

GOLD!

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Magazine van de Vereniging Gouden-Kruisdragers Vierdaagse

In this edition:

- A Retrospective of the 2024 4Days Marches with Henny Sackers
- Three generations of Gold Medallists
- Reunion: Saturday 27th September Breda!





GOUD! is an issue of the Association of Gold Medallists.

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Foreword chair

Dear Golden Crossbearers,

The year 2024 was a good year for our association. The growth of the number of members is steady and we have gone through several good changes. We know that It wasn't our organization alone that pressed the idea, the foundation DE 4DAAGSE had decided to keep a 20 km route at hand in case of emergencies for every walking day and one of these routes was successfully used this year. Many Goldencrossbearers that walk the 30km distance must have been happy with that alternative.

We work closer with the foundation on promotion; on social media, in the magazine FOUR and through the promotion screens on the Wedren and in the Julianapark the foundation helps to increase our brand awareness.

We have improved the relation with the Royal Dutch Walking Association (KWBN) by making appointments about contribution, discharging members and a user-friendly member administration. It will take some time before effects will be noticed, but the board feels quite happy about it. You'll read more about it in this magazine.

Although, most of the organizations that are runned by volunteers are struggling to get new co-workers, we manage quite well. We try to spread the tasks amongst more people to give everyone a chance to have enough time in their own busy schedule to contribute in a valuable way. The new boardmembers are young and enthusiastic, the editorial staff of GOUD! has been enlarged and we work on a new team that organizes the meetingpoints. If you want to contribute, don't hesitate to contact us, so we can discuss how you fit in our organization.

The coming year we will work on a IVV-walk, at least one new meeting-point, nice 'powered-by GKD' walks (Do you already have a full stampcard to be awarded a 'powered by GKD' -pin?) We are also working on the modernizing of the bylaws. I celebrate Christmas this year with warm thoughts about this years 4Daagse and the day I walked the Goldencrossbearers path together with my dad: hopefully you enjoyed the past year as much as I have!

I wish you all the best for Christmas and the coming 'walking' year!

Frans Leijtens
Chairman



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SAVE THE DATE!!!!

REUNION: Saturday 27th September, 2025

Also this year the reunion will be combined with a Powered-By-walk. The walk and the reunion will be held on Saturday 27th September 2025 in Breda. The final programme has not been arranged yet, but will be announced in the June edition of GOUD!

Customer Panel DE 4DAAGSE foundation

In the early part of the year DE 4DAAGSE foundation has set up a customer panel. At first in the form of a pilot, with the aim of improving their service. The participants exchanged experiences and ideas by reacting on prepared statements. The first meeting took place on Friday, May 17th, in Hotel Van der Valk in Lent, the same place where we hold our annual members meeting every year on the Monday before the 4Daagse. This meeting resulted in a second meeting on Saturday, October 19th. Among the participants were some of our members. It was a great opportunity to contribute to the discussion about several topics. Among the topics that have been discussed are the registration on Sunday and Monday, the capacity of the toilets along the route, the communication from the foundation to the participants, and the reduction in the distances on Friday because of the weather. DE 4DAAGSE foundation informed us that they highly valued the meeting and that the customer panel will be continued next year. It is good to see that some Golden Cross Bearers make this effort and help to improve the 4Daagse!



Introducing our new board member

At the member meeting of July a new member of the board joined. She introduces herself in this article. My name is Lisette Melisse. When I was a little younger I used to watch the 4-days marches on TV. I always wanted to take part and live this walking tour. Well it didn't stay with the one time and as long as I can I will join the walking tour because I love the event. I also try to walk a couple of Kennedy-marches each year and even longer walking tours.



Cherishing our precious volunteers

Dear members, we want to remind you that all of our Board Members are volunteers. That means that it might take a few weeks before you receive a reaction or your question has been sorted out. We ask for some patience from your side. We do our best to process all the questions concerning badges, changes in membership and other changes within a reasonable time. There may, however, be some delay because of holidays or a change in the Board, for example. Thank you for your understanding.

Summary of the General members meeting on July 15th 2024 at hotel van der Valk, Nijmegen

The meeting is opened with a special welcome to mr Koopman, the attendee with the most participations on his list of honors.

At the meeting there are three guest speakers this time: of cause there is the march leader Mr. Sackers. In addition there is the chairman of the supervisory board of the KWbN Mr. Habraken and the new director of the KWbN who will also address the meeting.

The marchleader is happy to be able to report that the average age of the walkers is decreasing because of the increase of the number of young walkers. Also the number of walkers that take up the 4 times 50 km is growing, Last year the safetycar is introduced and it will be continued to be used this year. The rules around the safetycar are tightened, passing the car can lead to an immediate disqualification.

This year there was the opportunity to switch startingtickets after registration and some 2300 people made use of this rule. New to drop-outs is the consolidation booklet, this is meant to encourage and stimulate the walker to try the march again the next year.

Ather this edition of the 4-days marches our association can expect at least 1100

new registrations of walkers who will try to finish their 10th edition.

Mr. Habraken memorizes the better and more intensive cooperation between the "stichting 4-daagse" and the "KWbN". The new director of the walking union Mr Janssen introduces himself and points at the special position the 4-days marches has in the world of recreational sports.

