Saturday 29 August 2015.

Interview with Mrs. Annie Prins-Pols in the presence of her son Jan Prins, gamekeeper John Harleman and Erwin Rust. The interview is partly conducted at the 'aircraft field' and at the house on the Hoge Duvel.

At the time of the bomber crash, the following people were present in the house on the Hoge Duvel:

- Father and gamekeeper Matheus Petrus (Theo) Pols. He was also with the BS

- Mother Klaziena Pieternella Pols- Peters

- Sister Ditty Pols

- Annie Pols (interviewee)

- Grandpa Peters

- Grandma Peters

- Furthermore, there were 2 uncles, Andre and Cor Peters, from Rotterdam present.

- Mrs. Den Hartog lived in the house on the left with her German maid Klaartje. The Pols family lived at the Hoge Duvel for 11 years, from 1935 to 1946.

On September 23, 1944 at around 23:30, the Lancaster MKI / PD318 / EM-J comes burning over the house, coming from the front of the house.

The Pols family sees the plane from a window of the bedroom at the front of the house. Ditty Pols thinks the moon is crashing.

The bomber crashes in the woods about 100m behind the house. The location of the crash is still known as 'the airplane field'. Now in 2015 it is no longer a field but there is a lot of vegetation. A nice detail is that the bomber almost landed on a shelter behind the house. There were no people in it at that time.

The location of the shelter is now probably the water well for extinguishing water.

After the crash, Mrs. Den Hartog and Klaartje come to the Pols family. Gamekeeper Pols goes to look at the plane and says that everyone has to stay inside. After a while he comes back and says that it is a big mess and that probably no one is alive anymore. He has to leave his family alone to report the incident in Elspeet. The children are scared. On the way to Elspeet the Germans stop him and ask him what he is doing outside at such a late hour. It is not entirely clear where he reported it, probably to the police. Gamekeeper Pols returns with Germans. Since they are afraid of possible survivors, he has to get his gun and lead the way to the crash site. The Germans return to Elspeet the next day. In the days after the crash, large black hearses from undertaker Rouwenhorst arrive with coffins in which the remains of the crew are collected.

There was nothing left of the Lancaster but a pile of twisted aluminium. The impact must have been enormous because even the smallest particles we find are bent and twisted. As far as Mrs Pols knows, nothing was cleared at the time and everything was left where it was. The fact that nothing was cleared may have something to do with the lateness of the war and perhaps also with the very remote location. Normally, the clearing was done to gather information about new techniques and to collect the scarce metal for reuse in aircraft construction. Metal was also removed by people from the neighbourhood.

After the war, Mr. Exalto, head teacher in Ugchelen, would come with the father of navigator Vernon Hanmer to the location where his son died for many years. Mr. Exalto could then translate. Mr. Hanmer would always visit the Pols family, often bringing ivory presents, such as napkin rings and knives. He worked in an ivory factory. Annie still clearly remembers the appearance of Mr. Hanmer. They arrived on a motorbike and Vernon's father was dressed in a long black coat with a bowler hat on his head and an umbrella on his arm.