



# THE BELGIANS REMEMBER THEM

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## GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2023 – MINUTES

REBECQ, FEBRUARY 16, 2023

### Present:

Carina Verhaeg, Francis Plas, Eric Verly, Christian Renotte, Guy Cockmartin, Bruno Vanderbeurght, Alain Zegers, Gérard Legrain, Alain Pinchemail, Emile Jadin, Roland Vecchiato, Charly Keppens, Gilbert Hautenauve, Francis Populaire, Alfred Boosten, Benoît Crasset, Maurice Duquesne, Wilfred Burie.

### Apologized:

William Albertyn, Jos De Rycke, André Deroanne, Jean-Pierre Bauwens, Gilbert Tilman, Thierry Cardon, Paul Fixelles, Christian Delgoffe, Erich D'Huster, Yves Louis, Frédéric Gaillard. Members who reside far from Rebecq are implicitly excused

### Agenda:

1. Reception
2. Approval of the minutes of the 2022 General Assembly
3. Presentation of the results of the 2022 accounts and outlook for 2023
  - Approval
4. Presentation of the 2022 moral balance sheet
5. Outlook 2023
  - Approval
6. Miscellaneous

### 1. Reception

The Chair welcomed the Members present. From the outset, it submits the Minutes of the 2022 General Assembly to the approval of the Members present.

### 2. Approval of the minutes of the 2022 General Assembly

The Meeting of Members present approved the Minutes of the previous financial year.

### 3. Presentation of the results of the 2022 accounts and outlook for 2023

#### FINANCIAL BALANCE SHEET YEAR 2022

|    |   |    |   |
|----|---|----|---|
| 1) | <b>Situation Financière au 1er janvier 2022</b> | 3) | <b>Détail caisse actuelle</b>             |
|    | Caisse Trésorier                                |    | Nombre                                    |
|    | Caisse président                                |    | Coupures                                  |
|    | Compte banque                                   |    | Sous total                                |
|    | 720,33  |    | 0   |
|    | Compte d'épargne                                |    | 100                                       |
|    | Autres  |    | 50  |
|    | Cotisations 2023                                |    | 20  |
|    | -240,00   |    | 10  |
|    | A recevoir                                      |    | 5   |
|    | 296,37  |    | 2   |
|    | A Payer.  |    | 1   |
|    | <b>Total</b>                                    |    | <b>0,50</b>                               |
|    | <b>776,70</b>                                   |    | <b>0,00</b>                               |
|    |   |    | 0,20                                      |
|    |   |    | 0,10                                      |
|    |   |    | 0,05                                      |
|    |   |    | 0,02                                      |
|    |   |    | 0,01                                      |
|    |   |    | 1/01/11 Total                             |
|    |   |    | <b>0,00</b>                               |
|    |   | 4) | <b>Situation Financière au 31/12/2022</b> |
|    |   |    | Date                                      |
|    |   |    | Libellés                                  |
|    |   |    | Solde                                     |
|    |   |    | 31/01/22                                  |
|    |   |    | Caisse                                    |
|    |   |    | 0,00                                      |
|    |   |    | 30/12/22                                  |
|    |   |    | Compte vue                                |
|    |   |    | 406,23                                    |
|    |   |    | Compte épargne                            |
|    |   |    | <b>Cotisation 2023</b>                    |
|    |   |    | <b>-115,00</b>                            |
|    |   |    | A recevoir                                |
|    |   |    | 187,00                                    |
|    |   |    | A Payer                                   |
|    |   |    | <b>Total encaisse</b>                     |
|    |   |    | <b>478,23</b>                             |
|    |   |    | Différence                                |
|    |   |    | <b>0,00</b>                               |
| 2) | <b>Synthèse de l'année en cours</b>             |    |   |
|    | Total des Dépenses                              |    | 3.085,52                                  |
|    | Total des Recettes                              |    | 2.787,05                                  |
|    | Résultat de l'exercice                          |    | <b>-298,47</b>                            |
|    | <b>Total intermédiaire</b>                      |    | <b>478,23</b>                             |

## EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE BY ITEM – YEAR 2022

| N° Plan Comptable | RECETTES                                      |                   | N° Plan Comptable | DEPENSES                          |                   |
|-------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 710000            | Cotisation des membres                        | 1075,00           | 610000            | Loyer et charges locatives        |                   |
| 710100            | Cotisation outremer                           |                   | 610200            | Location de locaux d'activités    |                   |
| 732400            | Dons et sponsors                              | 100,00            |                   |                                   |                   |
|                   |   |                   | 613170            | Assurances d'activités            | 278,73            |
| 737000            | Subvention de la commune                      | 50,00             | 612100            | Frais de téléphone                |                   |
| 737100            | Subvention de la province                     |                   | 612105            | Site Internet AMR                 | 12,00             |
| 737215            | Subvention Communauté Française               |                   | 612106            | Site internet BRT                 | 12,00             |
|                   |   |                   | 612107            | Site internet UFAC                |                   |
| 737900            | Autres subventions à détailler                |                   | 612110            | Frais postaux                     | 199,10            |
| 745000            | Recettes d'activités (PAF,....)               |                   | 612300            | Fournitures et matériel de bureau | 13,06             |
| 745900            | Autres recettes diverses                      |                   | 613230            | Affiliation                       | 52,00             |
|                   |   |                   | 612400            | Frais de locations Grenke         |                   |
| 720000            | Vente de livres                               |                   | 612405            | Locations DGET                    | 429,81            |
|                   |   |                   | 612410            | Divers photocopieurs              |                   |
|                   | Travaux d'impression                          |                   |                   |                                   |                   |
| 746200            | Echarp  | 908,35            | 612500            | Frais d'activités cérémonies      | 377,74            |
| 746201            | Rewisbique                                    | 467,75            | 612505            | Réception VIP                     | 176,80            |
| 746202            | Autres  |                   | 612510            | Frais de réunions                 |                   |
|                   |   |                   | 613301            | Frais de missions - fuel          | 904,96            |
|                   |   |                   | 613302            | Interventions 550                 |                   |
|                   |   |                   | 613305            | Carburants                        |                   |
|                   |   |                   | 613331            | Frais de restauration             | 8,15              |
|                   |   |                   |                   |                                   |                   |
|                   | Vente d'écussons                              |                   | 614000            | Frais de promotion et publicité   |                   |
|                   |   |                   | 614500            | Cadeau, frais de réception        | 70,52             |
|                   |   |                   |                   |                                   |                   |
|                   |   |                   | 615000            | Frais d'impressions extérieures   | 259,27            |
|                   |   |                   |                   |                                   |                   |
| 751200            | Produits financiers ( intérêts bancaires....) |                   | 659000            | Frais de banques                  | 38,36             |
| 760000            | Remboursements taxes diverses                 |                   | 660000            | Taxes diverses - Moniteur         |                   |
| 744900            | Divers à détailler                            |                   | 612900            | Divers à détailler                | 67,07             |
| 580000            | TRANSFERT DE FONDS                            |                   | 580000            | TRANSFERT DE FONDS                |                   |
| 450000            | Récupération garanties                        |                   | 450000            | Garanties                         |                   |
|                   |   |                   |                   |                                   |                   |
|                   | <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>2.601,10 €</b> |                   |                                   | <b>2.899,57 €</b> |
|                   | <b>Perte de l'exercice</b>                    | <b>-298,47 €</b>  |                   |                                   |                   |

## BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2023

| Revenue item  |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| Contributions | 1200          |
| Donations     | 300           |
| Impressions   | 2000          |
|               |               |
|               |               |
|               |               |
|               |               |
|               |               |
|               |               |
|               |               |
| <b>Total:</b> | <b>3500 €</b> |

| Item expenses           |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Activity insurance      | 300           |
| Postage                 | 340           |
| Websites                | 400           |
| Office equipment        | 200           |
| Affiliation             | 100           |
| DGET Rentals            | 300           |
| Ceremony activity fees  | 800           |
| Mission expenses – fuel | 800           |
| External printing costs | 200           |
| Bank charges            | 60            |
| <b>Total:</b>           | <b>3500 €</b> |

### **-Discussion:**

After detailing each point mentioned in the statement of expenses and revenues and explaining the financial results for the year 2022, the president comments on the budget planned for the year 2023 according to the objectives of the Association that will be developed after the moral balance sheet for 2022.

