



Friends of the **AIRBORNE** MUSEUM

Editors:

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Newsletter No. 69, March 1998

Translated by Cathrien and Peter Clark

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18th General Members Meeting

The management invites you to attend the 18th General Members Meeting and AGM of the Society of Friends of the Airborne Museum Oosterbeek. The meeting will be held in the Zalencentrum Lebre, Lebreweg 51, Oosterbeek (tel. 026 3333168) on Saturday 4 April next, starting at 2 pm.

The agenda is as follows:

1. Opening
2. Minutes of the General Members Meeting of 26 april 1997
3. General Report 1997
4. Financial Report 1997
5. Audit Committee Report
6. Budget for 1998
7. Election of Officials
8. Appointment of a reserve member to the Audit Committee
9. Increase in membership fees
10. Questions
11. Closure of the meeting.

Point 4: Financial reports and information are enclosed.

Point 5: The Audit Commission report will be available for perusal half an hour before the meeting begins.

Point 7: Mrs J.M. de Langen and Mr W.T.B. de Ruyter have reached the end of their terms of office, and have declared themselves available for re-election.

Article 8 of the Statutes allows for the proposal of alternative candidates. In this case a written nomination should reach the secretary (Sportweg 2, 3871 HH Hoewelaken) at least 10 days before the meeting, signed by a minimum of 10 members, and accompanied by a declaration of availability from the candidate. The candidate must be a Society member and an adult.

Point 9: Each year half of the Friends' Society contributions are given to the Airborne Museum, with the other half being used by the Society itself.

However, Newsletter production and postage costs already amount to more than half of the contribution monies. Publication of the Newsletter remains possible thanks to our sales stands activities and gifts from members, but this is an uncertain and shaky financial basis.

The management has therefore decided to propose to increase the annual subscription for members living in the Netherlands by ten guilders as of 1 January 1999. This also applies to family membership. Membership subscriptions for UK members will rise to 10 pounds, except for veterans who will continue to pay one pound. The amount for members in other European countries will be 35 guilders, with 50 guilders for the rest of the world.

After the meeting a film about the Battle of Arnhem will be shown.



Summer 1945. Shooting taking place at the Hotel de Tafelberg in Oosterbeek during the making of the film 'Their's is the Glory'.

See the appeal elsewhere in this Newsletter.
(photo: R. Voskuil collection)

Annual report 1997

Mr R. Fennema stepped down as member of the management team during the General Members Meeting of 26 April 1997. Mr E. van der Meiden from Oosterbeek was appointed in his place. Management

met 11 times, and held one meeting with the Airborne Museum Foundation Board. A number of management members attended the 'Publications' and 'Events' work group meetings.

Mr W. Boersma represented the Foundation Board at our meetings, his input being much appreciated.

We started the year with 1256 members. Alas, 14 members passed away during the year, namely the ladies B. Breman-Peters, C. v.d. Ende-Voorwinden and Mrs Koelma-Wijk, and the gentlemen A. v.d. Zijpp, G. Dijkstra, P. v.d. Slot, J. v.d. Voort, E. v.d. Dam, G. Stallinga, M.M. Schut, G.J. Oskamp, A.G. v. Tricht, J.H.D. Lee and K. Greenough. Sixty-nine members were removed from the membership list in 1997 through termination of membership or non-payment of subscriptions. The addition of one hundred and nine new members increased our membership to 1282 by the close of the year.

The Newsletter appeared 4 times thanks to the efforts of the editorship and the assistance of the few members who are always on hand to prepare the publications for distribution.

The 'Events' and 'Publications' work groups have been very active since their inauguration at the start of 1997.

The Schools Project, which provides the youth of today with information about the Battle of Arnhem, continues to be successful. There is still great interest in it, both here in the Netherlands and abroad. Support for the project was received from the Airborne Commemorations Foundation.