He also points at the importance of good contacts between the sports-organizations and the cities when organizing walking-tours and other events

The board reports that the redaction of "GOUD" needs reinforcements, during the meeting already some new members are coming forward. The German and English editions will as of now only appear in digital form.

At the meeting points the work will switch next year from Francie de Leeuw to Isis Lacroix.

Our association will this year too participate in the flag-parade, many members will walk in this parade with one of the flags of the 86 nationalities who will take part in this years edition of the 4-days marches.

In the board there are some changes to report; Mr van Dijk and Mr. Hendriks are

stepping down, they are thanked for their services and both will become "member of merit". In the spring meeting Mrs Noordanus already had taken up the office of treasurer, and in this meeting mrs. Melisse is introduced as the new member administrator.

The reunion of this year will be held on Sunday September 29th in Gulpen (Limburg) Members have the choice between taking part in the Powered-by walking--tour (Castle tour) or a ride in the "miljoenenlijntje" (this is a steam-traction train through a part of Limburg) According to our tradition the lustrum-rewards are issued.

Members that take part in the powered--by walking-tours can collect stamps. 5 stamps will lead to being awarded the Golden cross bearers pin in Bronze.

At the moment there are two people who can claim this pin: Mr Hamelink issues the first bronze pin to the chairman Mr. Leijten.

Finally volunteer pins are issued to our ambassador in the United Kingdom Mr. Rennie and to Mr. Pieterse and Mrs. Noordanus.

After singing the 4-days hymn the meeting is closed and a drink and some snacks follow.



When the 4Days Marches runs through your blood

Three generations of Gold Medallists

Sometimes, you hear people say they are infected with the 4Days Marches virus, but what if it is in your DNA? There are families where it really runs through the blood and then you might just have three generations of Gold Medallists in your family! The Van Oorschot family is proof of this. Barbara van Oorschot is a proud Gold Medallist since this year, her father has successfully participated 14 times and his parents were fanatic 4Days Marches participants. Barbara's grandmother participated 18 times and Barbara's grandfather no less than 57 times!

Author: Jaimy Pieterse

Grandpa Herman van Oorschot walked his first 4Days Marches in 1938. Although he lived with his wife Cor van Oorschot - Bakker in Aerdenhout, this was not unusual. He was a member of the walking club and his father and sister also participated in the 4Days Marches several times. Traveling to Nijmegen was (at the time) a trip in itself and they were his only leave days in the year. Still very well spent in their eyes, because many 4Days Marches years followed. His wife also enjoyed walking, debuting in 1948. Herman van Oorschot was an early member of the Association of Gold Medallists. In 1956 they attended the 5-year anniversary of the association together. They also got their son, Barbara's father, Herman van Oorschot, walking. Whereas in 1961 he

still rode his bicycle behind his parents and was able to explore the entire course, at the age of 14 he walked the 4Days Marches himself for the first time. At that time the age limit was 14 years. So with him it was an acquired taste.



As a 10-year-old boy, Barbara's father, Herman van Oorschot, covered the 4Days Marches course by bicycle in 1961. Beside him his mother, Barbara's grandmother.



In 1956 during the 5th anniversary of the Association of Gold Medallists, 2nd from right is grandfather Herman van Oorschot.



During the 1939 4Days Marches, grandfather Herman van Oorschot walks in the front right here.

With his daughter, Barbara, things were a little different. In 1988 the young family moved to Oss. She got her first taste of the 4Days Marches when she caught up with her grandfather on the Via Gladiola and later through Vierdaagsefeesten in the city. After many years of partying, it started to get itchy to participate one day and follow in her grandfathers, grandmothers and fathers footsteps. So she suggested to her father that they walk together and that happened in 2011. Her grandfather and grandmother had since passed

away but are strongly present in her thoughts. The 4Days Marches is inseparable from the Van Oorschot family and traditionally she places a bunch of gladioli at their final resting place.

A fourth generation of Gold Medallists? Who knows, says Barbara, I don't obligate my son to anything. I like to hike, including trips abroad. It could just be that my son will be infected after all, because walking really runs in the family. As far as the 4Days Marches is concerned, for me it doesn't stop at 10 times. Next year I would like to walk the 50 kilometer distance. It's extra special, because if you add up all our participations, my grandfather's, grandmother's, father's and mine, you end up with 99 participations! That makes next year the 100th participation for the Gold-Medallist-family Van Oorschot!



Barbara is pinned on her golden 4Days Marches Cross by her father during the 106th edition.

