

Colloquia of local history associations 'From Liberation to Victory'

On 3 June and on 17 June, CegeSoma organised two colloquia, at the State Archives in Namur and at the State Archives in Ghent respectively, for anyone interested in local history about the period from the Liberation of the country in September 1944 to the final victory over Nazism in spring 1945. The following report presents an overview of the papers presented that can provide tools and guidance for further research about the subject, thereby also spreading the findings of the colloquium among those interested in local history.

Two colloquia similar in form but not in content

At both colloquia, six papers were presented ? four in the morning and two in the early afternoon ? about similar subjects. Then, three working groups were set up, respectively about military and civil aspects, and about concrete projects related to the research carried out. Even though the colloquia were similar in the manner in which they were carried out, the contents of the papers presented were quite varied. In short, the papers to which this article refers are complementary and we recommend you to read them all in order to have the broadest possible view of the subjects at hand.

Namur, 3 June 2019

After the welcome address by the head of service, Emmanuel Bodart, some fifty attendees were given a bibliographical overview of the subject in question, drawn up by Alain Colignon, CegeSoma's head librarian.

Afterwards, Fabrice Maerten, who is responsible for support public access to CegeSoma's collections', presented a table of civil archives available at a national level.

After the coffee break, Jean-Michel Sterkendries, professor and head of department for the study of conflicts at the Royal Military Academy, held a presentation about military archives.

The last speaker of the morning session was historian Vincent Vagman, who is the coordinator of a recently published new guide to local history entitled *Le nouveau guide de l'histoire locale*. Together with two co-authors of the guide he discussed this research instrument that should prove to be useful aid for carrying out research and sharing results.

The early afternoon session was dedicated to regional approaches to the subject. Emmanuel Bodart first presented an extensive table of local civil archives, complementing the central archives introduced during the morning session.

After this, historian Mélodie Brassinne, who is dedicated to the valorisation of cultural heritage related to remembrance at the Cultural Heritage Service of the province of Namur, presented an overview of the province administration's future projects with regard to the commemorations of the Second World War, while also encouraging local initiatives. The public was then given the opportunity to present their projects and ask the speakers some questions in the three working groups mentioned above.

Ghent, 17 June 2019

Some forty participants were welcomed by Paul Drossens, department head of the Ghent repository. Then, Nico Wouters (director of CegeSoma) presented a general overview of bibliographical instruments and different sub-themes with a selection of main publications.

Subsequently, Gert De Prins, archivist at the Archives Service for War Victims took the floor. His paper focused on the archives of the resistance and of civil victims of the war.

After the coffee break Frank Seberechts, who is currently writing a publication about the liberation of Antwerp, presented a paper about military sources.

To round off the morning session Chantal Kesteloot, head of public history at CegeSoma, set up a list of frequently asked questions among those who wish to share their research findings with a broader audience, and presented a number of projects.

In the early afternoon, Paul Drossens spoke about the archives regarding the repression of collaborators, civil justice, Winter Aid and War Damages.

Lastly, Hendrik Vandeginste, historian and archivist of the non-profit organisation 'Histories?', drew a picture

of various initiatives and projects that are taking place in Flanders in the coming months related to the anniversary of the Liberation.
The colloquium ended with a very fruitful exchange of ideas among the participants and speakers in the three working groups.

Fabrice Maerten