



Dear Reader,

Here is the third newsletter of 2006. The main topics are the announcement of the Atlantic Wall Congress in Raversijde and a description of some of the 21 bunker sites that are earmarked for monument status. Please enjoy!

ATLANTIC WALL Congress at Raversijde

For four days, from 16th till 19th November, you will immerse yourself in your passion for the Atlantic Wall. Starting with a two day symposium on Thursday the 16th and Friday the 17th of November. The subjects and speakers are as follows :

- * Mr Alex Deseyne speaking about German coastal defences during World-War I.
- * Mr Rudi Rolf about Regelbauten.
- * Mr Alain Durrieu gives an overview of murals and inscriptions in bunkers.
- * Mr Peter De Laet talks about his research on beach obstacles.
- * Mr Philippe Despriet tells about the special constructions V1, V2 and V3 in the north of France.
- * Mr Hans Sackers speaks about the assaults on the Atlantic Wall constructions and the "Festungen" (Cherbourg, St Malo, etc.)
- * Mr Jens Andersen talks about the situation of the Atlantic Wall in Denmark between D-Day and VE-Day. The first day ends with a visit to the upper floor of the Atlantic Wall Museum.



The second day starts with a visit to the Atlantic Wall museum at Raversijde.

- * Mr Yves Le Maner is the director of "La Coupole" and starts the afternoon with an explanation of the project "Chemin de Mémoire du Mur de l'Atlantique et des constructions spéciales en Nord-Pas-de-Calais".
- * Mr Gennaro Postiglione gives information about the "Atlantic Wall Linear Museum" project upon which the university of Milan is working.
- * Mr Benjamin Meyer-Krahmer talks about the "Atlantik Walk" project that will run between 2008 and 2010 in Norway.
- * Mr Dirk Peeters gives an overview of the restoration of the command bunker SK1 in Antwerp.
- * Mr Jens Andersen tells about the latest evolution in his museum in Hanstholm, Denmark.
- * Mr Luc and Mar Braeuer will talk about the history of their museum "Poche de St Nazaire" in the large bunker at Batz sur Mer.
- * Mr Tonny Jenssens tells about the museum of the battery Hirtshals.
- * Mr Lenco van der Weel closes the day with an overview of the restoration efforts for the observation bunker, Regelbau 143 at Vlissingen.



WMF News

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On Saturday, November the 18th, an excursion is planned to the Dover area with a visit to "Hell Fire Corner", the underground command post of Admiral Ramsey who led the evacuation of Dunkirk and finally there is a "Battle of Britain" bus tour.

On Sunday, the 19th, a trip is planned to the launching sites of V1's and V2's guided by Mr Despriet with a guided tour of La Coupole.

* Participation in the symposium (16th & 17th Nov) costs 95 € (speakers, lunches and visit to the Atlantic Wall museum)

* The visit to the Dover area (18th Nov) costs 45 € (coach, guide, lunch and tickets)

* The visit to the V-launching sites (19 Nov) costs 40 €. (coach, guide, lunch and tickets)

If you want to subscribe, mail to alex.deseyne@west-vlaanderen.be

Or go to www.west-vlaanderen.be/raversijde website

Payments within Belgium are to: 091-0108956-54 (Prov West-Vlaanderen, Domein Raversijde)
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WN Ludendorf and Stp Blankerghe Mole are the first two of the 21 bunker sites earmarked for monument status.

WN Ludendorf

This resistance nest lies on both sides of the bridge on the N376 over the canal of Schipdonk. It's composed of four Tobruks (the fourth being on the only crew bunker of the resistance nest). The crew bunker is a type 621 Neu (*Gruppenunterstand*) with walls of 1 m thick. The bunker stands on the property of the farm at the Dudzele straat 160. The three Tobruks are all of a different construction.

The unit occupying the WN was a part of Bn II of Reg 732 of ID 712.

The bunker is used as storage by the owner and one Tobruk lies in a closed sheep field and is filled with sand. The other ones can be reached without a problem and are three quarters filled with sand..

We suggested that a board with a description and a diagram of the WN and bunkers be placed on the site.



The 621N bunker with its Tobruk. One of the three other Tobruks.



Stp Blankenberghe Mole



On the western bank of the port estuary there was a large strongpoint. Today there remains only three bunkers of which one is 99% covered with sand. (Probably now completely) The largest remaining bunker is a gun casemate for an anti-tank gun that covered the port entrance and the beach in front of Blankenberghe. It's a type **680** which is unique for Belgium. (orig : *Schartenstand für 7.5 cm PAK ohne Nebenräume*) Inside you can see inscriptions for the different kinds of shells. The entrance is special. It looks like the Germans put the gun inside and then they reduced the size of the entrance with bricks and

fitted a smaller door.

The unit that occupied the WN was the 3rd Cie of Bn I of Reg 732 of ID 712.

