

VRT EEN Television news, March 16, 2013, 1PM (2:15 min).

http://www.deredactie.be/cm/vrtnieuws/videozone/programmas/journaal/EP_130316_JO1?video=1.1575864

Last Post on Original Horn in Ieper.

A remarkable exposition was opened in the 'In Flanders Fields' museum last night. The exposition is about the American food aid to Belgium during World War One. It was organized by Herbert Hoover, who would later become the President of the United States. From 1915 on, the Commission for the relief of Belgium came into existence and saved millions of Belgians from starvation. The opening coincided with a special version of 'The Last Post.'

'The Last Post at the Menen gate this time has a very special American guest. Ambassador Gutman is in attendance but also the British, who on this occasion brought a very special gift. Because for the first time since 1927, the horn on which the original 'Last Post' was blown has returned to Ieper.

Anthony James, Sergeant Wellington School of Drums: "The fact that I am playing such a historic instrument means the world to me. I aspire to be in the military when I am older and to remember those who lost their lives through the medium of this instrument is just an honor for me."

But the Belgian civilian population suffered a lot because due to the occupation, they were threatened by famine. Luckily, there was Herbert Hoover, who with millions of dollars worth of food and aid came to the aid of the population.

Dominique Dendooven, Exhibition Organizer: "It is actually because of the 'Commission for the Relief of Belgium,' that we did not suffer from famine in Belgium. The American organization made sure that there was always sufficient food and medicine were imported, during the entire duration of the war."

Howard W. Gutman, US Ambassador to Belgium: "You see for the people then, the atrocities of World War One, you see they have never lived through such a thing. And an American, whether it is 1915 or 2015, we cannot let that happen, we have to step up."

The gratefulness of the Belgian population was very big because the Americans did even more. They joined the war actively in 1917. And at the time of the armistice a year later, some 116,000 US soldiers had died.

VTM 16 March 2013 1PM News (2:03 min).

<http://nieuws.vtm.be/binnenland/2013031640764-speciale-last-post-voor-nieuwe-expo>

Special Last Post for New Exposition

'The Last Post' sounds every evening underneath the Menen gate, but this time there are even more people in attendance than usual. Because the original horn is in leper for the occasion. De horn used for the very first 'Last Post' in 1927. The Defense Minister Pieter De Crem and the American Ambassador Howard Gutman are present because in the Flanders Fields Museum further down the road a special exhibit is opening: 'The Commission for the Relief in Belgium.' It is about the American food relief program to Belgium during World War One. In total some 3.2 million tons of food was shipped to Belgium in this period. The flour sacks are now the symbol of this.

Dominiek Dendooven of In Flanders Fields Museum: "The most important form of food aid came to Belgium in these flour bags. Once these flour bags were empty, they were given to schools and convents. These schools and convents painted or conducted needle work on them. These bags then went back to the US where they were sold. With the profits new food aid was purchased. And this made the circle round."

The food aid was an initiative of Herbert Hoover, who later became the US President. Hoover was the hero of millions of compatriots who would have otherwise died from hunger. The population received ration stamps and stamp cards so the meat, soup, and milk would be equally distributed.

Dendooven: "Here you have a family card for soup. For every day you would have a coupon. You would hand in the coupon and receive your soup and the next day the next coupon, so you could not nag."

US Ambassador Howard Gutman: "It is something that is a very important part of our history, and Belgians never forget. Belgians adopt the graves of dead soldiers and Belgians remember the relief effort and expositions like this are to make sure we never forget."

The exposition still runs to May 20th.