A special year for the friends

Last year there was the story in GOUD! about Swie Tjiang, his son Kai and their friends Pieter, Sjef and Evert, who agreed in 1986 to participate in the 4Daagse. How are they doing? We know about Swie Tjiang, the initiator. This year, he walked together with his son Kai on the 50K to get his 26th cross. Pieter received his 7th cross in 2018, but sadly he had to stop after that for medical reasons. Sjef, who died unexpectedly last year, has received 11 crosses. And Evert? After his participations in 1987 and 1988 he joined the KNBLO Board – which organized the 4Daagse at the time – and so he experienced the 4Daagse from the sideline. How-

ever, he couldn't miss his friends and therefore he enjoyed walking with them on the Day of Groesbeek every year. Evert finally walked 40 kilometers for a real cross in 2014. The four friends walked the 4Daagse together again in 2016, 2017 and 2018, and this year Evert walked to get his 10th cross. This 10th edition became a very special one: it marked also the debut of his 29-year-old daughter Maud. Swie Tjiang didn't want Evert to become a golden medallist unnoticedly, just like this did not happen to Sjef and Kai. He prepared a surprise for him, and former March Leader Johan Willemstein was contacted through our association. He

was pleased to honour Evert. And so, during the entry with Maud, and much to his surprise, Evert was welcomed at the main stand by Johan Willemstein and some other former board colleagues. Evert was heartily congratulated with some personal words and had to wear a special t-shirt. The four friends did not just walk the 4Daagse one or two times since 1986, but they have finished a total number of 54 marches – and nobody knows where it will end. On top of that, there are now no less than 5 children of the 4 friends who have also walked the 4Daagse. This is a telling sign that the 4Daagse is addictive, unites and helps to build deeper and more intense friendships.



Evert with his daughter Maud.



The welcoming on the 4th day.



The two friends, Swie Tjiang and Evert.

Have you already walked the Golden Cross Bearers trail?

April 13th, 2024. Report of one of our members on Facebook.

Today I walked the Golden Cross Bearers trail and I really enjoyed the route, the additional information and the temperature of 23 degrees Celsius in the afternoon. I thought I knew the city, but it keeps surprising me, with more green and recreational areas than I thought, like the Goffert Park and the part around the river Waal. I did, of course, not use the booklet, but only the app. I managed to do the walk on one battery load, which is nice. By accident I walked the route in the booklet in reverse, but that makes you walk to Heumensoord over the Beukenlaan, like the military do at the end of their walking day, and you walk over the Waalbridge after 24 kilometers, when you feel the walk in your legs. It was a pleasant experience. The small videos by the very experience walkers guided me through the 4Daagse's history, bringing it to life. Two things in the route stroke me: in the description of de 4Daagse 2006 which was put to an end after one day because of the extreme heat, there is no mentioning of the two people that died. After that, the heat protocols have been put in place. There is for sure an extensive discussion about this within the 4Daagse, but I would not ignore an event that is common knowledge. And the route would be perfect if there was made a version without stairs for the 4Daagse wheelers. At the end of the trail I walked to Elst to complete the 41 kilometers. Perfect day. Thank you GKD. - Hans van Dijk



Reunion golden cross bearers 2024

Sunday september 24th

At Sunday september 24th the yearly reunion took place in Gulpen and Wijlre, in the utmost southern point of Limburg, close to the “drielanden punt” (a place where The Netherlands, Belgium and Germany join). About 50 members were present. They could make a choice between a walkingtour “Powered by GKD” in Gulpen or a ride with the “Miljoenenlijntje” (a steam railway track through Limburg) which left from Wijlre. There was about an equal interest in both events, about 25 members started walking and about the same amount signed in for the nostalgic trainride with the “Miljoenenlijn”. The building of this traintrack started in 1925, so a century ago next year, the building took 9 years and in 1934 the line was ready. The name of the line is derived from the costs to build it, 1 million guilders per kilometer! An astronomical amount of money at that day.



hills in our province, some parts were pretty heavy to walk. During the rest periods we had nice conversations with our companion walkers, and of course we talked about the 4-days marches, very nice talks

Powered by GKD walkingtour in Gulpen

This was for me my first “Powered by GKD” walkingtour. Because we (Ina my walking buddy and I) are from Zeeland, we had made the decision to drive to Limburg on a Saturday already and book an overnight stay, otherwise we wouldn't be in time for the start of the walkingtour. Because we had to eat breakfast in the hotel (which wasn't possible till 08:00) we drove to Gulpen, trying to find a parkingspot.

After signing in for the tour of 24 km, we had to return to Zeeland in the evening, we started with the tour. We got directions and everything was very well directed (with arrows) and in the woods the directions they had hung up ribbons to follow. The first km were easy to do, some of the paths were quite slippery because it had been raining a lot in the days before, so we had to constantly pay attention where we walked. Very soon we saw the first of the castles, so beautiful and impressive! The route went in the direction of



Wahlwiller, where a resting point was situated in a community centre. Here you could use a lot of things, there were sandwiches and a delicious soup and of course coffee!

From Wahlwiller we already saw that we would return at that place a couple of times, we could clearly read this on the signs which said for example: 1st time straight ahead, 2nd time take a right etc.



The second part of the tour was through a lot of woods also, we walked on the traintracks of the “miljoenenlijntje”, quite peculiar because the others in the group would pass here by train! We also heard the train (because of the steam escaping) and we've seen it ride along, too bad that I was too late to take a picture of it. At last there was our rest again in Wahlwiller.

The 3rd round was through the woods again, because we Sealanders have no

At last we started at the last part of our walking tour, this time we went in the direction of Gulpen again. I thought, well this last piece must be easy to do, till we arrived at the last hill, this hill had an incline of 14%, well this was really tough, but arriving at the top, my dear, what a view, how beautiful Limburg is! We really enjoyed the view for quite some time.

After this we had to descend, the road was full of loose gravel and the slope was steep so we had to pay a lot of attention to the path.

