



Friends of the **AIRBORNE** MUSEUM

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The England trip

The recent excursion to England organised by the Friends' Society took place from 17 to 21 April. Thanks to the co-operation of Colonel B. Middleton, Controller of the Airborne Forces Security Fund, the 50 strong party of excursionists was accommodated in one of the army buildings at Browning Barracks in Aldershot.

Visits to two operational airfields were included in the programme. At Brize Norton the group was given a guided tour of No. 1 Parachute Training School by Squadron Leaders R.E.A. Wadley and G.E. Sizeland. The visit to Fairford was possible thanks to the permission given by Squadron Leader I.S. Pollitt

and his staff. At Fairford, now used by the American air force, an explanatory talk by former Glider Pilots Mike Dauncey and Peter Clark was included in the tour. In Aldershot the group was honoured by a visit from Arnhem veteran Bob Peatling.

A report on the excursion by Eef and Nelie Vellinga is given below. Their trip to England was a gift from the Airborne Museum Foundation and the Society of Friends of the Airborne Museum to mark Eef's retirement from his work at the museum.

The England excursion was 'rounded off' with a reunion held in the Airborne Museum on Friday 24 May. During the reunion videos were viewed and recollections and photographs exchanged.



*Oosterbeek, September 1944. Two British soldiers behind a Vickers heavy machine-gun. A house is visible in the background on the right. Where is/ was that building? For more information see the article elsewhere in this Newsletter.
(Photo: Imperial War Museum, London)*

Excursion Report

17 April 1996.

At last the 'Big Journey' began. We left in the morning by bus, destination England. Following a visit to Ypres in Belgium, known from the First World War, the journey was continued on to Calais. The French customs were particularly irritating and gave us a thorough going-over, looking for 'hash' perhaps! Luckily none was found and we were finally allowed to board 'le Shuttle'.

25 minutes later we were in England. What an experience! From France to Great Britain without a glimpse of water. From Folkstone we travelled to Aldershot where we arrived at our 'hotel' around 7 o'clock in the evening.

Unpack suitcases and then dinner in the Mess. Everyone was ready for a good meal. After one or two nightcaps in the bar, all retired to bed at 11 pm. This took a bit of getting used to in such varied company, but in the end everyone got a good night's sleep, in spite of the odd snorer.

18 April.

Up at seven o'clock, breakfast, and then to the Airborne Forces Museum, where the history of British airborne troops is shown. After lunch our journey continued on to Middle Wallop where we visited the interesting Museum of Army Flying. Back at Aldershot it seemed that the chef had again excelled himself. We took a short stroll after a splendid dinner, and then once again spent a pleasant hour or so in the bar until eleven o'clock.



April 19 1996, during the excursion to England. Squadron Leader R.E.A. Wadley provides explanations in the large hangar of No. 1 Parachute Training School at Brize Norton, where would-be parachutists receive their ground training.

(Photo: Berry de Reus)

19 April.

A nine o'clock departure for Brize Norton, where we arrived at eleven for a visit to No. 1 Parachute Training School (P.T.S.).

After the showing of a film about the training we were split up into two groups and shown around a huge hangar containing all manner of equipment for the training of parachutists. This was followed by a

visit to the small No. 1 P.T.S. museum.

After lunch it was on to Fairford. Here too a wonderful reception, with coffee and biscuits and a meeting with two veterans, followed by a tour of this enormous airfield. Another marvellous experience! Then, later in the afternoon, back to Aldershot. 20 April.

Today to London. First to the Imperial War Museum; so huge and so much to see. In the afternoon we, together with others from the group, visited the 'City' of London, with Wybo Boersma as guide. At the end of the afternoon we headed once more for Aldershot. After dinner a last, enjoyable get-together in the bar. 21 April.

Back to the Netherlands after a few fantastic days. The return journey was trouble-free and we arrived back in Oosterbeek at 7 o'clock in the evening. Once again, many, many thanks to the organisers, Chris, Robert and Berry. Truly, they could easily set up their own travel agency because everything was organised down to the finest detail and nothing was overlooked.

When Eef celebrated his retirement on 12 January 1996, we could not have imagined being given such a wonderful farewell. Our thanks to the employees, management and Friends of the Airborne Museum for this marvellous gift!! (Eef and Nelie Vellinga)

A second trip to England?

