

1940 Brussels International Fair

In 1937 the annual Trade Fair was moved from the Palais du Cinquantenaire at Molenbeek, an inner Brussels suburb, to the Centenary Pavilion at Heysel. The latter had been built to mark 100 years of Belgian independence from Holland in 1930. It was used for the first time for the 1935 International Fair and has been used regularly since. Despite the outbreak of war in Europe on 3 September 1939 with Germany's invasion of Poland, war in Western Europe did not erupt until the Blitzkrieg on 10 May 1940. While not a full scale International Fair, it still used this word in the title.

Heysel, enlarged for the 1958 Fair, was quite small beforehand. The Centenary Hall is shown below in these etiquettes produced for 1935. This year's Fair ran for the two weeks of 3 – 17 March 1940.



The Postal card (EP119), shown below, is purely philatelic, as internal postage was currently 40c. The other stamps were still current until later that year.

However, due to the timing, very few people attended the Fair and used material is seldom seen.



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