It was a very beautiful walking tour and by these means I wish to thank the organization for the most beautiful route and the great arrangements.

Your walking correspondent Finie Groenewoud

Miljoenenlijntje (Millionline)

From 10:00 the members could report to the community centre “Het Wielderhoes” in Wijlre where we started with coffee and pastry. Our chairman Frans welcomed everyone and told us that the association is very healthy, financially and also the amount of members. The numbers are rising slightly again. The members answered to this positive news with applause. Many members present already had made a lot of km’s by car. The only German member present probably had the shortest drive, he lives in Aken (Aachen, just across the Dutch-German border).

Organizer Rino explained the programme, coffee and tea were finished, and a quick sanitary stop followed by a short walk to the nearby station.

Everyone got into the third-class wagon, with wooden seats in the compartments, a very nice experience. From Wijlre we left in NW direction to Schin op Geul. The temporary end of that side of the line, eventually it will be Valkenburg aan de Geul again.



The about 100 year old Swedish locomotive “Bonne” was dismounted and with some manoeuvring on the nearby track it coupled on the other side of the trainwagons. From there we rode back the whole 29 km’s in one time back to Kerkrade. We passed the village of Simpelveld where the track has a branch till the tracks across the border, i.e. the village of Vetschau in Germany, close to the earlier mentioned Aachen.

Finally we stopped in Simpelveld where a very excessive lunch was presented with soup, several kinds of sandwiches, fruit, yoghurt and drinks, this all was at platform 4. After this we got a tour from guide Frank, one of the 270 volunteers of the ZLSM (Zuid Limburgse Stoomtrein Maatschappij). The volunteers consist of machinists, waiters, mechanics and so on.

He told us about the history, but also about how a steam engine works. In the signal-post we were informed about signals and trainswitches, quite complicated. The province of Limburg is the owner of the traintracks but volunteers run the company that is in charge of the line.

Underneath the line were a lot of mine shafts that had to be protected and reinforced to protect it to the danger of collapsing and that was very expensive.

At the end we returned to Wijlre with a so called railbus, for the closing drink. The chairman addressed the members and up to 14 lustrum award were appointed. A very fresh editor of this magazine Finie Groenewoud, has finished already 30 times at the 4-daagse, Rino Hamelink, the organizer of the yearly reunion and the flag-parade finished already 40 time and the top of the bill this year was Henk Visers. At the grandstand, at July 19th, he got his 50th cross (Kruuske) tied to a orange and green ribbon by no less than the march-leader Henny Sackers himself. Of course he was also awarded the beautiful lustrum pin.



The delicious snacks went around again and a last drink was ordered, after which the members left for an in most cases not a short trip home. It was more than a very successful reunion

Author: Henk Rutten



Would you like to see photo’s of the reunion?

Go to: www.goudenkruisdragers.nl/wp/fotos/. Pictures taken by Frans Leijters, Henk Rutten and Finie Groenewoud.

Lustrum achieved

Congratulations to all!

Congratulations to all members who achieved their Four Days Marches lustrum! Eligible members who were present at the reunion in Gulpen received their rewards that day, the other rewards were sent by mail to the ones who were not present. Did you not get a reward but should you have had one this year? Our apologies, please send us a mail and we will get you your reward and we will update our administration.



15x
Marion Aalbers, Margareta Andersson, Dick Bakker, Michel van Beek, Henk van de Berg, Tanya Bisseling, Ben Bloemink, Willemien Blokvoort-Klumper, Bert Blonk, Alain Blosser, Nico van den Bogaard, Agatha Born, Cor Bouter, Jolanda Bouter – van de Ende, Jeanne Braspenincx, Joebea Broek – Dijkshoorn, Annet de Bruijne, Simon de Bruin, Ronnie van Brummelen, Theo Buchmeyer, Paul Conen, Jules Combee, Peter Conijn, John Cordia, G. Cruiming, Jan van Dal, Gerda Derks, Mieke Dingemanse, Theo Dorlandt, Elly Edam-Arns, Hans van Eerden, Henriëtte van Eeuwijk – van der Moolen, Johan Embregts, Krine Faber, Jac Feijen, Marcel de Gooijer, Lammert van het Goor, Martin Gorissen, Charles Grisel, Louise Groen – van Velzen, Dirk de Haan, Ferdinand van Haastert, Truus Hartman, Hjerke Hartstra, Kostas Hatzis, Jo ten Have, Ria Hendricksen – Kluitman, Chantal Hendriks, Marc Hillebrink, Dré Hofstede, Douwien Hofstra, Anita van Houten, Rianne Houterman, Remco Houterman, Rogier ten Hoven, Ineke Hutters – Brouwer, Ina Janmaat – Jongejan, Suze Jansse, Harry de Jong, Folkert Jongma, Sjaak Keijzer, Bennie Kenkhuis, Marcel Kesteloo, Ruurd van der Kooi, G. Kroeze, Hermann Kruit, Noes Laliatu, Adisa Lasisi, Jan van Leeuwen, Ad Leijten, Hennie Lensink, Jan van Lierop, Jos Looijse, Wolfgang Lorenz, Anne Maris, José Massar, Francis de Meij, Coen Meijerink, Marijke Mesu, Inge Mol – van Egmond, Fried Molkenboer, Mirjam Mooijman, Hans Nab, Mientje Nelissen, Jacco Nieuwenhuijse, P. Nijenhuis, Arend Noordermeer, Ronald van Oijen, Willie Olderen Verschuren, Rens Olijslager, Louis Olivier, Binne Oosterbaan, Linda Paaij, Rene Pijnenburg, Rina Prins – Bourgonje, Cesar Reyes Milan, Anja van Rheenen, Theo Rovers, Leo Rutten, Peter Scharrenberg, Marielle Schepers, Herman Schimel, Yolande Schouten, Uri Shavit, Howard Smith, Nelis Speksnijder, Ruud van Stelten, Peter Theloosen, Gerard Thijssen, Joost van Tilburg, Joop Timmer, Wilma Timmerhuis, Pieter Tromp, Charles Verhoeff, Nicole Verhoeven, Cobi Verschuur, Anne Vierkant, André Visser, Bas Vos, Harrie van Wanrooij, Marleen van de Wetering, Véronique ten Wolde.

