

Friends of the **AIRBORNE** MUSEUM

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Translated by Cathrien and Peter Clark

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Friends for twenty years

The Society of Friends of the Airborne Museum is twenty years old! That means two hundred management meetings, eighty Newsletters, fifty lectures and excursions, fifty thousand schools' projects and more than 300,000 guilders for our museum. And that's not bad! Observant readers will translate this effort into hours of work. How many unpaid hours does it involve? How many words have been spoken and decisions taken? I'm afraid these are questions I am unable to answer, but I am certain that you and I would have a shock if a sum were made.

In short, many board members, together with other enthusiastic members, have worked hard to keep our Society going and to expand it. And to give you the feeling that you belong to a fine organisation which, in conjunction with the museum, wishes to keep alive the memory of the Battle of Arnhem. A club with 1400 members, here and abroad, ensures a lot of work for us, and every day of the year I am proud to think that there are so many people helping us with positive advice and action. Most board members have full-time jobs and do society work in their spare time. Because of this things sometimes go slightly amiss, such as when certain activities take more time than expected. But, luckily, in most cases a solution can be found. For instance, in all these years only once have I heard that two members found the late appearance of the Newsletter 'scandalous'. In the view of the amount of work that goes into producing this publication I found that remark totally unfitting.

The new year promises to be interesting and exciting. The second Market Garden excursion, with the Grave-Driel sector as its subject, is under preparation. This trip will be a sequel to last year's Neerpelt-Grave battlefield tour. Partially in connection with this, and as a finale to our AGM next April 7, a visit will be made to the recently re-opened Liberation Museum. As was the case last year, lunch will be taken in Zalencentrum Lebrecht prior to the bus journey to Groesbeek. This year the preparations and 'reconnaissances' will

be carried out for a possible extended tour of the Ardennes region in 2002. Naturally you will be kept informed.

A number of you will already be aware of the discussion that has taken place between the Society of Friends of the Airborne Museum and the Stichting Airborne Museum (Airborne Museum Foundation, AMF) about the building of a lift for disabled persons. The Stichting Airlift (Airlift Foundation) was created for this purpose, made up of representatives from the AMF and the Stichting Gehandicaptten Overleg Renkum – a body serving the interests of the disabled. Our Society is totally behind any initiative to make the building more accessible, not only for wheelchair users and those less fleet of foot, but also for people with vision and hearing difficulties.

However, a difference of opinion has arisen regarding the way in which the lift project could be realised. Should it be built inside the building, or should it be a glass lift shaft on the outside? Your board prefers the inside solution, assuming it is architecturally possible. We feel that everything possible should be done to avoid affecting the external appearance of the historical Hartenstein building, a listed National monument. The AMF and the Stichting Airlift go for the external option. To make things absolutely clear it must be said the AMF, which by right has prime responsibility for the museum, has decided to set in motion the building plan for an outside lift. Despite this, the often fiery, but always constructive, discussion between the Friends and the board of trustees of the AMF is still in full flow. You will be informed of the latest developments during the next AGM.

Recently, it became possible for schools to download our entire schools project from our website, a fact of which we can be justifiably proud.

Thanks to the enthusiastic efforts of our British representative Niall Cherry, a group of British members will be making a battlefield tour in our area on 22, 23 and 24 June 2001.

You will find all other events listed in an appendix to this Newsletter. It promises to be another busy

year, one that I hope we shall be able to look back on with satisfaction in 2002.
(C. van Roekel)



Dutch Commando Tom Italiaander's uniform, recently donated to the Airborne Museum by his widow. Corporal Italiaander took part in the Battle of Arnhem in September 1944. See Ministry No. 68 (with Newsletter No. 80). (Photo: Berry de Reus)

Apologies

The bottom of the pages of the previous Newsletter had not been cropped, making it necessary to cut these through before you could read the contents. The printer has offered his apologies to us in writing, with the promise to do better in future.

