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CEGESOMA - State Archives

NEWSLETTER

No 79 - November 2022



NEWS

BELGIUM WWII

Focus on the clandestine press, the roundups of Summer 1942 and a series of contributions from young researchers on the social history of the Resistance in some small Belgian municipalities.

► [Read more](#)



THREE QUESTIONS FOR ...

Léo Baudelet, CegeSoma's MacGyver, tells us about his career path, his daily schedule and shares a few anecdotes...

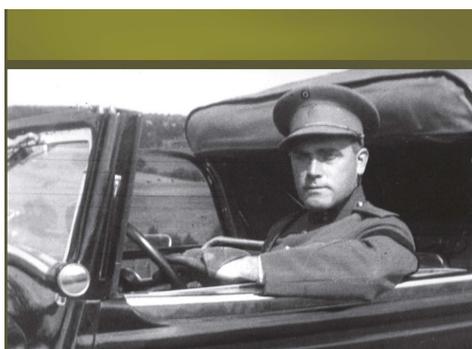
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AGENDA

'OORLOGSCAFÉS'

A new format of lectures for the general public on collaboration and its repression in Flanders. Next meeting : Tervuren, 13 December 2022.

► [Read more](#)



PUBLIC HISTORY MEETING

On 21 December, the association 'Les Amis du CegeSoma' invites you to attend a conference-debate (in Dutch) on the incredible rescue of Antwerp's diamonds in May '40 with guest Bruno Comer.

► [Read more](#)

RESEARCH

WIKIBASE RESISTANCE

A big step forward for the project: more than half a million data from the files of intelligence and action agents involved in the resistance in Belgium are now encoded into our database.

► [Read more](#)



EHRI

A double call for applications to the Conny Kristel Fellowships.

► [Read more](#)

**EUROPEAN HOLOCAUST
RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE**



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Belgium WWII – new content



Focus on underground press

For some years now, all underground journals that were found are available online on the site [The Belgian War Press](#) of CegeSoma. This site also contains information about war press in general and about specific journals. Now, the histories of a couple of them can also be read on the site www.Belgiumwwii.be. The latest additions are among others [Le Coq victorieux](#), [Steeds Verenigd/Unis toujours](#) and [Churchill Gazette](#). In order to quickly find them, please consult the section "*La Belgique en guerre*", then select "*Articles*" and show all related articles using the "*filtres*" option (top right corner): select the topic "*Résistance*" and the keyword "*Presse clandestine*" ((do not forget to click on '*valider*' at the top right of the page). Not all of the 675 archived items are discussed, but readers can already find a selection of papers that mattered. Some underground press organisations are already mentioned in articles of the section about the history of underground movements.

Summer raids 1942

On the occasion of the 80th anniversary date of [the summer raids of 1942](#), it seemed opportune to us to revisit this event, city by city. A bit more than two months after the mandatory [wearing of a yellow star](#) was introduced by the occupying forces, they started to directly track down Jews and tried as much as possible to rely on help from

locals. The Belgian population of Jewish origin mostly live in [Brussels](#) and [Antwerp](#), and to a lesser extent in the Walloon cities of [Liège](#) and [Charleroi](#). How did events unfold in these four cities? Discover the four articles that discuss the situation there.

Contributions from young researchers

In the course of the academic year 2020-2021, an inter-university workshop about "**A social history of the Resistance in small Belgian municipalities**" brought together students from the University of Antwerp and the *Université catholique de Louvain* under the direction of professors Marnix Beyen and Emmanuel De Bruyne. In spring 2022, they presented the results of their works on the occasion of the study day dedicated to the resistance organised by CegeSoma. Some students indeed have decided to translate their work during the workshop into a paper they presented on this day. They have thus subjected their work to external scrutiny and – where necessary – revised their paper for publication. Through their papers, less known and studied parts of the resistance at local level are brought to light, be it [in Boom with police officer Gustaaf Rummens](#), [in Mortsel with the Venckeleer family](#), [in Kapellen with the underground journal *Optimisme*](#), or [in Court-Saint-Etienne with women in the resistance](#), and [Fontaine-l'Évêque with various units of resistance](#). Also worth mentioning is the paper about [Groupe D of the sabotage service Hotton](#), which is the fruit of a master's thesis and which was presented on the study day dedicated to young historians.

Further content to discover

A couple of months ago, we addressed [the exile government in London](#) and various key personalities in Belgium and London. This time, we delve into the participation of the military in the war effort through the creation of [the Tenby rescue base](#). In the context of the occupation, it is also judicious to look into the legal dispositions in place at the time. What does [the Hague Convention](#) stipulate and to which extent did the precedent of the First World War impact the second occupation?

