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AIRBORNE

MAGAZINE

SOCIETY OF
FRIENDS OF
THE AIRBORNE
MUSEUM

During the yearly commemoration of the Battle of Arnhem, paratroopers jump over Ginkel Heath
(Photo: collection Airborne Museum)



COLOPHON | CONTENT

The Airborne Magazine is a publication of the Society of Friends of the Airborne Museum Oosterbeek (SFAM) and appears three times per year. The objective is to promote the Airborne Museum, the SFAM and the history of the Battle of Arnhem.

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Discount action

Especially for members of the SFAM:
A maroon coloured T-shirt with the
logo of the Airborne Museum for only
€10,00!

A NEW CURATOR FOR THE AIRBORNE MUSEUM

On 1 May 2014, the new Airborne Museum Curator began working. After a tense selection process with more than 100 qualified candidates, the choice was made of Marieke Helsen. Who is she?

The Battle of Arnhem

Born in Huissen, Marieke grew up with stories from days gone by about the Battle of Arnhem 'A Bridge Too Far' and the 'the Island' (the Betuwe area, 1944/1945). But only when she came across the visual material from the War, did she really appreciate the actual reality of the stories from her Father (1929-1995). "At home we owned three wooden boxes bearing an inscription. These were the so-called 'evacuation boxes', with which, my Father's family, after the evacuation, returned home. "We had nothing!", he recalled. Another story from her Father, concerned an afternoon when her Father and his brothers were bored! "They decided to change the layout of their bedroom. That night, a piece of shrapnel came through the window exactly where a bed previously stood..."

After the evacuation, the family fortunately received accommodation in Gramsbergen. Later, they received linen goods, clothing and the three boxes, in which to carry their new possessions on the return journey to Huissen. "One of these boxes now stands in my lounge."

Study and work

Marieke studied at the Catholic University at Nijmegen in the Cultural Anthropology department. An anthropologist studies the culture of others: customs, standards and values, stories and objectives. This culture can geographically be far away or be found in another time frame or age. At the Amsterdam University, she specialised in Museology. She finished her studies with the question of how an exhibition can affect the creation of visitor's mental images. In association with this work, she also worked in the Nijmegen Cultural Anthropology Museum. Her knowledge of this subject appeared to also fit well in the archaeological work area. For some years Marieke worked as archaeologist in Nijmegen and Arnhem and excavated Iron Age farms, native Roman settlements and burial grounds. She has retained powerful memories of the excavations in the Schuytgraaf (the area east of Driel village) where the work was dangerous. "Often we

found live ammunition from WW2. The Explosive Clearance Service (Dutch Army unit) often came to blow up the bombs and grenades. One day, the metal detector beeped continuously. We decided with three of us to excavate further and emptied a ditch that was full of metal: ammunition, crates, helmets weapons etc...." In the Arnhem Council area, she set up a depot and worked on the results of the excavation. Together with eight volunteers, the items found were cleaned, registered, recorded and conserved.

Thereafter, for 10 years, Marieke worked in the Archaeology Dept in the 'Het Valkhof' Museum in Nijmegen. Here she was responsible for the Archaeological collection and the 'Provincial Depot of Buried Treasures' of the Gelderland province. She wrote the Public Automated Information System Plan of the 'Het Valkhof' Museum and various registration protocols for 'Adlib', the museum registration system. She designed and realised the digitisation system for the mu-

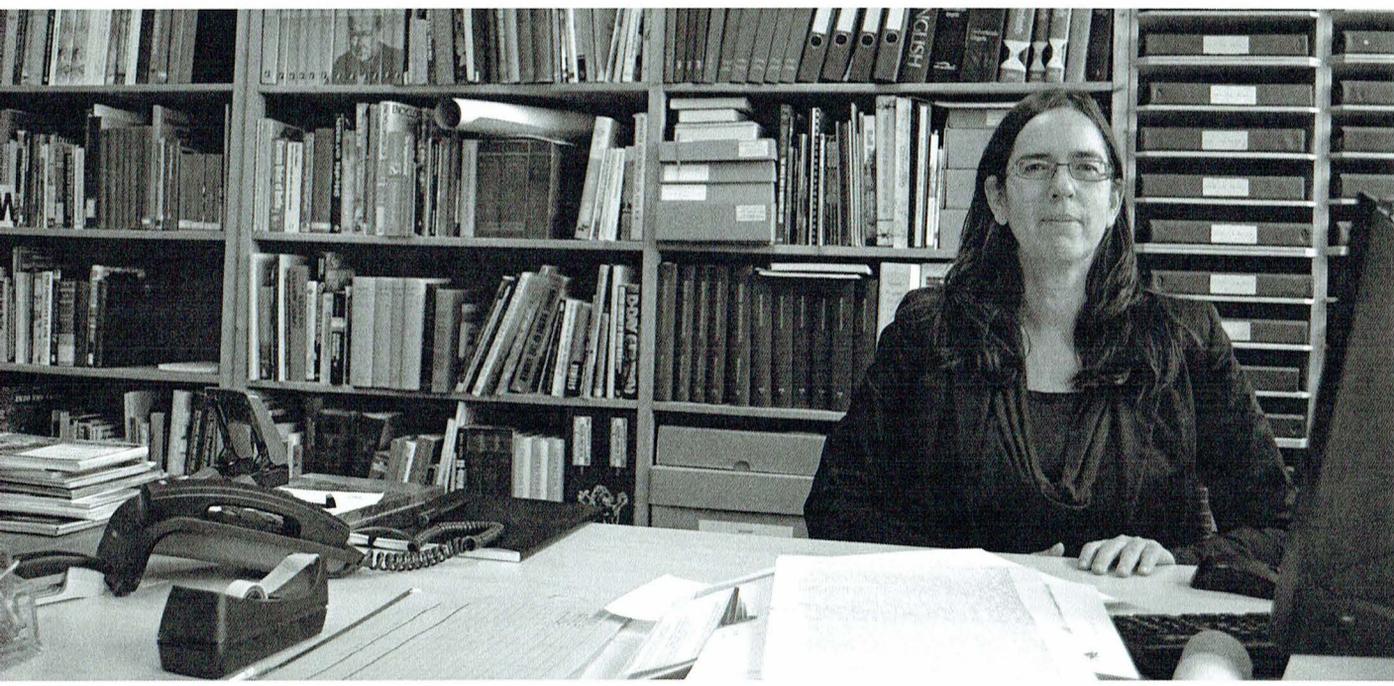
seum collections with the eventual object of making the objects available in a digital system to the wider public. The result of this, amongst other items, is to be seen on the website CollectieGelderland.nl. There also appears a number of items from the Airborne Museum collection.

