

# De Nieuw Nederlansche Mercurius



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“De Nieuw Nederlansche Mercurius”

March 2008

## Upcoming Events

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**March 22, 2008.** The Native American Institute of the Hudson River Valley announces its 7<sup>th</sup> Mohican–Algonquian People's Seminar at the New York State Museum in Albany, NY.  
Contact: Mariann Mantzouris at: PO Box 327, Sand Lake, NY 12153  
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Telephone: 518-369-8116

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**June 5–7, 2008.** The 29<sup>th</sup> Conference of New York State History will be held at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, NY.  
Contact: Field Horne, Conference Chair, Conference on NYS History, Box 215, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866; tel: 518-587-4962; email: [conference@nyhistory.net](mailto:conference@nyhistory.net). For the program go to: [www.nyhistory.com/cnysh/2008CNYSHprogram.htm](http://www.nyhistory.com/cnysh/2008CNYSHprogram.htm)

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**June 6–7, 2008.** The American Association for Netherlandic Studies [AANS], in cooperation with the Center for European Studies at UNC-Chapel Hill, announces its 14<sup>th</sup> Interdisciplinary Conference on Netherlandic Studies [ICNS]: “Dutch Studies in a Globalized World.”

June 6–7: ICNS Program  
The conference will be held on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. All conference sessions, including the workshop, will be held at the new Center for Global Education ([www.gi.unc.edu](http://www.gi.unc.edu)), conveniently located across the street from the Carolina Inn ([www.carolinainn.com](http://www.carolinainn.com)) where a block of rooms has been reserved for ICNS participants at a reduced rate. To register, book a room, or see program, on-line, go to: [www.unc.edu/aans](http://www.unc.edu/aans).

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**September 13, 2008.** The NNI announces its 31<sup>st</sup> Rensselaerswijck Seminar to be held at the Huxley Theater of the NYS Museum in Albany, NY. The following speakers will explore the theme of relations between New Netherland and New France:  
Willem Frijhoff, Vrije U. A’dam  
Conrad Heidenreich, York U.  
José Brandão, Western Michigan U.  
James Bradley, ArchLink  
Jacob Soll, Rutgers U. at Camden.  
Look for more details in next issue.

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**September 18–20, 2008.** The [McNeil Center for Early American Studies](#) and the [Omohundro](#)

Institute of Early American History and Culture, in cooperation with the School of Arts and Sciences of The Catholic University of America, will hold a conference in Philadelphia September 18-20, 2008, on the uses of anti-popery in the early modern world. This conference will explore the diverse uses of anti-popery in the Protestant Atlantic—whether religious, social, legal, economic, or political—from the time of the Reformation to the era of massive Catholic migration to America in the mid-nineteenth century. For more information go to: [www.mceas.org/anti-popery/](http://www.mceas.org/anti-popery/)

## News

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### Baltic Wreck Could Be Dutch

A wooden sailing ship dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century has been discovered almost intact in the Baltic Sea off the island of Gotska Sandon off southeast Sweden. It was found at a depth of about 400 feet in 2003 by a Swedish television crew preparing for an underwater documentary, but it was only last year that it was fully explored using a remotely operated submarine. The condition of the ship is such that it is thought to be the best-preserved of its kind ever seen (“Hardly a

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shipwreck” says one source), thanks to the low temperature and relative lack of oxygen in the water. With an almost complete hull, a high stern, and a rounded bow, the vessel is 65 feet long and 22 feet wide, and had two, perhaps three, masts. There are many blocks lying on the deck, and carved heads near the ship’s wheel.

Of interest to *Marcurius* readers is the fact that, while the ship’s nationality is as yet unclear, many of its features and construction techniques strongly point to a Dutch origin. The Baltic was an important area of trade for the Dutch, known as the *moeder negotie* or “mother trade.” We have knowledge of more than 3,000 ship movements in this area by Dutch ships in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, trading for essential bulk goods such as grain, timber, and iron. However, despite the similarities this wreck shares with Dutch shipbuilding, further investigation is needed before we can know whether or not this is a Dutch vessel. The ship may be a contemporary of, though much smaller than, the Swedish warship *Vasa* that sank on its maiden voyage in 1628 and was salvaged in 1961. For more information on the *Vasa*, go to: [hem.bredband.net/johava/WASAE.htm](http://hem.bredband.net/johava/WASAE.htm).

