



SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF THE AIRBORNE MUSEUM OOSTERBEEK

Utrechtseweg 232,6862 AZ OOSTERBEEK, The Netherlands

Representative in Great Britain: Mr.F.M.Young,
6,Kildown Gardens, Cliftonville,Kent CT9 3EG

NEWSLETTER NO. 29
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Editor:Drs.R.P.G.A.Voskuil
Translation:Mrs.A.G.Meeuwssen

8th General Annual Meeting.

You are invited to attend the 8th General Annual Meeting of the Society, on SATURDAY,MARCH 12th,1988,in the Concerthall,Benedendorpsweg at Oosterbeek (opposite the Old Church),telephone 085-332046).Time:14.00 hrs.

The agenda of the meeting is as follows:

1. Opening address by the chairman.
2. Reading of the minutes of the 7th General Annual Meeting of March 28th,1987.
3. General Review 1987.
4. Financial Report 1987 and budget 1988.
5. Report Auditing Committee.
6. Election of Committee members.
7. Appointment of reserve member auditing committee.
8. Questions before closing of meeting.
9. Closure.

Messrs.J.Smits (chairman) and R.P.G.A.Voskuil (editor ,Newsletter) are due to retire from the committee.Both are eligible for re-election.According to art.8 of the regulations,members can propose other candidates.Proposals should be sent in writing to the secretary of the Society,ten days before the day of the meeting.They must be signed by at least ten members and be accompanied by a written agreement of the proposed members,who must be of age and members of the Society.

Thirty minutes before the start of the meeting,the financial papers and the report of the Auditing Committee will be available for inspection by the members. The Financial Report 1987 and the Budget 1988 will be sent to our members with the next Newsletter.

Film:"Back to Arnhem". The British video-documentary "Back to Arnhem" will be shown after the Annual Meeting.This is a documentary about the 1st Airborne Reconnaissance Squadron during the Battle of Arnhem,and especially about the experiences of Sgt.Henry Venes (A Troop) and Trooper Richard Minns(C Troop). The makers of this film have made a very realistic reconstruction of some of the incidents in which the Recce Squadron was involved.They have also made use of some original film fragments taken in 1944.

Death of Brigadier Chatterton.

Brigadier George Chatterton OBE DSO (retd.) died on November 11th,1987,after a short illness.During the war he commanded the Glider Pilot Regiment.In September 1983,Brigadier Chatterton acted as leader of the Pilgrimage during the commemoration of the Battle of Arnhem.

Annual Report.

In spite of the fact that again 24 members had to be expelled from the Society because of non-payment of their subscription, the number of members of the Society did increase to 866. By the end of 1986 there were 820 members. Sadly, six members died during 1987: Messrs. P. Dawson, J. Fox, E. J. Geurs, W. P. Kramer, C. M. v. d. Lee and J. Verhoeven.

Four Newsletters were sent to our members.

The special-subject day on May 30th was a great success and had to be repeated on October 3rd, the same applied to the special-subject afternoon on November 28th, it was visited by 180 members.

The sale of articles and souvenirs went very well, both in the Museum shop and during several occasions outside the Museum where we were present with a stand about the Museum and the Society. Several articles as the statuette and the poster of the mosaic of aerial photographs are sold out.

The Society is planning shortly to start the sale of new articles and souvenirs. The idea to issue the booklet "the Tommies are coming!" has proved to be a great success. The schoolchildren who received it as a token of thanks for their taking part in the commemoration in the cemetery in 1987, were very pleased with it. The sale of the booklet is also going very well. The booklet is at the moment being translated into English.

The Educational Project has become a firmly established part of the activities of the Society.

The Society donated the following items to the Museum: window dummies for use in the new diorama in the basement; a new show-case for the exposition of explosives and, thanks to our Chair Project, a number of beautiful oak chairs.

Altogether, we can conclude that the past year has been a good year for the Society, we trust that 1988 will be the same.

The Chair Project.

In our last Newsletter we mentioned the donation of 2 chairs on September 16th, 1987. We can now tell you that the chair dedicated to the 156 Battalion, the Parachute Regiment, was donated by Mr. Hector Montgomery. The chair dedicated to the 1st Airborne Divisional Signal Regiment was donated by the Old Comrades Association of the Airborne Signals.

In the meantime we have also received a chair dedicated to "The King's Own Scottish Borderers of 1st Airborne Division, September 1944, 7th (Galloway) Battalion".

General Urquhart's visit to No. 14, Zwarteweg, Arnhem.

In addition to the article in our last Newsletter about General Urquhart's stay in the house at no. 14, Zwarteweg, in September 1944, General Urquhart sent us the following addition :

"It is factual that I was out of touch with my HQ's for 36 hours, after I set out to visit I Para Bde during the afternoon of 17 September, but of this interval some 15 hours only were spent in 14 Zwarteweg. My memory of the actual timing is vague, but during that period my stopping places and their timing were something like the following.

