

CEGESOMA - State Archives

NEWSLETTER

No 110 - February 2026



ON THE AGENDA

THE GHOST TRAIN OF SEPTEMBER 1944

Dimitri Roden will give a lecture on the Ghost Train, symbol of the resistance of railway workers to the occupiers, on 1 March 2026 at 11:00 a.m. in Dutch and at 2:30 p.m. in French at Train World.

► [Read More](#)

LEZING - CONFÉRENCE

DE SPOOKTREIN VAN
SEPTEMBER 1944

LE TRAIN FANTÔME DE
1944

DOOR/ PAR. DIMITRI RODEN



1/03/2026, 11u NL - 14u30 FR



BELGIAN PARACHUTE AGENTS, 1940-1945

Come and discover a great book that sheds new light on the resistance in Belgium and the secret war waged from London on 25 March 2026 at 2:00 p.m. Marie Marchand, Jean-Claude Maréchal, and Peter Verstraeten will be interviewed by Fabrice Maerten.

► [Read More](#)

NEWS

TRANSFER OF RESISTANCE ARCHIVES

Part of the collections created by the Witte Brigade, Les Affranchis, Service D, the Union nationale de la presse clandestine, Les Insoumis, the Organisation militaire belge de Résistance and the Mouvement national royaliste are now available for consultation at the Cuvelier repository.

► [Read More](#)



SOCIAL PARTNERS DURING THE WAR

An exhibition on the situation of social partners during the war years and their essential contribution to the development of social security and social dialogue in post-war Belgium is on display until the end of January 2027 at the Federal Public Service Employment, Labor, and Social Dialogue.

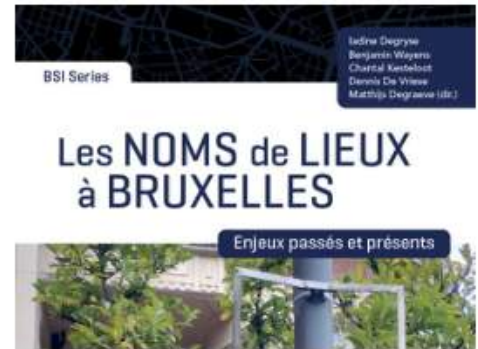
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PUBLICATIONS

BRUSSELS TOPONYMY

A must-see: the presentation of a book discussing the issues of power and urbanization revealed by street names, a database dedicated to place names in the Brussels-Capital Region, and a series of lectures at the Collège Belgique.

► [Read More](#)



Verzameling archiefstukken van particulieren van
het CEGESOMA
Aanwinsten 2018-2023
1890-2021 (vol. jaren 1930-1940)



INVENTORY OF PRIVATE ARCHIVES

A diary, a bundle of letters, a few photographs... Discover the wealth of material in the inventory of private archives acquired by CegeSoma between 2018 and 2023.

► [Read More](#)



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Le Train Fantôme de septembre 1944

[Seconde Guerre mondiale](#) [Conférence](#)

LEZING - CONFÉRENCE

DE SPOOKTREIN VAN SEPTEMBER 1944

LE TRAIN FANTÔME DE 1944

DOOR/ PAR *DIMITRI RODEN*



1/03/2026, 11u NL – 14u30 FR



Dans le cadre du cycle de conférences sur l'histoire des chemins de fer belges pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, [Dimitri Roden](#) (UGent-CegeSoma/Archives de l'Etat), membre du [Réseau Histoire de la Résistance](#) donnera une conférence sur **le Train Fantôme de septembre 1944**, le **1^{er} mars 2026 à 14h30 à Train World**.

"Au printemps 1944, les pénitenciers de la Belgique occupée étaient surpeuplés de prisonniers politiques et de résistants. Pour les empêcher de retourner au combat après la libération, les occupants allemands organisèrent à la hâte une série de déportations massives vers des camps situés à l'intérieur du Reich. Il s'agira des derniers convois de déportation d'entre autre des prisonniers politique organisé par les nazis durant l'occupation de la Belgique.

Le 2 septembre 1944 – quelques jours avant la libération de Bruxelles – un train part de Bruxelles-Midi. Réquisitionné par les Allemands, ce train doit déporter et mener vers la mort 1 500 prisonniers politiques détenus à la prison de Saint-Gilles. Il est notamment tracté par une locomotive de Type 12. À la suite d'actes de sabotage ce train n'atteignit jamais l'Allemagne ! Les 1 500 prisonniers ont ainsi eu la vie sauve. Ce train porte depuis le nom de « train fantôme » et est devenu le symbole de la résistance des cheminots à l'occupant." (cfr site Train World)



01/03/2026 - 14:30

INFORMATIONS PRATIQUES

Où : Train World, Place Princesse Elisabeth, 5 - 1030 Schaarbeek (Rendez-vous dans la Salle Pays de Waes)

Quand : 01.03.2026 à 14H30.

