

RCH Association Tours for the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands - **BLUE** Northeastern LOOP - 11 - 16 April 2025

The **Blue** Loop is a 6-day tour of the northern part of the Netherlands which was liberated in 1945. It will retrace the steps of the 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment (17th Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars), visiting specific locations of interest. It will start and end in Amsterdam. The tour will be of interest to members of the Royal Canadian Hussars Association as well as the families of veterans who served with the regiment during the liberation.

Background

The government of the Netherlands surrendered on May 15, 1940, five days after being invaded by German Forces. As time went on, the Nazis took increasingly repressive measures. Many people of the Netherlands were killed or died in prison camps. Others were rounded up and taken to internment camps to be used as forced labourers. Those who could escape, went underground.

In September 1944, the Allied Forces entered the southwestern parts of the Netherlands, however their advance was paused due to heavy fighting at Arnhem and around the Scheldt Estuary. During the following winter, a German embargo on food and heating fuel resulted in a famine and suffering, mostly in the urban parts of the Netherlands still under German control. This resulted in many deaths and health problems. There was also an intense air war over Friesland. Tensions between the German Forces and the local population were high.

By April 1945, the German Forces were in full retreat towards Germany. Five Canadian Divisions entered Germany just east of Nijmegen, but then swung north, to clear the northeast part of the Netherlands, including the provinces of Overijssel, Drenthe, Friesland, and Groningen. The 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment (17th Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars) pursued the German Forces in front of the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division, trying to seize bridges and find routes forward towards Leeuwarden.

Costs of the tour

- As of 15 October, the estimated cost per person based on double occupancy will range from \$1,500 to \$1,900 CAD depending on the number of participants.

Included in the price	Excluded from the price
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation during the tour will be by chartered bus and canal barge; the size of the bus and the price will vary depending on number of participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are responsible to arrange travel between their homes and Amsterdam Schiphol touring-bus terminal • Cost of flights to the Netherlands.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation costs include : • 5 nights in 3 hotels based on double occupancy (double or twin). • 5 breakfasts, 3 box lunches and 4 dinners • Cost of two group meeting rooms for presentations 	Other expenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinks, refreshments and snacks • Optional stays before and after the tour • Optional visits to museums and other attractions • Lunch on April 11 before RV • Lunches (April 15, 16) and dinner (April 15) in Leeuwarden

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Booking arrangements

- A firm commitment to participate in the tour and a deposit of \$600 per person is required by December 20, 2024. Please communicate your intentions as soon as possible to John Cochrane.
- The balance will need to be paid at the end of January 2025.
- The deposit and balance are to be paid to the **Royal Canadian Hussars Association**, either by cheque or by credit card.
- For credit card payments from Canadian and U.S.A. locations, use the “membership and payments” page on the RCH Association website.

Here is the link: <https://rch.ca/en/membership/>

Use the on-line payments function at the bottom of the screen, select “other” for type of payment.

ON-LINE PAYMENTS

To submit your membership dues, donations, and other amounts electronically, enter your payment amount below and click on the PAYMENT button to continue the data input process. On the CHECKOUT screen, you will be prompted to select the type of payment and enter your name, address, and credit card information. On the right-hand side of the screen, you can provide explanations related to your payment. When all information has been entered, press PLACE ORDER to complete the transaction. You will receive an e-mail confirmation of your payment.

PAYMENT SERVICES

Other

Explanation (Optional)

Amount (CAD) (\$3.92\$ USD)

ADD TO CART

- For payments by cheque, address your cheque to the “Royal Canadian Hussars Association” and mail it directly to :

The Royal Canadian Hussars Association, Care of: John Cochrane, Treasurer
146 Rang des Vingt, St-Basile-le-Grand, Quebec, Canada, J3N 0E5

- This trip was planned and will be coordinated principally by **John Cochrane** on behalf of the Royal Canadian Hussars Association. John can be reached at 514-591-9455 or john.s.cochrane@videotron.ca.
- Assisting in the planning and coordination was booking agent **Caroline Ripolles Bøyum** of MijnVakantieCoach / Eurotripadviser. She is available to make additional optional reservations for participants before and after the organized part of the tour. She can be contacted at info@eurotripadviser.com or on Skype at caroline.boeyum.