Night 17/18 September with HQ of 3 Para Bn in a villa on the Utrechtseweg to the West of the Hartenstein Hotel, along with Brigadier Lathbury.

Morning and early afternoon of 18 September still with HQ of 3 Para Bn in a three storied house on main Arnhem road, short and west of the Elisabeth hospital, also with Brigadier Lathbury.

Late afternoon and following night 18/19 September in No 14 Zwarteweg, with Captains Cleminson and Taylor.

I must have left that house about 0630 hours on 19 September, for I arrived back at my HQ's, which was then at the Hartenstein Hotel, at 0725 hours on that day."



Mr.Pit presents a signed copy of his book "War over Oosterbeek" to Drs.A.Groeneweg,member of the board of the Foundation The Airborne Museum.

Hugo Pit visits the Airborne Museum.

One of the first books which were written about the Battle of Arnhem was "Oorlog over Oosterbeek" ("War over Oosterbeek"), by Mr.H.F.Pit.It was published in Delft in 1946.In this booklet Mr.Pit describes his experiences in September 1944 in and around his house at the Jagerskamp in Oosterbeek.

Hugo Pit studied electrical engineering;as a young student his hobbies were radio and recording technics. He had built a complete recording studio in his father's house.When the air landings started on September 17th,and during the days that followed,he made gramophone records of the sounds of battle around him.

Sadly,the house was destroyed by fire on September 20th,his unique recordings were destroyed,too. In spite of the danger,Hugo Pit managed to film the burning down of the house and,fortunately,that piece of film was saved.

After the war Mr.Pit did not return to live in Oosterbeek.On December 30th,1987, he visited the Airborne Museum for the first time. He was very much impressed by the wealth of material exhibited by the Museum.He was also very surprised by the news that his booklet,which is of course in the library of the Museum,has now become very rare.In 1946 no publisher was interested in it,so he published it at his own expense.

The Museum possesses a video-copy of the film Mr.Pit made in 1944.

New member of the board of the Museum.

Mr.J.W.van Slooten of Oosterbeek has been nominated as a new member of the board of the Museum.

7th British "member for life".

Mr.H.Howlett from Broadstairs in Kent has become the 7th member for life of our Society.During the Battle of Arnhem he served with the Royal Signals.One of the photographs taken on September 17th on the landing area near Wolfheze,shows a group of seven soldiers of the Royal Signals; there is a sunflower in the foreground.This photograph has been used many times,among other things it was used in the booklet "It was like this".The third soldier on the left is Mr. Howlett.

Anniversary of Airborne Museum.

Ten years ago,in the month of May,the Airborne Museum was moved from Doorwerth Castle to Hartenstein House.On May 11th,1978,General Urquhart opened the new Museum.

This anniversary will be commemorated in the coming month of May.Apart from the official festivities,a book will be published with photographs which have been given to the Museum in the past ten years.It will also contain some stories by soldiers and civilians who took part in the Battle of Arnhem.None of these stories have been published before.This book is being compiled by Messrs.Duyts and Groeneweg,both members of the board of the Museum.

Our next Newsletter will contain more detailed information about this anniversary.

Polish parachutists and the Battle of Arnhem.

In our Newsletter no.27 we wrote about the plans to publish a book about the 1st Independent Polish Parachute Brigade Group.

Mr.G.H.Maassen,archivist of Renkum Municipality,sent us the following information about this subject:

" George F. Cholewczynski,a Polish American,has been gathering information for some years now about the 1st Independent Polish Parachutists Brigade and the role it played during the Battle of Arnhem.He has interviewed numerous veterans,visited their reunions in Scotland,corresponded with a great number of the parties involved and he has spent many hours in the Polish Institute and the Sikorski Museum in London.

As far as we know,he is the first (amateur) historian to have made an extensive use of the Polish reports and accounts which have been in this Institute for many years. Moreover,he aquired many photographs which have never been published before,both from veterans in England and Poland,and from the Sikorski Museum. All this has resulted in an extensive mass of documentation which now serves as the basis for the book which Mr. Cholewczynski has started and which tells the story of the Brigade.As it has been decided that the book will be first published in the Dutch language,a Dutch publisher has been contacted.

The book tells the complete story of the Brigade;the first chapter starts in Poland.Then the reader is taken on a journey which goes via France to Scotland. Chapters about the training of the Polish soldiers and the preparations for operational actions are followed by eight chapters about Operation "Market Garden". The book will have 144 pages and will contain 80 to 100 photographs.

As the publisher wants to publish this book in September 1988, at a reasonable price (f 35,-),he would like to know how many people are interested in it. As the extent of the edition influences the price of the book,members of our Society are urgently requested to make known whether they are interested in the purchase of the book.

If so,please inform Geert Maassen,Jan van Riebeeckweg 82, 6861 BH Oosterbeek. (tel. 085-337515).

Request from the treasurer: Members who have not yet paid their contribution for 1988,are kindly requested to do so as soon as possible.