

After the liberation, it was the wish that the war cemetery would serve as a place for national commemorations. For this reason the National Armed Forces Memorial Grebbeberg Foundation was established in 1946.

The National Armed Forces Memorial Grebbeberg Foundation commissioned the Lion Memorial (unveiled in 1953) designed by J.J.P. Oud and made by J. Raedecker and son.

The bell tower was made in the same period. The bronze toll bell, with the inscription " I speak for those who fell" was founded in 1953.

The Ministry of Defence handed over the care for the war cemetery to the Netherlands War Graves Foundation in 1952.



VIJ DAGEN ENDE VRIJHEID
GING VERLOREN
VIJ JAREN EN EERST TOEN
WERD ZIJ HERBOREN
ZOMIGTZAAM TRIOMEERT
GERECHTIGHEID
AAN DIT BESEF ZIJ DEZE
GROND GEWIJD
J.C. BLOEM

Grebbenberg Military War Cemetery

Grebbeweg 123 - 3911 AV Rhenen - The Netherlands
Tel: 00 31 (0)317 612507

The Netherlands War Graves Foundation

Since 1952 the Netherlands War Graves Foundation has been responsible for this military war cemetery. This now ensures that the war cemetery is maintained and that the memories of the battle fought in this area are kept alive. The Foundation placed uniform headstones on the graves in 1966. At this site the Royal Netherlands Army commemorates annually all Netherlands military personnel who have died world-wide in the course of their duties since 10 May 1940 till today.

In the information centre there is a permanent exhibition; "We have never spoken about it". The exhibition focuses on coping with the grief of the next of kin and military casualties who were involved in the Grebbeberg Battle in May 1940. A book and an educational programme for secondary education have been published to complement the exhibition.



Information leaflets

The Netherlands War Graves Foundation publishes information leaflets in Dutch and English.

In English available are:

- The Netherlands War Graves Foundation (general information)
- The Field of Honour Loenen
- Netherlands War Cemeteries in Indonesia
- Netherlands War Cemeteries in Europe
- Netherlands War Cemeteries in Germany

For more information:

The Netherlands War Graves Foundation
PO Box 85981, 2508 CR The Hague, The Netherlands.
Tel: 00 31 (0)70 3131080 Fax: 00 31 (0)70 3621546
Bank account: 24.62.44.097

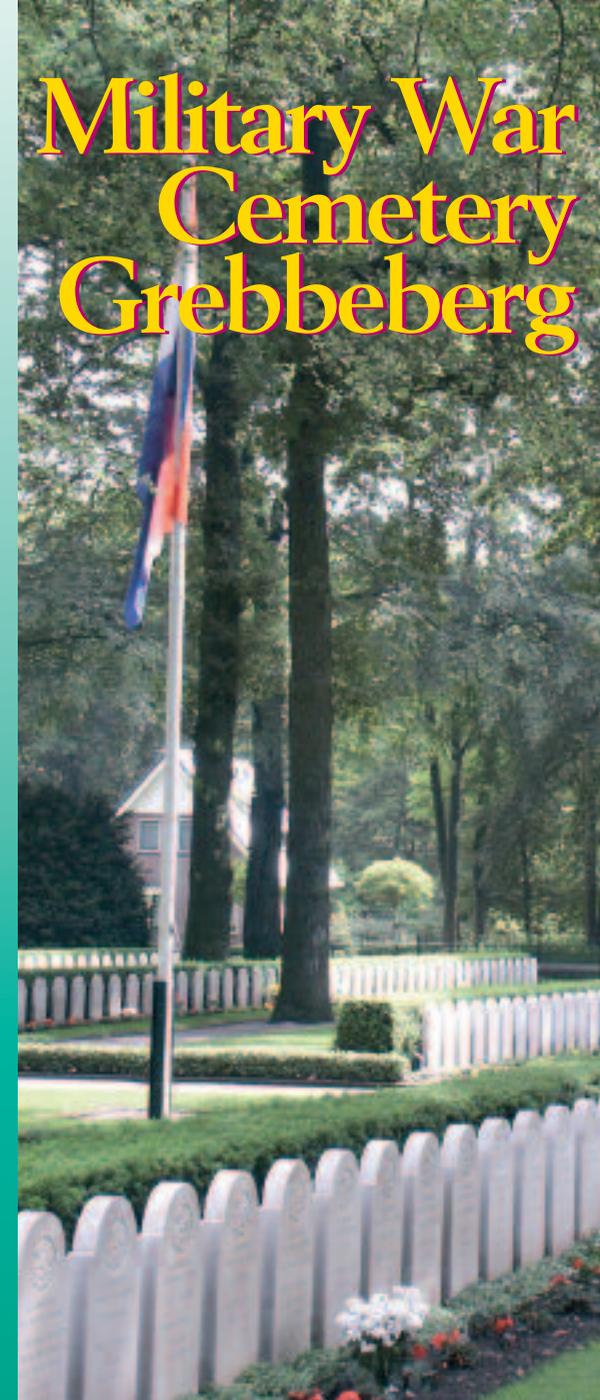
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Netherlands
War Graves
Foundation

Military War Cemetery Grebbeberg





Military War Cemetery Grebbeberg

“Far away from the bustle of the big cities, where the battle of Grebbe was fought, rest amidst the verdant tranquillity, those who by doing their duty have never returned.

