

B-24J *Liberator* CRASH SITE MEMORIAL DEDICATION NEAR KIOWA, COLORADO

The following is being provided in response to your request for information about the August 9, 2008 B-24J crash site memorial dedication. This brief document consists of three parts – a request from the event organizers, driving directions from Castle Rock and Colorado Springs, and a short history of this crash and why it is now of interest, 64 years to the day later. The event will start promptly at 11 AM on August 9 and will take about an hour.

First, A Request

Property owner Bob Newhouse has been kind enough to donate a small portion of his private land near the crash site for the granite monument. Please respect his privacy and his property by not crossing any fence lines and by not leaving any refuse behind. The area is mostly private ranch land so the ceremony will take place on the public right of way near the crash site. All private land will be fenced and marked. Chemical toilets will be available. Please bring some drinking water.

Driving Directions

From Castle Rock: Follow State Highway 86 to Kiowa. Then continue east on Hwy 86 for approximately 4 miles to Maul Road. Turn right onto Maul Road and follow it south for approximately 6 miles to the crash site.

From Colorado Springs: Follow US Hwy 24 northeast through Falcon to Elbert Road, which is about 15 miles from the eastern Colorado Springs city limits. Turn left onto Elbert Road, and follow it to the town of Elbert. In Elbert, turn right on the county road (CR 98), and go east for one mile, then left at the T intersection for one mile, then follow the road as it turns to the right for about 4 ½ additional miles east to Maul Road. Turn left onto Maul Road for about ¾ mile to the crash site.

Why a Dedication Ceremony Now?

At 11 AM on Saturday August 9, 2008, a granite monument will be dedicated at the crash site of a B-24J *Liberator* bomber. It will commemorate the 10 airmen who lost their lives at that location in a WWII accident. The aircraft crashed at 5:25 PM on August 9, 1944 after a fire erupted in the right wing. The wing structure later failed and a portion of the wing

separated from the aircraft, which then descended out of control. No one in the 10-man crew was able to parachute from the crippled aircraft to safety. The airplane was on a training mission from the Pueblo Army Air Base at the time.

The exact location of the site was rediscovered a year ago -- on August 9, 2007 -- due to the effort of Chuck Marvel, who was stationed at the Pueblo base in 1944. His good friend Harold Humphrey died aboard this aircraft only two months after introducing Chuck to Val Pritekel, the woman who would later become his wife. Harold, nicknamed "Humpy," had introduced the two of them on D-Day just before they clustered around a radio listening to the President's announcement of the Normandy invasion. After Val's death in 2007, Chuck wished to locate the exact site where his friend had died and to honor him in some way. With the help of his son Bill, an Air Force Academy graduate who now lives in Grand Junction, CO, they were able to assemble a group of people on the front range to help with the search. Incredibly, that group grew to include three men, boys at the time, who were first on the scene after the crash and attempted to pull the bodies of the crew away from the burning aircraft. One of them, Marv Maul of Colorado Springs, is deeply involved in organizing the dedication. All will be in attendance and two will be speaking, as will Chuck Marvel.

After successfully finding the crash site and small pieces of aircraft wreckage to confirm it, the group later elected to dedicate a granite monument depicting the aircraft, the date of the accident and the names and home towns of the crew. They have also been able to locate relatives of three crew members. After 64 years, their motivation for doing this is simple -- "No one has ever honored this crew before. It is the right thing to do."

The effort is funded entirely by private donations from the participants and crew relatives. The public is welcome and invited to attend the ceremony. Individuals wishing to attend and needing any additional information can contact Bill Marvel at rv8tor@msn.com or Marv Maul at manama1@mindspring.com