



Friends of the AIRBORNE MUSEUM

From the Board

The issue of this edition coincides with Geert Maassen's decision to relinquish his position as member of the Newsletter editorship, a post he has held for 10 years. Pressure of work has brought him to this decision. Geert joined the Newsletter editing team in 1993, with number 49 to be exact. Over the years that followed he regularly produced articles covering a wide range of topics. Besides this he edited the contributed Ministories with painstaking accuracy, often accompanied by critical comment. In this his encyclopaedic knowledge of the history of our municipality was of inestimable value.

The members and board of the Society of Friends would like to thank Geert for all he has done for the society. Fortunately, he has indicated that he will still be available for editorial work if required. Geert will also continue his work with the publication commission.

25th Jubilee

The celebration of the Society of Friends' Silver Jubilee on Saturday 21 May attracted several hundred members and other interested parties to the Airborne Museum. A number of stands had been set up around the museum in which representatives of the SFAM and other organisations exhibited museum pieces and gave demonstrations. There were stands displaying radio equipment, medical items, model making, books, etc, and a large tent in which all sorts of weapons were on show. Also there for inspection were a Bren carrier, a 25-pounder artillery piece and a howitzer. The public was able to view all the museum exhibits at close hand, even being allowed to handle and/or touch them, something which a museum does not normally allow. All questions were expertly answered. The weather was ideal, which encouraged many people to remain in the grounds for quite a time, enjoying the snacks and drinks provided by the Schoonoord restaurant. Later in the afternoon a number of members gathered in the museum's large room for the more 'official' part of the day. In his speech our chairman Ben Kolster spoke in glowing terms of the close bond between the society and the Airborne Museum. The SFAM's support of the museum was emphasised by the presen-

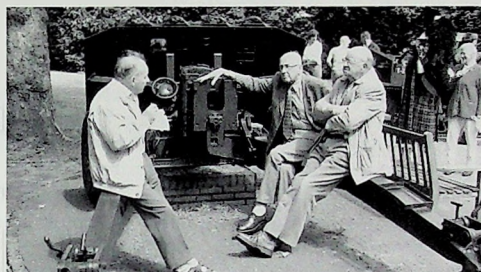


PHOTO: E. VAN DER MEIDEN

Three members of the Society of Friends sit chatting on one of the 17-pounder guns next to the Airborne Museum during the SFAM's Silver Jubilee on 21 May 2005.

tation of a cheque to Mr Groeneweg, who thanked Ben on behalf of the Airborne Museum Foundation.

Thanks to the efforts of legions of volunteers, among others, the SFAM can look back on a wonderfully successful jubilee!

(Erik van der Meiden)

61st Commemoration programme on internet

The Stichting Airborne Herdenkingen (Airborne Commemoration Foundation) has put the programme for the 61st Commemoration of the Battle of Arnhem on internet: see www.airborne-herdenkingen.nl.

Wybo Boersma standing down as director

On 17 September 2005 Wybo Boersma will be leaving his function as director of the Airborne Museum. He will be succeeded by Frans Smolders - deputy director/curator since June 2004 - on 1 October 2005. Wybo began working at the museum as a volunteer in 1972 and was elected to the Airborne Museum board of directors in 1974. After taking early retirement from the Dutch Army in 1991 he was to be found every day working as a volunteer in the museum. He was also the guiding force behind the big renovation project in 1993/1994. After the renovation he became director of the Airborne Museum. Mr Boersma will retain his links with the museum as member of the foundation board.

A reception to mark Wybo's farewell as director will

be held in the Airborne Museum on 23 September next, starting at about 17.00 hours.

Changes in the foundation board

Over a very short period we have lost three members of the Airborne Museum Foundation Board through retirement from their respective functions. Mr André de Vries resigned as chairman for personal reasons. He took up this position in 2004. It was under his guidance that the museum's innovation plans came into being. Vice-Chairman Jook van Slooten takes over as ad interim chairman

Aad Groeneweg and Gerrit Pijpers intend standing down as board members as soon as replacements can be found. Aad Groeneweg has been a foundation board member since 1975. He will continue as advisor to the museum. Mr Van Slooten took over Aad's function as vice-chairman at the beginning of July 2005.

