

A fake history of Almere

50 landmarks to celebrate its 50 centuries of existence

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A - Introduction

Almere is very old. Before the *Zuyderzee* was closed by the *Afsluitdijk* and the creation of the polders was taken up, it used to be a peninsula. Unlike Marken, Urk or Schokland it had a connection to the mainland and this has influenced its history heavily. The connection with “Holland” was between *IJmeer* and *Gooimeer* (that’s why these two lakes have different names – these were separate water bodies in the past). Later the connection was opened up (because the new polders blocked old routes to e.g. *Spakenburg*) and was replaced by a bridge. Now only the A6 connects Almere to the mainland at this location.

The difference with the real *Zuyderzee* islands is also that Almere was a very large area, mainly covered with woods. Later, a couple of settlements were called Haven (Harbour), Stad (Town), “*buiten de Poort*” (outside the Gate - later abbreviated to “Poort”) and the outcrop outside Almere, later called “*Buiten*”. What started out as a hippy settlement (*Oosterwold*) is not really old and only came up in the sixties of the last century, but that’s also history of course! The same goes for “*Hout*” (literally “Wood”), which was established in the early 20th century, when rich people wanted to escape from the hectic daily life. All the areas have remnants of their own history. Below we will present a couple, explaining how they came into existence, changing over time – sometimes beyond recognition.

Although Almere is old, it changed a lot after the *Zuyderzee* was drained and the polders were created. Modern times required demolition of “outdated” buildings. Just like other cities, towns and villages did with their towers, gates, walls and antique houses. In the sixties the car would be the most important means of transport, so broad areas were freed up. Most of the planned highways were never built. Instead special bus tracks appeared and most of those are still in use in Almere today.

Modern times also meant that the “ugly” exteriors of outdated buildings (some were many centuries old) had to be “improved” by refurbishing and cladding. Remarkable is that what is well known from the Soviet Union: tile cladding. This was also very popular in Almere. Probably there was a relation with the political orientation back then (communism)?

In mediaeval times the total population was probably a couple of thousands of souls (about a tenth of Amsterdam). Yet the Almere peninsula, with all its settlements was important. Back then it could be compared to Muiden and Weesp: other towns in the shadow of Amsterdam and also closely connected. Connections to Utrecht and Amersfoort were also very important and the A1, A6 and A26 are silent witnesses of the former trade routes, becoming highways only later.

Having said all this about the history of Almere, we have to place a comment about the celebration of 50 centuries of Almere (“Almere 50” for short). It’s true indeed that ancient pottery, some wooden foundations and what could be graves have been discovered which date back 50 centuries. Then some Roman artifacts (much younger) are known, although it’s not clear whether the Romans just visited Almere frequently or had a permanent residence at the peninsula. The actual history of Almere only starts later, most likely in the late middle ages. The period after 1975 is ignored in this booklet, because other documents already cover the recent years extensively. It’s the real past of Almere, deserving more attention.

Caveat: although this is a fake history, some elements could accidentally be true. If so, the author wants to apologise in advance.

B - Nature and geography

1 The woods

In the introduction it was already mentioned that in ancient times the peninsula of Almere was covered with woods. Over time a lot of the trees had to disappear. Not only because of the housing, but also for agricultural use. However, patches were preserved as nature reserves and got names, like *Vroege Vogelbos*, *Hannie Schaftpark*, *Kromsloopark* and *Pampushout*. The Beatrixpark on the other hand, is an artificial park and got its own chapter.



Vroege vogelbos



Hannie Schaftpark

2 Oostvaardersplassen and Lepelaarsplassen

Although mainly located in Lelystad (with its own fake history), a part of the *Oostvaardersplassen* belongs to Almere (and all of the *Lepelaarsplassen*). This is an area that was never cultivated for two reasons. The threat of the sea was rather grave (see also the information about the *Noorderplassen* in “Lakes”) and the whole area remained a huge marsh. Then better opportunities for both housing and agriculture were available, so there was no need to drain this swamp. Later on, it was decided to make it a natural reserve – a wise decision and now it’s a famous “*Natura 2000*” area. Together the areas are now known as “*Nationaal Park Nieuw Land*” (*National Park New Land*).

One piece of land between the *Noorderplassen* and *Oostvaardersplassen* is an exception. In the 19th century the industry needed its own place, but it had to be outside of the populated area. That’s why “*De Vaart*” is a patch of industry in what was mostly waste land.