She combined her role at the 'Het Valkhof' Museum with a function in the education system. "I obtained my first class teaching qualification and taught with much pleasure, Social Studies and Research in the secondary education area." After those ten years, she had the chance to become a full time instructor immediately, at the HBO (Higher Professional Education) "An amazingly enjoyable role but that, sadly, ended due to cost reductions"

Defence

As Curator, Head of department and deputy director at the Marines Museum in Rotterdam, Marieke went, as a civilian, to work in the Military Defence world. During her time at the Marines Museum, she was often found





*Marieke Helsen, the new Curator of the Airborne Museum
(Photo: Airborne Museum collection)*

at the Ministry of Defence in The Hague, writing policy plans; working with the 'National Agency for Inheritance Inspection'; organised exhibitions and worked in the bunkers in the Hague, where part of the collection was stored. "I lived for a month in the barracks, asked military personnel to take films during their Afghanistan mission and even acquired a pirate ship from Somalia for the collection" It was an exciting and educational time for Marieke, but her heart lay in the region of her family history.

Airborne Museum 'Hartenstein'

Since May, Marieke Helsen is the new Curator of the Airborne Museum 'Hartenstein'. She faces a number of challenges.

A major job for Marieke is the digital opening up of the Museum collection. Also the research and widening of the collection is part of this. The objective is with a systematic and formal approach, to clear the backlog and enter it all into the system registration. The digitisation of the collection will be designed in such a way that it will have maximum connections with the actual national and international policies of the museum inheritance sector. The collection will thus be accessible to a broad public, for researchers and colleagues. To digitise the current collection, it will require much time and manpower. Volunteers and various collaborations are thus very important, for example, with the Gelderland Archive, the Gelderland Museums, the

NIOD (the Dutch National Institute for Wartime Documentation) and the Museums and Memorial Centres 40-45. On various websites, the collection will become available, such as on *digitalecollectienederland.nl*, *oorlogsbronnen.nl*, *Europeane.nl* and *CollectieGelderland.nl*. The Airborne Museum hopes eventually to present an attractive catalogue about the most important items in the collection and their underlying connections. One important addition to the existing collection will be the cultural inheritance from the collection of personal stories about the Battle of Arnhem, the 'Airborne Memories'. These have as a target the 'keeping alive' of the history, and the identification, inventory, documentation and making available of this 'oral history'. This all forms part of the tasks of the new Curator.

Also Marieke will look after a number of new inter-museum exhibitions. There will be a working connection and co-operation achieved with the Museum Kasteel Wijchen and Museum Arnhem, where objects from the Airborne Museum collection will shortly be exhibited. And then, Marieke will organise events such as the 'Weekend of the Wartime book' and sometimes a lecture, such as about the collection of personal oral historical stories at the 'Youth University' on 7 December 2014. In her own words 'I have a fantastic job!'

(Marieke Helsen, Conservator)



AUTUMN MEETING SFAM ON 15 NOVEMBER 2014

On Thursday 24 April 2014, amid great interest, the exhibition 'From House and Home – Airborne memories' was opened in the Airborne Museum. This exhibition, as well as the many interviews that took place in the previous years, means for many older citizens, the renewal of their experiences during the Battle with all the resulting hardships. At that time, many, still children, hid in the cellars under their houses. Thereafter, they had to flee the continuing storm or, after the battle, were forcibly evacuated from the then developed front line North of the Rhine.

The initiative for these interviews and the exhibition has been received with great enthusiasm by these participants. From this it appears that not only the veterans who are received each year with regard and respect, but also those who as citizens in the wartime violence, deserve recognition for the events at that time which, through their contributions, are now brought to light.

Every year, the SFAM organises in November, an Autumn lecture. This year, it will take place on **Saturday afternoon, 15 November at 14.00hr in the Concert Hall in Oosterbeek**. This time it will not be a lecture to which we are accustomed. The 70th commemoration will then have passed us by, the veterans will have formed a renewed centre point and their fallen comrades will have been remembered. It is then perhaps appropriate to bring the theme of the exhibition in the Museum closer to home. The veterans shall sadly in the future have left us forever, but the children of the battle will stay with us for some time to come. Therefore, the Autumn meeting this year will take the form of the theme of the Museum exhibition. The title of the afternoon will be 'Our own story'.

“The Autumn meeting this year will take the form of the theme of the Museum exhibition.”

The programme for the afternoon is broadly as follows:-

- Director Jan Hovers will inform us of the experiences that have been seen thus far with the exhibition
- One interviewer will share with us, the experiences with various interviews he had in making Airborne Memories.
- Robert Voskuil will give a presentation on the scope and size of the plundering which took place in Arnhem and surroundings.
- A number of our members and guests will talk about their own personal experiences. For this, we are thinking of people originally from Arnhem/Oosterbeek, the Betuwe and Nijmegen.
- Finally there will be a group(s) interview with members and non-members from the Society, about their experiences in that period. In this way, it will be a meeting by us and for us. Our own stories! I am looking forward to it and hope to meet you that afternoon.
(Eric Paap)



THE PHOTO BY SEM PRESSER

For the exhibition 'Van Huis en Haard' (from House and Home) that opened on 24 April in the Airborne Museum, a poster was designed, on which a photo is shown, of people, who, by German dictat, were forced to flee from Arnhem with very few possessions which they piled up on an old pram and on a bicycle without tyres. The photo was taken by Sem Presser.

Although in the photo, relatively little is visible of the background, it proved not difficult to trace the actual location, also because the site has changed very little in the last 70 years. It appears that Sem Presser took the photo on the Rosendaalseweg, at the corner with Middenweg, shown left in the background. The fugitives walk in the direction of the Schelmseweg. The characteristic extension with the windows in the right corner of the photo still stands with no changes that is clearly visible from the recent photo.