To make a long story short: A lot of new interesting papers to be discovered...

Other news

[Launch of new calls for candidates for the EHRI-Conny Kristel scholarships - 2023](#)

[THREE QUESTIONS TO ... Léo Baudelet,](#)

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THREE QUESTIONS TO ... Léo Baudalet,

CegeSoma's exceptional MacGyver



Next May, Léo, it will be 20 years since you first joined CegeSoma as a surface technician. You started at the Residence Palace (CegeSoma's former location) when the Palais des Congrès closed.

Could you tell us a little about your career before coming to CegeSoma?

I've done a little bit of everything. When I was 14, I started as an apprentice in aluminum frames, then I worked as a trimmer, first for the railroads, then for a car body shop. Then I got to the Cinquantaire to work in the Army Museum but my contract was terminated because I was called up for my military service in Germany. After that, I was hired by the Palais des Congrès where I stayed 18 years. During that period, I also worked as a freelance café owner in Brussels for 5 years, in the evening, with the help of my parents and other relatives.

What is your current job and what do you enjoy in particular?

What I like is the diversity in my work. In addition to my maintenance duties, I also install shelves in the building - sometimes cutting off their 'feet' if necessary to optimize storage - I try to fix locks that don't work, adjust fire door locks, set up the conference room before events organized by the Center, etc. I also accompany tradesmen around the building.



I especially like everything that has to do with repairs, because I know a lot about buildings... I regularly help people outside of work. Being able to work early in my career as an apprentice alone with a boss was ideal! Moreover, I have a very good memory which helps a lot. And I have to say that I have learned a lot over the years, even though you never finish learning, especially on a technical level.

Besides all that, what I appreciate most of all are all the occasions where we meet and share good moments all together like team building for example.

Do you have any good memories or anecdotes to share with us?



Oh yes, and there are many! I remember for example the day we celebrated the departure of José Gotovitch, our director at the time... He arrived at CegeSoma in a wartime Jeep, it was great!

And the day when I had to evacuate a mouse that had fallen into our former accountant's wastebasket... The mouse kept jumping up and down to try to escape... I don't know who was the most terrified of the two...

Then during the lockdown periods, I was one of the only people who came daily to CegeSoma and there, when nobody is around, you start hearing all the cracks of the building ... and I must say that it is not always very

reassuring ...

And to conclude Leo, next year, after 43 years of work, you will retire. What are your plans?

I would still like to work as a delivery driver for a few hours here and there because I know Belgium very well. Otherwise, I'd like to do repairs, repaint, do ceilings, or anything related to the building sector.

Thanks to you Leo! We will miss you and your many MacGyver talents... We wish you all the best !

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“Oorlogscafés”: Collaboration and repression in Flanders

A new and more informal series of lectures for the large public

World War II [Conference](#)



On 24 November, **Koen Aerts** (*UGent/State Archives-CegeSoma*) and **Bruno De Wever** (*UGent*) launched a new type of lectures in Gent titled “*Oorlogscafés*”. Partners are the Davidsfonds and the State Archives-CegeSoma. The goal is to share knowledge and findings from scientific research into collaboration and repression with the large public in an informal, café-like setting.

Upon registration, attendees will be given **access to some 20 webinars of maximum 10 minutes about topics related to collaboration and repression**. Once registered, you can also ask questions in advance that will be summarised and addressed at the event. “*Oorlogscafés*” are organised in every Flamish province.

-> Registration via this link: <https://www.davidsfonds.be/zoekresultaten?q=oorlogscaf%C3%A9>

-> Further information: https://view.publitas.com/davidsfonds/het-accent_juli_2022/page/8-9

Please also note the scientific survey about the Second World War that underpins these lectures. Link to the

survey: <https://forms.gle/X49BRr5Mc3z1jKPE9>



24/11/2022 - 19:30 to 24/04/2023 - 21:30

Dates and locations of the Oorlogscafés:

Thursday 24 November 2022 from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm - NTGent, Sint-Baafsplein 17, 9000 Ghent

Tuesday 13 December 2022 from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm - De Steenberg, Spechtenlaan 9, 3080 Tervuren

Wednesday 8 February 2023 from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm - Borrelhuis, Witte Nonnenstraat 28, 3500 Hasselt

Thursday 16 February 2023 from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm - De Basiliek, Trooststraat 22, 2650 Edegem

Tuesday 9 March 2023 from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm - ZoWe Vormingscentrum, Barrièrestraat 2 D, 8000 Brugge