Lepelaarsplassen



Oostvaardersplassen

3 Agricultural settlements

Initially *Almere Stad* (Town) was not a town at all, but rather a small agricultural settlement. We can still see patches of this area, left untouched by city planning. Neither were these areas affected by land consolidation, so the small areas, owned by small farmers, remained as they were. Nowadays most of these farmers have an additional occupation, because it's impossible to survive when only farming a small piece of land. Below some examples of remaining farming areas are shown.



Stedenwijk near "Spanningsveld"



Dr. J den Uyl park



Utopia peninsula



Kruidenwijk

4 Duin

Almere Duin (Dune) is to a certain extent the mirror image of Muiderberg. Almere was not completely protected by dunes, but there were some and in this area another settlement arose.



An original dune



Houses in "Almere Duin"



Path through the dunes



Characteristic beach road

5 Harbour

Almere *Haven* (Harbour) is an old fishermen's village. An authentic part can be seen at *Klavergrind*, where the original wooden houses are still present (similar to what can be seen in Marken). Only one of the original Almere Harbour boats survived, thanks to ongoing restoration.



Old fishermen's houses (Klavergrind)



The only remaining fishing boat of Almere Harbour "Haven"

6 Other fishermen's settlements

Almere Haven (Harbour) is not the only place where fishers lived, although it's the largest. The *Victoria Regiastraat* shows other old fishermen's houses.



Old Fishermen's houses



A closer look at the old Fishermen's houses



The Paarlemoervijver in Almere Buiten, holds a Fishermen's memorial.

7 Canals

Almere has a lot of canals and for a good reason. Because of the soft underground (some areas are still marshlands, see: *Oostvaardersplassen*), roads would deteriorate quickly. That's why canals were more useful, just like in Venice. Of course we can't show all canals of Almere, but some are really famous.