Hiker, sauntering by

And passing the Grebbe,
Do not walk idly by,
They died for you as well”

Music: E. Stöcklein. Original Text: G. Plato. Netherlands Text: J.F. Tol.
© Editions Altona b.v.-Strengtholt Music Group, Naarden.
EMC, Huizen-The Netherlands

Military War Cemetery Grebbeberg is the final resting place of Netherlands military casualties who were killed in action in May 1940. Over 400 were killed during the battle over the southern area of the Grebbeline.

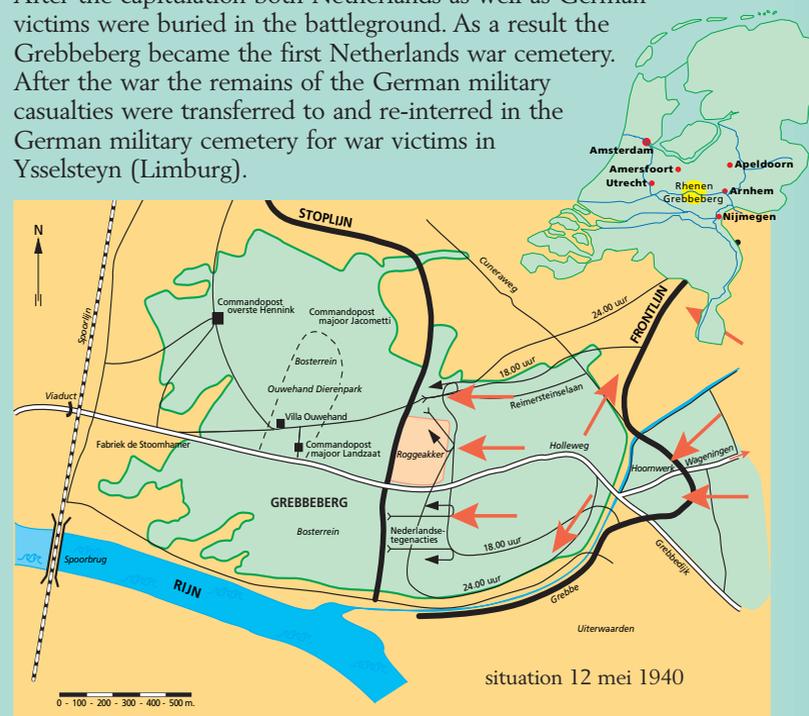
They are buried in the ground which they defended with their lives. Since 1946 re-interments of the remains of military casualties, who were also killed in the first days of the war, but died elsewhere in the Netherlands and who were buried in family graves have taken place regularly. Today there are nearly 850 military graves in this military war cemetery.

Nowadays it is difficult to imagine the short but intense battle that took place in the area. The bomb shelters and pieces of armoured concrete jutting out of the ground are, the only remaining reminders.

Special significance

What makes the Grebbeberg so special? The liberation of the Netherlands was fought for in the surrounding area of the current cemetery. Despite the superior power of the German forces, the battle lasted well over 4 days.

After the capitulation both Netherlands as well as German victims were buried in the battleground. As a result the Grebbeberg became the first Netherlands war cemetery. After the war the remains of the German military casualties were transferred to and re-interred in the German military cemetery for war victims in Ysselsteyn (Limburg).

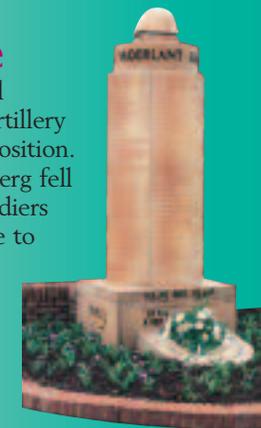


The Grebbeline

The Grebbeberg was an important part of the Netherlands defence against the German forces. It was part of the defensive position taken up in the valley “Vallestelling”, better known as the Grebbeline. Some parts of this area were flooded to strengthen this defensive position. However, this was not possible between Wageningen and Grebbeberg. For this reason the Germans focused their attack at this weak part of the Grebbe defence line.

The Grebbeberg Battle

The Grebbeberg Battle lasted from 10 until 14 May 1940. In the night of 10/11 May artillery fire started the attack on the Grebbeberg position. On 13 May a small section of the Grebbeberg fell into German hands. Only small units of soldiers were able to hold out but they were unable to make an effective resistance. The Netherlands forces withdrew that night. After the bombing of Rotterdam the Netherlands forces surrendered.



The War Cemetery

After the Grebbeberg Battle the search for casualties and wounded started. By order of the German Command a cemetery was constructed on the Grebbeberg by a group of local workmen supervised by a major in the Netherlands Army.

“German soldiers were lined up in front of us, next to members of the Red Cross and those who had assisted in the search for casualties or in the digging of graves in which 60 men had been put to rest side by side so that they could still be identified. Standing to one side, there was a ceremonial firing party ready to fire a salute. Branches of spring green beech were spreading over the graves. The wind wafted through the trees. All was silent.”

Memory of Reverend Keers (*in charge of identifications*)

Soon afterwards, the 8th, 10th and 22nd Infantry Regiment memorials were placed to commemorate those who were killed in action in the Grebbeberg Battle.