Monday 24 April 2023 from 1.15 pm to 4.00 pm - National Archives 2 - Joseph Cuvelier repository, Hopstraat/Rue du Houblon 26-28, 1000 Brussels

Main language

Dutch

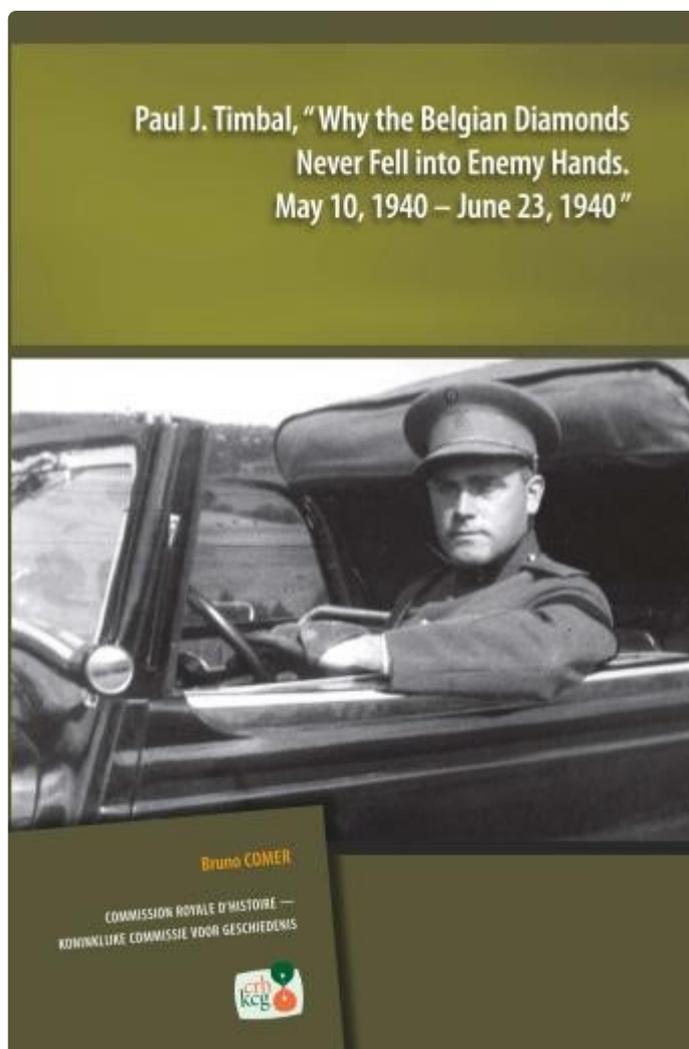
TAGS

[collaboration](#) [Repression of collaboration](#)

The rescue of Antwerp diamonds in May '40.

Public History Meetings of CegeSoma (2022-6) - Invitation of the non-profit association 'The Friends of CegeSoma'.

World War II [Conference](#)



Conference-debate (in Dutch) with Bruno Comer as guest speaker.

A discussion led by Dirk Luyten (CegeSoma/Dtate Archives).

We are at the beginning of World War II in Belgium and the rapid advance of the Germans is causing havoc throughout the country, even in its highest circles. In this chaotic situation, a banker, Paul Timbal, flees the *Pelikaanstraat* in Antwerp towards Paris. In his car, two sealed safes containing a real fortune in diamonds. Six weeks later, mission accomplished, the precious cargo ends up in the vaults of the Diamond Corporation in London thus escaping the Nazis. Bruno Comer has come to tell us the story of this incredible transport, mentioned in the Memoirs of General De Gaulle, through the much more precise manuscript version by Paul Timbal, discovered in the

archives of the Antwerp Diamond Bank. This little-known story is said to have inspired Ian Fleming's novel, 'Diamonds are forever'...

The association 'Les Amis du CegeSoma' has the great pleasure to invite you on Wednesday 21 December for a public History Meeting, in the company, for once, of one of its own members, Bruno Comer, who will be interviewed by Dirk Luyten (CegeSoma).



Bruno Comer studied law at the *KULeuven* and international politics at the Johns Hopkins University in Bologna. A retired executive of KBC Bank & Insurance, he authored several children's and youth books and two general interest books, '*Kapitalisme zonder cijfers*' and '*Mei '40: de onbegrijpelijke nederlaag*'. Together with journalist Chaim Even-Zohar, he published a history of the Antwerp Diamond Bank. In the archives of this bank, he found the manuscript of Paul Timbal, which has been published by the Royal Historical Commission. Working as a guide in Bruges, Damme and De Panne, his interests include neo-gothic architecture, the relationship between ethics and economy, and Napoleonic history, more specifically in connection with the construction of the Damme canal (*Damse Vaart*).