Gerrit Pijpers joined the board in 1995. His present work with the Royal Dutch Air Force gives him too little time to carry out a board function at the Airborne Museum.

The Foundation's board of directors owes a great debt of gratitude to this retiring trio for the massive amount of work they have done for the museum over the years.

The Airborne Museum Foundation will very shortly be looking for new members to fill these vacancies.

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Lecture on re-supply flights

On Saturday 3 December 2005 society member Arie-Jan van Hees will be giving a lecture on the re-supply flights carried out by British Stirling and Dakota squadrons to the Arnhem battle zone between 17 and 26 September 1944. The organisation of air despatch operations will also be gone into in detail. Arie-Jan published a book on the subject in 2004, entitled 'Green On, The Story of the Arnhem re-supply'. Signed copies of the book will be on sale on the afternoon of the lecture.

The lavishly-illustrated lecture will be held in the Concert Hall in Rozensteeg, Oosterbeek, starting at 14.00 hours (doors open 13.30 ours).

Questionnaire

In March this year all Dutch members of the Society of Friends received a questionnaire. We propose using the results of this questionnaire to help formulate a future vision for the society.

1035 forms were sent out and up to now 213 have been returned completed, for which we thank you!

If you have not yet filled in the questionnaire but intend doing so, you still have time to send it to: Society of Friends of the Airborne Museum, c/o St. Bernulphusstraat 8, 6861 GS, Oosterbeek. The data contained in the returned questionnaires will be processed during the winter.

(Erik van der Meiden)

Photo site located

A photograph appeared in the September 2004 issue of the Newsletter (number 95) showing an open area with a number of houses in the background. Clouds

PHOTO: DR. R.S. TJADEN-MODDERMAN



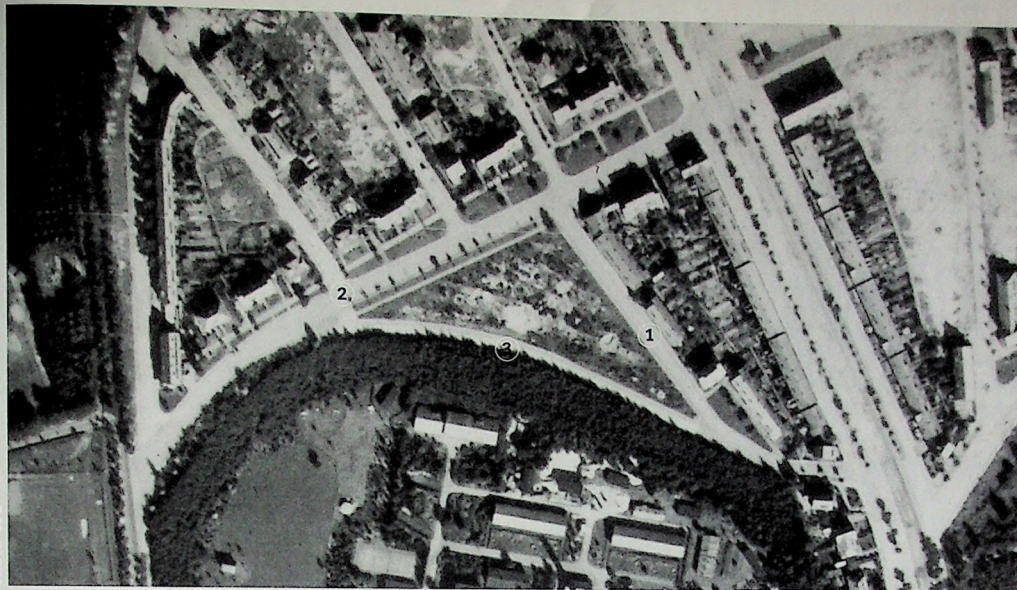
Until last year we had no idea that this photograph had been taken at Beethovenlaan in Arnhem. Date: 17 September 1944.

of smoke are visible on the left. The only information we had at the time of inclusion was that it was taken on 17 September 1944 by Dr. R.S. Tjaden-Modderman, probably in Arnhem. Our question then was: where was the photographer standing when he took the photo and what caused the smoke?

