the exhibition and learn more about our work!

Appendix C: Proofs of Display in French

Appendix C-1: Proof of the full display spread in French.

1. SSg Herbert Pressman
2. SSg James W. Bozarth
3. Melvin H. Crawford [PAS EN CRASH]
4. SSg Leland B. Tracy
5. Sgt Lyle P. Wheaton
6. Julian Pasillas [PAS EN CRASH]
7. 2e Lt Richard C. Tyson
8. 2e Lt James E. Pratt
9. 1er Lt Gerard J. Melofchik
10. 2e Lt Hughlon K. Grisham

PAS EN PHOTO: Sgt Harold E. Mapes

L'équipage

Sergent-chef Herbert Pressman
Mitrailleur de tourelles supérieure
TAC, Corps non récupéré

2e Lieutenant James E. Pratt
Copilote
TAC

Sergent-chef James W. Bozarth
Mitrailleur arrière
Survivant

1er Lieutenant Gerard J. Melofchik
Pilote
TAC, Corps non récupéré

Sergent-chef Leland B. Tracy
Opérateur radio
TAC

2e Lieutenant Hughlon K. Grisham
Bombardier
TAC, Corps non récupéré

Sergent Lyle P. Wheaton
Mitrailleur de tourelle inférieure
(boule)
TAC

Sergent Harold E. Mapes
Mitrailleur de sabord
Survivant

2e Lieutenant Richard C. Tyson
Navigateur
TAC

Légende: TAC = tué au combat

Appendix C-2: Proof of the Crew panel in French.

STORMY WEATHER

L'alliance de l'archéologie et du patrimoine à Néron, France

Trouver les disparus

Des fouilles scientifiques archéologiques peuvent être menées pour localiser ces militaires disparus. Plusieurs missions de récupération ont été menées en partenariat avec la Middle Tennessee State University, la Direction régionale des Affaires Culturelles (DRAC), le Bureau d'Archéologie Préventive (Service de l'Archéologie, Eure et Loir), le Maire de Néron, et l'agence comptable Défense POW/MIA (DPAA).

Tout en apprenant des méthodes archéologiques et médico-légales, des équipes internationales composées d'archéologues professionnels, de bénévoles et d'étudiants de différents pays tels que la France, l'Autriche, l'Espagne, la suisse et les Etats Unis ont arpenté et fouillé le site. Guidés par des recherches historiques et une étude antérieure du site en 2013, l'équipe a examiné un champ agricole et une zone boisée qui sont considérés comme le site de l'accident d'après les souvenirs des témoins. L'équipe a établi une grille d'enquête sur cette zone afin d'enregistrer l'emplacement de chaque objet, horizontalement et verticalement tels qu'ils ont été trouvés sur le site.

Connaitre l'emplacement exact des objets récupérés est crucial en archéologie pour pouvoir dater les objets dans le temps – savoir quand et d'où ils viennent – et reconstituer l'histoire du site. A partir de la grille et avec une tenue de registre méticuleuse, l'équipe a pu effectuer une fouille systématique et scientifique en reconstituant la façon dont les pièces d'avion étaient dispersées sur le site et, en utilisant ces données enregistrées, prédire l'emplacement des militaires disparus. La chasse aux reliques, le déplacement et l'enlèvement de l'épave sans les documenter rendent plus difficile la prévision de l'emplacement des membres d'équipage et entravent la récupération globale.

Au cours des étés 2021 et 2022, des missions de récupération ont fouillé un total de 760 mètres carrés sur le site. Avec 62 unités d'excavation, l'équipe a localisé des restes de l'avion et des preuves matérielles qui peuvent aider à identifier les militaires portés disparus.

L'équipe a enregistré l'emplacement de chaque artefact tel qu'il a été trouvé dans l'espace, documenté les couleurs et les textures des différentes couches de sol et utilisé des équipements archéologiques de terrain comme les détecteurs de métaux pour comprendre la distribution des restes de l'avion. Les fouilles ont été enregistrées dans des notes et formulaires de terrain, des photographies et des cartes, ainsi, grâce à l'utilisation d'équipements d'arpentage, une fiche détaillée du site pourra être conservée.

Le soutien de la communauté, la coopération des témoins, le travail acharné et le dévouement des bénévoles ont rendu ces efforts de recherche et de récupération d'autant plus possible.