He points out that the economic situation and the successive increases in the cost of living that we have experienced since the beginning of the year have profoundly affected the functioning of associations such as ours.

As a result, as far as we were concerned, the question was to achieve as best we could the objectives we had set for ourselves while keeping the bank account in a positive balance. The president explains: *"It was a balancing act that was imposed on me by circumstances to keep our heads financially above water. The main point was to keep our bank account always positive. It is clear that if all the invoices have been duly paid, several payments do not appear in the statement of accounts because they have been taken care of by myself, pending a possible reimbursement in case by some miracle, we have a financial contribution that would allow it. As I say, the catastrophic situation that impacts us all at all levels has forced me to make choices so that the Association can continue to fulfill its mission of Memory. »*

A lively but constructive debate ensued, during which each member was able to speak. It follows that to the question of why the Association does not benefit from subsidies from the Commune, the Province or another official body, it is answered that an important partnership exists between the Commune of Rebecq and the Association. It is materialized by the important help provided by the Commune de Rebecq in the organization of annual events: bringing seats, arbors in case of bad weather, cleaning of the site, securing the site and its surroundings, making available to the small Mill for the reception following the commemoration, etc. All these measures involve implementation by municipal staff, which has a cost. Therefore, we can consider that the support of the Commune of Rebecq is important and valuable.

As for possible support from the Province, it is facing budgetary constraints and can no longer provide subsidies to cultural and patriotic associations as in the past. The redirection of its objectives no longer allows funding for our associations, therefore, we are all forced to find our livelihoods elsewhere.

A note concerning the item "fuel" expenditures states that it is normally provided that a fee per km imposed by the Act is to apply. The President admits and says that this will be the case from now on.

In summary, the current situation makes any project of any kind very precarious, this year, more than ever, the management of the Association's activities will have to be done on a case-by-case basis, with the caution imposed by circumstances.

**-Approval:**

The Assembly of Members present unanimously approves the financial balance sheet for the year 2022 and the budget for 2023.

**4. Presentation of the 2022 moral balance sheet and 2023 outlook**

The president then listed the various activities of the Association "The Belgians Remember Them" undertaken during the year 2022.

**A. Commemorations organized by the Association**

1. 17/04/2022: Wreath laying on Anzac Day in New Zealand
2. 8 & 9/082022: D-Day commemoration in Rebecq (laying of flowers at the 2 Memorials\*)
3. 18/05/2022: Solemn tribute ceremony to Rebecq and retrocession to 115 Squadron RAF of a radio set from a Wellington fallen in Tourpes.
4. 7/11/2022: Commemoration of the Armistice in Rebecq and laying of flowers at the 2 Memorials\*

*\* These are the Rebecq Memorial and the Memorial dedicated to the Soviet Armed Partisans in Belgium.*

**B. Ceremonies outside the association**

1. 8/05/2022. Commemoration of Victory in Brussels, Unknown Soldier
2. 22/05/2022: Tribute ceremony in Westerlo
3. 4/08/2022: National tribute to King Albert in Nieuwpoort
4. 24/08/2022: Tribute ceremony in Diksmuide
5. 11/11/2022: Commemoration of the Armistice in Brussels, Unknown Soldier

**C. The Association's Bulletin and Newsletter**

In addition to reviewing our patriotic activities, we have begun to publish articles about the Resistance in Flanders. Two young Flemish who fought heroically within the Resistance have already been highlighted: Paul-Pieter Baeten in Lier and Pierre Albertyn in Sint-Niklaas. We will continue to publish other articles on this aspect of our national history, which is still too little known in the Francophone region.

We have also reproduced historical surveys conducted as part of the database "The Belgians Remember Them" at the request of descendants of airmen who fell in Belgium.

