



The 2026 journey begins.

As the first weeks of the year unfold and the days gradually brighten, we find ourselves looking forward with renewed energy. Although the year is already underway, we would like to take this moment to wish you a prosperous, healthy, and meaningful 2026. We hope this year brings you many moments of connection—both with those around you and with the rich history that binds us all.

At Heritage 40-45 Valkenswaard and Waalre, we remain deeply committed to our mission. Passing on the stories of this pivotal period is what drives us. In a world that is constantly changing, understanding our past provides a vital anchor for the present.

While many of our stories reach you through events and publications, much of the vital work of Heritage 40-45 takes place quietly behind the scenes. We are dedicated to the meticulous process of preservation and discovery that happen away from the spotlight. In this newsletter we would like to give you an update of the work that is taking place behind the scenes. ●



Connecting Families: A Special Story

In our September newsletter, we shared a letter from Mervyn Cardwell, grandson of Guardsman Norman Mallon, who described his journey to visit his grandfather's grave at Valkenswaard War Cemetery. Just before Christmas, we received a deeply moving response from Dave Marshall.

Dave had not realised until recently that Norman still had living relatives. Dave's father, William Marshall, was born in a mother and baby home in Belfast in 1922. He was later fostered and raised in the small County Antrim village of Aghalee, where Norman became his older foster brother. William also had a younger foster brother, Jim, who sadly passed away only a few years ago. The family grew up at Brankinstown Road in Aghalee, forming close bonds that lasted a lifetime.

In his email to us, Dave explained that he had several personal mementos connected to Norman and wished to pass them on to Mervyn, so that he would have something tangible to remember his grandfather by. He asked whether we could help put them in contact. We were, of course, very happy to assist and forwarded Dave's email to Mervyn.

Through this connection, Dave sent Mervyn several treasured items: photographs of Norman, a shoulder lapel from the Irish Guards, Norman's diary from 1936, and two orders of service from the funerals of his father and brother James. James is buried at St Matthew's Church in Broomhedge, a place with deep family significance for Mervyn, as his parents were married there and his grandmother is also buried there. On his next visit, Mervyn will be able to pay his respects at James' grave as well.

William Marshall himself served in the Military Police during the war and later emigrated to New Zealand, where he lived until his death in 2013. His story, intertwined with Norman's, adds yet another layer to this remarkable family connection.

Stories like this remind us why we do this work: connecting people, honouring memories, and keeping history alive.



Norman Mallon.

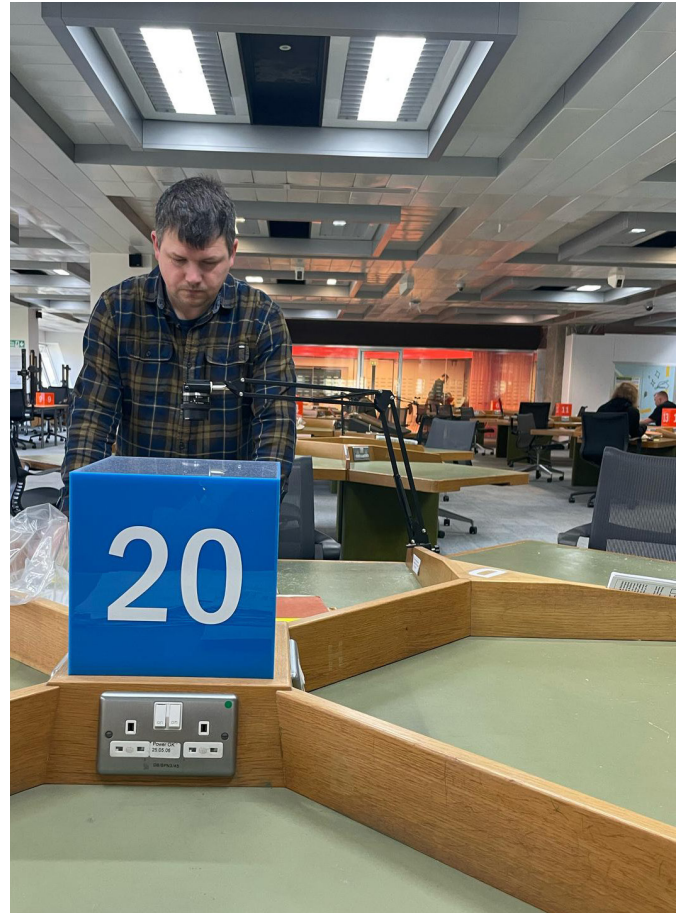
Research in London

Several times a year, our foundation's members conduct research in the National and Military Archives in London. We seek information that is not available online, focusing on individuals, military units, daily orders, and diaries. Part of this research also investigates evidence that the British Cemetery on Luikerweg may have been the first British cemetery in the Netherlands. Through this work, we hope to deepen our understanding of the events and stories that shaped our region.

Alongside this, our secretary, Raimondo Bogaars, is undertaking a major project: reviewing all servicefiles of the soldiers buried in Valkenswaard War Cemetery. During his research, he discovered discrepancies between these files and the records held by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC).