You will have gathered from the above article that the first excursion to England was a great success. It is a shame, of course, that so many who had applied to go had to be turned down because accommodation in Aldershot was limited to 50 people.

As promised, the excursion commission discussed the chances of a possible second trip with our British friends. However, the problem is that, since recently, Browning Barracks in Aldershot is no longer in the hands of The Parachute Regiment. All activities with the exception of the Airborne Forces Museum and a few offices have been re-located. Thus, no arrangements could be made regarding local accommodation.

It was agreed that they will contact us if accommodation becomes available. Hopefully, the possible second trip could take place some time in August or October, with our provisional preference being for the latter.

Those members whom we had to disappoint with the first excursion will now of course be considered for the second. There may also be people who didn't apply for the first trip because the time was unsuitable and who now would like to go in the autumn. They can apply by postcard and their names will be placed on a secondary list which will be used if there are places over.

At the moment payment is not required.

In the meantime, those members who applied but in the end couldn't make the trip have received a letter explaining the state of play. Every disappointed applicant, (including those who didn't phone in

about it), have had their excursion money refunded. The excursion commission will contact these people first as soon as we receive definite information from England.

(Chris van Roekel)

Request for information about photo

The front page of this Newsletter carries a photograph from the Battle of Arnhem and we would like to know where it was taken.

We do know that Sergeant Dennis Smith of the Army Film and Photographic Unit was the photographer and that it may have been taken in Oosterbeek on 18 September 1944.

The original caption states: 'Heavy machine gun trained on houses holding snipers.'

If anyone has any idea where this photograph was taken, could they please contact Geert Maassen via the Renkum Municipal archives, Postbox 9100, 6860 HA, Oosterbeek, tel. 026 3348303.

Volunteers needed for Society work

Members regularly offer to carry out various jobs for the Friends' Society, and in most cases these offers are gratefully accepted.

Management would now like to introduce a bit more structure into the situation and, based partly on a proposal put forward by some members, have decided to set up a number of working groups:

1. 'Events' working group (organisation of theme days and excursions);
2. 'Publications' working group (supervision of books and brochures intended for publication by the Society);
3. 'Fund raising' working group (including assistance on sales stands at large events).

If you have the time and inclination to join one of these working groups, drop a line to the Friends' Society management. Your help is vital!

Glider Pilot Regiment exhibition

An exhibition on The Glider Pilot Regiment during the Battle of Arnhem, entitled 'No Engines!', will be held in the Airborne Museum 'Hartenstein' until 3 November next.

Items for this exhibition have been provided from the museum's collection plus material and documents from the large private collection of our member Luuk Buist from Oosterbeek.

Airborne Museum gets new storage space

Two years after the completion of the 'Facelift' project in which the Airborne Museum underwent a thorough modernisation, a new building project has

begun. The earth underneath the front, ground-floor terrace of the 'Hartenstein' has been excavated.

The huge space thus provided has been lined (with concrete, brickwork etc) and will be used for the storage of items which, up to now, had to be stored here and there in the museum.



18 April 1996. On behalf of the excursionists, Jan Altink hands over a 1994 Arnhem commemoration flag to assistant curator Diana Andrews in the Airborne Forces Museum, Aldershot.

(Photo: Berry de Reus)

Eugène Wijnhoud new management member

During the Society of Friends of the Airborne Museum's AGM on 27 April 1996, Eugène Wijnhoud from Arnhem joined the management team. He replaces Arie Hofman who was obliged to step down for personal reasons.

'Perimeter; 17-25 September 1944', a booklet

One of our members, Mr Henk van Zoest, has independently published a beautifully prepared booklet on the Battle of Arnhem.

Henk was 13 years old in September 1944 and lived in Cronjéweg in Oosterbeek with his parents and little sister. Fifty years later he has put his recollections down on paper. The result is a 48-page diary of events as he saw them, described day by day.

The Van Zoest family lived through the first days of the struggle in Cronjéweg, but on 21 September they were forced to leave their home. They ended up in a house on the corner of Paul Krugerstraat and Steijnweg where they endured the rest of the battle up until Monday 25 September 1944.