'Friends' get their own room

Up until mid 2000 the museum's attic apartment was the home of Curator Berry de Reus. The Airborne Museum Foundation has put a room and storage facility at the disposal of the Friends' society in the space that has now become available. Very soon we shall have a large conference room, and we shall be able to store our papers and stock in a neat and tidy manner. If desired we will also be able to leave items temporarily on the table without fear that the public will help themselves. The re-location and inventory will take a little time, and because of this the ordering of back numbers of the Newsletter will not be possible until the end of April. Thereafter we hope to provide you with an even better service than before.

(C. van Roekel)

Airborne Museum certificate

On 11 November 2000 the Airborne Museum, along with fourteen other Gelderland museums, was included in the Nederlands Museum Register. The museum received this 'seal of approval' during the Gelders Oudheidkundig Contact contact day held in the Open Air Museum in Arnhem. The certificate is

awarded to all Dutch museums that satisfy certain quality requirement levels. As far as we know, 'Hartenstein' is the first military museum to be given this certification. Among other things, the requirements are that the material must be well ordered, and the collection registered. Quality requirements are placed on the staff, who must be well educated, as well as on the volunteers. The aim of this mark of quality is to promote the further improvement in the standard of Dutch museums.

New medal display cabinet

On 15 September last year a new display cabinet for the medals of soldiers who took part in the Battle of Arnhem was unveiled by Captain (Ret'd) Z.R. Gasowski, President of the Polish Airborne Forces Association. A second cabinet was badly needed because the number of medals given to the Airborne Museum continues to increase. In the year 2000, medals were donated by the following veterans and others: Colour Sergeant P. Banks, 10th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment; Lieutenant Colonel K.B.I. Smyth OBE, Commander 10th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment; Strzelec (Private) T. Sosk6w, 3rd Battalion, 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade Group; Sergeant H.W. Walker, Royal Army Ordnance Corps; Lance Corporal G. Ward, 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment.

Acquisitions

The museum recently acquired a copy of the well-known German propaganda magazine, the 'Signal'. This issue dating from 1944 (No. 19) contains a report on the Battle of Arnhem. However, this is no ordinary copy but a smaller version in English. These were 'delivered' to England by way of V1 'Doodlebugs'. Copies of these 'Signals' are very rare. At the end of the war there was also another flyer in existence called 'The Other Side'. These too were sent courtesy of the V1. The museum obtained a copy of this publication some time ago.
(W. Boersma)

BBC documentary

In last October's Newsletter mention was made of the filming of a television documentary about operation Market Garden. The museum was involved in the filming for four days, from seven in the morning till nine in the evening. The finished product is due for transmission by the BBC in May this year as one of a series of four. The presenter Dr Richard Holmes told the producers/directors, David Wilson and Julian Hudson, that the episode dealing with Arnhem is the best he has ever made. He had appeared previously in the 'War Walks' series that was broadcast on BBC and Belgian TV. This 'Arnhem' section of the series is unusual in that it includes film shot for the first time in the attic of Zwarteweg 14 in Arnhem. It was here that General

Urquhart, Captain Taylor and Lieutenant Cleminson were isolated and hid out from Monday afternoon the 18th until Tuesday morning the 19th of September. There are also interviews with Major Tony Hibbert, Moffat Burris (who took part in the crossing of the river Waal), and the above-mentioned Lieutenant, now Sir James, Cleminson.

After transmission by the BBC the museum will be given a tape which can eventually be shown at one of the Friends' theme afternoons. The film lasts forty minutes.

It is not certain if all the footage is authentic. The credits mention that reconstructions are included. Keep an eye on your TV programme guide. (A. Groeneweg)