Almost one third of the headstones contain inconsistencies, mostly concerning the soldiers' ages, and occasionally names or religious denomination. Interestingly, most soldiers appear older than recorded on their headstones, rather than younger, which is unusual.

Raimondo is now reaching out to relatives for help. Any official documents – birth certificates, enlistment papers, or similar – would be extremely valuable to correct these records. We will continue to provide updates as progress is made.



Names from a Dutch War Diary by Neutkens

In the previous newsletter, we mentioned receiving a diary from the Neutkens family containing names and addresses of mainly British soldiers. Regarding Patrick McCarthy, Ballinprior, Ardfert, Tralee, Co. Kerry, Ireland, we received a response from Siobhán O'Connor. Her family has promised to research further in Ireland to trace any surviving relatives.

We hope their search proves fruitful. Attached is an overview of all the names and addresses recorded in the diary. Any help in locating relatives or confirming whether the soldiers survived the war would be greatly appreciated. We will keep you informed of any progress.

Name	Initials	Street	Correction adress	Place	County
Dodds	K.G.	38 Windsor Rd		Enfield	Middlesex
Binding	A.W.	1 Dodington		Bridgewater	Sommerset
Barett		14 Rose Villa	14 Rose Lane	Watford	London
Overhand	A.W.	12 C.O.A.J. Sub			
Aiss	A	14 Hoylake Rd		East Acton London	London
Lewis	T.R.W.	Station Rd		Ystrad Mynach Hengoed Cardiff	Wales
Barthy	P.M.	Ballinprior		Ardfert	Kerry
Barthy	P.M.	171 Whiteway Rd		Kingwood	Bristol
Carcaiz	Padruiz Mae	Ballie-An-Prior		Ardfert	Kerry
Barthy	P.M.	2146 - 58th Street		Astoria Long Island	New York
McBeath	Donald M.	1 Station Bottages	1 Station Rd	Grandtown-on-Spey	Morayshire
Bobley	T.R.W.	17 Richmond Blose	17 Richmond Close	Aylestone Rd	Leicester
Buck?y	B	Iha Burgha?? Bankhurst Rd		Honley	Surrey
Mooney	R	12 Thornton Street		Bradford	Yorks
Mooney	J	91 City Rd		Bradford	Yorks
Jorres	Dion Garritear	9 Pantierra Rango		Leeds	Yorkshire
Smith	Ronald	102 Talbot Road		Nothampton	
Mallarthe	Thomas			Bradford	Yorkshire
Baker	Ronald	10 Bovenry Rd	10 Coventry Road	Southampton	Hampshire
Lavender	A.R.	55 the Uplands		Rogerstone Newport	Mommouthire

Preparations for 85 Years of Liberation

Preparations for the 85th anniversary of liberation in 2029 are well underway. Careful planning is key. We have already established initial contacts with various countries and international organisations to understand their wishes, ideas, and capacities, ensuring a meaningful and collaborative approach. Early engagement with the municipalities of Valkenswaard and Waalre ensures they are involved from the start. Together, we aim to make this special anniversary a dignified, inspiring, and unifying commemoration.

Christmas Eve Candle Ceremony

On Christmas Eve, Heritage 40-45 upheld a cherished tradition: together with local residents, we lit candles on every grave to honour those who gave their lives for our freedom. This year, relatives from abroad were able to join in the remembrance via livestream, sharing in this quiet, meaningful moment even from afar.

All 222 graves were illuminated, along with the Cross of Sacrifice. Adoptive families were warmly invited to take part, either by placing a candle themselves or laying flowers. It was a serene and shared act of remembrance, connecting generations and countries in reflection and respect.



Irish Guards Yearbook 2025

The Irish Guards have approached our foundation seeking photographs of the 80th liberation celebrations in Valkenswaard. We were delighted to provide a selection from this memorable week. These images will feature in the 2025 Irish Guards Yearbook, an international recognition of how Valkenswaard continues to honour its liberators.

Photos and Film

Heritage 40-45 is always seeking photographs and film from 1940–1945, particularly from September 1944 onwards. We are interested in images or footage of the liberation, as well as photos or films depicting war damage in Valkenswaard and Waalre. If you have any material, we would be very grateful to receive it for preservation and research purposes.

Thank you!

We thank you for your continued support and for keeping the memory of these brave individuals alive. Together, we ensure that the sacrifices of the past remain remembered and honoured. ●



Your Help

The Erfgoed 40-45 Foundation is a non-profit organisation. All donations go directly to our work: researching graves, educating youth, maintaining remembrance, and supporting visiting relatives.

We are always looking for sponsors or wartime stories, photos, and items.

Interested? Email us at: info@erfgoed40-45.nl

Thank you for keeping the memory alive - together.



**VWCAP is a part of
the foundation Erfgoed 40-45, municipalities
Valkenswaard en Waalre**

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The foundation has an ANBI status