Dirk Luyten holds a PhD in history from the *VUB*. His research interests include social policy and industrial relations, legal history (in particular social and criminal law), the socio-economic history of World War II and the repression of collaboration after WWII.

He coordinates the research sector at CegeSoma.



21/12/2022 - 12:30 to 14:00

PRACTICAL INFORMATION :

Where ?: Conference room of CegeSoma, Square de l'Aviation/Luchtvaartsquare 29 – 1070 Brussels

When ?: Wednesday 21 December 2022 (12.30 pm – 2.00 pm)

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

Feel free to ask other interested people to join in!

Où : Salle de conférence du CegeSoma, Square de l'Aviation 29 – 1070 Bruxelles

Quand : Mercredi 21 décembre 2022 (12h30 – 14h00)

Inscription obligatoire : isabelle.ponteville@arch.be ou 02.556.92.11

Main language

Dutch

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News from the Wikibase Resistance project

Half a million data about Agents of the Intelligence and Action Services involved in the resistance in Belgium



Thanks to a collective effort, the data feeding from 46,340 files about the attribution of the status of [Intelligence and Action Agent](#) preserved at CegeSoma is now finished!

There are over half a million data that now enable us to have an overview of the persons about which the State Security (*Sûreté de l'État/Staatsveiligheid*) has opened files. This information can henceforth be searched by gender, age, place of residence, or resistance network to which the person belonged. In anticipation of a transversal study to be published in the future, this data feeding work already allows us to make some observations.

From the information contained in the files preserved at CegeSoma it appears that about half of the requests addressed to the Belgian state were rejected (of a total of 40,869 requests accounted for, 49.1% were refused, 45.3% led to the status of national recognition and 5.2% led to an equivalent status from the French state; no data for 0.4% of the files). More than 4 requests out of 5 that led to the granting of the status of Intelligence and Action Agent were filed by men (more precisely 82.6% according to a sample of 11.094 recognised agents from September 2022). The top of the list of resistance networks and missions is held by the trio "Luc-Marc" (14.4%),

“Bayard” (14.4%) and “Zéro” (12.3%).

We will keep you updated about the publication of these data in the coming months. Until then, you can already contact CegeSoma if you would like to obtain further information about one of these files.

[The Wikibase Resistance project](#) team continues its long-term work with a new challenge at hand: feeding the data from over 25.000 files on persons who have requested the status of resistance fighter through the underground press.

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Launch of new calls for candidates for the EHRI-Conny Kristel scholarships - 2023



The EHRI (European Holocaust Research Infrastructure), of which the State Archives/CegeSoma is one of the partners, aims to facilitate international Holocaust research by improving access to archives and stimulating international contacts between Holocaust researchers.

The Conny Kristel fellowships, which offer archivists and Holocaust researchers the opportunity to conduct archival research in one of the EHRI's partner institutions, help achieve this goal. An EHRI Fellowship can also be applied for at the State Archives/CegeSoma (if working in Belgium, you cannot apply for a scholarship at the State Archives/CegeSoma, but may apply for an institution outside of Belgium).

Two new calls were recently launched, which are open until 20 January 2023 and 30 June 2023.

- More information about application conditions and the procedure can be found [here](#)
- For questions about opportunities offered by the State Archives/CegeSoma for Holocaust research, please contact dirk.luyten@arch.be.

EHRI (European Holocaust Research Infrastructure), waarvan het Rijksarchief/CegeSoma een van de partners is, wil het internationale Holocaust onderzoek faciliteren door de toegang tot archieven te vergemakkelijken en internationale contacten tussen Holocaust-onderzoekers te stimuleren.

Eén van de middelen daarvoor zijn de Conny Kristelfellowships, die archivariissen en Holocaust-onderzoekers de mogelijkheid bieden archiefonderzoek te doen bij één van de *EHRI*-partner instellingen. Ook voor het Rijksarchief/CegeSoma kan een *EHRI*-fellowship worden aangevraagd (wie in België werkt kan niet kandideren voor een fellowship bij het Rijksarchief/CegeSoma, wel voor een instelling buiten België).

Pas werden twee nieuwe calls gelanceerd, die open zijn tot respectievelijk 20 januari 2023 en 30 juni 2023.

- o Meer informatie over de voorwaarden en de procedure vindt u [hier](#).
- o Mocht u vragen hebben over de mogelijkheden die het Rijksarchief/CegeSoma biedt voor Holocaustonderzoek kan u contact opnemen met dirk.luyten@arch.be

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