Patrimoine

L'accident fait partie de l'histoire de Néron depuis 1944 et a, depuis, été intégré au patrimoine local de la ville. Des témoins se souviennent avoir vu l'avion s'écraser et avoir visité le site de l'accident. Des particuliers ont enlevé de grandes sections de l'épave du champ afin de rendre celui-ci à son usage agricole. L'un des gros morceaux d'épave, une section d'aile, a été utilisée en mur d'un bâtiment de ferme pendant plus de 50 ans avant d'être conservé et entreposé en toute sécurité par la ville.

En protégeant ainsi l'aile, la commune préservé le souvenir du crash de l'oubli.

Appendix C-3: Proof of the center panel- archaeology and heritage in French.

Mission

Le B-17G, nommé Stormy Weather, était piloté par le 1er Lt. Gerard J. Melofchik et faisait partie du 401st Bombardment Group (BG) de l'US Air Force.
Dans le cadre de la mission #120, l'équipage devait quitter l'Angleterre le 1er août 1944 à environ 11h00 (11:00AM) pour bombarder l'aérodrome et les casernes près de Chartres. Stormy Weather était l'un des 37 avions volant en quatre escadrons ce jour-là.

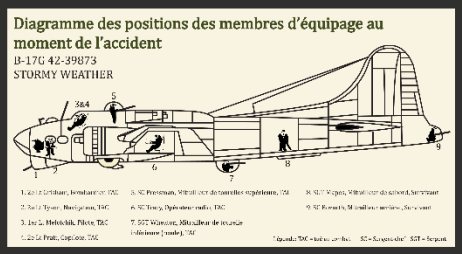
Le plan de vol

Vers 15h00 le 1er aout 1944, Stormy Weather a été touché par les tirs antiaériens ennemis avant d'atteindre Chartres et a quitté la formation.
Puis l'avion est entré en collision avec un autre B17G piloté par le 2e Lieutnant Robert Sproul. Les deux avions se sont écrasés près de Chartres, l'avion du 1er Lieutnant Melofchik tombant à Néron.

Les détails du vol

DÉPART: Angleterre, environ 11h00
ARRIVÉE: Angleterre, environ 17h00
BOMBES Larguées : Chartres, env. 1500 heures

Sur les neuf membres d'équipage à bord de l'avion du 1er Lieutnant Melofchik, sept ont péri et deux ont survécu. Les restes des 1er Lieutnant Melofchik, du 2e Lt. Hughlon Grisham et du SSgt (Staff Sergeant) Herbert Pressman sont toujours manquants et n'ont pas été retrouvés.



Appendix C-4: Proof of the Mission panel in French.

Appendix D: Proofs of Display in English

Appendix D-1: Proof of the full display spread in English.

1. SSg Herbert Pressman
2. SSg James W. Bozarth
3. Melvin H. Crawford [NOT IN CRASH]
4. SSg Leland B. Tracy
5. Sgt Lyle P. Wheaton
6. Julian Pasillas [NOT IN CRASH]
7. 2d Lt Richard C. Tyson
8. 2d Lt James E. Pratt
9. 1st Lt Gerard J. Melofchik
10. 2d Lt Hughlon K. Grisham

NOT IN PHOTO: Sgt Harold E. Mapes

CREW

Staff Sergeant Herbert Pressman
Top Turret Gunner
KIA, Body not recovered

2nd Lieutenant James E. Pratt
Co-Pilot
KIA

Staff Sergeant James W. Bozarth
Tail Gunner
Survived

1st Lieutenant Gerard J. Melofchik
Pilot
KIA, Body not recovered

Staff Sergeant Leland B. Tracy
Radio Operator
KIA

2nd Lieutenant Hughlon K. Grisham
Bombardier
KIA, Body not recovered

Sergeant Lyle P. Wheaton
Ball Turret Gunner
KIA

Sergeant Harold E. Mapes
Waist Gunner
Survived

2nd Lieutenant Richard C. Tyson
Navigator
KIA

Appendix D-2: Proof of the Crew panel in English.

STORMY WEATHER

UNITING ARCHAEOLOGY AND HERITAGE IN NÉRON, FRANCE

FINDING THE MISSING

Archaeological scientific excavations can be used to locate these missing servicemen. Recovery missions were led in partnership with Middle Tennessee State University, Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles (DRAC), the Office of Preventative Archaeology (Service de l'archéologie, Eure-et-Loir), and the Mayor of Néron, and the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA).