Donations

If you cannot go, but wish to donate funds so someone else may go, you could consider a tax-deductible donation to the Montreal Cavalry Institute. One of the Institute’s purposes according to its charter is to: Commemorate the efforts and sacrifices of members of Cavalry Troops, Armored


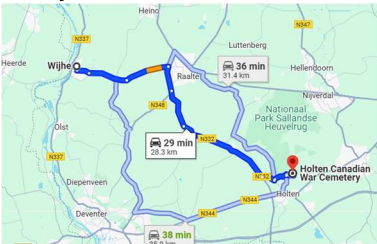
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Troops and other mobile military forces by defraying the costs of commemorative items and allocating funds for current or former members to attend commemorative events.



PROPOSED ITINERARY

Destination	Description
11 April	Friday
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rendezvous in Amsterdam on 11 April at 12:00 hours – RV Location at the Schiphol airport terminal for touring coaches. Follow the “Touring Coaches” sign.
	 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel from the Schiphol “Touring Coaches” terminal to our first hotel in Raalte, near the Holten Canadian War Cemetery : estimated distance & time 130 km, 2 hours 
Short stop in Deventer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5 hour stop in Deventer, which was captured by the 3rd Canadian Division on 11 April 1945. The wide, high-banked IJssel River ran through this town forming a great defensive barrier so it had to be attacked from the rear (the east). The eastern approaches were also well protected by a maze of waterways, which had to be overcome. The defence of Deventer proved to be “the last determined resistance offered by the enemy” during the northern drive by the 3rd Division. 

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotel Inn Salland in Raalte • Free time in the afternoon. Possible activities, at your own expense, include visiting a nearby motorcycle museum, Basilica or a clog maker (6 euros per person) or walking around a small lake. • Meet at 17:00 hours for introductions, welcome briefing, meet and greet and , at 18:00 hours, have a group supper. 		
12 April	Saturday		
Holten (a.m.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast at Hotel, leave hotel at 09:00 hours with box lunches, travel 30 min. to cemetery. • Morning visit and memorial service at Holten Canadian War Cemetery, the burial location for 11 members of the unit. A presentation will be made of each of the deceased and the circumstances of their deaths. Poppies and flags may be placed on graves. <table border="1" data-bbox="418 716 1406 856"> <tr> <td data-bbox="418 716 911 856"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt Anderson, Hugh Henry 11 Apr 45 • Sgt Baker, Herbert T. 28 May 45 • Sgt Dabbs, Harold 4 May 45 • Tpr Dawson, Leslie James • Cpl Goldberg, Harry 26 Apr 45 • Tpr Huber, Walter Leo 12 May 45 </td> <td data-bbox="911 716 1406 856"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cpl Ludwig, Frederick 23 Oct 45 • L/Cpl McKeown, Bruce Joseph 11 May 45 • Tpr McLelland, John Thomas 12 May 45 • Cpl Morrison, Donald 4 May 45 • Tpr Parker, William Frederick 2 May 45 </td> </tr> </table>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Canadians buried in Holten nearly all died during the last stages of the war in the Netherlands and Germany. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt Anderson, Hugh Henry 11 Apr 45 • Sgt Baker, Herbert T. 28 May 45 • Sgt Dabbs, Harold 4 May 45 • Tpr Dawson, Leslie James • Cpl Goldberg, Harry 26 Apr 45 • Tpr Huber, Walter Leo 12 May 45 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cpl Ludwig, Frederick 23 Oct 45 • L/Cpl McKeown, Bruce Joseph 11 May 45 • Tpr McLelland, John Thomas 12 May 45 • Cpl Morrison, Donald 4 May 45 • Tpr Parker, William Frederick 2 May 45
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Wijhe (p.m.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel from Holten to Wijhe; estimated distance & time: 30 km, 1 hour. 		
Wijhe (early p.m.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to the location where Lt. Anderson and his troop was ambushed, now referred to as Luitenant Andersonstraat, just south of Wijhe. • Gordon Routley will recount the story told to him by his father. We may walk the road and search for the approximate location. We will be accompanied by one or more members of the Wijhe historical society. • Link to story on RCH Website: https://rch.ca/wp-content/uploads/3-The-George-Routley_Andy-Anderson-Story_20211222.pdf 		

