



WMF News

WMF is a section of the Simon Stevin Centrum
Edition 1 of 2016
Composed by Frank PHILIPPART

ATLANTIKWALL

Bunker discovered at Bredene

Pierre Nowak

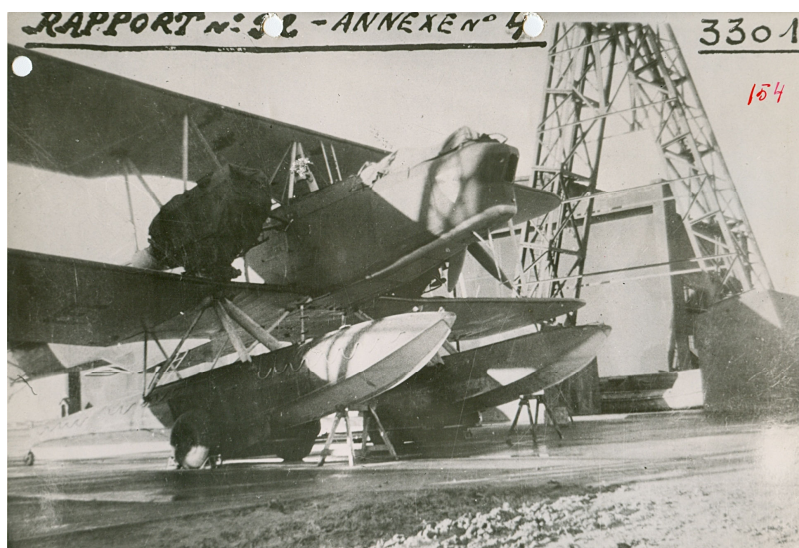
The Simon Stevin association was contacted as a result of the projected demolition of a bunker near the Spuikom (a small lake) at Bredene near Ostend.

One of our members, Mr Pierre Nowak, inspected the bunker and made this report.

The bunker lies in the Spuikomlaan near the crossing with the Polderstraat.

General history

The lake called Spuikom was used as a landing area for sea planes of the "Seenotdienst" until 1943. This was a special unit of the German Luftwaffe to rescue pilots who were shot down over the sea. During the beginning of the Battle of Britain in 1940, these planes were painted in white with red crosses and were of course, unarmed. However the British discovered that the Germans were using these planes as reconnaissance airplanes and agreed to shoot them down as well. It was also possible that seaplanes with other missions like reconnaissance or mine laying used this base, but I haven't found any documentation or testimonies about this.



A few German documents give away some information about the base of the Spuikom. At the end of 1942, it was known as "Seeflughafen Breedene", with airfield code "(E) 6/III". The base was occupied by 171 men of "Seenotkommando 8" from June 1942 till March 1944. The "Seenotkommando" had under its command units of seaplanes ("Seenotstaffel") and rescue speedboat units ("Seenotflotille"). The seaplanes came from

"Seenotstaffel 3" which was stationed in Boulogne, but a component was located in Ostend until September 1942. Seaplanes of the type **He59** en **Do24** have certainly used the Spuikom.

From 1943 on, the allied supremacy above the Channel had become too big and all the "Seenotstaffels" were withdrawn out of the Channel area. Rescue operations were only executed with the rescue speed boats.

The defence of the base was assured by a FlaK-section (Zug) of the **4./252** Gem. Flak. Abteilung with 3 x 2 cm FlaK guns and 1 x 60 searchlight. The strongpoint was called **Stp Richthofen** in 1943 and it became also the headquarters of the 6th Company of the 216th Infantry Regiment of the 171. Res.Inf.Div. In 1944 the strongpoint Richthofen was incorporated into the Landfront of