20x
Erik Arts, Jos Baars, Cora Blaauwendraat, Riet Blonk – Wielhouwer, Hettie Bol, Douglas Broman, Henk Bronts, Andre Burghardt, J. van Dijk – van de Ven, Martijn Duffels, Cindy Duffels – Zwaartman, Mia Faber – Eppink, Ton Frederiks, Frank Guldemon, Reinie Heerema – Kremer, Piet van Hees, Tue Henriksen – Delaney, Robrecht van den Heuvel, G. Hoff, G. van den Hooff, Jan van der Horst, Wilco van Hunen, Henk Janssen, Ralph Jany, Kor Kalsbeek, Yoshizawa Keiko, J. Kerkdijk, Wim Keuper, Elly Kooijmann, Hans Kramer, Aart Kusters, Muriel Leenders, Rikje van Lier, Monica Linssen – Broekhuis, Raymond Meeusen, Aafke Meursing, Ailsa Miller, Ronald Mudde, Alie Overtoom, Chandon Paul, Koen van de Pol, H. Pols – Meerburg, Marja Pot, Karin Rasing – Glezer, Jan Reesink, Dick de Reus, Rody Rijnenberg, Ronald Ruijter, Marien Sauve, Marc Scheenen, Miriam Segers, Kees Slingerland, J. Snijders, Ria Sonneveldt – Brouwer, Jaap Stellingwerff, Jeanet van der Stouwe, Guus Tang, Hans Thoonen, Siny te Vaarwerk – Katier, Joke van Veen – van der Pouw Kraan, G. van Veldhuisen, Rene Vroomman, Erik Weerts, Ton Wesselius, Martha Westhoeve – Krijger, Ronald Wolvers, Hans Zuurmond, Wilco Zwanenburg.

25x
J. Albrecht, W. Ambaum, T. Bakker, T. Beekmans, J. Berendse, W. Bleijendaal – Vermeulen, A. Bosman – Meeuwissen, P. Bosvelt, H. Brocks, Ronny Cairo, L. van Dijck, Edwin Duiverman, Theo Folker, G. Gabriels, M. van Gelder – Maas, Henk Geurts, J. de Groot, J. van Haaster, Wouter Hagen, Rolf Heijnen, A. van Heijst, Ed Hendriks, Marielle Hoogeveen, R. Iburg, H. Jansen, R. Joosen, Leo Kardiernaal, Jacco Kasteel, Martin Keulstra, J. de Kluijver, Jan Moes, C. Mols, C. Morre, Angela Nuij – Derks, Peter Ouendag, H. van der Palen, G. Piepers, Marien Polderman, G. Reurings, Anke van der Tuin, Frits Verhaert, W. Vossestein, Ronald de Waal, Jan Wieringa.

30x
A. Baars, J. Been, C. Bos, A. Demont, Ad Eegdeman, A. Evegroen, Finie Groenewoud, Gerda van Hal – Meeuwssen, Peter Heuij, H. Leenders, Thomas Markus, Raymond Nijssen, Nelly van Osch – van Dijk, Bas Revelmans de Vries, E. van Rijssen, Manfred Rosenthal, R. van der Schot, Linda Schuurs, Anita van Slageren, Mari Smits, Anton van der Sommen, J. Verbocht, Petra Vissers.

35x
Margaret Bleijendaal, Peter Bongers, Helen Elliott, Peter Haas, Piet Hartman, John Kusters, Geert Menting, T. Mes, Gerrit van Platering, J.P. van der Reep, F. Smits, P. Verbeet, C. Visser, J. Wilhelm.

40x
Rinus van Driel, P. Eigenhuysen, Wim Feber, G. Frederiks, G. Groenen, Rino Hamelink, Theo Jacobs, Nicolaas Kilwinger, C. Mooij, Fridolin Taverna, G. Zandstra.

45x
Dannie Beijck, Peter van Haperen.

50x
Mimi den Mengerink, Henk Vissers.

60x
P. Logmans – Boer.



