Another information board about the crash of B-17 #43-38473 was erected in the district of Steinbach/Stürzenhardt, of Steinbach Gem. Mudau



Crash site of an American B-17 bomber in December 1944 in the district of Steinbach/Stürzenhardt

You are standing here at a spot with a view of the former crash site. During a daytime raid by the American U.S. Army Air Forces flew over Mannheim on December 30, 1944 heavy bomber units of B-17 Flying Fortress bombers at an altitude of an altitude of 8000 m also flew over the airspace of Mudau/Buchen. During this mission, two of the bombers collided during a flight maneuver and crashed.

The aircraft with the registration number 43-38473 was severely damaged and crashed uncontrollably towards the ground was torn apart by an explosion while still in the air. The wreckage was scattered within a radius of around 2.0 km on the outskirts of the village and in the Taubenfeld/Bannholz and Streitwald in the former municipality of Steinbach, district of Stürzenhardt. All 9 crew members lost their lives. The second plane crashed in the municipal forest of Buchen and exploded together with its bomb load.

4 crew members were killed. 3 remain missing to this day. 2 were able to escape, were captured and returned to the USA after the end of the 2nd World War in 1945. The 12 crew members killed in the crash were recovered and transferred to the small chapel in Steinbach and buried on January 2, 1945 in a common grave in the Steinbach cemetery. Another crew member was found in February 1945 and buried in the same grave. In January/February 1946, the 13 bodies were exhumed by the American Grave Registration Command (AGRC). The remains were transferred to US military cemeteries in France and Belgium. Individual members of the occupation were then moved by their relatives to other cemeteries in the USA.

Apart from a still visible bomb crater in the district of "Bannholz" district, there are no other traces of the crash today in the Steinbach and Stürzenhardt districts.

In the former crash crater in the town forest of Buchen after the investigations by the Americans from 2019, a biotope was created in consultation with the forestry authority.