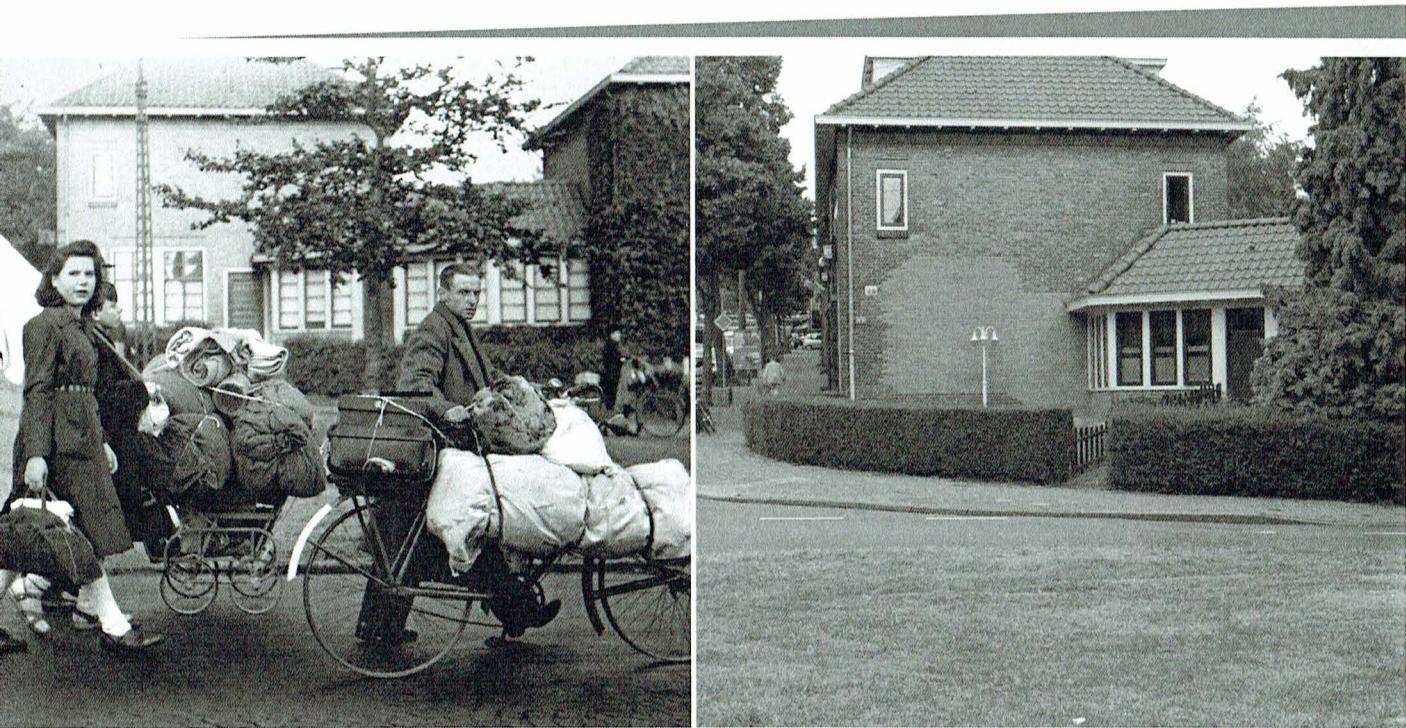
The photographer Sem Presser from Amsterdam, who was Jewish had since 1942, been in hiding in the Geitenkamp suburb of Arnhem, where amongst other activities, he worked for the Resistance movement.

He had a false passport in the name of Willem Knol. On Monday 18 September 1944, Presser entered the centre of the city with his camera hidden under his coat. On the Weerdjesstraat, he saw the first British paratrooper and he took ten photos, of which some later became well

known. In the in 2003 published book 'B Company Arrived', the author David Van Buggenum was able for the first time, to publish all ten photos.

Presser only took a few photos of the evacuation. There are only three or four known, of which that taken on the Rosendaalseweg is one.

(Robert Voskuil)



*Fleeing citizens on the Rosendaalseweg in Arnhem
(Photo Sem Presser)*

The same location in June 2014. (Photo Robert Voskuil)



BATTLE OF ARNHEM 70 YEARS

In this special Jubilee year, when it is 70 years ago that the Battle of Arnhem took place, there are a number of events organised in our area, that mark this important occasion. A good overview can be found on the website www.airbornefeelings.nl.

In the Airborne Museum in this Jubilee year, many hitherto untold stories of the evacuation are now incorporated in the "House and Home – Airborne Memories" exhibition. The exhibition deals with the more than 150,000 people from Arnhem and surroundings who, at very short notice and with little time, had to evacuate their dwellings and for many of whom, could only after 8 months return to their often plundered and/or destroyed homes. As a result, they faced the heavy task of rebuilding their homes and lives. In many cases, they did not look back and never spoke about this dramatic important part of their lives. Now, with steadily fewer people who from first hand witness experience, can speak at first hand about this period, a large number of interviews were made in the framework of the "Airborne Memories" citizen participation project, and they have formed the basis of the exhibition. Roughly one month after the opening on 24 April, more than 16,500 people had visited the Museum. The exhibition brings out many emotions with the visitors. Children and grandchildren of the evacuees, only now for the first time, realise what their parents and grandparents went through. And for many of them, seeing the exhibition, it acted as a catalyst for them to speak about this life-changing period. Also many foreign visitors have been touched by the personal experiences that are presented in the exhibition. For many had no knowledge of this direct result of the Battle of Arnhem. In spite of the size of this project, it is not the only one that the Museum is planning for this Jubilee year. There follows a selection from our activities:

Bullet proof trees

The now beautiful and peaceful Park Hartenstein in September 1944, formed the heart of the perimeter, where heavy fighting took place. Meanwhile, you must look very carefully to see the traces of battle now nearly covered by nature. But it is sometimes said that you are six saws further, when a sick or fallen tree has to be sawn into pieces. On the outside trees in the Park appear restful and pretty but look under their bark, and innumerable bullets and shrapnel pieces appear. Outer appearances thus can deceive! Park Hartenstein is thus a typical example of what the well-known Dutch artist Armando, calls a 'Guilty Landscape'. Armando declares the landscape guilty, not because of the atrocities that happened here but because it covers the evidence. Whatever happens, nature grows on. The wood is not guilty of disinterest but of the erasure of clues. And that while it saw everything that happened:



"Many wood edges. Many guilty trees. It chokes here of the guilt – tree by tree" – so reads a footnote in Armando's "Diary of an offender" from 1973.