**D- Database – Research**

At the request of families of airmen who fell in Belgium we carried out in-depth research concerning the crashes and crews of:

- Halifax JB913-EQ-F fell at Tessenderlo on 4/07/1943
- Halifax NR233-NP-J fell at Loupoigne on 18/12/1944
- Mosquito DZ358-KN-O fell in Silly on 8/12/1942

The permanent management of the database makes it possible to offer visitors to the website on which it is located a real information tool. This database is searched daily around the world.

### ***E- Zedelgem***

The Zedelgem monument has finally been removed from public space and is currently stored in a depot in the municipality. The Latvian authorities protested to the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, who assured us that she was keeping this file under observation. We ourselves do not let our guard down and remain attentive to any negative developments that may arise in this regard.

### ***F. Meetings, receptions and miscellaneous attendance***

In addition to meetings with the Executive Committee, special meetings were held with Wing Commander David Norfield, RAF Chaplain General to NATO and Shape forces.

A meeting was also organized with Colonel Philippe Raemackers, Military Commander of Walloon Brabant and Commander Daniel Lebrun. This meeting was about the partnership with regard to the ceremonies in Rebecq.

We were also received at the Canadian Embassy in Brussels by H.E. Mr. Jean Gendron, Ambassador on Canada's National Day, June 1, 2022.

In December, we were invited to the end-of-year reception by H.E. John Sheaham, British Ambassador in Brussels.

Finally, we have, where possible, participated in the many statutory and other meetings organized by the associations of which we are members.

### ***-Approval***

The Assembly of Members present unanimously approves the moral balance sheet of the year 2022.

## **5. Outlook for 2023**

### ***A. Servio***

Two years ago, responding to the wish of His Majesty King Baudouin who proposed the creation of an institution bringing together national patriotic associations so that together they could find the means to perpetuate the duty of memory, we wanted to join the "Servio" group created following the King's desire. This platform brings together the associations and memorial federations recognized in the country. The pandemic delayed the examination of our candidacy and on February 28, 2023, we are invited to the General Assembly of Servio in order to be welcomed as a member.

This approach is important and represents a step in our journey and in the meaning we wish to give to the work of preserving Memory. We are already implicitly recognized by fifteen nations and several international memorial institutions because of the moral value we give to our actions to preserve Memory. All this obliges us...

### ***B. Inauguration of the Givry Memorial, April 17, 2023***

80 years ago, on April 17, 1942, a Lancaster plane of the 61st Squadron of the Royal Air Force crashed in a meadow in the village of Givry, Hainaut. Of the eight men of the crew (7 British and 1 Australian), none survived this disaster. They rest in the cemetery of Chièvres.

The aircraft was returning from a bombing mission in Plzen (Czechoslovakia) and had been hit by fire from a German fighter while flying over Belgium on its way to its base at Skellingthorpe (UK).

Three years ago, two young inhabitants of Givry, Julien and Frédéric Gaillard had the idea of building a monument in memory of the airmen who fell near their homes. Their project coming to the end of its preparatory phase, and the monument being almost finished, they mandated the association "The Belgians Remember Them" to organize the inauguration ceremony of what became the Givry Memorial.

This inauguration ceremony will take place on April 17, the anniversary of this air disaster, at 11am. We will announce the event shortly on our media. Those wishing to participate in this event are kindly requested to contact us for this purpose.

### ***C. Fly-Past from Coningsby's Lancaster to Rebecq on May 4, 2023***

Recently, we submitted a request for an overflight of the ceremony of May 17, 2023 by the last Lancaster still able to fly in Europe. The British Embassy, represented by Group Captain John Dickson, Defence Attaché supported us in this approach.

The relevant services of the Royal Air Force replied that the only possible date would be May 4. Unfortunately, we cannot change the date of our annual commemoration because of the obligations to which we are bound (Presence of the Representative of His Majesty the King, presence of a Military Band, a guard of honor and students from the schools of Rebecq).