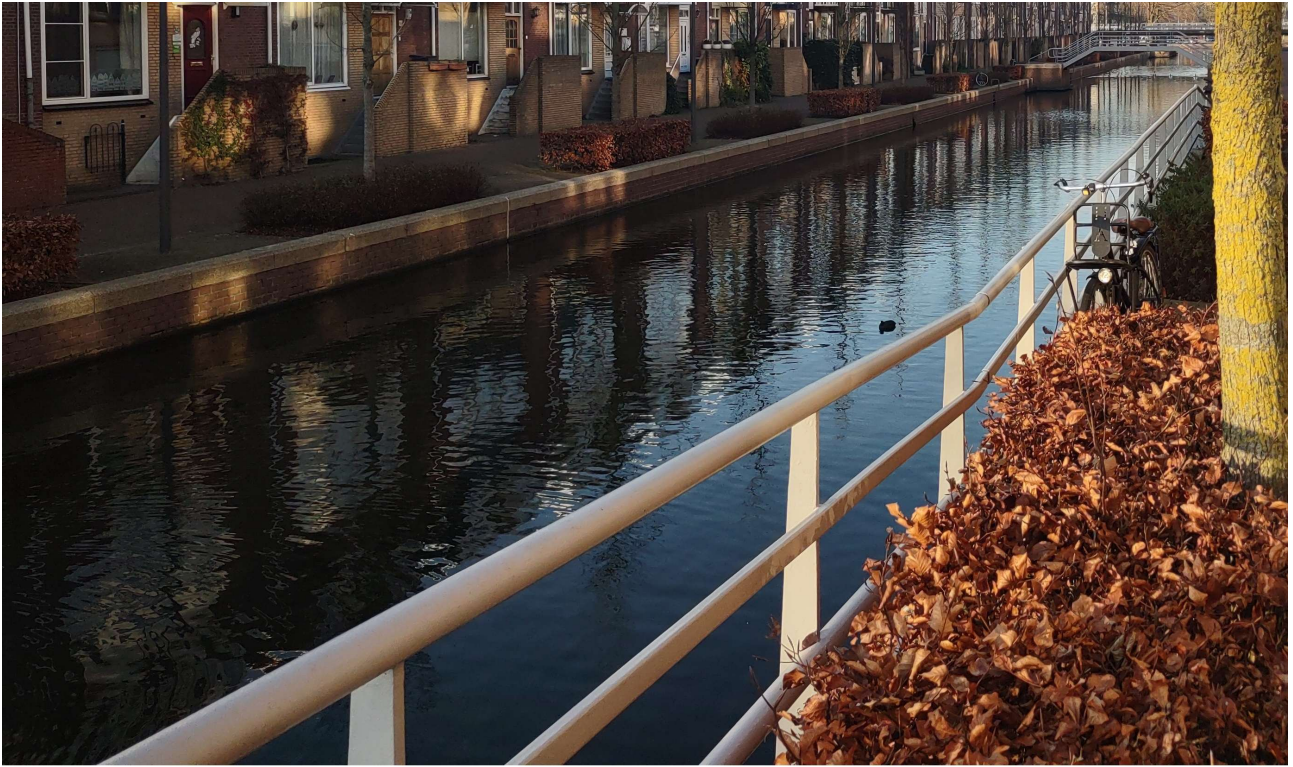
Hoge Vaart



Lage Vaart

Olstgracht

The *Olstgracht* was and is one of the most important waterways of Almere. Connecting the city to what's now the *Markermeer* (then *Zuyderzee*), where all kinds of materials were coming in. Recently a part was renamed to "Koning Willem Alexander Wetering". When the Beatrix park was created (see the item on Beatrix park), another part of the canal was widened to a lake like structure, where the rich and noble families of Almere could stay at the water in their little boats during summer.



Meandering former river at Poort

What looks like a canal along the *Cypruskade*, *Duitslandpad*, *Scandinaviëkade*, *Noorwegenkade* in *Almere Poort* (Gate) is actually a former river. Looking at the map the meandering gives away that this is not a canal after all.



Meandering river at Almere Poort



Another view at the river in Almere Poort

8 The lakes

Three major lakes are *Noorderplassen*, *Leeghwaterplassen en Weerwater*. *Noorderplassen* is the result of [Saint Nicholas' Flood](#), flooding a part of the peninsula of Almere. The *Weerwater* and the *Leeghwaterplassen* resulted from Saint Lucia's Flood.



Noorderplassen



Weerwater



Leeghwaterplassen

9 Beaches

Around the former connection of the Almere peninsula with the mainland of Holland, beaches are present. The one to the North-West is much larger as a result of the dominant direction of the wind. Remember that originally the *Gooimeer* and the *Markermeer* were disconnected, because Almere was a peninsula. As a result two very different beaches are present nowadays.



Beach Almeerderstrand



Beach Zilverstrand

10 The towpath of the old barge to Lelystad

Horses used to walk here, pulling the barge to Lelystad. The Dutch word for such a barge was “trekschuit” so the name “Trekschuitweg” made sense. The “schuit” part was lost over time and now the name of the path is simply “Trekweg”.

It’s certainly not the only tow path in Almere, but in some cases the canals were neglected and became overgrown, leaving the tow path, which was already useless since other means of transport took over. In the 17th century however, these paths were very important.



The old tow path to Lelystad



Old tow path near Muziekwijk, with neglected, overgrown canal.

C - Buildings and other constructions

11 Carlton Tower

Originally a church tower (about 60 metres, belonging to the former Saint Carlton church), but after refurbishing and becoming the World Trade Centre, much taller (120 m even without counting the Zeppelin mooring mast at the top. See for more details “Zeppelin Mooring mast”).

The refurbishing was done in the 20th century, when it became clear that the full restoration of the old tower would be too expensive. Rather than tearing it down (like was done so often in the past with historical buildings), the tower became part of a new construction. The idea was that future generations might decide to remove the new construction and restore the old tower. However, the new “Carlton Tower” is so beautiful that it’s a modern monument now. The vertical elements have a special temperature sensitive paint, which is dark brown in the cold, red at moderate temperatures and orange to yellow during sunshine.



The Carlton tower during a cold period



The Carlton tower at a sunny day



The Carlton tower in a hot weather conditions

12 Former monastery wall

Nowadays it's a parking (*Metropoolgarage*), but there used to be a monastery. One wall was preserved and used again. The niches in the wall remind us of the time when either candles or statuettes of Saints were present in this wall. Later the niches were closed with yellow glass and lit. A very original idea of the architect who designed the parking.



The old monastery wall, now part of the Metropoolgarage



Close-up of a (covered) niche

13 Hunting house

In the *Vroege Vogelbos* (Early Bird Forest), there is a building currently used by scouts as their hub. In the past this was a hunting lodge. It was owned by a noble family living elsewhere in the Netherlands.