In the Museum, we have asked ourselves if and how the hidden clues of the heavy fighting might be made visible. This has led to the co-operation with the ArLab (co-operation with Royal Academy of Expressive Art/ Leiden University/TU Delft) and resulted in a unique application for smartphones and iPads/tablets which we will launch in the forthcoming commemoration period. A number of trees in the immediate surroundings of the Airborne Museum will be provided with small text boards. When you have downloaded the app, you can aim your smartphone or tablet at the text board and you will have a view inside the core of the tree at that site. You then see three-dimensionally the bullets and shrapnel at that point in the tree. The first tests have been staggering and make the tracks of the fighting at that point almost real. In one of the coming editions of this magazine, we will go more in depth to the remarkable realisation of the app and how we came to the best method to scan the exact spot in the trees.

Co-operation with 'Arnhem Museum'

At first sight, a partnership between a military history museum and a museum of modern art, seems an unlikely option. Around the 'Arnhem Museum' building during the Battle, very heavy fighting took place. Thus, this Autumn, the 'Arnhem Museum' forms an important part of the commemoration of Market Garden and the Battle of Arnhem.

In the west halls, comes a large exhibition by the Polish artist Miroslaw Balka, entitled FRAGMENT. The exhibition in the eastern halls is a group exhibition entitled 'Realms of Memory'. In this Anne Wenzel (ceramic pictures) and Raquel Maulwurf (drawings) are together.

The Airborne Museum contributes with filling the remaining spaces in the Museum. The collection of Suze May Sho from Arnhem comprises original objects and

photos/films reconstructing what happened in September 1944, in and around the 'Arnhem Museum'. In this theme, many items from the Airborne Museum collection will play an important role in this 'archive'. This will perhaps all take shape in an 'installation' in the dome with satellite materials elsewhere in the Museum. The Suze May Sho partnership consists of Rosell Heijmen, Jessica Helbach and Connie Nijman. An exhibition of theirs is often in the form of a walk where you are encouraged to leave the main route and thus enjoy going a little astray but not losing sight of the main route. With this partnership, we hope that lovers of both museums will meet each other and each take a look at the other displays.



The completely destroyed tower of the Eusebius Church in Arnhem in 1945. (Photo Paul Mutsaerts)

"Also many foreign visitors have been touched by the personal experiences that are presented in the exhibition. For many they had no knowledge of this direct result of the Battle of Arnhem."

Display in the Eusebius Church tower

At the time of publishing this bulletin, the finance was not entirely complete. But we proceed with the hope that it will succeed in September, starting with a modest presentation in a chapel and in various floors of the tower of the Arnhem Eusebius Church tower. The Airborne Museum is working on an enduring co-operation with the Eusebius Church to achieve a permanent exhibition in the chapels and tower of the church, about the Battle of Arnhem. As a beginning, there will be a temporary presentation developed, consisting of a large photographic banners, with a short text in Dutch, English and German.

Three themes will be highlighted:-

1. Battle of Arnhem – summary of the military battle from day to day;
2. The story of the citizens – aftermath of the Battle of Arnhem for the residents: inner city destruction, evacuation, rebuilding;
3. Future vision of co-operation between the Airborne Museum/Eusebius Church (plans and artists impressions)

(Jan Hovers)

PHOTOS OF ARNHEM IN 1945 DONATED

Last February, the Airborne Museum received a wonderful gift in the form of a collection of photos of Arnhem in 1945. The photos were taken by Paul Mutsaerts and they were discovered when, following his death, his house was being cleared. His daughter recently decided that the pictures (with the negatives that were with the photos) would be presented to the Airborne Museum.

Paul Mutsaerts (1921-1999) lived in the Hoofdstraat in Velp and had a clothing manufacture business on the Rietgrachtstraat in Arnhem. He was passionate

amateur photographer. Shortly after the liberation in 1945, he took an interesting series of photos of the destroyed Arnhem city. Roland Boekhorst has since managed to trace the original locations of the majority of the photos (amongst other methods using Google Street View). In the collection, are also pictures of a shot-down Stirling bomber that probably came down in the Betuwe (see illustration).

(Robert Voskuil)



*During a resupply mission in September 1944 a Stirling bomber was shot down and photographed in 1945. Likely location somewhere in the Betuwe, to the south of Arnhem
(Photo Paul Mutsaerts, Airborne Museum collection)*



BATTLEFIELD TOUR TO ZEEUWS-VLAANDEREN AND WALCHEREN FROM FRIDAY 3 UNTIL SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER 2014.

On 1 November 1944, British, French, Norwegian, Belgian and Dutch Commandos landed at Vlissingen (Flushing) (Operation Infatuate1) and at Westkapelle (Operation Infatuate 11). The liberation of Walcheren, the opening of the Scheldt giving entry to the Antwerp harbour had begun. During the preceding weeks, after heavy fighting, units of the 1st Canadian Army had captured Zeeuws-Vlaanderen.

The SFAM has organised in oktober 2014 an excursion to Zeeuws-Vlaanderen and Walcheren. A unique opportunity to view this former battle zone from close up.

Programme:-

Day 1: Canadian/Polish Museum, Adegem Belgium, Albert Canal, Eede (where Queen Wilhelmina set foot for the first time again on Netherlands territory on 13 March 1945, after her nearly five year long exile in England, cross over by the Braakman, Breskens, cross over to Vlissingen.

Day 2: Vlissingen, anti-tank ditches and defence bunkers at Koudekerke, Zoutelande, landing zones at Westkapelle, Domburg, Oostkapelle, Serooskerke, Dishoek Museum and the battlefields.

Day 3: The Sloedam, Private Museum in Ossendrecht and the Canadian cemetery at Bergen op Zoom.

The excursion will be led by Wybo Boersma, previous director of the Airborne Museum and guide of the 'International Guild of Battlefield Guides' and Jaap Korsloot, member of the SFAM.