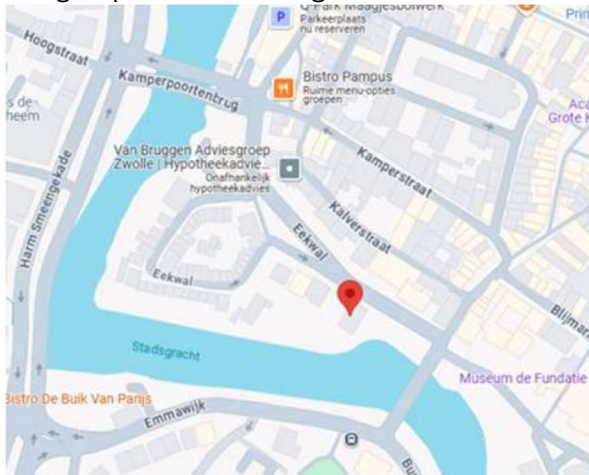
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Wijhe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to monument commemorating war deaths, including Lt. Anderson and others in the centre of Wijhe. (It is at the corner of Orangeelaan and Stationsweg and not accessible by a large bus, so some walking may be required) • Link to story on RCH Website: https://rch.ca/wp-content/uploads/3-The-George-Routley_Andy-Anderson-Story_20211222.pdf 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel from Wijhe back to Hotel in Raalte; estimated distance & time 19 km, 40 min.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival at Hotel Inn Salland in Raalte (same hotel as previous night) in late afternoon, free time to visit local community, meet and greet, and at 18:00, have a group supper at hotel.
13 April	Sunday
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast at Hotel Inn Salland in Raalte, Box lunches to be prepared by Hotel. (Box lunches cancelled because we are invited to lunch in Kampen): • Depart 08:30 hours • Drive to Zwolle; estimated distance and time: 21 Km, 40 min.
Zwolle (10:00 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided tour/briefing on capture of Zwolle, which was liberated on 14 April. Leo Major a member of the Regiment de la Chaudière entered the town at night and, by making a lot of noise, convinced the Germans to leave. He returned to his lines to report that the Germans had withdrawn from the town, allowing a planned artillery bombardment to be cancelled, thus saving the old city. However, two troops of "A" Squadron were the first units to enter the town the next morning, and did so amidst scenes of wild jubilation, as citizens clambered over their vehicles.

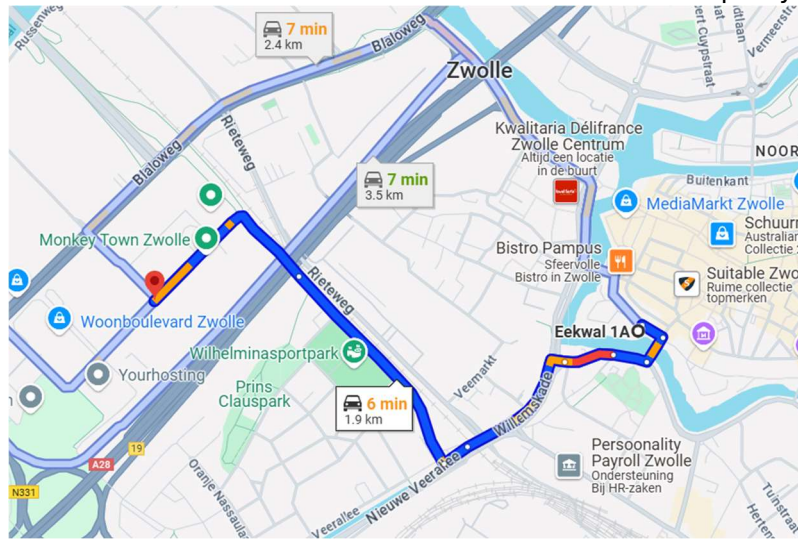
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The group is to meet the guide at Eekwal 1a in Zwolle (Bergman Clinics)