The hunting lodge

14 Dykes and elevated houses

With the water being a constant threat, houses were preferably built at elevated locations. Now this is not always clearly visible, but sometimes the remains of a dyke are still visible.



Dyke houses of Stedenwijk

15 The Water gate

The Water gate is a former defence work in the “*Kromme Wetering*”. This canal connects Almere Harbour with Almere city and was mainly needed to secure the toll, to be paid by passing boats and ships. There has never been a battle. It was primarily meant to impress visitors, making them pay their taxes. It's older than the castle, which was built close to this gate.



The old water gate

16 The former Town Hall

Because of the many floods in the past, the original Town Hall was elevated. This was not only to protect regents and noble families. Ordinary citizens also found a refuge in this building. When the new Town Hall opened, this building became a hotel.



17 Canal houses

The *Olstgracht* stems from the same time period as the *Prinsengracht* in Amsterdam. Originally the canal houses were similar, but during the 19th century the façades were renewed. Several elements can still be recognised, especially the former warehouses, which now have balconies instead of the original doors.

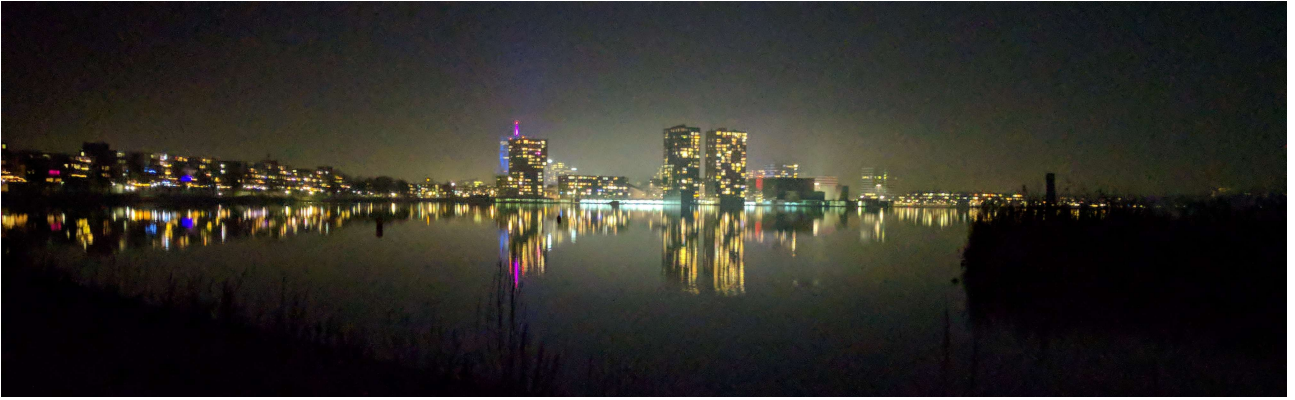


18 High-rises

Almere has several high-rises or tower blocks. None of those can be classified as real skyscrapers, since they usually don't exceed thirty floors. The Carlton tower is tall, but has a different history. The high-rises were built in the early 20th century,, but the weak Dutch underground didn't allow to construct something like the Empire State building. The high-rises in Almere were among the first in the Netherlands.