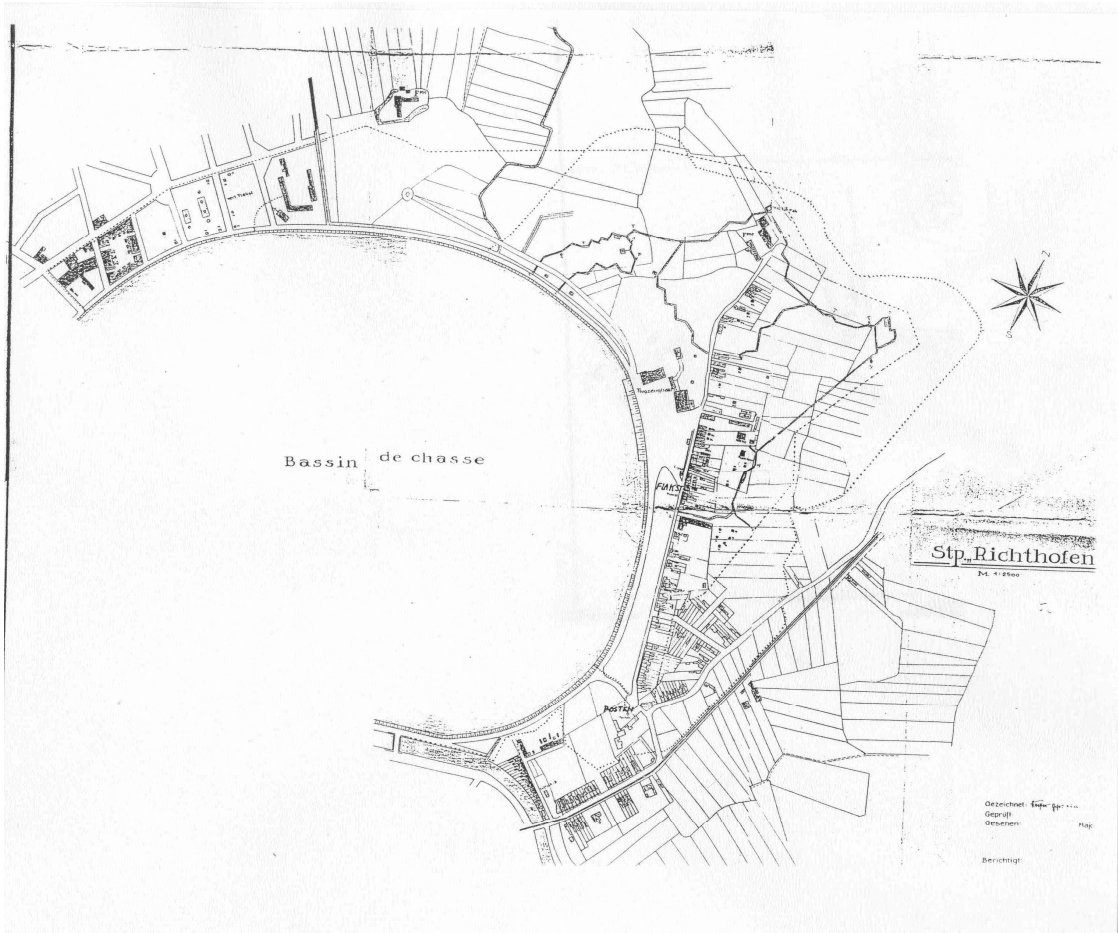


WMF News

WMF is a section of the Simon Stevin Centrum
Edition 1 of 2016

Composed by Frank PHILIPPART

Ostend. An anti-tank ditch was dug, but it was unfinished at the moment of the liberation. A network of trenches with machinegun posts was created to the north of this position.



The bunker

The bunker is situated between the council offices and it's a German construction. It has three equal rooms for storage. The entrances to the room didn't have an armoured type of door (no door with two lids (434P01) nor a gas tight door (19P7)) Its measurements and the type of construction leave you in no doubt about it. Equal rooms of 4 m to 3 m, a corridor of 1 m wide, the use of parallel steel I-beams for the roof with bricks between them and a roof of 1.4 m concrete. The only thing that bothers me, are the entrances with a double porch. I don't think that these were added after the war.

The entrance to the inner part in the right double porch was closed after the war. The entrances were used for a building that was constructed next to the bunker after the war. I was able to measure the thickness of the front wall of the bunker through a ventilation shaft that runs through the wall from out of each room. The side walls and the roof have the same size : 1.4 m. Finally, the bunker was completely incorporated in the post-war building next to it and on its room.

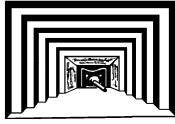


WMF is a section of the Simon Stevin Centrum
Edition 1 of 2016 Composed by Frank PHILIPPART



The front view and the rather unusual entrances.





WMF News

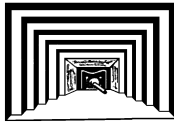
WMF is a section of the Simon Stevin Centrum
Edition 1 of 2016
Composed by Frank PHILIPPART



The corridor and one of the rooms inside.



The other room.



WMF News

WMF is a section of the Simon Stevin Centrum
Edition 1 of 2016
Composed by Frank PHILIPPART

Let's look at the other remains of the strongpoint.



