

# De Nieuw Nederlansche Mercurius



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“De Nieuw Nederlansche Mercurius”

June 2008

## Upcoming Events

**19 June 2008 at 8pm.** The John Adams Institute is proud to present an evening with **Lisa Jardine** at the Bethaniënklooster, Barndesteeg 6B, Amsterdam. The **JAI** writes: “In the great book of history, the British Empire typically merits a fat chapter, while the Dutch Enlightenment gets a passing mention. The problem with this, argues Lisa Jardine in her groundbreaking work *Going Dutch: How England Plundered Holland’s Glory*, is that Britain’s rise was built on—not to say swiped from—the intellectual achievements of its neighbor and competitor. From painting techniques to new business practices to its passion for cleanliness and proclivity for tolerance, the Dutch Republic infected England in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Its way of doing things became part of the English way. In her rich new book, bristling with examples and exuding the colors and textures of the time, Jardine—professor of Renaissance Studies at Queen Mary, University of London—rewrites history. Join us as she presents a sweeping overview of how the Dutch laid the foundations not only for the British Empire but of the world we all live in today.”

Russell Shorto, director of the John Adams Institute will serve as moderator. For more information go to: [www.john-adams.nl](http://www.john-adams.nl).

[*Going Dutch* has been released in the UK; however, will not appear in the States until the end of August.]

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Until July 6, 2008. “Framing Colonial Albany.” Working in conjunction with conservators from the Williamstown Art Conservation Center, this year’s Lenett Fellow, Katherine Alcauskas, researched an eighteenth-century portrait of a member of one of Albany’s founding families—the Van Rensselaers. Exploring the artist, itinerant painter Thomas McIlworth, the painting, and its elaborate frame, this presentation will highlight the findings of this yearlong project. For more information go to: [www.clarkart.edu](http://www.clarkart.edu).

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**September 13, 2008.** The NNI announces its 31<sup>st</sup> Rensselaerswijck Seminar to be held in the Clark Auditorium at the Cultural Education Center of the Empire State Plaza in Albany, NY. The following speakers will explore the theme of relations between New Netherland and New France:

- José Brandão, Western Michigan University, “An Unreasonable Offer: Iroquois Policy towards their Huron and Mahican Neighbors”;
- James Bradley, ArchLink; “In Between Worlds: New Netherland and New France at Mid Century”;
- Conrad Heidenreich, York University, Ontario, Canada “The Skirmish with the Mohawk on Lake Champlain: was Champlain a ‘trigger-happy thug’ or ‘just following orders?’”
- Joyce Goodfriend, University of Denver, “Introduction and presentation of the Hendricks Manuscript Award”;
- Willem Frijhoff, Free University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, “Jesuits, Calvinists, and Natives: Attitudes, Agency, and Encounters in the Early Christian Missions in the North.”

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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,

## De Nieuw Nederlanse Marcurius 2

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).

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**September 19–20, 2008.** The Association of Blauvelt Descendants announces its 82<sup>nd</sup> annual meeting and reunion entitled “Oh Henry!” Hudson. The program will take place at the First Church in Albany. For further information go to: [www.blauvelt.org](http://www.blauvelt.org).

### News

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Cornell University Press has agreed to publish a revised paperback edition of Jaap Jacobs’ *New Netherland, A Dutch Colony in Seventeenth-Century America*. Priced at \$24.95 it will not only reach a wider audience but be an appropriate and affordable gift during the 2009 Hudson 400 commemoration season.

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Congratulations to New York State Museum research associate, **James W. Bradley**, author of *Before Albany: An Archaeology of Native-Dutch Relations in the Capital Region 1600–1664*, for receiving the 2008 Society of American Archaeology Book Award for Public Communication. Bradley’s book was published last year as

Museum Bulletin #509. The Society for American Archaeology annually recognizes a book that contributes to public understanding of archaeological research. *Before Albany* explores the interaction between Native Americans and the Dutch settlers living in the Beverwijck settlement, now present-day Albany.

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A new web site at [www.maap.columbia.edu](http://www.maap.columbia.edu) uses video, audio, and maps and images to show historic sites in NYC related to African American history, starting in 1632. MAAP stands for Mapping the African American Past.

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**Gary Dunham**, the new executive director of SUNY Press has announced a new series entitled “The New Netherland Experience.” The series will feature new works relating to the history and cultures of New Netherland as well as reprints of “classics” that have been out of print for decades. The editors of this series will be William Starna and Charles Gehring.

### Publications

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*Vermeer’s Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World* by Timothy Brook. Bloomsbury, UK, December 2007. \$27.95. This book is a historian’s look at a vital era in world history, the growth of 17th commerce. What’s different is how he does it—by the unusual route of an examination of the paintings of Johannes Vermeer.

Timothy Brook holds the Shaw Chair in Chinese Studies at Oxford University and is the author, among other works, of the award-winning *Confusions of Pleasure*. Brook deftly uses Vermeer’s works as windows into the daily life and thought that were being transformed across the globe in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The small and private scenes that the artist’s brush created broaden into a panorama of world history, from Delft to Beijing, at a time when everything was being newly transformed by the spreading web of global trade, be it tobacco, chinaware, or slaves.