Our representative in Britain

One of our members in Britain, Mr Gary Jucha, whose father fought with 4 Company, 2nd Battalion, Polish Parachute Brigade in Driel in 1944, is the coordinator of a small group of family and friends of Polish veterans who regularly exchange information on matters relating to this former unit. Contact is maintained via e-mail and letter. There are members of this group living in England, France, Poland, Canada, the USA and the Netherlands. Those interested can contact Gary Jucha, e-mail address: POLSK144@driel.fsnet.co.uk, home address: 160 Crown Street, Peterborough, Cambs, PE1 3HZ, England. Gary also informed us that Major/Doctor Stanislaw Janusz ('Staszek') Sosabowski, son of the late Major General Stanislaw Sosabowski, passed away in England on 6 November 2000 at the age of 83. Staszek was blinded by German shellfire during the Warsaw uprising. There is a Sosabowski family website: www.sosabowski.com. (Niall Cherry)

List of names

In the previous Newsletter I made an appeal regarding the compilation of a list of names of all servicemen of the 1st British Airborne Division who took part in the Battle of Arnhem in September 1944. I would like to thank all of you who responded. I hope to publish the list this year if possible. The following information will be included: name, army number, age (if KIA), unit, escaped or taken prisoner (POW). The names will be listed in alphabetical order, not per unit thus. The list will be published in book form and not on CD-Rom. I will keep you up to date with the progress of the project via the Newsletter. (Philip Reinders)

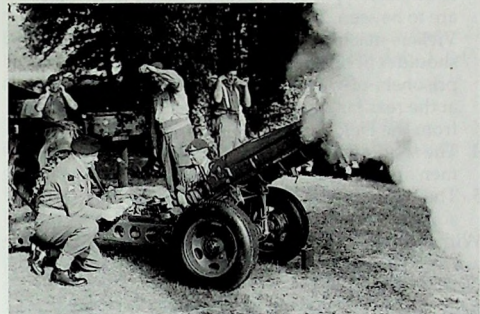
Gunsmoke

A demonstration of the firing of a 75 mm Pack Howitzer was given on Friday afternoon 15 September 2000 in the grounds of the Westerboewing in Oosterbeek. The event was

organised by 'Airborne Battle Wheels Oosterbeek' and the gun crew came from the 'Living History Group Holland'. Various people wanted to know about the technical aspects of firing the howitzer, and Dick Timmerman provided some background information.

During the demo 5 x 5 shots were fired.

Approximately 250 grams of gunpowder were used for each shot, this being packed in an ordinary plastic sandwich bag, and placed in a prepared 75 mm shell case. By prepared we mean that a live 9 mm firing cartridge was positioned at the bottom of the case. This firing cartridge replaced the original detonator, which had been removed. In order to increase the visual impact, shredded paper was also packed into the shell case. In view of the huge interest generated by this spectacle a repetition is possible!



A demonstration of the firing of a 75 mm Pack Howitzer on 15 September 2000 at the Westerboewing in Oosterbeek.

(Photo: Kees Smulders)

The sale of publications

Although this has already been mentioned in the March 1999 Newsletter No. 69, the management board of the Society of Friends would again like to emphasise that the sale of one's own publications at AGMs, theme days and other meetings is not allowed unless permission to do so has been obtained from the board. A written request for permission should be sent to the board, accompanied by a sample copy of the publication in question. Depending on the price of the publication, the author will be asked for a small contribution in order to help reduce the cost of the theme day or excursion concerned. For questions regarding this ruling, write to or ring Eugène Wijnhoud, Bernhardlaan 41-1, 6824 LE, Arnhem, tel. 026 3513100, e-mail E.Wijnhoud@12move.nl. (E. Wijnhoud)

'Unknown, not forgotten'

The unknown photo in the previous Newsletter stirred a number of members into action, eight responses being received in all. Doubtless many more Friends have been poring over the question.

The first person to ring got no further than the revealing and uplifting message, 'It is not Heelsum!', but subsequent letters and phone calls have been of increasingly substantial content.

Put all together the following conclusions and questions are not illogical.

1. The photo was not taken in the Arnhem region. No one recognises the topographical situation and/or the people.
2. The location seems to be in the Netherlands, even in the province of Gelderland, in view of the houses, small garden gates and tramline poles (but where are the rails?!). Others say they are German village houses.
3. The servicemen concerned have not been photographed in a combat situation. They walk as if on an exercise or a march. No personal weapons, ammunition pouches hand grenades or helmets are to be seen. The only weapon visible is a Vickers machine gun being carried on the shoulder of one of the men. Could they be prisoners-of-war being marched away? Is the man at the rear far right a German serviceman, perhaps from the Field Police?
4. The shadows (position of the sun) show that the men are going in a westerly direction.
5. The leaves on the trees, sharp light and thick scarves being worn suggest springtime.