While learning archaeological and forensic methods, international teams consisting of professional archaeologists, volunteers, and students from several different countries such as France, Austria, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States surveyed and excavated the site. Guided by historical research and an earlier 2013 survey of the site, the team examined an agricultural field and wooded area that was thought to be the site of the crash based on the memories of witnesses. The team established a survey grid over this area in order to record the location of any objects horizontally and vertically as they were found in the site.

Knowing the exact location of recovered objects is crucial in archaeology for being able to date objects in time- knowing when and where they came from- and piecing together the history of the site. From the grid and with meticulous record keeping, the team was able to excavate systematically and scientifically, piecing together how aircraft parts were scattered throughout the site and using this recorded data to predict the location of the missing servicemen. Relic hunting and the undocumented movement or removal of aircraft wreckage from the site, makes it more difficult to predict crew member location and hampers the overall recovery.

In the summers of 2021 and 2022 recovery missions excavated a total of 760 square meters at the site. With 62 excavation units, the team located aircraft wreckage and material evidence that can help identify the missing servicemen.

The team recorded the location of each artifact as it was found in space, documenting the colors and textures of the different layers of soil, and used archaeological field equipment such as metal detectors to better understand the distribution of aircraft wreckage.

The excavations were recorded in field notes, field forms, photographs, maps, and through the use of surveying equipment so that a detailed record of the site could be preserved.

The support of the community, the cooperation of witnesses, and the hard work and dedication of volunteers has made these recovery efforts all the more possible.

HERITAGE

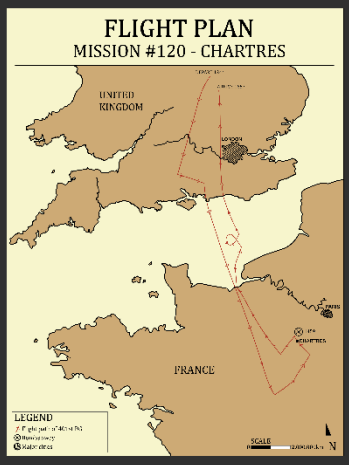
The crash has been a part of Néron's history since 1944, and has since been incorporated into the town's local heritage. Witnesses remember seeing the plane crash and visiting the site of the crash. Individuals have removed large sections of wreckage from the field in order to return the field to agricultural use. One of the larger pieces of wreckage, a section of a wing, was repurposed as the wall to a farm building for over 50 years before being safely stored by the town.

By preserving the wing, the town has kept the memory of the crash from fading. To honor the crew of "Stormy Weather," the community also erected a monument with the names of the crew members. This monument, located near the crash site, remembers the mission and the sacrifice of the crew.

Appendix D-3: Proof of the center panel in English.

MISSION

The B17-G, called Stormy Weather, was piloted by 1st Lt Gerard J. Melofchik, and was part of the 401st Bombardment Group (BG) of the United States Air Force.
As part of mission #120, the crew was to depart from England on 01 August 1944 at approximately 1100 hours (11:00AM) to bomb the airfield and barracks near Chartres.
Stormy Weather was one of 37 planes flying in four squadrons that day.



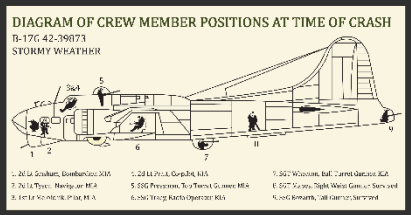
THE FLIGHT PLAN

At approximately 1500 hours (3:00PM) on 01 August 1944, Stormy Weather was reported to have been hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire before reaching Chartres and fell out of formation. The plane then collided with another B-17G piloted by 2nd Lt Robert Sproul.
Both planes crashed near Chartres, with 1st Lt Melofchik's plane ending up in Néron.

FLIGHT DETAILS

DEPART: England, appx. 1100 hours
ARRIVE: England, appx. 1700 hours
BOMBS AWAY: Chartres, appx. 1500 hours

Of the nine crew members on board 1st Lt Melofchik's plane, seven perished and two survived. The remains of 1st Lt Melofchik, 2nd Lt Hughlon Grisham, and SSgt (Staff Sergeant) Herbert Pressman are still missing and have not been recovered.



Appendix D-4: Proof of the Mission panel in English.

Appendix E: Photographs of Finalized Display

Appendix E-1: Final display set up in town hall.

Appendix E-2: Artifact display case.