Tour cost €350,- p.p. on basis of 2 person room. Surcharge for single room €50,-

Early application is recommended. There is still space but the number of available rooms is limited.

For information and booking, Vereniging Vrienden v/h Airborne Museum, p/a Binnenhof 38, 6715 DP, Ede. Tel: 0318-639633. You then receive a booking form.

E-Mail: w.boersma@wxs.nl. For further details see also: www.vriendenairbornemuseum.nl



BOOK REVIEW: 'THE DEPLOYMENT OF 'JEDBURGH' TEAMS IN NETHERLANDS'

During WW2, the British 'Special Operations Executive', in conjunction with the American 'Office of Strategic Service', formed a special unit, from which the so-called 'Jedburgh teams' were created. These teams consisted of three men, an officer commanding, a second officer and a sergeant-radio/telegraphist. Amongst other tasks they were largely involved in supporting the underground/resistance groups in occupied territories. As well as British, American and French servicemen, a number of Dutch men also formed part of a Jedburgh team. Specifically for Operation Market Garden but also thereafter, these teams were also active in the Netherlands. Until now, there has been little written about the actions of these men in the Netherlands. There is a Dutch book 'Achter de linies' (Behind enemy lines) about the team in Twente, while in various other books, the teams at Nijmegen and Veghel are mentioned in part. Also there is a broader book over the teams in Market Garden, titled 'Abundance of Valor', written by Will Irwin, an American, but a total overview of the Dutch efforts has thus far not appeared. It is thus to the credit of Jelle Hooiveld that he, over the years, has collected much material on this subject and in this new publication does give a total overview. Many faults made by earlier authors are in this book corrected.

The book, which is written in Dutch, is systematically constructed and begins with the origins of the Jed-

burgh teams, the training and thereafter, from day to day, the involvement with Operation Market Garden. Then the deployment of the teams in the Winter of 1944-45 and the team with Operation Amherst in April 1945. Various Dutch Jedburgh officers received after the War, high-ranking medals, including the Military Willems-Order. The book is richly illustrated, but in the stated origins of the photos, there are some things to be re-examined. For example, photos from the IWM in London, are too often stated as coming from other institutes. Also the captions of many, partly unknown photos are sometimes incomplete. This publication was produced with contribution from the Dutch 'Institute of Military History' in The Hague. That is very obvious from the excellent colour maps and orders of battle. It part it is assumed that the reader is well versed in the use of military symbols, used to identify units. That will obviously not be the case with everyone. The many notes giving origins, make clear the Institute's involvement. With the appearance of 'Operation Jedburgh', this has finally put right matters about a small but nevertheless important group of Dutch Special Forces. The book is well worth acquiring and not only for those interested in Arnhem. The price is very reasonable.

'Operation Jedburgh, Geheime geallieerde missies in Nederland 1944-1945' by Jelle Hooiveld, is published by Boom, Amsterdam (2014) ISBN: 978 90 8953 256 5, 288 pages illustrated. Price €19,90. 'Operation Jedburgh' is available for sale in the Museum in Oosterbeek, but can also be ordered from the usual bookshops.

(Wybo Boersma)



MINISTORY 120 MEMORIES OF OUR EXPERIENCES ON THE KLINGELBEEKSEWEG IN ARNHEM, SEPTEMBER 1944

Anton van Mens

Introduction

At the end of 2013, Wybo Boersma found at a collector, a notebook of someone who had experienced the Battle of Arnhem whilst on the Klingelbeekseweg in the western part of Arnhem. It turned out to be a diary with footnotes belonging to Mr Anton van Mens. The text, partly written in ink and partly in pencil was difficult to read and therefore Wybo typed the whole thing again. Because there are few diaries known, originating from that area of Arnhem, Robert Voskuil has taken the section dealing with the fighting on the Klingelbeek and the flight of the Van Mens family to the Hoogkamp in North Arnhem, and edited this part for publication in this Airborne Magazine and has provided some footnotes.

From research made by Geert Maassen in the Gelders Archive it appeared that in the Arnhem City Directory of 1942, H. van Mens, Klingelbeekscheweg 14 is recorded. The relevant residence record card confirms this information. Anton (Tonnie) van Mens, the author of the diary, was a son of the family.

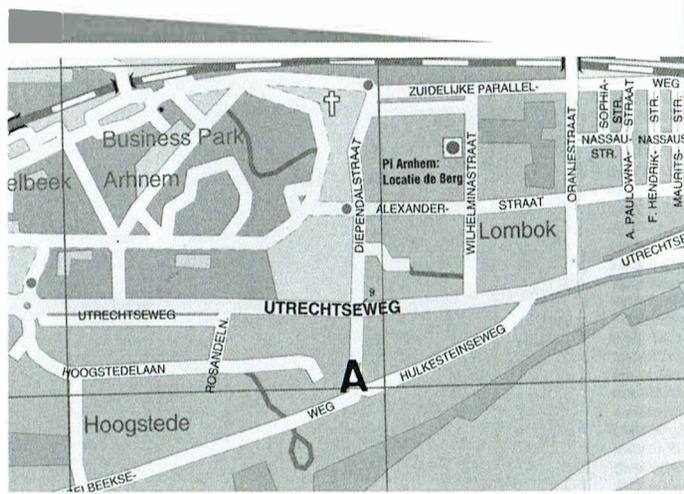
From enquiries made of the present occupiers of the house, Klingelbeekseweg 14, it appeared that the author of the diary, Anton van Mens, had lived in the house for many years after the War. Their information also revealed that he had died some time ago.

The Diary

Sunday 17 September 1944

Sunday morning early the air raid sounded for 10 minutes, but we see and hear nothing. 15 mins later, the alarm sounds again but again, nothing to see. After the siren sounded for the third time, we see bombers in formations of six fly over, led by fighters. They circle round menacingly. I go to the air raid shelter at W. After a while a loud roar and whistle resounded, after which a number of crunching bangs followed. Shortly after again a tremendous whistle and a number of hard explosions. The door of the shelter shakes like a devil! Refugees come running in and tell us that they saw a large number of white stripes fall down on the other side of the Rhine, after which large black columns of smoke appeared. With the next roaring noise, we put our hands over our ears. Once again

there are loud explosions. The electric light becomes weaker and weaker and suddenly flashes off. We sit with 14 people in a small dark shelter. A candle is lit and it is quite picturesque to see. So we sit for some hours under ground, while the bombers drone over our heads and bombed the Betuwe. After a while, the electric light flashes on again. The sirens wail the all clear signal. We go back on the street and find large bomb fragments, heavy pieces of steel. Roof tiles are broken, the same as a number of windows. Indoors, the pictures all lay on the ground, Ten minutes later, the sirens wail again. Mosquito fighter-bombers skim low over the city and drop bombs on various locations.