Shortly after Newsletter no 95 had been issued we came across Mr Tjaden-Modderman's name in the book 'De illegale camera 1940-1945, Nederlandse fotografie tijdens de Duitse bezetting' (The illegal camera 1940-1945, Dutch photography during the German occupation), by Veronica Hekking and Flip Bool (Naarden, 1995). The compilers of the book had been allowed to borrow the original album from a private collection for their research. The photo in question had the following caption: 'the airborne landings at Eindhoven, Nijmegen and Arnhem. This was a limited bombing raid on houses in Beethovenlaan in Arnhem... (photo taken a few seconds after the first bomb fell)'. This text is missing from the photo in the Gelders Archive, which possesses reproductions only, without text.

Five of our society members, Messrs J. de Vries, K.H. Kwabek, J. Back and H. Timmerman from Arnhem, and Mr D. Kolenbrander from Velp, confirmed the location as being Beethovenlaan in the Alteveer district of Arnhem-Noord. All five came to the conclusion that the photographer took the picture from Lisztstraat, looking in a north-westerly direction. On the left, along Mahlerstraat, one can see the fir trees on the steep slope down to the former Municipal Hospital, now the Rijnstate Hospital. The trees are still there, and the house furthest right in Beethovenlaan is numbered 27 and 29. Flats have now been built on the open area in the foreground, so a comparable photo can no longer be made.

Mr Kolenbrander had something else to add concerning the plumes of smoke. According to him they were caused by an attack from a fighter aircraft, probably a Typhoon. At that moment he was at the corner of Bachlaan and Cattepoelseweg, and he thinks the attack occurred around midday. He refers us to the book 'De Zwarte Herfst' (The Black Autumn) by C.A. Dekkers and L.P.J. Vroemen (Weesp, 1984). The following police report from 17 September 1944 is reproduced on page 25: '12.30 hours: telephone call reports bomb explosions in



Aerial photo taken on 6 September 1944 showing, in the centre, the area photographed by Dr. R.S. Tjaden-Modderman on 17 September 1944. 1. Lisztstraat, where the photographer was standing when he took the photo. 2. Beethovenlaan, with houses on the north side. 3. Mahlerstraat, with the slope – with a strip of darker coloured fir trees at the top – down to the former Municipal Hospital. The triangular open ground lying between the three above-mentioned streets is visible in the foreground of Mr Tjaden-Modderman's photo. After the war this area was built on.

Bachlaan, 3 to 4 houses hit, possible casualties'. We have been unable to verify if the above-mentioned incident actually caused the smoke that can be seen. Any further information would be gratefully received.

The editors would like to thank those members who took the trouble to respond to our appeal.

(Robert Voskuil)

UK Members Weekend 16-18 June 2005

Once again I was privileged to be part of the UK members' weekend. Even though I missed the walk on the Friday afternoon I'm told it was, as usual, expertly led by Niall Cherry, with a number of stops at salient points around Oosterbeek. They ended up at the relatively new Operation Berlin memorial which few people had been to before. Anyway, Saturday morning came hot and sunny, and this year it was to be a 1st Parachute Brigade day. Various locations were visited and numerous new stories told. Indeed, on the Bredelaan I was interested to hear from a group member the story of a pistol liberated from the Kussin car by a member of the 3rd Parachute Battalion. The majority of the day was spent looking at the actions of B Company of the 2nd Parachute Battalion, led by the highly knowledgeable David van Buggenum. One of the highlights was going to the scene of their action at the now disused Oosterbeek Laag station. Whilst David was recounting the events of 17th September 1944, the current owner produced a WW2 Army green right angled torch that he had recently dug up from his garden.

Neither was C Company of the 2nd Parachute Battalion ignored, and Marcel Anker walked and

talked about their actions in the St Elisabeths Hospital area towards Arnhem. Later on we followed the route of B Company from the pontoon bridge to the road bridge, taking the opportunity on the way to match up some of the famous Sem Presser photos. I was quite unaware of the actual spot before the weekend. All in all an excellent day, with Niall and Eugene providing a booklet containing maps and photographs to help orientate us.