The excursion to England in 1996 was such a success that it was repeated in 1997, taking place from the 2nd till the 6th of April. On Saturday 7 June the 'Events' work group, led by management member E. Wijnhoud, organised a walk through the western part of the former 'Perimeter'. Many members took part. The special Battlefield Tour on 13 September 1997 gave an overall picture of the battle area at Arnhem. It was organised by Mr W. Boersma, and was enthusiastically received by the 58 participating members. The theme afternoon on 13 December 1997, which this time concentrated on the German side of the Battle of Arnhem, was attended by more than 200 members. The programme consisted of a lecture by Society member P. Berends, followed by the showing of a German newsreel film 'Die Deutsche Wochenschau' from 5 October 1944.

Last year part of the money earmarked for 1998 had already been handed over to the museum. Because of this the amount available to the museum this year came to 3,313 guilders and 68 cents. This was spent on the payment of 25% of the costs of the development of a future vision for the museum, and on uniforms and equipment.

There has been a continuing call for the statuette of a British parachutist produced 10 years ago, so management decided this year to commission a

similar design. The new statuette was created by the British designer Peter Hicks. Beer mugs were once again included in the sales inventory.

Society promotion/sales stands were present at the Royal Netherlands Air Force Open Days at the Gilze Rijen air base, the Resistance Day, the Airborne Walk, and the Pegasus Walk, and at the Society's theme day and the General Members Meeting. Sales results for the Society amounted to 4,937 guilders.

All in all a good year.
(M. de Langen, secretary)

Message from the treasurer

In the previous Newsletter we omitted to mention the subscription fees for individual and family membership. In spite of this omission many people had already paid their 1998 subscriptions by December, some with a gift on top. For this our heartfelt thanks! As opposed to other years, members who have already paid their subs receive their membership cards along with this Newsletter. Management chose this method in order to save on postage. Members who have not yet made their contribution for 1998 are asked to do so as soon as possible. Individual annual membership costs 20 guilders, family annual membership 30 guilders.
(E. van der Meiden, treasurer)

Theme days in 1998

The following theme days will be held in 1998. The annual excursion: Saturday 13 June. Theme afternoon, comprising a lecture and film show: Saturday 31 October.

Battlefield Tour

Mr W. Boersma from the Airborne Museum will be organising a general battlefield tour on Saturday 6 June 1998.

The programme is as follows: 09.30-10.00 am: Reception of participants, with coffee, in the Airborne Museum. 10.00-11.30 am: Guided tour of the Airborne Museum. 11.30 am-12.15 pm: Walk to the Schoonoord restaurant. 12.15-1.15 pm: LUNCH. 1.30-4.30 pm: Battlefield Tour by bus. The sites visited on the tour will include: The landing and dropping zones, Wolfheze, Onderlangs, the John Frost Brug in Arnhem, the Perimeter in Oosterbeek, Wester-bouwing, Oosterbeek-Laag Church, the Tafelberg and the Airborne Cemetery. The cost is 45 guilders, which includes: admission to the Airborne Museum, lunch, the bus trip, and a special information folder. The number of participants is limited to 45 and applications for a place on the tour will be dealt with 'first come first served', as usual. People will only be notified if the Battlefield Tour is fully booked.
(W. Boersma)

Museum weekend, 1998

The national museum weekend will be held this year on 18 and 19 April. Countless museums will be open to the public, free of charge or at a reduced rate of admission. Most will also be organising extra activities for the weekend. This year there will be an emphasis on cycling and walking, providing an excellent opportunity to combine a museum visit with a more sporty activity. At the Airborne Museum 'Hartenstein' one will be able to take part in a walk through the former battle area in Oosterbeek on both the Saturday and Sunday. The walk will cover 5 kilometres and last one and a half hours. The route will take us through the woods to the south of the Hartenstein, and past the Hemelse Berg, to the church in Oosterbeek-Laag and to the former hospital at 'de Tafelberg'. On the way guides will explain the events that took place in September 1944. The walks are free, and departure from the Airborne Museum will be at 12 noon, 2 pm and 3 pm on both days.