In Memoriam

D. Trumpie - Brokkelkamp
J.A. Damen - Bles
F. van der Logt
E. Landeweerd
A.H. Griesel
G. Stumpf
E. Fraterman
L. de Coninck
T. Theunissen
H. Lankhaar
C. Verloo

Dordrecht
Huissen
Wezep
Heiloo
Beneden Leeuwen
Hoogeveen
Breda
Doesburg
Malden
Veenendaal
Terheijden



A Retrospective of the 2024 4Days Marches

Author: Fred Kruijer

These were the 4Days Marches of new starting times and excellent weather for walking. But they were also the Marches of long holdups and a shortened route - although it was not extremely hot - on the fourth day. Lots of things went well. Lots of things did not. We discussed this with Marches' leader Henny Sackers.

A number of things did not go too well this year during the 107th edition. For one thing, the double start of the 40 and 30 kms was cancelled, which many walkers did not think was a good decision. In all stages, in particular in Wijchen, Elst and Bemmelen, there were enormous holdups when walkers were held up for a really long time because the streets were jammed. This measure to stop the double start of the 40 kms, will it be evaluated?

We are concentrating on that now. A number of factors coincided. Firstly, we cancelled that double start of the 30 and 40 kms. The idea was to please the walkers. It was quite a hassle for people who walked in pairs or in larger groups. Swapping places did not really work, because demand and supply were absolutely out of balance. At

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one moment even money was offered to be able to have an early start on Friday. That is not in accordance with the 4Days Marches and it is not in accordance with me. So it was a calculated risk that it would, nevertheless, be busier in some places than of late years.

Things that we just had to live with ten years ago can now be measured properly.

Secondly, there was the effect of the new 'no show rule'. People who had signed up, but at some time knew they were not going start, were given the chance to return their tickets so that we could as yet enter many people who had been turned down. Those were a few thousand extra walkers that we did not have in previous years. But what really 'did us in' was this year's perfect weather for walking. Especially on Tuesday and Wednesday, when there were considerably fewer drop-outs. These three factors explain everything, but how do we solve these problems? As usual, Wijchen was a bottleneck. It is always busy there, but this time things literally came to a standstill, which of course is a bad thing for walkers. As we speak, we are busy analysing things, which we have become quite good at in recent years. We can see exactly how many walkers started per second and their average walking speed. Everything that was established ten years ago is being looked at now. And having analysed that, we shall, for example, once again confer with the mayor of Wijchen about the situation at the Market there.

Can anything be altered there at all? First there is the Market and next the bottleneck into the Kasteellaan, it seems almost inevitable.....

Well, for Wijchen it is a must for all distances to pass through the town centre. Not only with a view to the Town Council, but most of all to the caterers. Apart from it being so crowded at the Market in Wijchen, there is also the 'Tour de France effect' where people stand in front of the fences, making it even narrower. There is no easy solution to this problem without diverting one of the walking-distances.

The police, as well as other regularly supporting services of the 4Days Marches, nowadays deal with professional crowd management, for instance during the evening festivities. Is that also one of the tasks of the organization of the Marches or do they rely on those services?

No, crowd management is exactly one of our priorities, part of which is how to deal with the weather. We have a meteorologist in a permanent appointment, for it is precisely the effects of the weather that play an enormous role in the course of the Marches. In perfect weather things go differently than in rain. Everyone wants to finish early then and people only rest inside cafes and restaurants along the route. One tries to lay down the foreseen effects in scenarios, but in practice it is never the same.

There used to be a time when we walked the loop before Breedeweg in 34 degrees centigrade. It seems that now precautions are taken much earlier. Is that at random or have standard criteria been laid down?

There is now a protocol for extreme weather. That includes the whole range from extremely cold to extremely hot weather. Risks of cooling down and supercooling. Dealing with tropical thunderstorms and such like conditions during the marches. In that protocol we are guided by the so called WBGT-formula. A method which is also applied in, for example, the Dam-to-Dam Run in Amsterdam. Many more factors are measured than just the air temperature. Think of humidity, increasing temperatures in built-up areas and such like. (see box WBGT - ed.) The outcome of the formula gives us a number between 20 and 30 and that tells us what measures we have to consider. Apart from that, there is the weather-advisory team, consisting of an appointed meteorologist, a professor of strain physiology, a sports psychologist, a physician of the army, as well as GHOR and the

Red Cross and the head of our own medical staff. They are independent of the board, in order to give a neutral assessment of the outcome of the WBGT-result and then to advise me. To enlighten. That happens both in advance and on a daily basis during the Marches. In this case I was told on Wednesday that conditions would deteriorate. And then it is up to me to decide if it is necessary to advise the mayors of the towns and villages that we pass through.

Yet there is a general sentiment that these days action is taken earlier than in the past.

I rather think that we possess more information than twenty years ago, in 2006, when we cancelled the 4Days Marches. We watched the weather forecast of the Dutch Meteorological Service, we had someone in the meteorological service of the air force, a few telephone calls were made and that was it. Besides, risk management has become more and more common in present-day society. We are less inclined to take risks and in the case of accidents more often than not the question of who is to blame is posed. That is something we simply have to take in consideration. And that, in turn, calls for tricky decisions, as was the case this summer. We receive weather related advice: tomorrow is the last day. The weather will be good for walking, a bit warmer, but from three o'clock onwards a significant rise of humidity is expected, which may cause the WBGT-score to go into red alert all of a sudden. Nowadays, there are still thousands of people who enter the Via Gladiola after three o'clock. Quite a few of those have started celebrating already past Cuijk. What if I do not take a decision and people die? It will then be established that I had been warned. So, yes, we have become more careful. But we still do not pamper the walker. People remain responsible for their own actions. But we do make sure there are extra water taps when it is hot.

