



# ECCE Link

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## ECCE General Meeting, May 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Dear members and interested friends of ECCE,

As you know the next General meeting will find place in Bronlaak, a 71 years old organisation for persons with disabilities. In the article below you may read about the history and developments of Bronlaak.

Bronlaak is situated in the village Oploo, community Sint Anthonis, 25 km south of Nijmegen and 15 km west from the German border. It is in the province Noord Brabant (North Brabant).

It is about 2 ½ hours by public transport from Amsterdam Airport or Köln-Bonn Airport.

We will give you details after the Committee meeting March 24.

Bronlaak is part of an interesting research project in The Netherlands, concerning 'How can the UN treaty be worked out for people with an intellectual and / or multiple disability who live, work, learn and recreate in a sheltered environment that meets the needs of people with a mental and / or multiple disability and their relatives?'



Bronlaak is a unique village community on a beautiful estate in the Brabant Landscape 'de Peel', where people with disabilities and talents with an indicated care or help request share everyday life. Bronlaak is based on the anthroposophical inspiration; this means that the healthy side of the individual is based on his or her possibilities and wishes. In total there are 196 inpatient care possibilities and about 20 extramural clients: (young) adults with intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities and/or behavioural problems.

This support can take place in all areas of life - in the areas of living, work and daytime activities, learning and leisure; home with their parents or (accompanied) independent living to intensive 24 hours care in one of the houses.

Clients and employees develop by meeting each other in living together, working together and relaxing in free time. There is a rich cultural life that becomes visible in (year) parties, concerts, shows and exhibitions (open access).



Bronlaak consists of various houses and work areas on the estate. There is also a house with a working area at a distance of 3 kilometers and a forest group, situated on a nearby complex. In the nearby village of Sint Anthonis, five houses are inhabited from Bronlaak and there is as well the Lunchroom Markant. In the care center Pantein 't Hoogveld a working area of Bronlaak maintains the landscape garden and the animals.

On October 23, 1948, living-working community Bronlaak was officially opened, as a prelude to an international conference, organized by co-founder Bernard Lievegoed. The name Bronlaak refers to the source of King Laach or Laak from the Parzival story.

The 'Grote Huis' (Big House) with 23 hectares of garden, forest and heather was donated to the Bronlaak Foundation by the Roelvink family.

The saying below is the foundation stone of Bronlaak. This spell originated in 1948 and is put into practice every day:

***We want to work together  
in such a way which can flow into our work  
what comes from the spiritual world  
and will become human in ourselves  
on physical and soul-spiritual area***

### **Working at Bronlaak**

By working, clients take part in social life so that they can develop themselves. Every person can participate in the labour process, regardless of his level of development. There are many different areas of work, both in the agricultural and service sectors and in the applied arts. For example a pottery, a candle factory, a weaving mill, a wood workshop, a farm, a market garden and a nursery. There are also possibilities within the lunchroom, foyer, linen room and kitchen.



People of different ages, different levels, with different disabilities and different talents complement each other in the cooperation in order to make beautiful products together and provide meaningful services. More and more therapies are being used: eurythmy therapy, painting, theatre play and music. Later, in the 1980s, the concept of "reverse integration" took shape, opening up the area for public walks and attending cultural activities.

In the coming period, Bronlaak ended up in turbulent waters of expansion and mergers. In the end, Bronlaak and several other adult locations had been merged in 2012 into a new DeSeizoenen organization, while retaining anthroposophical identity, working method and vision.

### **Enjoyment with respect**

Bronlaak attaches great importance to a professional relationship between employee and client, and employees mutually. At all times the well-being of the clients is central to the collaboration. It is based on understanding and respect for the parents / legal representatives of the clients and their position. This requires empathy, trust, a respectful attitude, commitment and good communication.



Bernard Heldt