Exhibition on prisoners-of-war

The theme exhibition in the Airborne Museum this year will be focused on the British and Polish servicemen who were made prisoners-of-war during the Battle of Arnhem. A work group is busy with the gathering and description of material on the subject. Recent searches of archives in England provided numerous photographs, and film of the liberation of the camps was also unearthed. A reconstruction of part of a prison barracks will be built in the exhibition room in the museum cellar. The exhibition will be open to the public from 18 April.

Memorial service for General Sir John Hackett

A memorial service for General Sir John Hackett was held at the church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square, London on 24 November 1997. Sir John died on 9 September last year. A Dutch delegation of 28 people flew to England for the service, in an aircraft of the Royal Netherlands Air Force. The group included the burgomasters of Arnhem, Ede and Renkum, plus the Reverend Snoek and Mrs Snoek (nephew and niece of the De Nooy sisters, who sheltered the General after the battle), Mrs Caspers (the courier who led Hackett through the enemy lines), Mrs Lambrechtsen-ter Horst (daughter of Kate ter Horst), and many others who knew the then commander of the 4th Parachute Brigade personally. After the service Lady Hackett talked at length with members of the Dutch delegation.

'Airborne Soldier' statuette

The issue of a new statuette entitled 'Airborne Soldier' was announced in Newsletter No. 67. Interest in this little work of art has been enormous,

and it is almost sold out. There are however a few examples still available. The statuette can be purchased at the Airborne Museum, price 250 guilders for members, 275 guilders for non-members.



Author Johann Nitrowski (right) meets Society member Robert Signoud during the presentation of the book 'Die Luftlandung' in Hamminkeln on 11 December 1997. Robert offers Johann a copy of his recently published book 'Off at Last'.
(photo: Bob Gerritsen)

Book about the airborne landings in March 1945

On 11 December 1997 the book 'Die Luftlandung, das Kriegsende im Gebiet der Städte Hamminkeln und Wesel' was presented in the council chamber of the city of Hamminkeln.

The author Johann Nitrowski told a packed chamber how the publication came into being. He first became interested in the wartime history of this area in 1979. He was invited to a presentation of a book about the war. This included the showing of two British films about the airborne landings at Hamminkeln. So began a search into the course of this allied airborne operation that took place in March of 1945, a search that was to take years. As well as studying documents in various archives, Nitrowski also tracked down and interviewed many allied and German veterans.

The recently published book deals with the attack by the 6th British and 17th American Airborne Divisions, which was aimed at forming a bridgehead over the Rhine at Wesel. This Operation Varsity was part of the much larger Operation Plunder, involving the crossing of the Rhine by ground troops.

The book comprises five chapters, each consisting of two parts. The first part gives a description of the objective and the course of the operation, while the second part is given over to eye witness accounts from both sides. The last chapter tells the story of the ground troops who, after crossing the Rhine, forced a breakout from the bridgehead. The descriptions are

very detailed, and the maps show clearly where the actions took place. 'Die Luftlandung' is written in German, and the first edition consisted of 1,200 copies. It contains 520 pages, 390 illustrations, and is in a 30 cm x 24 cm format. The first edition was sold out in one and a half days, and Hamminkeln's Municipal Administration decided to commission a second edition. This will appear in mid March, and will cost 50 German marks. Sponsorship has made it possible to sell this beautiful book at such an incredibly low price.

Author Johann Nitrowski is not entirely unknown to some of our members. In May 1995 he led a theme-day excursion in the Hamminkeln area. During his explanations his enthusiasm and passion for the history of his region was obvious. This passion and his attention to detail guarantee an exceptional publication.