WBGT – Wet Bulb Globe Temperature

WBGT is a measure of heat stress on the basis of air temperature, air humidity, wind speed and solar radiation. To calculate WBGT, the temperature must be measured in three ways: normal environment temperature, so-called wet bulb temperature and globe temperature. Environment temperature is measured by a regular thermometer. The natural wet bulb temperature is measured with a thermometer with a damp cotton mantle around it. This thermometer imitates a skin wet with sweat, whereby the damp cotton cools the air by evaporation. The globe temperature is measured by a thermometer encapsulated by a black bulb that is sensitive to radiation. The measurement is to be taken at belly height (observer's temperature). After that, limits can be established, advisory maximum temperatures (WBGT) in which a person is able to work or practise sports. The limits are established by five different levels of physical activity. The WBGT-limit, therefore, goes much further than simply air temperature.

Have the 4Days Marches reached the end of their limits?

Once again we have come to the conclusion this year that 47,000 walkers is the absolute max. This is the limit.

But the Defence budget is being increased at a quick rate. NATO armies are brought back to Cold War strength and work frantically on 'readiness'. Will this lead to an increase of the number of military participants? Are you investigating this and if so, will such an increase prevail if the total number of participants remains the same?

Certainly not, that has all been laid down. Each year, we have 6,000 tickets for the military. That has always been the maximum, also in view of the maximum capacity of Heumensoord. For safety reasons, it is impossible to provide accommodation for the military elsewhere. Those 6,000 tickets are divided each year in December at the Military Delegation Meeting. Of all foreign military, traditionally Great Britain has the most claims. And demand is already surpassing supply now and we have to let people down. German military, for instance, make a claim to 380 tickets. They start training 1,100 people in January in order to be able to send out the best 380 walkers in July.

Wouldn't there be any plans to lower (in a logical manner) the maximum number of participants a little again?

No. We have arrived at the number of 47,000 on the basis of investigations. We keep a focus on the development per distance. That is subjected to change. The most remarkable thing is that, after Covid, the number of 50-km walkers totally unexpected rose from 7,000 to 10,000. Whereas the 40 kms stabilizes. And now there is a tendency that the head of the 40kms convenes with the 50kms earlier than we had foreseen on the basis of our crowd management data.

And that is where it gets jammed. Would it not be a simple solution to postpone the start of the 40 kms by one hour?

That is an option we are looking at. It is not a question of just saying: "Oh well, we have been doing it like that for years, so that's alright then..." We are making data-analyses non-stop, but sometimes things just won't work. For example because the police say that something cannot be done. And that is a very sensitive point, because they also have to deal with those gigantic festivities, where they have to see to it that moving those partygoers does not clash massively with early starters.

And so not a single scenario remains intact...

Not one single edition goes according to plan, ever. There is always something the matter. Last year I had to bother myself about the Nature Conservation Law, because out of the blue, the province demanded an investigation into the 4Days Marches in relation to the Animal Protection Law. A small bird, the big yellow wagtail, nearly caused us to be forced to divert the walking route. The only way out was to do some research, which we ourselves were supposed to pay for, twenty thousand euros. Last year we had the farmers' protests of course, this year the intended demonstrations against Israel. But together with the services involved we have managed to make it a walking feast nonetheless. And I am proud of that. I am a lawyer and a judge, and the right to demonstrate is a great good, but as soon as you start bothering the walkers with it, I step in. And I am very pleased with the strong support of our mayor Bruls.

Financially speaking, are the 4Days Marches not becoming a little elitist? As much as €109 entry fee. That, and the cost of overnight stays, makes it an expensive week for people of modest means.

Indeed, that is one of our hardest cases. We are a foundation without purpose of gain. What money we sometimes have left is

immediately invested in things that are in great demand. New toilets, just to mention one. At the same time, there are limits to what we can do. We receive a modest subsidy from the municipality of Nijmegen, about €300,000 a year – not a lot if you take in consideration how much exposure the 4Days Marches yield to the City of Nijmegen. Operational costs amount to something between seven and eight million. Sponsors are a second source of income, but we simply do not want to be dependent of sponsor money for more than twenty percent. We have no wish to be a Volkswagen or some supermarket's 4Days Marches. So what is left are the entry fees. We help people where possible. Those who cannot afford it, are referred to the welfare institutions of their municipalities. In Nijmegen this is called the 'join-up arrangement', which people can also turn to for help with the membership dues of sports clubs. But then, people often do not want this to become known.

You have always taken part, as many as 25 times! You have been 4Days Marches' leader since 2018. Have you come to stay?

I have been chairman of the Foundation of 4Days Marches since the summer of 2017 and in addition became Marches' leader in

2018. I can say – a little disrespectful – that I have walked the Marches more often than my predecessors all together. (Laughing) It has kept me off the streets since I retired.