High-rise in Harbour



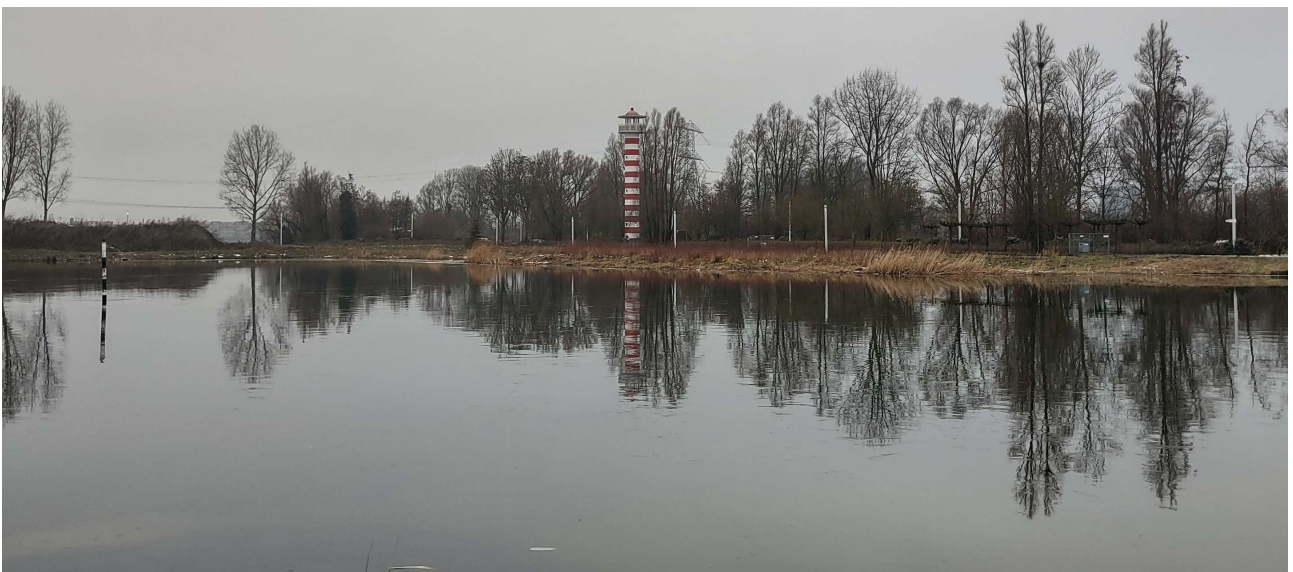
Skyline with high rises, at night



Skyline in daylight

19 Lighthouse

The lighthouse became mostly obsolete when modern techniques like radar became available, especially the small ones. In the past they were very important. Located at the Utopia island (actually a peninsula), it guaranteed a safe crossing of the *Weerwater*. The age is not exactly known, but most likely it stems from the late middle ages.



20 The Casemates and the tunnel

Almere had extensive fortifications and also casemates. These constructions were built in the 17th century and had a function similar to the ones in [Elburg](#) or the [Dutch Waterline](#). The casemates of Almere were also built on behalf of Prince Maurice and are special because of the two levels and the tunnel leading to the centre. Traffic from outside could be controlled when passing the tunnel, thus safeguarding the town.



The two levels of the former casemates (now used as a parking)



The other side of the casemates



The tunnel, running through the casemates

21 Mediaeval Defence towers & fortifications

The castle of Almere was (most likely) built in the 18th century, but much older fortifications can be found at several places. The most well-known mediaeval towers can be found in *Haven* (Harbour). There they not only protected the village, but also took care of the toll. The narrow entry between the two towers made it hard to besiege the village or to pass without paying. As one can imagine, the original constructions had fewer windows. Those were added when the buildings were transformed to apartments.



The towers of “Haven”

In *Almere Stad* (the city) several remaining elements of fortifications can be found. The rounded walls are in indication (like in e.g. Breda).

The Donjon, which later became a part of the (former) “Leaseplan building” is another example. Just like the ones in *Literatuurwijk* (the Literature neighbourhood).



Stad: Regisseurstraat



The "Leaseplan" Tower



Literatuurwijk (Poëziestraat/J.J. Slauwerhofstraat)

22 Napoleon's fortification

During the French occupation, the current *Stedendreef* was already an important road. I had not been paved yet, but a large number of carriages travelled along it to enter the city. To be able to control the traffic (the enemy could use the trajectory as well!) a kind of fortification was built. It's still there and looks like a very strange viaduct, but originally it wasn't. One side has a tall wall, to protect the soldiers who were looking at the other side. The side looking at the incoming traffic had a lower wall, where the soldiers could hide behind, but also attack when standing up.



View from "Muziekwijk"



View at incoming traffic



The protecting wall (to the soldiers' backs).

23 Mosque

The oldest mosque in Almere is strangely found in *Almere Poort*. The mosque has been there for centuries. Most likely the remote location had to be chosen, because Christendom was dominant in earlier centuries. Yet, since the Netherlands were rather tolerant, a small group of refugees, fleeing after the failed siege and battle of Vienna (1683) were allowed to build a mosque.



Mosque Baitul Afyat in Almere Poort

24 The Castle

Not as old as the *Muiderslot* of *Loevesteijn*, but still a landmark. Although the history is not completely clear, one of the Huguenots fleeing from what then was France, Hargimont, would have been responsible for the construction at the start of the 16th or 17th century. In this context it's not a surprise that the castle is very similar to the castle over there (*Jemeppe*). Probably drawings were still in possession of the founder, who would have been an architect, although no evidence supports this claim.

