

Adriaan LINTERS^(†), chairman of VVIA

Adriaan LINTERS (1951-2025), chairman of VVIA (Flemish Association for Industrial Archaeology www.industrieelerfgoed.be) and member of Europa Nostra who unfortunately passed away last month wrote shortly before his death a most impressive reference article “Industrial heritage on a European scaffold” in which he tries to convince the industrial sector to pay more attention to European initiatives which can help raise awareness of the value of the sector. He does this on basis of a comprehensive analysis of the way by which Europa Nostra over the past years has been paying growing attention to industrial sites by rewarding those that have been saved, renovated and reused in a remarkable way. And this is done within the frame of its campaigns for the ‘European Heritage Awards/Europa Nostra Awards’ <https://www.europeanheritageawards.eu/> and the ‘7ME’ (the 7 most endangered European heritage sites) <https://www.europanostra.org/our-work/campaigns/7-most-endangered/>. In several of these cases Adriaan has been a key person, by fighting endlessly and unconditionally for their survival and reuse. The case about the Kortrijk Station is still pending but the first victory has been reached as the legal proceedings introduced by the VVIA he is speaking of in his article have brought (after the closure of this article!) an annulment of the demolition and building permit. Of course to be followed. And meanwhile VVIA introduced a formal request for the listing of the Kortrijk Station as protected monument.

Adriaan was an exemplary competent activist, a critical observer of government’s and public authorities’ policies, a scientist who started from the reality on the ground and a volunteer among the volunteers

As historian Adriaan was convinced that history of industry, technique and engineering contains solutions for today’s environmental problems, climate mitigation and socio-economic challenges. In 2019 he and his organisation VVIA were rewarded with the European Heritage Award/ Europa Nostra Award as ‘Heritage Champions’. In 2024 he was rewarded with the Sarton-medal by the Universiteit Gent for his research work and lifelong commitment and investment in industrial archaeology.

The article was published in the very important Dutch ERfGOED, quarterly in which he was a steady member of the editorial board and frequent contributor.

Erfgoed van Industrie en Techniek (Heritage of Industry and Technique, ISSN 0927-3026) is a Dutch-language quarterly journal, founded in 1992, in which original articles are published on industrial archaeology, technical history, and related heritage aspects, such as restoration and conservation, management and policy. The journal has a European scope and is jointly produced by the Dutch *Stichting Erfgoed* (Heritage Foundation) and the Flemish (Belgian) *Vlaamse Vereniging voor Industriële Archeologie* (Flemish Association for Industrial Archaeology), of which Adriaan Linters was one of the founders in 1978. Through cross-border collaboration, the journal aims to stimulate knowledge of and interest in industrial heritage. For more information, visit www.erfgoed.org.

Piet JASPAERT

Hon. Vice-President of Europa Nostra