The actual situation of Stp Richthofen



Stp Richthofen on a areal photo of 1948.



WMF News

WMF is a section of the Simon Stevin Centrum
Edition 1 of 2016
Composed by Frank PHILIPPART

The "Kompensierscheiben"



This large circular platform was used to compensate the magnetic compasses of the airplanes. It has to be far away from any unwanted magnetic fields radiated by metal. For this reason, we find these platforms on German airfields always at quite a distance from buildings, cranes, airplane hangers, etc. The concrete platform has grades and the airplane was placed in the middle of it. Then it was turned in various courses. The course of the magnetic compass was compared with the real value of that course which was indicated on the platform. A concrete road connected the "Kompensierscheiben" with the rest of the base. The road and the platform were still visible at the time of the aerial photo taken 1948. The Belgian inventory of 1946 has described the platform as an emplacement for a gun.

The ruins of a FlaK emplacement



Some concrete and brick debris are the only remains of a German construction. The German plan of the strongpoint mentions a FlaK emplacement (anti-aircraft gun) at this location.

The anti-tank moat

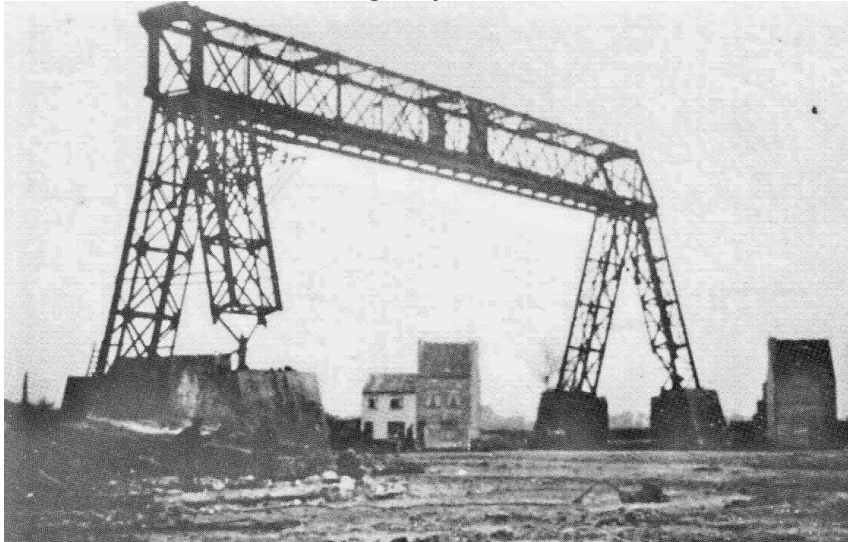
The actual pools at the Schietbaanstraat and at the end of the Vijverstraat are the relicts of the anti-tank moats that existed around the position and Ostend.



WMF News

WMF is a section of the Simon Stevin Centrum
Edition 1 of 2016
Composed by Frank PHILIPPART

The foundation blocks of the gantry crane



The crane was used to lift the seaplanes to work on the floats. During the retreat in September 1944, the German have tried the detonate the crane, but it was only damaged at its base. It was still visible in a photograph of 1948. On one of the blocks you still can see the drilling holes which have been made by a master builder after the war who had the task to demolish the blocks. But for one

or another reason, the demolition was never executed.



The drilling holes in the concrete blocks.





WMF News

WMF is a section of the Simon Stevin Centrum
Edition 1 of 2016
Composed by Frank PHILIPPART

An unusual construction of Czech hedgehogs



Normally they were put on three beams, most of the time in concrete blocks.



Although, some engineers seemed to have other ideas about it. On this picture they are installed with one beam into the concrete!

Zoom in



:



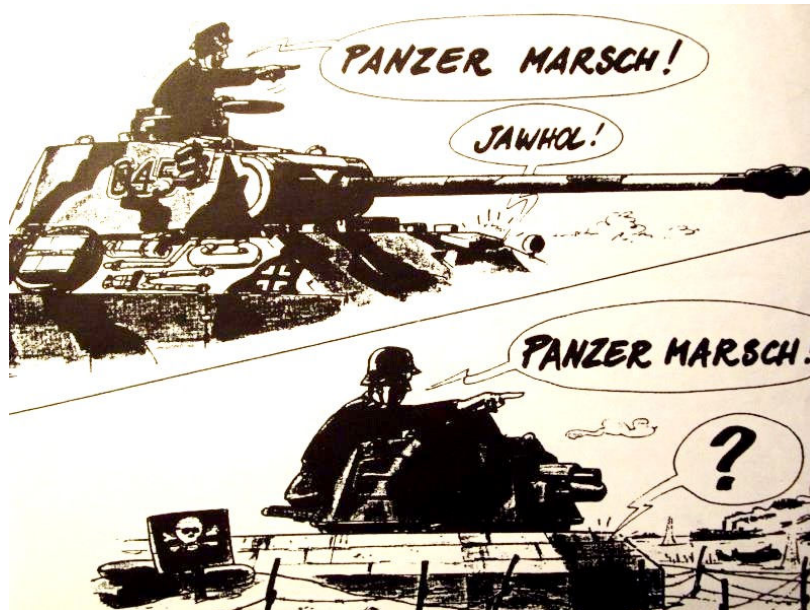
WMF News

WMF is a section of the Simon Stevin Centrum
Edition 1 of 2016

Composed by Frank PHILIPPART

HAVE A LAUGH

What happens when a German tank commander got transferred to the Atlantikwall by a shortage of tanks???



BOOKS

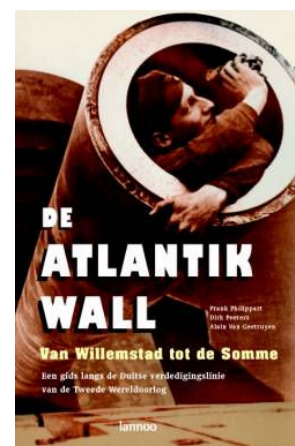
Exceptional offer!!!

This two books are for sale. They are out of print! But these are the two last ones. They are new. Never read!

De Atlantikwall Wall. Van Willemstad tot de Somme

First of all the history of the wall will be explained including the building up of the bunker line from the sea inwards to the land with descriptions of all the possible bunker types. Railroad guns will be discussed; they played an important role on the coast. But the majority of the book is spent on the most interesting strongpoints between the Schelde and the Somme. For example the HQ at Antwerpen, the defences of Vlissingen, the coastal and field batteries in Belgium and France, mysterious bunkers in the inland of the Pas-de-Calais, the large guns at the Cap like the Todt battery, the V2 and V3 sites, the huge defences of Boulogne, the tunnels of the Mont Neufchâtel and the forgotten sites downwards to the Somme. Per site you will find a roadmap, a description, the units deployed there with their armament and what happened there. Moreover the story behind the evacuation in 1940 and the pocket of 44-45 of Dunkirk and the liberation by the Canadians will also be told.

The authors are Frank Philippart, Dirk Peeters and Alain Van Geertruyen. Editor : Lannoo nv. Published in 2004. Language : Dutch. Number of pages : 339. Price : 30 €





WMF News

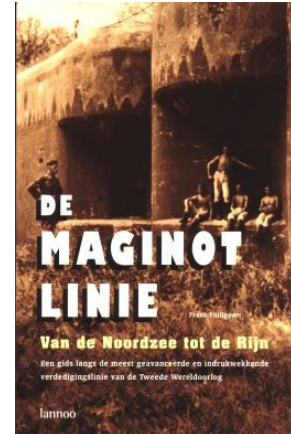
WMF is a section of the Simon Stevin Centrum
Edition 1 of 2016 Composed by Frank PHILIPPART

De Maginot Linie, van de Noordzee tot aan de Rijn

The French Maginot Line was probably the most advanced of all fortification lines built in the thirties to defend France against Germany. Nowadays these forts lie forgotten in forests and on desolate hills in France and locating them without a decent guide is a hard nut to crack. This book is just like the "Atlantic wall between Willemstad and the Somme" an historical travel guide with several line drawings and maps, present day and historical photo's and "then and now" situations. You discover all the forts from the sector of the Scheldt to the Rhine. Next to the different routes you read about the development and the construction of the line. Then you make a virtual tour through a fortress and you are informed about the different weapons and combat blocs. Of course you also read about what happened in 1940 and how the US troops conquered them again in 1944-45. The last chapter gives an impression of the different concept of the Maginot fortresses in the south of France at the Italian border.

Author : Frank Philippart. Editor : Lannoo nv. Published in 2004. Language : Dutch. Number of pages : 487.

Price : 30 €



Interested? Contact frank.philippart@telenet.be .

Thanks to Yvonne Mayo for the spell check.

=====