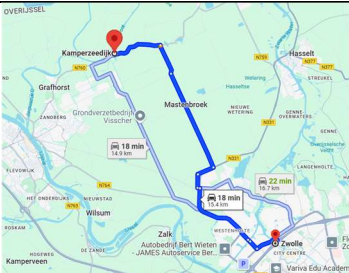
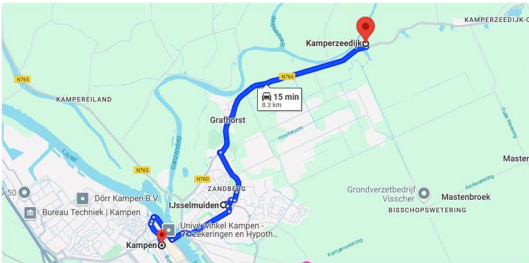



- Bus will park at Grote Voort in the industrial area Voorst about 2 kilometers from where the group will be dropped off. You will have to inform the bus driver 10 minutes before to come and pick you up.



- Travel from Zwolle to Kamberzeedijk: estimated distance & time 16 Km, 30 Min.

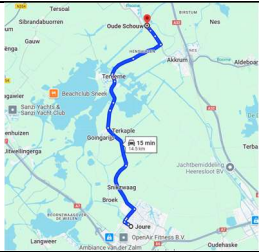
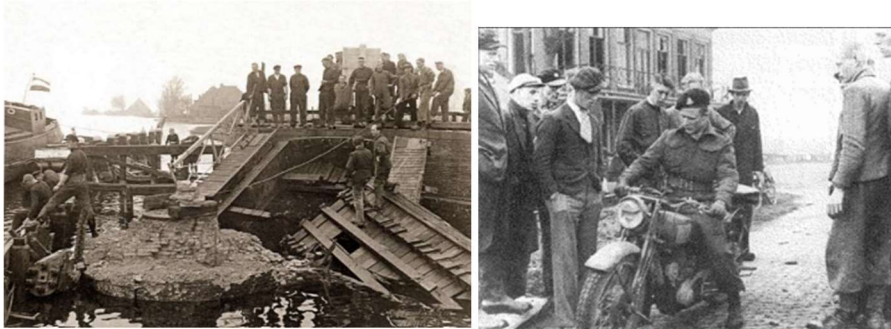
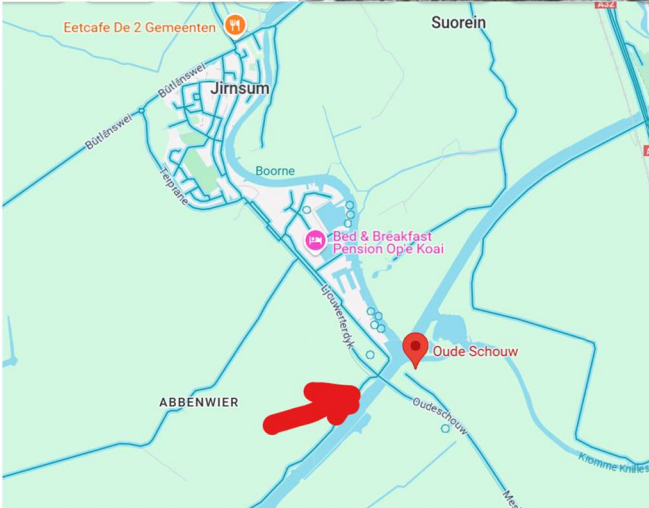
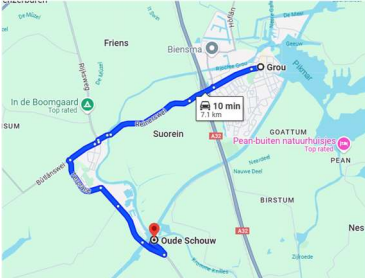
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<p>Kamberzeedijk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short visit to William Thomson Bridge. On 14 April 2015, the bridge near Steam Pumping Station Mastenbroek (N760 Kamperzeedijk, Geme,uiden, municipality of Zwartewaterland) was named The William Thomson bridge. In 1945, it was sergeant Willaim Thomson of the 7th Recce, who was first to cross the bridge, liberating Kamperzeedijk. The bridge was named at the initiative of 80-year-old Ab Roetman, born in Kamperzeedijk and in 2015 residing in IJsselmuiden. • A member of “A” Squadron, Sergeant William Thomson, dismounted from his vehicle to check if the Germans had placed explosives on a bridge over the Veneriete Canal near Genemuident (some 15 kilometres from Kampen). He found that the bridge was safe, but then he got into a firefight with retreating Germans in IJsselmuiden. • Meet Herman Broers at the Bridge, then follow him to Kampen.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel from Kamberzeedijk to Kampen: Estimated distance & time: 8 Km, 30Min. 
<p>Kampen (p.m.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13:00 lunch with the Kampen city council at the former City Barracks (dating back to the 1850’s), now the City Archives and Library. The Kampen Historical Society is also based there. It is an important location connected to the story of WW2 along the river Yssel.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing/Guided visit to 17th Hussars memorial in Kampen. Estimated time 14:00 hours to 16:00 hours. (Herman Broers – President Historical Society.) • On the 14 April 1945, “A” Squadron troops reconnoitred to the west and north of Zwolle. They found that a bridge over the IJssel near Kampen