The bunker is in use by the **Strandcafé**, Oude Wenduinse steenweg, Blankenberghe, Tel : 050/42.63.98. The status of the bunker is very good, although the flanking wall has been demolished for the harbour mole.

We suggested that a board with a description and a diagram of the strongpoint and bunkers be placed on the site.

The other item of the Stp is a Tobruk for a tank turret. It stands close to the locks on the western bank of the harbour entrance. The French FT 17 turret had a 3.7 cm gun and was for years covered with stones until another bunker fanatic discovered it. Unfortunately the turret has been moved to Raversijde. On one hand, this is good because he will be preserved there, on the other hand, we would like to see the object at its original location.

The address is opposite to house nr 16 at the Oude Wenduinse Steenweg.

Two bunkers in Adinkerke

The curator of Stp Schlieffen, Mr Guido Mahieu, found recently two small bunkers. One is located next to the railroad and looks like an air-raid shelter (*Luftschutz*) The other one is located inside the Westhoek domain at the entrance that is situated on the road between Adinkerke and Bray-Dunes.



The location of both bunkers.



The bunker next to the rail road.



The the Westhoek domain measures 20 m and has two entrances. It seemed that the southern entrance had a lock and is at ground level. Though the northern one had staircases, (but is now closed with concrete blocks), in the bunker there is no difference in level. The thickness of its walls varies between 60 cm and 100 cm. The width of the southern part measures 10 m and the northern 6 m! The chimneys are not original. A pass-through of 90 / 90 cm between the two parts attracts one's attention. It resembles a bunker of the same kind in the Elisabethlaan in De Panne. That one is from World War I and was modified during the last war. The bunker will be put aside for bats for the coming winter.

Source : Guido Mahieu



The bunker at the Westhoek domain.



The pass-through inside.

Books

Last summer I passed my holidays in the Normandy landing area. The shops in the museums were crowded with books about D-Day, some interesting, some not so interesting. The following ones are of the better kind.

Pointe du Hoc

This brand new book (appeared on June the 6th 2006) is a decent study of the famous coastal battery at the Pointe du Hoc. The book describes the battery and the assault by the Rangers. It contains many colour photos, nice bunker plans and many testimonies of veterans.

Author : Helmut Konrad von Keusgen. Editor : Heimdal.

ISBN : 2-84048-227-4 Hard cover, 131 pages. Language : french



Les canons de Saint-Marcouf

This book appeared last year in May 2005. Like the Pointe du Hoc book it describes the two coastal batteries of Utah Beach, namely Saint-Marcouf and Azeville. The book describes the batteries, the battle between the batteries and the battle ships and the American assault. It contains many colour photos, and nice bunker plans.

Author : Helmut Konrad von Keusgen. Editor : Heimdal.

ISBN : 2-84048-208-8 Hard cover, 138 pages. Language : French

Editor's Note : One thing is amazing : the statement that there are two 671 gun casemates persists, even in this new book!! Although the plan of the so called 671's on the map is identical to the plan of the 650's. Well, there are no 671's, only four 650's!





Les véhicules allies de la libération

Although this is not a bunker book, I found it interesting because it is about the allied transportation vehicles. This is something that has not been done before. It describes each vehicle of the US, British and Canadian forces with many colour photos and with all the technical specification you could wish for. The markings on the vehicles are also well documented. It's a very strong book, however the data concerning tanks is weak. Example : the author speaks only about the Sherman M4A1 and does not specify the other models, M4, M4A2, etc. Ok, I know; it's a vehicle book.

Author : François Bertin. Editor : Ouest-France. ISBN : 2-7373-3426-8
Soft cover, 127 pages. Language : French Appeared in 2004.



MAGINOT LINE

A new book

Le Nord, Frontière militaire, tome 2

The subtitle is "L'organisation défensive de Dunkerque à Mézières 1919 – 1940". At last, there is a very complete description of the northern area of the Maginot Line, from the North sea to River Meuse! It describes not only the small works of Maubeuge but also all little constructions like MOM's, STG and CORF casemates with plenty of colour photos, fine drawings and maps.

The first book concerned the same area but from 1874 till 1914.
Author : Julien Depret. Editor : Julien Depret. ISBN : 2-9520574-2-7
Hard cover, 287 pages. Language : French Appeared in 2005.
Visit Mr Depret's website to learn more about these great books.
<http://julien.depret.free.fr/pages/indexpag.html>



MODELLING

The Cointet obstacle

Some good news for fortification modellers. Last summer I discovered in the Omaha Beach museum shop at St Laurent the construction kit for the Cointet Beach Obstacle. Interesting to know that it's a Belgian company that makes the model : CRP Modelling in Wavre. The kit contains many resin parts and photo etched barbed wire. Even the pole is included that the Belgians used to lock the elements. I paid 24.69 € for it.

Number of the kit : 35001
Website : www.crp-wavre.com



Thanks to Yvonne Mayo for the spell check.

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