

End of 2022

Another Monument

**Mierlo-Hout
Then and Now**

**Rabobank Clubkas
Campaign**

Acknowledgement



2022 has had its longest time.

What a year!

Nationwide protests regarding nitrogen policy.
Blocked highways, slow-moving farmers, fires here and there.
Inverted Dutch flags as protest and sympathy for the farmers.
Russia's invasion of Ukraine. As a result, heavy bombing with many innocent victims.
Energy crisis following this war.
People in financial trouble due to high costs of gas and electricity.
Threat of using nuclear weapons.

What will 2023 bring us?
Do you know?

Major General BD Rudi Hemmes



F I H.Raaijmakers

On November 13, 2022, we received the sad message that Major General Rudi Hemmes passed away at the age of 99 in his hometown of The Hague.

Hemmes was one of the last surviving Engelandvaarders.

Rudi was the figurehead for the Regiment. He has committed himself to veterans, young and old, he was a permanent Koord-distributor and was intertwined in all associations of the Regiment.

Rudi's death is therefore a great loss that will be felt in all generations. We remember "our" Rudi as someone with a heart for the Regiment.

History

Rudi is only sixteen when World War II begins. Together with a boy next door from The Hague, he decides to leave for England in May 1943, where they arrive in February 1944 after many wanderings.

There he joins the Princess Irene Brigade. On August 8, 1944, he and 1100 Irene men landed on the beaches of Arromanches in Normandy. Hemmes fought with the brigade in Zeeland until the end of 1944. He is then an interpreter for the English commandos and is sent back to England for officer training.

After the war, Hemmes is a commander in the Air Force in Schaarsbergen and eventually becomes Major General. He was one of the last living Engelandvaarders who experienced the liberation of Western Europe. He valued that we continue to remember and that the stories are passed on. In that light, he was, among other things, chairman of the Society of England Sailors, the Foundation for Collaborating Resistance and the Association of Former Warriors of the Princess Irene Brigade.

Another Monument

Sluis, the old medieval port of the once mighty Zwin, characterized by its earthen ramparts, looked like an old military stronghold. The belfry was central, which formed an excellent observation post for the Germans. However, one could not speak of a large German occupation; no more than thirty soldiers stayed in a few bunkers of the old ramparts. Seen from the air, Sluis had the character of a heavily defended city.

Due to a lack of correct information, the Allied High Command got the idea that Sluis was home to a large German force and decided to bomb the town. The local population was not aware of any harm until heavy artillery shelling began on 6 October. A few days later, on Monday, October 9, when the first victims were buried, a squadron of 40 four-engine bombers flew over; one dropped eight bombs destined for the belfry. At 12:15 the tower collapsed. The provisional balance of this useless display was 27 human lives, including four refugees.

Wednesday 11 October was fatal for Sluis. In the early morning "Typhoons" came down with a thunderous roar and machine-gunned everything that moved in the streets. The planes could spit their destructive fire unforced because German anti-aircraft guns were not there! When many civilians left their shelters or cellars in fear, a second wave of fighters flew in, causing even more casualties. The remaining civilians tried to pull friends and family from under the rubble.

Meanwhile, the local fire brigade was fully extinguishing the fires with their modest resources.

Many volunteers, even the mayor, helped with the extinguishing works. Later, some more hunters came to attack the firefighters.

Most of the population fled Sluis. Many sought shelter in the bunkers of the ramparts, but now a new bombardment came with the ramparts as their target. Again Sluis residents were killed or badly injured.

The air strikes had taken a heavy toll in human lives. One wondered what the proper reason or purpose was for this bombardment! Little mention was made of this action at Allied headquarters. It was a major "blunder", but this happens more often in wartime.

Sluis

November 1, 1944 After a devastating bombardment on October 11, Sluis was a shattered city. The inhabitants had fled to Belgium or had hidden themselves in shelters under the buildings or in the ramparts. And it still wasn't done. On October 30, the Canadian troops encountered fierce resistance from the ramparts of Sluis. After the same troops had crossed the drainage canal at the Sluische Veer, the advance to Sluis could begin and that did not go without a fight. There was heavy firing from mortars and machine guns. On the outskirts of the city, the passage was blocked by trees blocking the access roads, which had to be cleared first. The weather conditions were bad at that time, it was snowing. The city was cleared, but resistance was encountered near the South Gate. After the deployment of tanks, the resistance was also broken here and the remaining German soldiers surrendered. The inhabitants were able to come out of their shelters again. Sluis was liberated on November 1st 1944, but was completely destroyed: one big mess.



F I H.Raaijmakers

For more information about Sluis see website: <https://www.zwinstreek.eu>

Mierlo-Hout Then & Now



Bevrijdingsherdenking, 1945. Mierloseweg

F I STIWOT



F I H.Raaijmakers



We once again participated in the Rabobank ClubSupport campaign.

Return of this year is:

€ 189,37

We would like to thank all those people who voted for us once again for their vote.

Acknowledgement

The 1944-2022 liberation and commemoration festivities in Mierlo-Hout were also made possible this year by our volunteers, partners, sponsors, the Damiaan parish and, last but not least, all those who have joined the club of: 'Friends of the Monument'.

The HMMH foundation board is very grateful to you and would like to express its respect and appreciation to everyone for all your small and large efforts.



F | M.Coolen

Our thanks also goes out to all family members who in 2022, after a funeral of a deceased loved one, donated or placed flowers at our memorial in a non-binding manner.

On behalf of board members, Harrie, Henk, Patrick and Ad, I wish everyone a very happy holiday and... may the new year, in all areas, be a year of which you say; it could take years!

Mario Coolen Chairman

For more information about our Foundation, please refer to our website:
<https://monumentmierlohout.nl>

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