Even the date is disputed, because it is argued that it wasn't the persecution of the Huguenots causing its founding father to leave the area, but the French occupation of Luxembourg. The two events are about a century apart and a more detailed investigation of e.g. materials used could tell us what the age of the castle is. Unfortunately this is not possible, because the company owning the castle during a couple of decades has always kept the premises heavily guarded. The castle became a ruin during the era, as a result of a long lasting conflict between owner and the municipality. Chances are that the Castle will be renovated during the next couple of years.



View at the ruin of the Almere castle.

25 Churches

The oldest church of Almere (the St. Carlton church) was demolished completely. Only the (refurbished) tower (Carlton tower) remained.

The second church, now know as *“Goede Rede”* can still be found in *Haven*. The tower was demolished during the *Beeldenstorm* (Iconoclasm) and the current one is rather new. The church itself, originally a cathedral-like structure, has been shrunk by the removal of the supporting bows, with the roof being cut in half. Some think that this was done to avoid a tax regime, related to the height of the building, but no formal evidence could be found.



The “half church” now known as “Goede Rede”

26 Red barns

The red barns are apartments now, but originally these were granaries. Here large amounts of wheat, rye, barley and so on were stored. This was important to feed the population of Almere, but a large part (from own agriculture) was traded with Holland. Tom Waits mentions the red barn in a song and several people think this was inspired by his visit to Almere in 1990.



27 Van Hanh Pagoda

Although the [history of Buddhism in the Netherlands](#) goes back for centuries, the Van Hanh Pagoda is not that old. Vietnamese fleeing to Europe including the Netherlands, because of the war were the founders of this temple in the mid-20th century. Again in *Almere Buiten*, because there was still room for larger buildings. This is the only building in the Netherlands primarily built as a Buddhist temple.



28 The old railway station Almere Buiten

When the railways became important in Europe and the Netherlands, Almere was connected to the West and the North. *Almere Buiten* got an impressive station, a so called “first class”. Other examples can be found only in Zwolle and Dordrecht. Later, when a new railway track was constructed, the building lost its function. Currently it’s a gym (*Balistraat*).



29 Hindu temple

Unlike the Muslims and Buddhists, the early Hindus of Almere weren't refugees but business people and scientists, travelling from India came to the Netherlands in the 16th and 17th century. Some decided to stay in Almere and of course a temple was needed. Only one was built in Almere Buiten (now Tempo Doeloestraat 250), where more space was available than in the crowded city. Almere also has a tradition of celebrating [Diwali](#).



The Hindu temple

30 Operation Resilience (Fantasie, Realiteit, Eenvoud)

Although the houses in these three neighbourhoods could be interpreted as “artistic” or “alternative” there was a good reason to build them. During the cold war, the Netherlands were aware of the need of resilience and different types of housing were constructed as a “proof of concept” for different threats, like flooding, nuclear war, being cut off from the grid. Also the application of locally available materials (wood, sea containers) was important. Some of these houses are self supporting (like the one with an enormous Dewar vessel, to store solar heat). Others are elevated (because of potential floods) and some were meant to withstand radiation and are partly constructed underground. One house is a bit of an enigma. Although the formal explanation is that the pointed dome was meant to withstand the impact of heavy bombs, others think that it was an installation to launch rockets. Some of the houses have viewpoints, to be able to watch the sky for upcoming threats.



Elevated house



This house is even more elevated



House with a very large Dewar vessel



House with observatory (dome)



Another kind of observatory



Bomb shelter or launching facility?

31 The prison “Almere Inside”

A larger town needs a prison, but only in the 19th century a real prison was built. Of course people were no longer held in the scattered dungeons, but sent to e.g. Haarlem. The new gaol was called “*Almere Binnen*” (Almere Inside) to emphasise the contrast with its location in *Almere Buiten* (meaning Outside) and of course at the same time referring to the fact that people were locked in. It’s not a remarkable building, but it’s clear that the original design (with barred windows) has been extended. The style of the newer part is clearly different.

Later the concrete walls were decorated with tiles (in the same period as the tiles in town).



The entrance of “*Almere Binnen*” (Penal Institution)



View at the old and new parts of the prison and the outer wall with tile decorations

32 Old palaces

“Palace” suggests that a building is a king’s or queen’s residence, but this is a different type of palace. Almere was a bailiwick and had a bailiff (later the area was extended to all of *Flevoland* and then the bailiff was called the “*Landdrost*”). This house, originally from the 18th century, was the residence of the bailiff. (*Vergulde Draakstraat*).