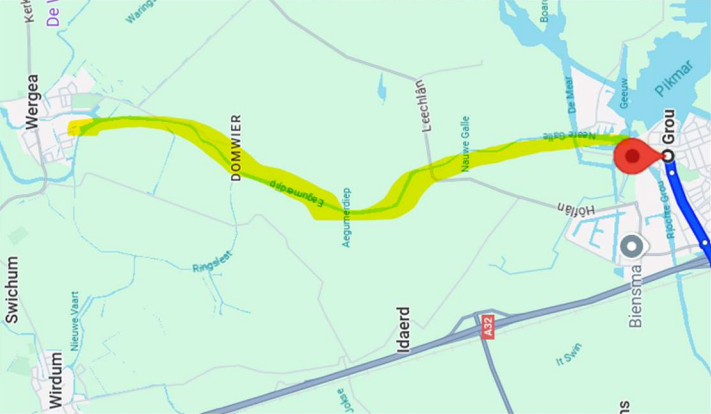
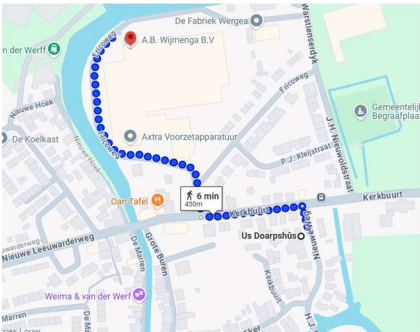
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	<p>had been blown. They came under shell fire from the other side of the river, and from sniper fire from the church towers in Kampen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 17 April 1945, hearing that the Germans had left Kampen, Lieutenant D. J. Mobberley, of No. 2 Troop, took a small boat, crewed by local citizens Warner Pap and Frans de Hosson, and with Sergeant Leon Baker and Trooper L. Lallemand, crossed the River IJssel and entered the town, followed later by sections of the other troops. When the Hussars landed from their rowboat they were met by a cheering crowd. After the squadron was securely established in Kampen, a victory parade was held. In 1995, a memorial to the 17th Hussars was unveiled on the riverbank in Kampen. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div data-bbox="418 640 711 821"> </div> <div data-bbox="732 648 971 856"> </div> <div data-bbox="987 640 1369 905"> </div> </div> <p><small>Locals row Lieutenant D.J. Mobberley, Sergeant Leon Baker and Trooper L. Lallemand, of 'A' Squadron across the River IJssel to liberate Kampen on 17 April 1945. This photo typifies the improvised river crossings undertaken by 7th Reconnaissance Regiment in 1944-1945. (Robert Terpstra provided this image; Collectie SMS Historisch Centrum, Frans Walkate Archief, Photo J. Voeten)</small></p> <p><small><i>At Memorial in Kampen</i> L. to r. <i>Marrin Middleton, Scott McLean, Ken Diebel, Don Oertan.</i></small></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel from Kampen to Heerenveen: Estimated distance & time: 54 km, 1 hour. <div data-bbox="781 1014 1052 1329"> </div>
<p>Heerenveen (overnight)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hotel in Heerenveen Free time, Group Supper
<p>14 April</p>	<p>Monday</p>
<p>Heerenveen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakfast at hotel, Box lunches to be prepared by hotel 09:00 hours Welcome to Freisland. Presentation by Edwin Meinsma, Historian and author – estimated time 1 hour. <div data-bbox="889 1560 1036 1759"> </div>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel to Oude Schouw; estimated distance & time: 15 Km, 30 min.