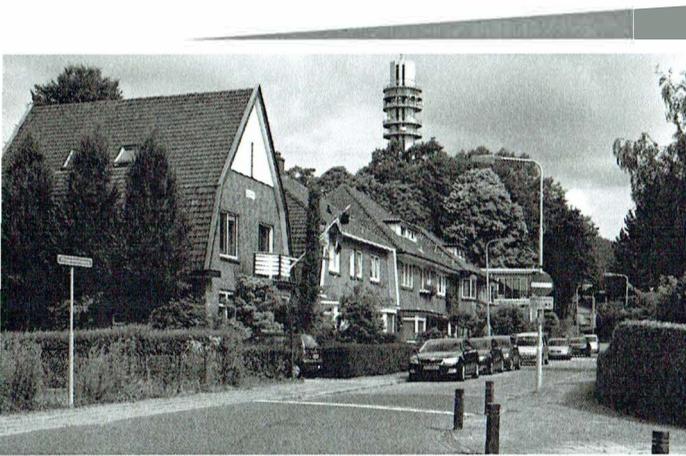
Part of a map of Arnhem. At the capital letter 'A', stands the location of the Mens family house.

Later we hear that the Willems barracks are burnt out. We live now in a restless tension. We hear shooting in a westerly direction. There are still fighter aircraft in the air. On the Utrechtseweg, we see lots of Germans in vehicles and on foot coming from the western direction. They are in full battle-dress. It looks as if they are retreating. The air is full of aircraft, but no more air raid sirens. There is no electricity more. Now and then the German ack-ack guns fire from their position near the Rhine. There are absolutely loads of fighter aircraft in the air, but we are gradually not afraid any more of the British Spitfires. We again go looking for bomb fragments. When later, we look over the city from our loft space, we can see the smoke columns from various Arnhem locations on fire.

Marietje was at the Fratershuis ¹⁾, when a German soldier arrived on a bike and shouted at another German, "Los, laufen, die Tommies sind bei die Gummifabrik!" ["Let's go, the Tommies are already near the rubber factory!"] ²⁾. The soldiers ran to the vehicles and raced away to escape. Due to their panic, they left everything behind. Beautiful bicycles that were left were quickly taken by the citizens. When Marietje told that the Tommies were already neary the rubber factory,

nobody believed her. ³⁾ Suddenly shooting starts and the bullets whistle over our heads. We agree to make the air raid shelter in order and carry bits and pieces to it, for example, vegetable and fruit preserves, butter and also clothes. Mr Dekker stands on the roof of his house and by chance sees the Oosterbeek Railway bridge being blown up. We see a black smoke column. Mr Dekker says that he saw lots of soldiers walking by the bridge but he was not sure if they were Germans or British.

We now stay in the air raid shelter because now and again there is shooting. Father walks outside with a French helmet in his hand. At a safe moment, he goes



The Mens family house at Klingelbeekseweg 14, photographed in June 2014 (Photo Robert Voskuil)

briefly up to the street, to have a look. Suddenly he comes back and says "The Tommies are here. I have just got my first English cigarette. They are walking along the Klingelbeek". We reply: "Oh that can't be so yet?" We are flabbergasted. Certainly we hear now and again, machine-gun or rifle firing. Together with Mr V, I decide reluctantly to go and have a look. And.... there march the Tommies along the street, well camouflaged. They are young blokes. The locals are mad with joy. Suddenly we hear a short, sharp order, after which all the soldiers duck behind a small tank (Bren Gun Carrier) and begin to fire with machine guns. We decide to go back to our shelter.

As evening approaches, we go back upstairs to the street. Now large groups of soldiers are passing and sometimes a number of jeeps full of military men. Some jeeps are pulling a gun. The paratroops wear light brown uniforms with lots of pockets, which contain amongst others, all sorts of food, such as chocolate and rations. Some men have yellow scarves round their necks and others carry an orange flower on their helmet. We stay the whole evening with the soldiers. We get cigarettes and we give them water.

Later in the evening, we sit with Mrs Cherkowski in the lounge, that is lit by one candle. In the neighbourhood we still hear shooting. We go to sleep upstairs and during the night now and then we hear artillery fire and constant footsteps of the English soldiers. When occasionally we look out of the window, we see above Arnhem a yellow glow of burning buildings.

Monday 18 September 1944

We are early wakened next morning by the sound of all artillery batteries firing in the neighbourhood. Also there is machine gun fire. The Tommies walk through the gardens of the houses. In the City is bitter fighting. In spite of the firing, many people go to collect coal in the Oolgaardhuis ⁴⁾, where Germans had sat. Also people are walking towards the City. In the afternoon the German artillery fire becomes constantly worse. In more and more places fires are burning. Also the beautiful villa 'Hulkestein' stands in flames ⁵⁾. It is an impressive sight and seems so close by, that sometimes we have the feeling that our own house is ablaze. In the air above us hangs brown smoke and fluttering burnt paper. In the afternoon, begins very intense shooting and we stay most of the time in the shelter. In the evening, we go outside again, where still Tommies are passing by. Round about 9.00 we go to sleep in the shelter. Upstairs in the house it is too dangerous. We lay mattresses and some blankets on the floor, but not much sleep occurs, because in the close by area, there is much shooting. The Tommies sleep in the house or walk round. At 9, nine people sleep in the cellar, while two keep watch.

