



Welcome by Gerard Nieuwenhuis on behalf of the 'Comités 4/5 mei Neder-Betuwe', Friday 20, 2019 at the ceremony unveiling memorial 'Vliegers in het vuur', Parallelweg in Opheusden.

## **To honour and remember...**

At September 18, 1944, close to this location a Dakota crashed with four crew members and 17 para's. Thanks to the bravious acting of co-pilot Ed Fulmer the life of 16 para's were saved, while one para and two crew members lost their life. Ed Fulmer himself was badly injured. Thanks to local people – here in Opheusden and in Kesteren - he survived.

I mention this example to illustrate the special efforts of the allied forces. Young men from all over the world risked their life, fighting for freedom.

Ed Fulmer obtained for his courage the Dutch 'Militaire Willems Orde' (Military Order of William). After the war he organized a collection campaign to support the distressed inhabitants of Opheusden.

For the joint 4/5 May Committees of our community this occurrence was the inspiration to realize a memorial at this location. The 16 columns represent the 16 airplanes, crashed during the second world war within the territory of our community.

Today I would like to welcome the Ambassadors or their representatives of Australia, Canada, New-Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Young men of your countries were fighting for freedom for us.

A welcome to the deputy Royal commissioner, our municipal administration and the representative of the Chapter of the Military Order of William.

Finally of course a warm welcome to the relatives of the occupants of the mentioned crashed airplanes. We highly appreciate that you are present with such a number of people.

I mention the families Spring, Shurbourne and Hayes from the United Kingdom, family of Patrick Tiernan en Alfred Burns from Australia and last but not least the family Fulmer.

We will never forget the important contribution of your relatives and all the other allies. Thanks to their efforts we still live in freedom already nearly 75 years. Therefore a permanent memorial 'Kitters in the fire' – 'Vliegers in het vuur', to honour and remember.

Thanks, many thanks, to the allied forces, especially the ones who where fighting for freedom in our region. It is to the young generation to keep the commemoration alive.