Sunday was a bit of a journey into the unknown for many of us, as we looked at some areas away from Arnhem. We visited a couple of the US dropping and landing zones before arriving at the LZ of Browning's 1st Airborne Corps HQ. Visits also followed to the Groesbeek Memorial to the Missing and Nijmegen to look at the Guards Armoured Division actions. We walked across the road bridge before meeting the vehicles for a most welcome lunch on the banks of the Waal. After lunch we drove round the Island looking at various scenes of actions of the Polish Parachute Brigade and the 43rd Wessex Division. On the banks of the Rhine at Driel, Niall offered us the option of taking the ferry across the river or driving around. The whole party went with Niall on the passenger ferry - a bargain at 60 cents. This gave us all an excellent view down the Rhine towards Arnhem.

All in all another excellent trip, and thanks must go to Eugene and Niall for the tour notes and administration, the speakers at various locations, the Dutch friends who helped with transport and lunches, notably Bob, Robert, Erik, Annejoke van der Meiden and Monique Wijnhoud. If I've missed anyone it is entirely accidental and please accept my apologies. There is talk of a further weekend in 2007 and I'd

wholeheartedly recommend the weekend to any UK member. Anyone who's previously thought about going and hasn't has certainly missed an excellent trip.

(Lawrence Le Carré)

Hideout remains visited

During the Battle of Arnhem, nine men of the 10th Parachute Battalion hid-out in a hut in the woods near the Kleine Kweek area to the north of Dreijenseweg. They probably arrived at this spot when, after the fighting at the La Cabine pumping station on 19 September 1944, they saw no real possibility of rejoining the bulk of the force on the south side of Amsterdamseweg. Information on this can be found in the books 'Zwevend naar de Dood' (chapter 14), 'De Zwarte Herfst' (chapter 46) and 'Blik Omhoog', part 3, page 898.

During a meeting with Mr Ben Oosting, South Veluwe supervisor of the Gelders Landscape, he mentioned that the remains of this hideaway were still to be found. He offered to show me the place,



PHOTO: PHILIP REINDERS

British rifle ammunition and a phosphorous grenade found recently in a former hiding place of soldiers from the 10th Parachute Battalion in Kleine Kweek woods, north of Amsterdamseweg, level with the 'De Leeren Doedel' restaurant.

which a week later he did. When we got there the remains of the hut were clearly visible in two adjacent places in the woods. Once the various twigs and branches had been removed the search could begin. A dangerous phosphorous grenade lay next to a piece of webbing and some bullets at the spot where the hut originally stood. Thirty metres or so further on lay more than a thousand rounds of British .303 rifle ammunition. We also came across three 20 mm cartridge cases from the guns of allied fighters. The munitions were removed to a safe spot and reburied. They were removed later by the Explosives Clearance Unit.

It is interesting that even now, 61 years after the Battle of Arnhem, there are still places to be found in the field that played a part in the battle.

(Philip Reinders)

'De Vergeten Executie', (The forgotten execution)

In the book "Arnhem 44/45" (1981) by the former head of the Arnhem Municipal Archive, the late Mr P.R.A. van Iddekinge, is a passage on page 34 which tells of the shooting of three civilians at Sonsbeek Park. This is said to have happened on Wednesday 20 or Thursday 21 September 1944. A fourth civilian escaped. Van Iddekinge gave no further details.

Jos Diender, who works at the Sonsbeek visitors' centre, has recently completed detailed research into this scarcely known piece of history, which even some 'Arnhem connoisseurs' doubt ever happened. The result of his investigation has now been described in a brochure and published by the Sonsbeek Visitors' Centre. It is admirable how, thanks to intensive detective work, Mr Diender has brought to light the history of this execution in which two civilians were killed and two escaped. The booklet, illustrated with photos, highlights this dramatic event that took place at Sonsbeek Park more than 60 years ago. Fortunately there are still enthusiastic people about who are prepared to put in the time and effort to research these aspects of the Battle of Arnhem. The booklet is also a must for the Arnhem aficionados, and no one can quibble at the price of just € 1.

'Arnhem, 20 September 1944, De Vergeten Executie', by Jos Diender, is a Sonsbeek Visitors' Centre, Arnhem publication. This 17-page booklet is available at the Sonsbeek Park visitors' centre, Arnhem. (Wybo Boersma)

COLOPHON

The Newsletter is a publication of the Society of Friends of the Airborne Museum Oosterbeek (SFAM) and appears four 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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