With all facts set down we come to the vital question: are they men of the 6th Airborne Division in Germany in April 1945?

Reactions to the above would be most welcome, and I would like to thank sincerely those who have made their views known. To be continued (probably).
(Geert Maassen)

Battlefield tour 'Market Garden 1'

On Saturday 19 May next, the Documentation Group '40-'45 will be repeating the 'Market Garden 1' battlefield tour as organised by the Society of Friends on 7 October last year. Members of the Society of Friends and the Documentation Group can take part, and our guide will again be Jacques Haegens. The excursion will start from the NS railway station in 's Hertogenbosch, and bookings should be made before 15 April. All bookings will be dealt with in order of receipt, and you will only be notified if the excursion is fully booked. Contact W. Boersma for more information, tel. 0318 639633, e-mail w.boersma@wxs.nl.
(W. Boersma)

Normandy excursion

Society member Mr Jacques Haegens, who led the Friends' Society excursion to Normandy in 1999, has informed us that he will again be making a five-day tour to the area in conjunction with Kupers travel agency in Weert. The excursion will take place from 22 to 26 August, the programme will be more or less the same as that of 1999, and the price will be 795 guilders per person. Members (and non-

members) who are interested in making this trip can contact Jacques Haegens on 046 4517065.

Appeal, 11th Parachute Battalion

I would like to make contact with veterans, families or others who may be able to help me with information regarding my research into the history of the 11th Parachute Battalion. I am not only interested in the Arnhem operation, but also other operations in which this unit was involved. Details of life in the battalion and training would also be welcome. Furthermore, I would like to invite veterans of the 11th Battalion and their families, planning to attend the Airborne commemoration this September, to a reunion on Wednesday 20 September 2001. This will be held in the Dreyeroord Hotel in Graaf van Rechterenweg, Oosterbeek, commencing at 2 pm. Entry for veterans and their family members is free, but others will be asked for a contribution of 17.50 guilders to help cover costs. Prior reservation is necessary, after which you will be given further information. Please make your reservations before 1 May with Peter-Alexander van Teeseling, Margrietstraat 30, 6862 GP, Oosterbeek, e-mail: nvdo.teeseling@wxs.nl.
(Peter-Alexander van Teeseling)

'Tugs and Gliders to Arnhem' (II)

In the previous Newsletter the publication of the book 'Tugs and Gliders to Arnhem' by Arie-Jan van Hees was announced. The following information is intended for members in the UK wishing to order a copy. The book costs 69.95 guilders plus 16 guilders p&p per copy to the United Kingdom, making a total cost in the UK of 85.95 guilders (39.00 Euros). The following methods can be used for trouble-free payment:

Eurocheque in Dutch guilders

Send a Eurocheque for 85.95 guilders, made out to A.J van Hees, Courtpendu 7, 6245 PE, Eijsden, The Netherlands. It should be pointed out that only Eurocheques bearing the EC logo are free of additional charges to the beneficiary. And don't forget to write your name and telephone number on the back of the cheque.

Direct payment into my bank account in Euros

You can ask your bank to transfer your remittance of 39 Euros directly into my ABN bank account number 57.70.54.821 at the ABN Bank, Eijsden, The Netherlands. Please advise your bank that payment must be made 'free of all charges to the beneficiary'. If this is not done, I shall be charged a 9.43 Euro administration fee by my bank. In addition, please ensure that your bank notifies my bank of your address and telephone number. Payment by banker's cheque or International Money Order will result in additional charges. For more details on these methods of payment please contact the author: A.J. van Hees, Courtpendu 7, 6245 PE, Eijsden, The Netherlands.
(A.J. van Hees)