

Press trip 'Follow in the footsteps of the Polish liberating force - from Axel to Ter Apel'

While most people know that British, American, and Canadian troops were involved in the liberation of the Netherlands, few know that the Poles also played a major role in the last days of WWII in Holland. How the Polish troops ended up in the Netherlands is a special story. Nazi Germany's occupation of Poland lit the fire of resistance in many Polish people who wanted to fight for freedom. Emigrant children, refugees from labor camps, escaped war prisoners, and soldiers who managed to escape after the fall of Poland were brought together to form the Polish 1st Armored Division in Great Britain in 1942. In August 1944, the troops entered the war, fought in Normandy and then advanced through Belgium to the Netherlands.

I: <https://www.holland.com/global/tourism/holland-stories/liberation-route/follow-in-the-footsteps-of-the-polish-liberating-force.htm>



Friday 30 August 2019

Afternoon Arrival journalists for overnight stay in the province of Zeeland.
Evening Welcome dinner. Introduction Liberation Route Europe / Europe Remembers.
I: <https://liberationroute.com/>
I: <https://europe remembers.com/story/the-1st-polish-armoured-division/>

Saturday 31 August 2019

- 09:00 AM | Visit the Liberation Museum Zeeland. Guided tour about 'the Poles in the Battle of the Scheldt'. I: <https://www.bevrijdingsmuseumzeeland.nl/index.php/en/>
- 11:00 AM | Departure for small battlefield tour through the east of Zeeuws-Vlaanderen, the first region in the Netherlands liberated by the Poles.
- 12:30 PM | Lunch in Terneuzen – official start Dutch program '75 years of freedom' at the borders of the Scheldt with a fleet parade and a 'Liberation Boulevard': exhibitions, stories and performances, which together show the history of the liberation of Zeeland and the southern Netherlands. Visit the 'Liberation Boulevard', including meet & greet with the people of the Polish war museum Gdynia (from the nearby town of Axel).
I: <https://www.oorlogsmuseumgdynia.nl/over-het-museum/>
- 16:00 PM | Departure for the province of Brabant
- 17:00 PM | Visit the Dilemma Maze at the Bergen-op-Zoom War Cemetery. It's here that Brabant Remembers makes the impact of the Second World War palpable and conceivable. This interactive art installation presents visitors with profound choices in conflict situations from the past and the present.
- 18:00 PM | Departure for Breda.
- 18:30 PM | Check-in hotel for dinner and overnight stay. Introduction on 'Brabant Remembers' and the 75 life changing war stories, among which the story of General Maczek and his role in the liberation of Brabant
I: <https://www.brabantremembers.com/freedom/maczeks-eer/?lang=en>

Sunday 1 September 2019

- 09:00 AM | Start program 'the liberation of Breda by General Maczek's Polish 1st Armoured Division'. Guided tour by Frans Ruczynski, chairman of the General Maczek Museum and child of a Polish liberator. Visit Maczeck Memorial/Museum under construction, Polish War Cemetery, tank & monument

I: <https://liberationroute.nl/the-netherlands/spots/g/general-maczek-museum-breda>
I: <https://www.tracesofwar.com/sights/325/Poolse-Oorlogsbegraafplaats-Breda.htm>
I: <https://liberationroute.com/belgium/biographies/s/stanis%C5%82aw-maczek>
I: <https://liberationroute.com/the-netherlands/pois/g/gift-from-the-poles> (audio spot)
- 11:00 AM | Small battlefield tour from Breda to Kapelsche Veer, including visit to the monument at Kapelsche Veer, guided by Frans Ruczynski.
I: <https://liberationroute.com/the-netherlands/pois/t/the-battle-for-the-mark-canal>
I: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_for_the_Kapelsche_Veer
- 12:00 PM | Departure for the province of Gelderland for the story about 'The Poles of Driel'
<https://liberationroute.com/the-netherlands/pois/t/the-poles-of-driel>
- 13:00 PM | Arrival in Oosterbeek. Lunch.
- 14:00 PM | Visit to the Airborne Museum Hartenstein. Guided tour about 'Operation Market Garden' and the important, underexposed role of the Polish liberators.
I: <https://liberationroute.nl/the-netherlands/spots/a/airborne-museum-hartenstein>
- 15:00 PM | Departure for small battlefield tour guided by Arno Baltussen, chairman Foundation Driel – Poland, to the 'Westerbouwing' (river Rhine crossing) and through the area of Driel where General Sosabowski and his Polish 1st Independent Parachute Brigade acted bravely
- 15:45 PM | Arrival in Driel. Visit to the Information Centre where the story of the Poles of Driel is told, including eyewitness videoreport. Afterwards visit the nearby National Monument for the First Independent Polish Parachute Brigade Group.

- 16:45 PM | Continuation of the battlefield tour and short visit to the Airborne War Cemetery in Oosterbeek.
I: <https://liberationroute.com/the-netherlands/pois/t/the-poles-of-driel>
I: <https://liberationroute.com/the-netherlands/spots/i/information-centre-the-poles-of-driel> en <https://www.driel-polen.nl/en/information-center/>
I: <https://liberationroute.com/the-netherlands/spots/n/nationaal-monument-voor-de-1e-onafhankelijke-poolse-parachutisten-brigade>
- 17:30 PM | Departure for Fletcher Hotel Doorwerth-Arnhem for dinner and overnight stay.

Monday 2 September 2019

- 08:30 AM | Departure for the province of Drenthe.
- 10:00 AM | Arrival In Emmen. Visit museum 'Ergens in Nederland 1939-1945' (= 'Somewhere in the Netherlands 1939-1945'). The collection that is exhibited in the museum consists of original military objects (militaria) and other original objects related to the Second World War and made up to and including 1945. The collection has been brought together from the 80s by Erik Zwigelaar. The collection focuses on events in the northern Netherlands.
- 11:00 AM | Start of small battlefieldtour guided by Erik Zwigelaar about the role of the Poles in the liberation of the northeast of the Netherlands. The tour will end with a special story in Camp Oberlangen, just across the border with Germany.
- 12:00 PM Farewell lunch.
- 13:00 PM End of the program. Departure for returning home.