In view of the limited second edition, 2,000 copies, and the tremendous interest already shown, it is expected that the book will again be very quickly sold out. So, if you are interested in buying a copy, it's best not to wait too long. More information can be obtained from

Bob Gerritsen in Duiven, tel 0316 263743.
(Bob Gerritsen)

David Lord's Victoria Cross auctioned

Flight Lieutenant David Lord's Victoria Cross was auctioned on 17 July last year by the London auction house Spink & Son. The medal reached a selling price of 110,000 pounds (approx. 370,000 guilders). In September 1944 Flt.Lt. David Lord was the pilot of Dakota KG 374 from 271 Squadron RAF. During a resupply flight to Arnhem on Tuesday the 19th his aircraft was hit by German anti-aircraft artillery, which set fire to the starboard wing. Instead of giving the order to bale out, Lord decided to fly on to the supply dropping zone. When the Dakota arrived over the dropping point, the despatchers were able to eject six of the eight panniers. Although the machine was now burning more fiercely, Lord turned and flew once more over the dropping zone. After the last two panniers were dropped the aircraft crashed near Wolfheze. For his sacrifice Flt.Lt. Lord was posthumously awarded the highest British military decoration, the Victoria Cross. Only 106 VCs were awarded during the Second World War. One can read a detailed account of Lord's last flight and the search for the remains of his crashed aircraft in an article entitled 'Arnhem VC Investigation' in issue 96 of the magazine 'After the Battle'. The article was written by Society member Karel Margry.

'Theirs is the Glory' appeal

In August and September 1945, the film 'Theirs is the Glory' was shot in Arnhem and Oosterbeek. No actors were used in this re-enactment of the Battle of Arnhem, all parts being played by men of the 1st Airborne Division who had actually taken part in the battle a year before. In connection with an

investigation into the history of 'Theirs is the Glory', we would like to get in touch with veterans who were involved with the filming, and with inhabitants of Arnhem and Oosterbeek who experienced the making of the film at first hand.

We are also looking for photographs from that period. If you are able to help with this investigation, you are kindly invited to contact the Renkum Municipal Archivist Geert Maassen, Post Box 9100, 6860 HA Oosterbeek, tel. 026 3348303.

Appeal: 'de Oorsprong' estate

Mr Philip Reinders from Vlaardingien is looking for civilians who took shelter in the Frowein air-raid shelter on 'de Oorsprong' estate in Oosterbeek during the Battle of Arnhem. This shelter was (and is) in the woods next to the mansion, which was destroyed during the battle. Philip would also like to hear from anyone who knows anything about wreckage, field graves etc. on or nearby the estate. Any photos would also be greatly welcomed.

Reactions please to Ph. Reinders, Delftseveerweg 37d, 3134 JG, Vlaardingien. Tel/fax 010 4356704.

Book news

The editors have recently been made aware of the publication of the book 'Slachtoffers van de Emmapyramide, Velps gevangenisleven in de winter '44-'45 en de na-oorlogse speurtoch naar vermisten' (Victims of the Emma pyramid, prison life in Velp in the winter of '44-'45 and the post-war search for the missing), by J.O. van de Wal. The central theme is the fate of a group of men who were executed by the Germans at the foot of the Emma pyramid on 13 December 1944. The story also encompasses the Pegasus I and II Operations. The book is published by Fagus, from Aalten, and is available from Oosterbeek bookshops at 47 guilders 50.

Request

Society members who have produced publications, and would like to offer copies of the same for sale at theme days or the annual meeting, are kindly requested to let Eugène Wijnhoud know in good time. He will then make sure that a table is available in the room where the lecture or meeting is held. Eugène's address is: Bernhardlaan 41, 1 hoog, 6824 LE Arnhem, tel 026 3513100.

Notify us of your change of address on time

We still get membership cards and Newsletters returned to us 'Address unknown'. Every year the Society is put to an awful lot of unnecessary expense in getting these items to the correct addresses. Therefore, may we ask you, very kindly, if you intend moving house, please inform us of your change of address in plenty of time. We can then ensure that your 'Airborne' mail arrives at the correct destination.