Prix : € 5 ticket d'entrée pour la conférence uniquement (sans l'accès au musée) ; € 18 ticket d'entrée pour la conférence et l'accès au musée. Attention : Si vous suivez la conférence en après-midi ; visitez le musée avant la conférence. La dernière entrée au musée étant à 15h30, vous risquez de ne pas pouvoir le visiter après la conférence. Les tickets Article 27 et Vakantieparticipatie sont acceptés sur présentation d'un ticket valable au guichet. Dans ce cas, veuillez prendre contact avec Train World au préalable par email à info@trainworld.be

Langue(s) principale(s)

Français

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[Home](#) » [Event](#) » La guerre secrète des agents parachutistes belges, 1940-1945

La guerre secrète des agents parachutistes belges, 1940-1945

Public History Meeting (2026-1)

World War II [Conference](#)



**Conference-debate (in French) with guests
Marie Marchand, Jean-Claude Maréchal, and Peter Verstraeten
A discussion chaired by Fabrice Maerten**

Could it be that one of the most daring chapters of World War II remains, for the most part, unknown? For its first Public History Meeting of the year, the CegeSoma and the non-profit organisation Friends of the CegeSoma are pleased to invite you to the presentation of the book: *La guerre secrète des agents parachutistes belges, 1940-1945* by Marie Marchand, Jean-Claude Maréchal and Peter Verstraeten.

Commissioned by the British, Belgian, and American secret services operating from London, 333 Belgian agents (or people working for the Belgian services) were parachuted into or infiltrated across the continent from June 1940 to

May 1945 (and, in the case of a few missions, even later). Their objectives were to gather intelligence; circulate propaganda; carry out acts of sabotage; liaise between local resistance organisations and the Allies; facilitate the escape of airmen and resistance fighters to the United Kingdom; and provide financial and material support to resistance organisations and those fleeing forced labour in Germany. Their actions informed Allied strategy and contributed significantly to the liberation of Europe.

The fruit of in-depth research conducted in Belgian, British, American and German archives, this book is based, in particular, on the analysis of hundreds of personnel files held at the British National Archives (Kew, London), the Belgian National Archives, and the Belgian Military Archives in Evere, as well as the rich collections of the SOE and the Belgian State Security Service held at the CegeSoma. Once collected and organised, data from these files can be used to reconstruct each agent's background and profession, their escape from Belgium, their connection to the services, their training in Great Britain, their mission(s) and their subsequent fate.

The book is divided into two main sections. The first covers the context and structures, namely the British and Belgian services and how they worked together; agent training; risks from German law enforcement; the role of escape networks; special ops; and even services set up after the Liberation. Part two discusses the missions carried out in a chronological order, placing them in the broader context of the war, major international events, and the actions of the Belgian government in exile in London.

We invite you to discover this exceptional work on Wednesday, 25 March 2026 at the CegeSoma during an interview led by Fabrice Maerten. He will discuss with the authors the behind-the-scenes aspects of their investigation, the itineraries of the agents, and the historic issues revealed by this extraordinary work. Both an homage to these Belgian resistance fighters and an essential reference work, *La guerre secrète des agents parachutistes belges* sheds new light on the resistance in Belgium and the secret war waged from London.



Marie Marchand is a retired internal medicine physician. In 2015, she joined the *Fraternelle des Agents Parachutistes*, of which her father, Georges Marchand (1911–1990), was a member.

Since 2017, she has been working with Jean-Claude Maréchal and Peter Verstraeten researching the history of these special agents.



Jean-Claude Maréchal is the godson of Charles Hoyez, who parachuted from London in March 1944 to join the leader of the Secret Army, but who disappeared in Germany a year later. After studying Germanic philology at the University of Liège, he worked as a teacher, then as a translator for the European Communities, and finally as an attaché in economic affairs.

He is the author of the biography *Charles Hoyez: Un Agent parachutiste dans l'Histoire* (EME 2016).



An industrial engineer, **Peter Verstraeten** has been interested in the history of parachute agents and escape networks for the past twenty years. He has contributed to a dozen publications on the subject. He is a member of the board of directors of the *Fraternelle des Agents parachutistes*.



Fabrice Maerten is a doctor of history from *UCLouvain* who devotes most of his research to the history of the Resistance in Belgium during World War II. In charge of guiding the public through the CegeSoma collections, he coordinates the online platform 'Resistance in Belgium' and is the author of *Papy était-il un héros ? Sur les traces des hommes et des femmes dans la Résistance pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale* (2020).



25/03/2026 - 14:00 to 15:30

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Where: CegeSoma conference room, 29 Aviation Square, 1070 Brussels

When: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 (2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.)