### Publications

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#### Seeds of Change

The historical trade in spices played a pivotal part in the development of Western Europe and the conquest and settlement of new worlds, in which the Dutch played a major

role. Here are four recently-published books that deal with the influence and effects of this important commercial activity:

*Matters of Exchange: Commerce, Medicine, and Science in the Dutch Golden Age* by Harold J. Cook.

The author, a leading authority on the history of science and medicine, establishes a direct link between the rise of commerce in the Dutch Empire and the flourishing of scientific investigation in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. After studying a wealth of documents in Brazil, South Africa, Asia, the Netherlands, and elsewhere in Europe, Cook’s revisionist book argues that the need for accurate information that accompanied the rise of Dutch commerce was the foundation for the global spread of interest in medicine, science, and natural history. Hardcover, 2007, 576pp, \$23.10.

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*Still Life and Trade in the Dutch Golden Age* by Julie Berger Hochstrasser. The magnificent, glowing still life paintings of the Dutch Golden Age depict tables richly laid with an array of products that represent the fruits of that country’s global commerce. They attest to the vast scope of the Dutch trade network – from domestic cheese to European wines, and to exotic commodities like pepper and porcelain. These paintings reveal a lot about Dutch society and capitalist culture of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, says the author of this engaging book. Hochstrasser explores for the first time the significance of various foodstuffs

and commodities rendered on canvas during the Dutch Republic’s rise to prosperity. She notes too an uncomfortable tension between these elegant representations of trade products and the darker aspects of their histories. Hardcover, 2007, 320pp, \$26.40.

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*The Taste of Conquest: The Rise and Fall of the Three Great Cities of Spice* by Michael Kronl, a noted chef turned writer and food historian, tells the story of three legendary cities—Venice, Lisbon, and Amsterdam—and how their single-minded pursuit of spices influenced the Western diet and set in motion the first great wave of globalization. In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the world was brought together as a result of the spice trade. Before the great voyages of discovery, Venice controlled this trade and thereby became medieval Europe’s most cosmopolitan urban center. Driven to dominate this business, Portuguese mariners pioneered sea routes to the New World and around the Cape of Good Hope to India to unseat Venice. Then the savvy businessmen of Amsterdam created the modern corporation known as the Dutch East India Company, ousted the Portuguese, and took over as spice merchants to the world. This history presents a riveting globe-trotting tale of unquenchable desire, fanatical religion, raw greed, and fickle fashion. Hardcover, 2007, 320pp, \$17.13.

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*Spice: The History of a Temptation* by Jack Turner. Turner's book traces spices back through time—through history, myth, archeology, and literature. The lure of spices helped draw Europeans into their age of expansion, but the Western world was far from ignorant of them before that time. This Australian writer's lively and wide-ranging account begins with the voyages of discovery, but shows that, even in ancient times, spices from distant India and Indonesia made their way west and fueled the European imagination. Romans and medieval Europeans alike used Asian pepper, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, and mace to enliven their palates, treat their maladies, enhance their sex lives, and mediate between the human and the divine. While many of their non-culinary applications were not particularly efficacious, spices retained their allure, with all their exotic associations that remain to this day. The book brings out the mystery that people found in these flavors and fragrances, and proposes that sensations themselves have a history. Paperback, 348pp, \$10.17.

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**Reminder:** The quoted prices on the books above represent fairly deep discounts by Amazon. If you plan to buy through this site, please remember to access **Amazon** through our website. Just go to: [www.nnp.org](http://www.nnp.org), click on **books and more** and then **Amazon**. By so doing the NNI will receive a percentage of the sale; in fact, this procedure applies to any purchase, whether book or monkey wrench.

### Research Requests

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Information on the Romeyn family prior to 1680:

“According to the Romeyn family tradition, the first Romeyns to come to New Netherland were two brothers Klaes and Christophel who sailed from Rotterdam to Brazil as members of an expedition to that country commanded by Prince [Johan] Maurice of Nassau. Soon after arriving in Brazil that country was ceded to Portugal, and thereupon the two Romeyns sailed for North America” The researcher is looking for documentary evidence to support this claim.

Contact: Rosalind Walton at: [roswalton@cogeco.ca](mailto:roswalton@cogeco.ca)

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In 2012 the Belgian municipality of Turnhout will celebrate its 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As part of the celebration organizers are planning an exhibit of one of its favorite sons: Govert Loockermans. According to Karl van den Broeck—one of the organizers and editor-in-chief of *Knack* magazine: “In our archives we found a lot of information about the Loockermans family, but there is no trace of him after he went to Holland (Leiden) and then on to Nieuw Amsterdam.”