Another palace can be found at the *Hennahof*. It might even be older and belonged to one of the noble families of Almere.



Another palace – both parts face each other, with a pond in between



33 Blocq van Kuffeler

Although not the oldest pumping station in the Netherlands, it's the most powerful one of Europe. In the past it could not beat the famous [Cruquius](#). Later however, it was upgraded from steam driven to electricity powered and now it is not only important for Almere, but for all of *Flevoland*. The capacity is 3400 cubic metres per minute.



The largest pumping station in Europe



A bearing, exposed in the hall, gives in impression of the power of the machinery

D - Objects and miscellaneous

34 Dungeons

Although dungeons suggest a connection with a castle, remaining stand alone dungeons can be found in *Stedenwijk* and in the city centre. Far from the castle and much older!



Dungeon Stedenwijk



Dungeon Leerlinggarage (a parking)

35 Bridges

Almere has a lot of waterways and as a result, a lot of bridges were and are necessary. As far as we know no original bridges are in place, because the wooden constructions had to be replaced on a regular basis (twice a century). Yet the locations are original, because the new ones were usually rebuilt at the same spot. By the way: Almere has more bridges than Venice!

Probably the most interesting bridge (or actually a pair, because it's a twin) can be found in *Kruidenwijk* ("Herb neighbourhood"). These bridges have a clear "Art Nouveau" design and originate from the beginning of the 20th century. It's not completely clear who designed them, but it would have been a student or colleague of [Hector Guimard](#).



36 Greenhouses

Of course the greenhouses are not a part of the original agricultural settlements. Not only because greenhouses were invented much later (19th century), but also because originally the horticulture was mainly in Amsterdam. During the preparations for the Olympic Games (1928), large areas of land were needed for the Olympic Stadium. In the end the only solution was to buy out a number of market gardeners, most of whom moved to Almere, starting again. This means that we are looking at rather recent history from a century ago.



Linaeusweg



A painting by the Almere based artist "Charles Warter" depicts these greenhouses

37 Zeppelin mooring mast at the Carlton Tower

When the Carlton Tower was renovated, the expectation was that Almere would become an important Zeppelin station (of course referred to as “Amsterdam Zeppelin Station”). That’s why a “[mooring mast](#)” was constructed at the top.

It was very similar to the one at top of the [Empire State Building](#) in New York, with one difference: the Empire State Building had one single visit of a Zeppelin – the Carlton Tower none at all!



38 Amsterdam School architecture Stedenwijk

Although the name of the architectural style is “*Amsterdamse School*”, examples can be found all over the Netherlands, including Almere. The best examples can be found in *Stedenwijk Noord*, a neighbourhood close to the city centre. Several elements would have been designed and realised by Hildo Krop, but there is no supporting documentation. The most characteristic examples are probably the vertical roof tiles. In general the architecture in Almere is more sober than the most famous examples in e.g. *Amsterdam*, *Groningen*, *Hilversum* and *Wageningen*.



Gable stone



Vertical roof tiles



Ornaments at a front door

39 Roman artifacts

Only a few examples of Roman presence can be found in Almere. Some coins and pots, but very rare constructions are a round and a square well. Excavated in the 21st century.



The top part is modern, but the foundation turned out to be Roman.



Excavated well, prepared for transport to an expert centre in archeology.

40 Tile claddings and decorations

There's probably no other town in the Netherlands with such a large amount of tile claddings in public space. Several buildings are covered with – sometimes colourful – tiles. It's not an ancient phenomenon, as it only came up after WW II, probably under the influence of the socialistic architecture in Eastern Europe. In the centre (*Spoordreef*), there is a wall covered with a nice pattern, also colourful. Walking through Almere several other examples can be spotted.



41 “Sjouw”

The “sjouw” was an old-fashioned signal post. Apart from Almere examples are known at e.g. [Tiengemetten](#) and [Terschelling](#). It was a kind of wicker basket, which could be moved along a tall pole. At Tiengemetten it was used as a request for a ferry to pick up people, but at Terschelling it served more as a replacement for a church tower clock. It was raised to indicate important moments during the day. In Almere it had most likely a function similar to the latter, because the original “Sjouw” was in the middle of a huge area of agricultural land. Of course it was not useful any more when watches became more common. The current version is an artist’s impression, but placed at the original location.