Tuesday 19 September 1944

In the morning there is little to see, but there is again lots of shooting. Suddenly the streets run full of soldiers, jeeps, guns, motorbikes and ordinary bicycles and a pair of Bren Gun Carriers. Everything is coming from the direction of the City ⁶⁾. The small square at the Hulkesteinseweg, is crowded with war vehicles and is totally jammed to a standstill. But the soldiers seem quite relaxed. One officer with a cigarette in his mouth gives his orders, briefly and calmly. The soldiers load their rifles and Sten Guns. They get fresh ammunition and some go again slowly via the Hulkesteinseweg towards the Oude Tol. In front of our house a large gun is installed, with the barrel facing the Utrechtseweg. Many troops and material proceeded further along the Klingelbeek ⁷⁾. Everywhere the well camouflaged troops walk through the gardens and enter the houses. Father asks if they were retreating. They answer "No, no" or "Yes we are". At the Denkers family home, dozens of them enter the house. Behind the hedge, they set up a heavy machine gun. One of the troops points to our house and then a group of soldiers walk into our home. They are everywhere, also in our front garden where they lie behind some bushes. Two of them come to us in the kitchen

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where they have a good wash and shave. We give them a glass of lemonade. One of them cleans his Sten gun and reloads it. At that moment, the lady neighbour opens the door when he jumps cautiously forward with a loaded pistol in his hand. When he sees it is safe, he begins to laugh. The other, an attractive, dark chap, tells that two of his friends had died and that he nearly lost all his equipment. We ask if the main force is coming. They answer "In two or three days and they have tanks. My Father asks them: "Is the situation bad?". They answer: "No, just a little". My sister asks one of them if fighting was about to start and he answers: "Yes, yes", after which he calmly walks up the stairs. Windows are smashed to allow machine guns to be installed. Causing lots of noise, they use furniture to build barricades

My Father calls an officer to come downstairs and asks if the cellar below the house is a good shelter. The man looks round and answers: "No, no this is not safe. You have to go into the garden!" We look for protection in the air raid shelter, behind the greenhouse and suddenly all hell breaks loose. It was an afternoon you will never forget. Heavy fighting breaks out in our neighbourhood. The Germans sit amongst others, in the grounds of the KEMA, on the north side of the Utrechtseweg. Tommies run through the garden. They shout: "Tower, Germans!". It appears to be about the top of the prison dome, where they suspect a German observation post is installed. A little later, this is sprayed with bullets and shells. Shortly after, the guns in the meadow of W in front of our house begin to bark. The noise is so bad that you seem to lose all sense of hearing and sight. German weapons fire constantly at our area. We hear terrifying noise of the shellfire and the explosions in the surrounding houses. Mrs S is rapidly scared out of her mind. With every gun shot or explosion of a shell, you feel the air pressure in your ears. The noise of guns, machine gun fire and explosions is deafening. To make matters worse, the British put a machine gun on the roof of our air raid shelter, from where they fire constantly.

Nevertheless, we survive the afternoon unharmed. Towards 5.00pm, we hear the drone of aircraft. A Tommy comes in and sits with us at the stairs and gives us a lovely cigarette. He looks at the aircraft and says: 'Typhoons'. The aircraft, certainly forty of them, circle round and come steadily lower. Then we see a cross on the wings. 'Germans' says the Tommy, disappointed and we too are disappointed.

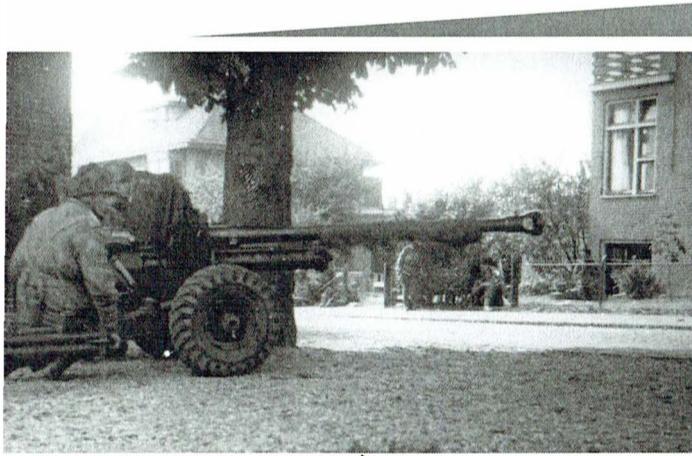
Towards the end of the afternoon, we hear a heavy drone and suddenly the firing becomes heavier. Then we see something that I shall never forget for the rest of my life. Three heavy transport aircraft with four engines come flying very slowly and at low level over the land. To the west of us, they begin to drop paratroops. Then follow more aircraft. Every plane drops at least thirty men. The parachutes open immediately and we

see hundreds of dollies dangling and coming down⁸⁾. They attract a lot of gunfire. We are so glad that this reinforcement has arrived.

A little later a couple of prisoners from the Koepel prison come walking along the Wilhelminastraat. Apparently they have been released. Then we hear the heavy drone of vehicles on the Utrechtseweg. My Father says that they are all German vehicles. It seems that we are German again! How terribly disappointing!! We are struck dumb! Everywhere on the street we see SS soldiers, also Dutch SS. At our place in a trench, a couple of Tommies still sit, one of whom is badly wounded. They are taken away by the SS.

Wednesday 20 September 1944

The battle seems to have moved in the direction of Oosterbeek. That morning early, Charles wanted to feed the rabbits. Suddenly we hear screaming noise. "Halt, heraus, stehen bleiben, halt!" SS soldiers walk through the garden and out of the air raid shelter come a couple of British soldiers. One gets a blow from a German with the butt of his rifle. Charles must remain standing until his father comes. With their hands up in the air, they have to go with the SS. Mr Cherkowski arrives with another Red Cross man who carries a flag to collect us. We have to leave the Klingelbeek - we must flee. We quickly pack a few things, such as clothing, a couple of blankets and a little food. We walk through the garden. Everywhere lie large shell fragments, ammunition and empty cartridge cases. It is an enormous mess. The houses have been heavily damaged. In our house a shell has exploded. The windows are all split and have fallen outwards. Through a shell explosion, part of the house of the Groeneveld family has been blown down. Everywhere we see shell holes in the walls of houses. A lamppost lies snapped off on the street. There also lie the wrecks of two anti-tankguns and a number of cars lie smouldering. Along the edge of the road stand our neighbours. "Where are you all going to?" they ask. We call back: "We must flee!" Quickly various other local residents join our column, that gradually gets longer. On the Utrechtseweg German SS soldiers are moving. We must look carefully where we walk because of the ammunition that lies everywhere. Large shell cases of nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ metre length lie spread out over the street. Also we see the bodies of dead British soldiers lying, covered in blood. They lie on their front with an arm under their head. The street lies strewn with branches shot from the trees. Parts of metal fences also lie higgledy-piggledy over the street. The column of refugees makes a lot of noise because we constantly must walk over all the broken glass that lies on the road. The Oranjestraat stands full of German tanks. Meanwhile we hear that in Oosterbeek and at the KEMA heavy fighting is still occurring. We walk towards the Hoogkamp, an Arnhem suburb, north of the railway line. As we arrive there, hundreds