Registration required: isabelle.ponteville@arch.be or 02.556.92.11

Participation in the event: €5.00 (to be paid in cash on site)

Copies of the book will be available for purchase on site (only in cash): Marie Marchand, Jean-Claude Maréchal & Peter Verstraeten, *La guerre secrète des agents parachutistes belges, 1940-1945* (The Secret War of Belgian Paratroopers, 1940-1945), Weyrich, 2025, 289 p. (€50.00)

Main language

French

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Transfer of Resistance archives from CegeSoma to the Cuvelier repository (AGR2)



CegeSoma has transferred a collection of archives on the Resistance from Aviation Square [to the Cuvelier repository \(ARA2\), located at 26-28 Rue du Houblon, 1000 Brussels](#). These archives now join the other CegeSoma archive collections. This transfer concerns (parts of) the collections created by the Witte Brigade, Les Affranchis, Service D, the Union nationale de la presse clandestine, Les Insoumis, l'Organisation militaire belge de Résistance, and the Mouvement national royaliste. These archives are now available for consultation.

They were kept at CegeSoma (Aviation Square) during the data encoding process for [Resistance in Belgium, the national database dedicated to the Resistance in Belgium](#).

[The vast majority of CegeSoma's archives can now be consulted in the reading room of the Cuvelier repository.](#) Due to high demand, we recommend that you make your reservation several weeks in advance.

The following archives remain available for consultation at CegeSoma:

- Archives compiled by CegeSoma itself, such as interviews conducted by its own researchers, documents related

to investigations carried out by the Center, etc.

- Files on agents of the Intelligence and Action Services (SRA = AA1333)

To consult these archives at CegeSoma, you must always reserve a place at least 6 days before your visit to our reading room Aviation Square de l'Aviation, 29, 1070 Anderlecht, using [the online calendar](#). You choose a date via this system and will then receive an automatic confirmation email.

Other news

[Placenames in Brussels: past and future](#)

[New inventory of CegeSoma's collections of private archives: acquisitions 2018-2023!](#)

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[Home](#) » [Event](#) » An exhibition on social partners during the war years

An exhibition on social partners during the war years

World War II [Exhibition](#)



An exhibition on social partners during the war years opened on Wednesday, 4 February 2026 in the entrance hall of the Federal Public Service Employment, Labour, and Social Dialogue (FOD WASO/SPF Emploi). The exhibition is an initiative of the National Labour Council (NAR/CNT). CegeSoma played an important role in its realization. Materials from various repositories of the Belgian State Archives were used for the exhibition.

Over 80 years after the end of World War II, this exhibition commemorates how social partners fared during the war years and their essential contribution to the development of social security and social dialogue in post-war Belgium. The exhibition is structured around four themes: war and occupation; the Social Pact; the development of social security; and the development of socio-economic consultation after the liberation.

This exhibition was designed by Dirk Luyten (CegeSoma), Peter Heyrman (Kadoc-KU Leuven), and Luc Peiren (AMSAB-ISG), who also collected the exhibition materials—photos, posters, texts. All this was done in close collaboration with the social partners represented in the National Labour Council.

Some material comes from the library, archive, and photo collection of CegeSoma, from the archives of the War Victims Service, and from the Cuvelier repository. The contribution of the Cuvelier repository was essential in enabling us to focus on the role of the central employers' organization, the predecessor of the current Federation of Belgian Enterprises (VBO/FEB), using the archives of the Central Industry Committee/Federation of Belgian Industries.

The FOD WASO/SPF Emploi was responsible for the visual presentation and material realization of the exhibition, which is open from 5 February 2026 to 31 January 2027, Monday to Friday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. in the entrance hall of the FOD WASO/SPF Emploi building, Ernest Blerot Street 1, 1070 Brussels, not far from CegeSoma. Admission is free.

