

## Another Monument

NL-Doet

75<sup>th</sup> Remembrance

### Change in the board

We would like to thank Paul Brok for his time and effort as a board member. Unfortunately Paul could not combine this role with another board member role. Paul, thanks a lot and good luck in your other board member role.

Are you interested, or do you know anyone else who could be interested in joining us as a board member within the foundation, please feel free to contact us through our e-mail address [secretaris@monumentmierlohout.nl](mailto:secretaris@monumentmierlohout.nl)

### Another Monument

This time not a specific monument, however an information plaque that refers to one of the biggest controversial bombings in NAZI-Germany.

“Operation Chastise” May 16 and 17, 1943

The German weapon plants in and around the Ruhr area needed electricity and water (drinking water, however mainly water to cool) for their production. This water was supplied by big hydroelectric power plants behind the reservoirs. The reservoirs were also used to control the water level of the Ruhr (through the Möhne dam) and the Wezer (through the Eder dam).

This operation was lead by Wing Commander Guy Penrose Gibson (12-8-1918 / 19-9-1944)



It now seems that the Wilhelmina canal and the de Zuid-Willems canal had an important role during this operation.

**A passage from his book “Dambuster” describes the following:**

The route would be along side a straight canal, which would end in a T-junction and after that junction he would find the Dutch-German border.

All eyes started to search for the correct canal, as we could not afford to make a mistake. And yes, slowly but clearly the canal showed before us and we carefully followed the canal by flying right above it, as we were awfully close to Eindhoven, which had the reputation of a strong defense. After some minutes we could however leave Eindhoven behind us and we noticed a horizontal shimmering line arise in front of us. That was the T-junction. Spam immediately noticed where we were at; exactly on correct route provided and Terry set course to the Rijn.



The information board is located at the Wilhelminaweg in Laarbeek. In the street between the Wilhelmina canal and Restaurant De Hommel.

In “Operation Chastise” 19 Avro Lancasters took part with each 7 crew members. The total group existed of 133 crew members divided over different nationalities. 8 Lancasters have been lost; 53 crew members died and 3 were made prisoners of war.

Eighty crew members survived the attack of the dams. Of these 80, 22 died later during the war in service of the 617th Squadron and 10 other lost their lives in other Squadrons during the war. Only 48 pilots who participated in the attack of the dams survived WWII.

This operation is now known as the “Dambusters Raid” and was made into a film.

Gibson was a Master Bomber during a mission towards twin cities Mönchengladbach and Rheydt, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 1944. He had to precede the bomb squad and mark the targets. The complete formation counted 227 Lancasters and 10 Mosquitos. Gibson was pilot of a Mosquito KB267 in the 627 Squadron. Squadron Leader Jim Warwick was his navigator. Above the target area, Gibson was still providing instructions to the formation, however on his way back to England, it went wrong. Around 11AM the Mosquito crashed near Steenberg, a West-Brabant village, and Gibson and Warwick both died. According to witnesses, a deviant motor sound. Assumption was made that the plane was hit by the defense near the target, seeing there were no claims from the Germans. Gibson and Warwick were buried next to each other at the general cemetery in Steenberg; their graves are still there.

**NL-doet**



Roll up your sleeves!

The board rolled up their sleeves, together with the elementary school kids of BS 't Baken, 8th grade. March 15<sup>th</sup> we did several chores around the remembrance monument and the small monument in the Slegersstraat. Unfortunately the weather was not cooperative and a national strike amongst teachers (closed schools) also did not help.

Still we had 4 children that were supportive and helped to finish the chores. Afterwards the LEV-group brought us cake, which we happily accepted.

Soon the board will go back to 't Baken to hand over a photo album and certificate for their adoption year 2018-2019.



We also would like to thank Jo vd Westerlo for the help provided, unfortunately Jo could not make it to join us for the picture.



After receiving several requests around Rabo club campaign, I can confirm it will only take place in October of this year. We will keep you informed on the developments.

Na diverse vragen omtrent deelname RABO clubkas, kan ik medelen dat de campagne pas in

## 75th Remembrance



Slowly but surely, our roadmap for the 75<sup>th</sup> remembrance is almost finalized. We have had several conversations with the municipality of Helmond, around the start of the festivities. Mierlo-Hout will take care of the start of all festivities in the Helmond and possibly Peel region as well.

As you might know, Helmond was only liberated September 25<sup>th</sup>.

We will facilitate education in different schools and also care home Alphonsus is on the agenda.

The transit of the military vehicles Sept 17th will be the eye catcher of the region.

Schools are contacted to give children a chance to be present at this big event. This could be the last big remembrance.

We do hope that the road construction at Mierloseweg/ Hoofdstraat will be finalized. To be sure we have created an alternative route, in case the road construction will not be ready on time.

The first announcement of the festivities is now visible to all as well. On the side of the house, left of the monument, we have placed a big banner.

Our motto: "Experience 75 years of FREEDOM"



If anyone is interested to help during the eemembrance period, please contact us. Especially on Tuesday September 17th we are looking for support to help us with the transit of the vehicles and supply lunch to the chauffeurs and escorts.

For Saturday September 21st we are looking for people who would like to help build and decorate the Geseldonk.

If interested please contact us at

p/a Binnenvoort 6  
5706 GB  
Helmond

or e-mail: [secretaris@monumentmierlohout.nl](mailto:secretaris@monumentmierlohout.nl)

or our site [www.monumentmierlohout.nl](http://www.monumentmierlohout.nl)