The story is not a detailed historical report but describes the war as seen through the eyes of a 13 year-old Oosterbeek boy. The street fighting in particular, when one minute the houses were held by the British and the next by the Germans, is vividly recounted.

Initially Henk van Zoest wrote the book for his children and grandchildren, but when other people began to show interest he had a number of extra copies printed. The author has made it known that any profits from the publication will be donated to the Airborne Forces Security Fund in England. The 'Perimeter', which is in Dutch, costs 15 guilders.

Obituary: Charles Douw van der Krap

News has reached us of the death at his home in Wassenaar towards the end of last year of Charles Douw van der Krap, Knight in the Military Order of William. He was 87 years of age.

Naval Commander Douw van der Krap took part in the fighting in Rotterdam in 1940. He was made prisoner-of-war and incarcerated in the notorious Colditz Castle, from where he made several escape attempts. He finally succeeded in escaping and after many wanderings ended up in Arnhem, just before September 1944. When the allied airborne landings took place he offered his services to the British. He became commander of the 'Oranje bataljon' (Orange Battalion), a group of civilians who had offered to help the airborne troops.

After the Battle of Arnhem he managed to escape across the Rhine on the night of 22/23 October 1944 as part of Operation Pegasus 1. On reaching England he reported to the Royal Navy.

Douw van der Krap has described his experiences in the book 'Contra de Swastika' (Against the Swastika) which appeared in 1981.

Obituary: Jacob Maris, sculptor

Sculptor Jacob Maris passed away on 5 April 1996 in Nijmegen at the age of 96. Maris became famous as the artist responsible for various war and resistance monuments in the Netherlands.

One of his most well known works is the Airborne Monument in Oosterbeek (the 'Needle' opposite the Hartenstein), which was unveiled on 17 September 1946 by Queen Wilhelmina (see Ministry No. 24 of July 1989).

Special offer to Society members

The Airborne Museum is offering two videos to members of the Friends' Society at a huge discount. These are 'D-Day; de bres in de vesting Europe' (D-Day; the breach in fortress Europe) of approx 60 minutes duration, and 'The True Glory; van D-Day tot VE-Day' (The True Glory; from D-Day to VE-Day), which is about 85 minutes long. Both films are in English with Dutch sub-titles. The normal price for these documentaries is 40

guilders each, but members in the Netherlands can obtain the pair for 30 guilders plus 7,50 post and package. Stock is limited.

Acquisitions by the Airborne Museum

The alert observer (and connoisseur) will have noticed that the figure of the RAF airman in the Airborne Museum 'Hartenstein' wore the wrong type of oxygen mask. The mask worn in September 1944 was the type 'G', whereas the one on display was the type 'H'.

After 15 years of searching and with financial assistance from the Society of Friends, we have succeeded in obtaining a type 'G' mask, so this detail error has at last been rectified. The glider pilot mannequin's helmet earphones have also been replaced with the correct 'AM' type. (Wybo Boersma)

Correction

Members have pointed out to us that the logo caption on the Newsletter envelopes contains an annoying mistake. The Dutch text states 'Afbeelding van Pegasus 725 v. Chr' (Picture of Pegasus 725 BC). This should read '725 na Christus' (725 AD). Our apologies for this historical 'clanger'. The English text is however correct. (Chris van Roekel)

Exhibition

Each year the Renkum municipal archivist Mr Geert Maassen organises a theme-exhibition in the town hall in Oosterbeek. This year the subject will again be the Battle of Arnhem.

Besides material from the archives the exhibition will include documents and photographs from the private collections of various amateur historians. Further information about this exhibition - scheduled to run from 21 August to 25 September 1996 - will appear in the next Newsletter.

Henry McAnelly retires as 'Airborne Battle Guide'

For more than twenty years Henry McAnelly has guided interested parties over the former battlefields in and around Oosterbeek.

As a veteran of the Battle of Arnhem he came to live in the Netherlands after the war, and on 3 March 1975 began his activities as a guide in his Landrover.

Now 73 years of age he has decided to call it a day and give up the job for which he became well known both here and abroad. He and his wife have left Oosterbeek for a new life in the 'het Gooi' area.