*A British 6-pounder anti-tank gun stands at the corner of Klingelbeekseweg and Utrechtseweg. The gun stands aimed in a westerly direction and thus covers the Utrechtseweg by the KEMA
[Photo Lt. P.McFarlane - Airborne Museum collection]*

of citizens stand waiting for some help. Some have taken essential things with them, others were unable to take anything. The Hoogkamp was lucky to have avoided the terrible storm of war. Only the roar of gun fire in the south and the activity of the Red Cross personnel, remind us that we sit in the middle of a war zone. We are lucky that we obtain accommodation with lovely people in a corner house opposite a church ⁹⁾. The church is being used, amongst others, as a collection/storage point for food, which is intended for the refugees. The following days, we see the continuous efforts made by the men of the Red Cross and the Fire Brigade, to deliver food and linen goods for the evacuees. There are amazing efforts to care for everyone. Streams of people arrive from the City suburbs near the Rhine. It is tragic sight to see all the evacuees pass by. Pensioners, who cannot walk with haste, stumble over the street. Other older people are carried in a wheelbarrow or moved on a handcart. People who could not save anything, pass by in floods of tears. The helpers do what they can. Men with white helmets, carrying a Red Cross on it and nurses help the whole day long to provide the evacuees with food and to try and arrange accommodation.

Friday 22 September 1944

New refugees arrive, now also coming from the suburb of Arnhem south of the Rhine. Huge transport aircraft drop parachutes. They are heavily fired upon by the German artillery. In the immediate vicinity, for the whole day, one hears the roar of gun fire. We see British jeeps with Germans in them. Sometimes there lie German or British wounded on the back of the jeeps. They drive to the hospital. At night we sleep on sacks of straw. Before we go to sleep we look quickly to the fire in the distance. Behind us in the woods, stand heavy German artillery. They fire over our heads. We

hear the discharge, the whistle of the shell and then the explosion far away.

Saturday 23 September 1944

In the morning, all the people stand in a queue for bread. If it is quiet, some people try to return home to recover some more possessions. Sadly, it appears that on a massive scale, the German troops plunder the City and even some Dutch civilians join this criminal behaviour. Especially shops suffer from this crime. My Father and Mr S. also return to the Klingelbeek. Just as they arrive in our house, an air attack started, that gave Father a bad shock. Fortunately they both managed to return safely to the Hoogkamp, loaded with lots of stuff, especially clothing.

During the evening, suddenly alarming notices arrive. We must all leave Arnhem. Lots of rumours started and everywhere people stand chatting in groups. It was said that all residents of Arnhem, south of the railway line, must leave the City before tomorrow evening. Everyone is nervous. Where must we go to??

Sunday 24 September 1944

The official notice about the evacuation has been made public by a number of adhesive posters. All persons who find themselves in Arnhem, between the Rhine and the railway line, must leave immediately and the rest of the citizens in remaining areas must leave the City before 8.00pm on Monday evening. Eventually, we depart on the morning of Tuesday 26 September.

Noten

- 1) Naming the Fratershuis, possibly meant the Huize Klingelbeek. On a map from 1943, this building is marked as the Klingelbeek Cloister (Klooster Klingelbeek).
- 2) The 'Gummifabriek' (rubber factory) was in fact a wool factory and it stood a half kilometre to the west along Klingelbeekseweg.
- 3) Evidently, people were not aware that British airborne troops had landed at Wolfheze.
- 4) This (since developed) villa, stands at the junction of the Klingelbeekseweg and the Hulkesteinsweg
- 5) Villa Hulkenstein stood on the southern edge of the Hulkesteinsweg, a few hundred metres from the Mens family home.
- 6) These must be the troops from the four British battalions who, after the failed advance via Bovenover and Onderlangs, in the morning of 19 September 1944, retreated in the direction of Oosterbeek.
- 7) Meant to be the Klingelbeekseweg in a westerly direction.
- 8) Because they stood so far away, the citizens thought the parachutes dropping containers and baskets were actually dropping paratroops.
- 9) The reference to the Church, is probably meant to be the Roman Catholic church on the Bakenbergseweg. See also Ministry 117.



PROGRAMME 2014 SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF THE AIRBORNE MUSEUM

Saturday 13 September: Battlefield Tour "70 year after the event, in the footsteps of the 1st British Airborne Division.

09.30 - 17.00hrs: Bus tour with walking tour past the most important locations of the Battle of Arnhem

Friday 3 – Sunday 5 October: Battlefield Tour 'Liberation of Zeeland 1944'

Three day bus tour to Zeeuws-Vlaanderen and Walcheren.

For further details, see www.vriendenairbornemuseum.nl

Saturday 15 November: Afternoon theme 'From House and Home' ('Van Huis en Haard')

The programme is based on the same named exhibition in the Airborne Museum. See further information in this issue. The afternoon starts at 14.00hr and will be in the Concert Hall in Oosterbeek.

Entry for members is free – non members €2,50 For changes and additions to the programme see:

www.vriendenairbornemuseum.nl

For the programme of the Airborne Commemorations 2014, see amongst others the following:-

www.airborneherdenkingen.nl ; www.airbornefeelings.nl ; www.liberationroute.com ;

www.driel-polen.nl



The heavily damaged Walburgis Church in Arnhem.

Photographed by Paul Mutsaerts

(Photo collection Airborne Museum)



On September 17th 1944, British paratroopers jump from their Dakotas over their DZ near Renkum.
(Photo: collection Imperial War Museum London)