

On May 15, 1996 a memorial was dedicated at Macikai Cemetary, at the northwest corner of the former prison camp Stalag Luft VI (Heydekrug). Three American Airmen, held as prisoners, had died there in 1944. Their remains were never returned to the U.S. and their location became complicated by the fact that the Soviets liquidated and buried hundreds (perhaps thousands) of political prisoners in unmarked graves, around them. Support for this memorial effort came from former prisoners of Luft VI, the Brooklyn Key Chapter and Mr. Robert Walker. Attending the ceremony were: Deputy Mayor Ciegatis Grincinaitis, Wing Commander Alexis Caralavicius (Lith. AF), Chief Petty Officer John Rougeux (USN, asst. Air Attache), survivors of the Soviet Camp, Stasis Melanauskas (Lithuanian journalist who expedited the work) and Greg Hatton.

Dedication by Greg Hatton:

We have come to pay our respects to Tech. Sgts. George Walker, Walter Nies and William Teaff. Most Americans don't even know that you are here; but, your fellow prisoners and families remember.

Sgt. Walker, your son Robert knows we are here today; and your folks still honor and miss you. Fellow prisoner Harold Sedivy has given me this earth from South Carolina.

Sgt. Walter Nies, your brother has just passed, but his good wife gives me this earth from Eureka, South Dakota.

Sgt. William Teaff, we don't know much about you, except that you are from Steubenville, Ohio. Fellow prisoner William Heubner jr. gives me this earth, in the name of the people of Ohio.

Perhaps you can tell, your homeland has come to you.

The other prisoners of Stalag Luft VI know that any of them could have shared your fate. They were fortunate to survive. Some have grown old enough to see their grandchildren. We all know that Prisoners of War and all Lithuanians know the price of Freedom.

So, now we complete every American soldier's due: a stone over your remains and your names proclaimed to all who come here.