Henny Sackers

Henny Sackers takes up the study of Dutch Law in 1974. He graduates in 1981 in Artificial Persons in Private and Public Law, Corporate Law and Administrative Law. Next, he decides to go for a doctoral degree on a specific subject of Administrative Law. After his doctorate in 1989 he becomes a lawyer. Soon he becomes involved in Criminal Law: "In those days a lawyer's practice could, in fact, not be run in a practice of administrative law. It is not surprising, then, that one looks for an area of law that is related to administrative law. In my case it became criminal law." In 2020 Sackers sees his boyhood's dream come true. He accepts the appointment to professor of Administrative Sanction Law, a chair in which his two favourite areas of law are united, namely administrative and criminal law. On that he remarks: "In fact that has become the jewel in the crown of working all those years in these two areas of law."

4Days Marches

Apart from his passion for teaching, Sackers has another hobby that "got out of hand": The Nijmegen 4Days Marches. He walked them as many as 25 times, until he suffered an injury at table tennis and out of necessity got involved with the organisation. In 2008 he became the person in charge of the Wedren and the start and finish procedures. The next step was deputy Marches' leader until he got the representative leadership as Marches' leader for the first time in 2018. He has been in this capacity since then. During this period he has had to take the difficult decision to cancel the event twice due to Covid.



'Powered-by GKD' 2025

Our association does not organize walks, but 'adopt' a number of walks a year, all over the country. In this way we support the organizing associations by highlighting these walks. It gives us a possibility to promote our association and realizes for our members a nice opportunity to meet each other aside the third week of July in Nijmegen.

A number of years ago a stamp card has been created that can be stamped at these walks. After the collection of five stamps you will be awarded with a bronze pin of our association and after collecting 10 stamps a silver pin. This stamp card is available at the organizing association during the walk. The stamp card will be stamped by the organizing association.
Participation in the Powered-by walks will be paid by our association, after application by mail.



In the coming year our association has put three 'Powered-by' walk in the agenda:
22 march - RET wandeltocht - 10, 15, 20, 25 en 40 km – Rotterdam - wsv R.E.T.
27 september – Markdalwandeltocht - 7, 12, 18, 24 en 30 km - Breda -wsv WIEGO
2 november – Bargermarketocht - 5, 10, 15, 20 en 30 km – Emmen - wv Bargermarke

Application for the Powered-by walks is possible (till a week before the walk) by sending an email to rino.hamelink@goudenkruisdragers.nl.
Please, list clearly your name, address, date of birth, walk and distance of choice.



RET Walk

The first Powered-by walk of 2025 is the RET walk. This walk is organized in Rotterdam. Walkingclub RET is one of the business clubs of the Public Transport Rotterdam. This club is known by most of us from the resting points along the route of the 4Daagse. They organize three walks a year.

This is the first walk of the yearly walkingprogram of the walkingclub RET. This walk departs from the depot Sluisjesdijk in the Waalhaven for the 5th time. A great citywalk, that was appreciated by many people over the last years. A walk under the river Maas through the Maastunnel is for many participants a highlight. If you have a fear for tunnels you might take the watertaxi.

Subsequently you walk along nice parts of the city of Rotterdam including Delfshaven, the Euromast en de Markethall. After passing these spots you will cross the beautiful Erasmusbridge back to Zuid (the Southern part of the city) along the docked SS Rotterdam.

A choice can be made from several distances 10, 15, 20 ,25 and 40km.

Application for this Powered-by walk is possible by sending an email (till a week for the walk) to rino.hamelink@goudenkruisdragers.nl. Please list clearly your name, address, date of birth and the distance of choice.



Membership Meeting April 5, 2025

Agenda

We invite our members to our General Meeting on Saturday, April 5, 2025. The location of the meeting is d'Almarasweg 22b, 6525DW Nijmegen. The meeting will start at 14:00 and lasts approximately one and a half hour.

The board proposes the following agenda:

1. Opening by the chairman
2. Documents received and board announcements
3. Minutes of General Meeting July 15, 2024
4. Annual report of the board for 2024
 - a. Report of the secretary
 - b. Report of the treasurer
5. Report of the finance committee
6. Appointment of finance committee 2025
7. Budget 2026 and determination of dues
8. Board election
9. Adoption of revised statutes
10. (Other) Proposals of the board
11. Any other questions
12. Closing

Notes to the agenda:

Items 4, 7 and 9: documents pertaining to these agenda items will be available at a later date, but at least three weeks before the date of the meeting.

Item 6: Joke Poppe, Jose Honkoop and Martin Pegels formed the finance committee in 2024, with Jos Knooff as reserve member. The board proposes to maintain this finance committee for 2025.

Item 7: The board proposes to maintain a membership fee of 12 euros in 2025, plus the contribution (if any) to the KWBN.

Item 8: Jaimy Pieterse is retiring and is eligible for re-election for another term as board member. Any member standing for election must announce this candidacy in writing to the board at least 30 minutes before the start of the meeting, accompanied by at least ten signatures of members who are eligible to vote.

Item 10: In 2025, the association will designate at least two walks as "powered by GKD" walks (in Emmen and Breda), in which our members can participate for free and earn a stamp (to qualify for the bronze "powered by GKD" pin with 5 stamps). The board proposes to organize the reunion in 2025 in Breda at the same time as the second 'powered by GKD' walking tour in that year.

The board aims to end the meeting around 3:30 pm.