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<p>Oude Schouw, Jirnsum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit site where a bridge was blown, and Sgt. George Dunlop’s patrol transported their motorcycles over by boat and the Netherlands Resistance built a temporary bridge using lumber and barges. • Link to story on RCH Website: https://rch.ca/wp-content/uploads/1-George-Dunlops-Memories_20211210.pdf  
	<p>Travel to dock near Grou; estimated distance & time 8 Km, 30 min.</p> 

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<p>Grou / Wergea</p>	<p>Embark on a vessel to retrace Lt. Harris’ steps, eat box lunches on vessel; estimated distance and time: 6 Km, 3 hours. The boat will be waiting for us in the harbour of Grou located on Grou Meerseweg 9A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lt. Harris’ troop Universal carriers were transported by barge from Grou to Wergea - Possible afternoon barge cruise to re-enact this move • Link to story on RCH Website: https://rch.ca/wp-content/uploads/2-Search-for-Lt-A F Harris 20211211.pdf • Accompanied by Edwin Meinsma  
<p>Wergea – arrival around 15:30</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival around 15:30 in Wergea on Fricoweg 47 which is located 5 minutes walk from the Community center on It Doarpshûs, Nieuwe Weg 2, 9005 PL Wergea. • Flag raising and presentation by a founding member of the Missing Airmen Memorial Foundation about Canadian airmen who were shot down above Friesland and in many cases hidden by the resistance. • After the event, the bus will be waiting to pickup group at St. Matinskerk Church, which is 150 meters in an easterly direction along Kerkbuurt Street 
<p>Bus pickup around 17:00</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to hotel in Leeuwarden, estimated distance and time: 9 Km, 30 min.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hotel is Fletcher Paleis Stadhoudelijk Hof which is located in a historic building, very central and very nice.  
Leeuwarden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Night off for personal touring and entertainment
15 April	Tuesday
Leeuwarden	<p>Liberated on the 15 April – end of loop – Optional events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible visit to city hall around 11:00 to attend an annual ceremony where the flag of the Royal Canadian Dragoons (RCD) flag will be raised. The RCD were the first to enter Leeuwarden arriving from the east during the morning of the 15th, whereas the 17th DYRCH arrived from the south around 15:00. A book launch for Edwin’s history book of the liberation, which is currently only available in Dutch, may occur at this same ceremony. Afternoon Visit to the Fries Verzetsmuseum (Friesland resistance museum - www.friesverzetsmuseum.nl). The museum pays close attention to the Frisian resistance but certainly also to the liberation by the Canadians. Open 11:00 to 17:00 hours Fries Verzetsmuseum, Wilhelminaplein 92, 8911 BS Leeuwarden Closing supper and adieu
16 April	Wednesday
16 April, Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departure in the morning 08:00 Hours and cross the causeway to Amsterdam. Estimated distance and time: 150 Km, 3 hours (including stop along the way). 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stop along the way at WWII Monument at Hammenspark, Harlingen/Midlum (near where major Maclean of B Squadron earned his DSO): https://www.liberationroute.com/pois/1304/harlingen-a-frisian-town-fiercely-fought-for 

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	<p>This town was strongly defended by German Forces who were defending the withdrawal route across the causeway from the Amsterdam area. By capturing, the Canadian Forces effectively cut off this route.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drop of point at the Schiphol airport terminal for touring coaches.• Thank-you's and good-bye's before returning home or continuing your vacations.