42 Mountain “Almere Boven”

A very old spot where people could flee when the water got too high. This “mountain” (actually just a hill) can be found at the [Meesweg and Merelweg](#). A winding path leads to the top, from where the view is really nice!



43 Beatrix park

The Beatrix park is not a remainder of the original woods, but a former part of a large estate. It's still a landscape park in English style, dating from the 18th century. Although it's named after the former queen of the Netherlands, Beatrix, this is not the original name, because our queen Beatrix was only born two hundred years after the development of the park. It would have belonged to a manor, that no longer exists. It's name "*Kruydenwijck*" however, survived as the name of a neighbourhood (*Kruidenwijk*). There all streets bare names of herbs and spices, because that is what the Dutch word "*Kruiden*" means.





Originally the Dr. J den Uyl park was a part of the Beatrix park, but when the *Waddendreef* became a main road and the railway got another trajectory, it became more or less disconnected and was considered to be a park of its own.



44 Folly

The famous folly of Almere is found in the Beatrix park. A [folly](#) is a construction without a real function, apart from being beautiful and enriching a park or landscape. Apart from being pretty it's useless. The Dutch are not very fond of follies, because these are expensive objects, not serving the purpose of earning money.

The island it stands on is also artificial. Although the canal through the park is a part of the old transportation network, it was altered heavily and became a part of the park. The broader, lake-like area is popular now and during summer people go for a swim, sometimes visiting the island and the folly.



The folly in the Beatrix park

45 Oosterwold

In contrast to the original settlements, *Oosterwold* is young. At the end of the sixties of the previous century, a group of hippies started their own village. It was around the same time Christiania in Copenhagen was founded, but *Oosterwold* was never a Freetown. Today a lot of the area is taken by regular houses, but the alternative cottages with their wild gardens are still around in some areas.



Self supporting homes in Oosterwold



View at one of the neighbourhoods

46 Golf Course Almeerderhout

Although not as old as the *Koninklijke Haagsche Golf & Country Club*, the golf course existed already at the start of the 20th century. Rumours go that the golf course was visited by by Colijn, but no evidence is available. Actually, it will be hard to prove the rumour, because in the war the archives were destroyed. Most likely “Colijn” does not refer to the prime minister, but to one of his sons who was a golf player. We’ll probably never know.



View at the golf course



The entrance of golf club Almere Hout

47 Labyrinth Korenbloemweg

The nobility of Almere, living in mansions and palaces, needed a quiet environment for their walks and talks. [Versailles](#) was an inspiration of course, so a labyrinth was built at the end of the 17th century. Not in the city itself, but closer to the country houses in *Almere Buiten*.

Although not completely in the original state, the labyrinth at the *Korenbloemweg* clearly shows the similarity with its example in France.



48 Bottelaarspassage

The *Bottelaarspassage* was inspired by both the [Galeria Umberto I in Naples](#) and the *Passage* in the Hague. The construction started at the end of the 19th century, but the first shops opened their doors to the public in 1905.



49 Ice rink Schipperplein

The Almere man made ice rink is one of the oldest in the Netherlands. It was established in 1935, one year after the one in Amsterdam but still earlier than the one in Tilburg.



50 High water cannon

Because of the constant threat of the sea in the old ages, cannons were used to warn people for upcoming floods. The number of shots fired indicated the level of the danger (one: “warning”, four: “evacuate immediately”). Of course Almere had such cannons, but this one survived. It must be several centuries old and got a place of honour close to “*Literatuurwijk*”.



The old cannon



A similar cannon can be found at Schokland, a former island in the Zuyderzee.

E – About this booklet

Charles Warter has been active as an artist for over fifty years, but also published stories, poems and did some performances over the years. Nearly twenty years ago he moved to Almere and still lives there.

Walking through town with a friend – where no real historical buildings are present of course – some things seemed older than they could be. That's when the idea came up to write a fake history for those objects. When Almere's 50th anniversary came up, things sped up. An active search started for more places which could wrongfully be considered as "ancient" and the descriptions were improved. The "50 years" were extended to "50 centuries" and the result was this booklet.

Of course it was important to add suggestive photographs. Keep in mind that an artist who primarily paints and creates objects, isn't a photographer. The pictures are taken with a simple smart phone and should be regarded as "holiday snapshots"