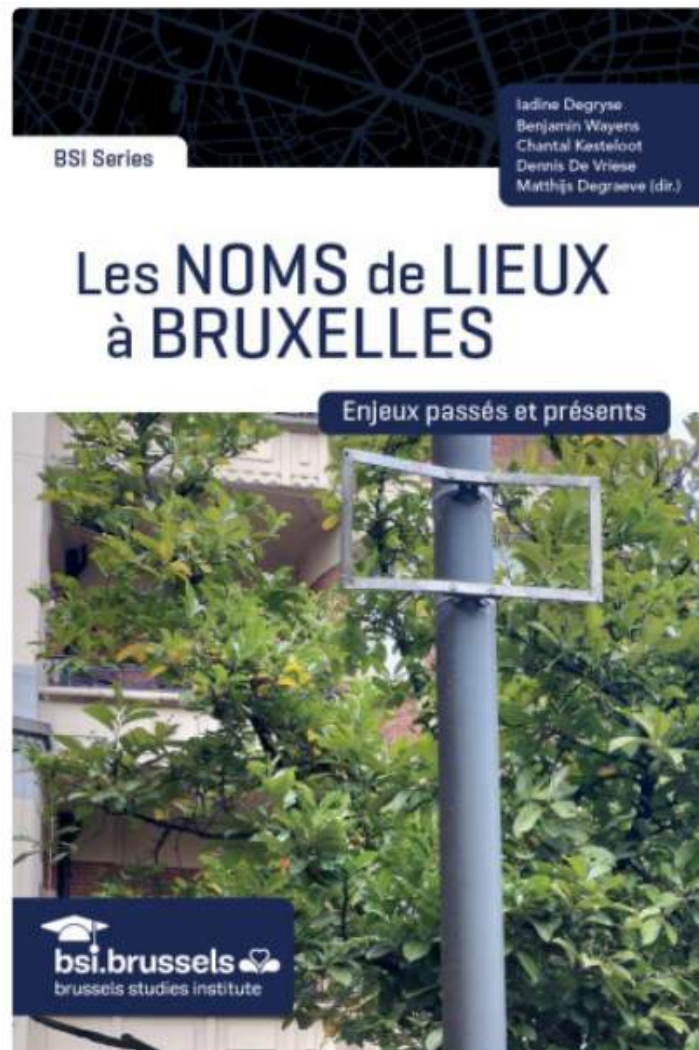


05/02/2026 - 09:00 to 31/12/2026 - 17:00

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Placenames in Brussels: past and future



On 14 November 2024, Cegesoma/State Archives hosted a study day on toponymy in Brussels. The initiative was led by the Brussels Studies Institute (BSI), the interdisciplinary network for Brussels studies (EBxl) and Cegesoma/State Archives.

A book

This meeting is now being followed up, starting with the publication of "Les noms de lieux à Bruxelles. Enjeux passés et présents" (Place names in Brussels: Past and present issues) (edited by Iadine Degryse, Benjamin Wayens, Chantal Kesteloot, Dennis De Vriese, and Matthijs Degraeve). Around twenty authors participated in this initiative. The aim is to move beyond the anecdotal stage that long accompanied toponymic research and to focus clearly on the issues of power and urbanization that street names reveal. How do the names of MIVB/STIB, TEC, De Lijn, and NMBS/SNCB stops fit together? What is the standardization of place names? How does the Royal Commission for Toponymy and Dialectology work? How are street names chosen, when, and by whom?

[On Monday, 23 March, this book will be presented at a session in the Brussels City Museum on the Grand-Place at 5:00 p.m.](#) As places are limited, [please register now via this link if you wish to attend](#). Feel free to forward this invitation to anyone you know who might also be interested in this topic.

A database

This presentation will coincide with the launch of the OdonIris database, dedicated to odonyms in the Brussels-Capital Region. A series of data has been selected for each of these 5,099 unique placenames. This freely accessible tool will be expanded as research progresses.

A cycle of lectures in French at the Collège Belgique

In addition, certain chapters of this book will be the subject of a presentation as part of a series of lectures (cycle « Nom d'un rue! ») at the Collège Belgique, starting on 24 March. [You can find all the details on this page.](#) Here too, please register and pass on the information.

Other news

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[Home](#) » [News](#) » New inventory of CegeSoma's collections of private archives: acquisitions 2018-2023!

New inventory of CegeSoma's collections of private archives: acquisitions 2018-2023!



Every year, CegeSoma receives dozens of new archives from individuals or organizations related in some way to major conflicts of the 20th century: members of the Resistance, collaborators, prisoners of war, civilians struggling to survive the violence of war, and much more.

Often, these documents consist of just one or a few items—a diary, a bundle of letters, some photos—donated by relatives. Managing such small archives is a challenge: how to store, contextualize, and make accessible such individual items in a way that is both accurate and efficient?

Inspired by similar collections in other departments of the National Archives of Belgium, Gertjan Desmet chose to group the items from private individuals under one collection of 'acquisitions' with a single inventory – rather than as separate 'blocks', each with a full inventory. A somewhat arbitrary choice, certainly, but one motivated by pragmatism and efficiency.

This allows us to make the many individual documents we acquire each year accessible within a reasonable time frame, so that the public can come and consult them.

[An initial inventory, describing the documents acquired from 2018 to 2023, has just been published and is available on AGATHA.](#) It covers almost 4 linear meters and consists of 528 items from almost 150 separate archive creators – the result of 85 separate acquisitions.

Every Monday over the coming weeks, Gertjan Desmet will illustrate an aspect or type of source from these collections. For more information, please follow us on our [LinkedIn](#) or [Facebook](#) pages.

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