Finally, we have reached an agreement. Subject to acceptance by the RAF, on 4 May 2023 we will organise a Victory Commemoration (8 May) in front of the Rebecq Memorial. Once the plane has passed, the public present to see and take pictures of the mythical aircraft will be asked to gather around the monument. The laying of a single wreath will be carried out by the persons we have previously designated. The British, Canadian and Belgian anthems will be broadcast by sound. Those wishing to participate in this event are kindly requested to contact us for this purpose.

### ***D. Commemoration of D-Day in Brussels, 8 May 2023***

We will be present at the national commemoration of Victory, May 8, 2023

### ***E. Solemn tribute to Rebecq, May 17, 2023***

This year, we will organize the annual commemoration dedicated to the airmen of the Royal Air Force and Royal Air Forces of the Commonwealth who fell in Belgium during the Second World War. His Majesty the King will be represented. We will be able to count on the participation of a Royal Band and a Guard of Honour.

We will also benefit, weather permitting, from a flight over the ceremony by a formation of Defence helicopters.

Beforehand, we will explain to the students of the 6th<sup>primary</sup> of the schools of Rebecq who will participate in the commemoration the History that stems from this event in which they will be fully involved.

### ***F. Participation in various ceremonies and commemorations in Belgium and abroad***

The Association will be represented at several patriotic events, both in Belgium and abroad.

### ***G. Database: General Update***

The database "The Belgians Remember Them" is currently undergoing a systematic revision of its web pages, which represents a significant work that can only be done as and when we can devote to this purpose. This research tool, open to all, is one of the important elements of our memorial action.

### ***H. Management***

The current economic situation requires us to be very careful in making choices in order to accomplish our mission. This implies that we will have to think about reviewing the amount of membership fees for 2024 bearing in mind that members are also suffering the disastrous effects of inflation and that it is therefore important to make acceptable for all the measures we take in this regard.

The same will apply to the publication of our quarterly newsletter. We will consider possible changes depending on the circumstances. But already, we will combine this year's issues 1 and 2 into a single publication to reduce the cost.

#### **- Discussion: summary**

Present Members are invited to express their comments and comments on what has been presented as drafts for the year 2023.

#### ***As a result:***

Our Association grows as the actions and activities we organize. The meaning we give to our commemorations attracts the attention of those who attend, among others, the authorities being involved in one way or another in the Duty of Memory. We are increasingly recognized for the work we do, locally, nationally and internationally.

This recognition, even if implicit, obliges us to respect the commitments to which we have bound. Our mission is paramount in an ever-changing world.

The current events in Eastern Europe obviously attract our attention. In this respect, it is clear that the arms race prevails over attempts to pacify States in conflict, to the detriment of the populations directly impacted by this fratricidal war. Europe will pay dearly for the effects of what is happening at its borders. Hatred and rejection of the other are growing, the media and social networks are fed with comments and positions stirring up the debate on the conflict. The few attempts to find ways to pacify adversaries are opposed with strength and determination by those who yesterday professed for peace and mutual respect. As a memorial association, our duty is to preserve the memory of those who fought Nazism and helped us to find peace. It is therefore in this spirit that we strongly condemn any aggression by one State against another, but we cannot subscribe to a current of ideas that can lead to the rejection of the other and to hatred. By all means, we must try to keep the door open to reconciliation and dialogue without compromise, even ideological.



It is clear that the 80 years of relative world peace that we have known and enjoyed are no longer of interest to today's actors, especially those who profit from this catastrophic and deleterious situation.

However, the women and men whose memory we celebrate and try to preserve have paid directly with their lives for the Peace we have enjoyed for eight decades. Whether it is the young Allied airmen or the Resistance fighters who intervened to save the survivors of the plane crashes that occurred on the soil of our Fatherland, we cannot allow us to forget them and evade from our memory the heroism of their actions. Let us never forget that they fought a totalitarian regime that tended to enslave us.

Generations have followed one another during all these years of Peace. Those who will have to decide their fate tomorrow no longer seem to be interested in the history of yesterday's Heroes. Should we be the last protectors of this National Memory, we will be!

This will be our act of resistance, as a so-called patriotic association.

**-Approval**

The Assembly of Members present unanimously approves the projects for the year 2023.

Done at Silly, 18 February 2023

Wilfred Burie,  
President