Contact: [karl.van.den.broek@knack.be](mailto:karl.van.den.broek@knack.be)

### NNI News

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The Institute added three new members of the Board: Nancy Curran of Schenectady, William Greer of Brooklyn and Dr. Scott

Taylor, Assistant Professor of History at Siena College. Board members Marilyn Douglas, Elisabeth Funk, Jippe Hiemstra and Fred Tibbitts were re-elected. This year's National Endowment of the Humanities grant to fund the New Netherland Project (NNP) was reduced from a three-year grant to a one year grant (beginning February 08 – ending January 09). The NNP has submitted another proposal for a three-year grant to follow this grant. In addition, the NNI Board has approached the NYS Education Department and the Dutch government to secure consistent, adequate and dependable funding so that the NNP can complete its mission. The City of Schenectady has given John (former president of NNI) and Sally van Schaick the Patroon award for their activities in promoting Schenectady city and county history. The Board decided to give the Alice P. Kenney awards for 2008 and 2009 at events connected with the 2009 Project or another major event to give the Award more visibility. A genealogical Committee has been formed to examine the best way to utilize and harness the interest generated by calls and inquiries to NNP about family lines; to generate use of the documents translated by NNP in genealogical research; and to aid genealogists in searching their early Dutch ancestry. Progress on the 2009 four-part project and other activities of NNI are in the [2007 Annual Report to Members](#) included with this issue of the *Marcurius*.

### Totidem Verbis

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Seventeenth-century Dutch activities in the South Pacific suffer from the same syndrome as in North America. Here we still find it difficult to convince people that New Netherland was more than just a trading colony that disappeared once the English arrived, leaving barely a footprint. In Australia and New Zealand there is little acceptance of European activity in the area before the arrival of Captain Cook in the eighteenth century. Peter Douglas hopes to set the record straight with the following contribution.

### Australia's Dutch Columbus

Nieuw Holland, Not New Netherland

We just missed the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary, but here's the information. It's worth a look as it's yet another example of the often understated but important role of the early Dutch in the history of the world.

Again it's the English that get the credit, for the Anglocentric claim that Captain Cook "discovered" Australia still has wide currency. However, in 1606, the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* pinnace *Dyfken* (*Little Dove*) sailed into the Gulf of Carpentaria in what is now Queensland, Australia, and into history. Under the command of Willem Janszoon (c.1570–1630), it became the first European vessel to make a recorded landfall on the Australian coast, 164 years before James Cook sailed the eastern coast.

Sailing east from Bantam at the western end of Java in late 1605, the *Dyfken* was on an exploratory voyage for the VOC, as well as searching for gold and trade opportunities in the lands to the south and east. The route took the ship beyond Papua New Guinea and to the western side of what is now the Torres Strait. Here Janszoon turned south and sailed along the western side of Australia's Cape York Peninsula, making landfall at the Pennefather River near the modern town of Weipa on February 26, 1606. Janszoon found the land swampy and the indigenous people inhospitable, for they killed some of the crew on various land expeditions. Running out of provisions, he was compelled to turn back at a place he charted as Cape Keerweer (Cape Turnabout or Blind Alley). Before returning home, Janszoon mapped hundreds of miles of coastline.

The continent was first known as "New Holland" (named "Nova Hollandia" by the Dutch seafarer Abel Tasman in 1644) and then Australia (officially adopted in 1824). In the Netherlands, "Nieuw Holland" would remain the usual name of the continent until the end of the 19th century; it is now no longer in use.

The Dutch charted huge areas of the west, north, and south coasts in search of spices and other trade goods, but they never colonized this land, perceiving it as barren and inhabited by hostile natives. The second Dutch ship to make landfall was the *Eendracht* (*Unity*) under the command of Dirk Hartog, on the western coast of the continent, in 1616. He named the place "Eendrachtsland." This was followed in 1618 by the *Zeewulf*, landing somewhat to the north of Hartog, and in 1627 by Francois Thijssen, who, in the *Gulden Zeepaert* (*Golden Seahorse*), explored more than 1,100 miles of the south Australian coast, and became the first European to see this part of the land.

Between 1606 and 1770, when James Cook explored the eastern coast and claimed New South Wales for Great Britain, more than forty Dutch vessels had already sailed to this new land. Clearly it's not just in the North American continent where the significance of the Dutch achievement has long been little known and under-appreciated!

For more information on Nieuw Holland go to: [www.voc.iinet.net.au/](http://www.voc.iinet.net.au/)