The author uses the props and artifacts seen in Vermeer’s intimate Dutch domestic tableaux as the starting points that take the reader along on an investigation of how things are connected in the rapidly expanding and increasingly interdependent world of the time. One painting (*De Soldaat en het Lachende Meisje*, 1655-60) shows a military officer in a Dutch sitting room talking with a laughing girl. His hat is of beaver fur, which Europeans obtained from the natives of New Netherland; the pelts, in turn, financed the voyages of exploration to places like China, where, with silver mined in Peru, Europeans would purchase the porcelain so often seen in contemporary Dutch paintings. This is a captivating approach to cultural history, where the study of seemingly minor objects is employed to draw the reader into an understanding of global connections, where, as we come to understand, a common humanity shares a history.

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*Land So Fair* by Firth Haring Fabend. iUniverse Inc., January 2008. \$20.95. Historian and novelist Firth H. Fabend will be familiar to many *Marcurius* readers for her books and articles on New Netherland. This new novel begins on a farm in New York's Hudson Valley in 1737. The lives of three strong-minded Dutch-American women are challenged physically, emotionally, and morally by the hardships of life in a wilderness community, the deaths of family members, threats to their land, and a dawning understanding that slavery is leading to inevitable tragedy. The struggle for independence heats up and war comes, making daily life even more desperate and difficult. One reviewer has said, "Fabend's evocative prose recreates a vivid New World. A poignant and gripping story, richly researched."

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**Hot off the press:** *From De Halve Maen to KLM, 400 Years of Dutch-American Exchange*, or, the selected papers of the 2006 Rensselaerswijck Seminar, which was organized in conjunction with the Association of Netherlandic Studies. Done by Nodus Publikationen Münster. [Publication was made possible through a grant of the Peck Stacpoole Foundation.]

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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.

### Language Courses

The Language Immersion Institute at the State University of New York at New Paltz invites the adult learner to acquire proficiency in one or more of twenty languages (including Dutch!) in the shortest possible time. The immediacy with which participants are able to use the language is a hallmark of LII's weekend, two week, overseas and special programs. Using the communicative approach to language acquisition, LII's master teachers create a highly effective, exciting and supportive learning environment for beginning, intermediate or advanced students. The LII has openings for *Elementary 2 Dutch* for the weekend of July 11–13. For more information go to: [www.giveusaweekend.com](http://www.giveusaweekend.com). Contact: Phone: 845–257–3500; Email: [lii@newpaltz.edu](mailto:lii@newpaltz.edu)

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The Belgian University of Leuven announces an intensive Dutch summer course intended for beginners or learners wanting to improve their knowledge of the language, 1 August–29 August 2008. A level test on the first day will determine the student's knowledge of the Dutch language. For more information visit: <http://ilt.kuleuven.be/summercourse>.

### NNI News

• Janny Venema's recent visits to Calvin College and Hope College in Michigan were very well received and generated a great deal of interest. Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan is interested in hosting the 2009 traveling exhibit. Calvin College also proposed holding a joint conference with the New Netherland Institute in Michigan in 2010.

• April 11, 2008, marked one year that Bonnie Urso has been with the NNI as an Office Associate. The NNI Board has extended its commendation to Bonnie for her work over the past year.

• The four part 2009 Project continues with steady progress. All the articles for the book of essays are in the hands of the Albany publisher, Mt. Ida Press. The traveling exhibit is scheduled to open at the NYS Museum in December of 2008. The documentary about the New Netherland Project will be finished in the Fall of 2008.

• The New Netherland Dinner will follow the Seminar and will be held in the New York State Museum, 4<sup>th</sup> floor Terrace Gallery with a cocktail hour beginning at 5:00 PM. Information and a registration form is included with this issue of the *Marcurius*. You can also register and pay for the Dinner online at [www.nnp.org](http://www.nnp.org).

### Totidem Verbis

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Peter Douglas, NNM's contributing editor, continues his story of Dutch overseas expansion and exploration with the founding of the Cape Colony in South Africa.

### Another First for the Dutch

If you've read in previous editions of the *Marcurius* how Dutch explorers were the first Europeans to set eyes on those other "New Worlds" of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, then it should come as no surprise that it was also a Dutchman who established the first permanent European settlement in another southern land—South Africa. The Dutchman was Jan van Riebeeck, and the settlement became Cape Town.

In March 1647, the *Nieuwe Haarlem*, a ship of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), ran aground near the Cape of Good Hope. The stranded crew built a small fort and it was almost a year before they were rescued. The Lords Seventeen (*De Heeren XVII*) of the VOC had two of the merchants write of their experiences, and out of this report came the recommendation that the VOC should open a trading area at that remote location. The VOC Lords were interested, for it was a time of tension between the Netherlands and England, and they saw the Cape as a strategic area to take over, both to forestall such a move by a rival European merchant company and to establish a crucial victualing station for the re-provisioning of ships on the long haul to the Indies.

Jan van Riebeeck (1619–1677) joined the VOC in 1639 and held a number of posts, including assistant surgeon in Batavia. He also served in Japan and took charge of the VOC trading post in Tonkin (now Vietnam), a position that he was called back from because he was conducting trade for his personal benefit. Van Riebeeck was on one of the ships that rescued the stranded merchants of the *Nieuwe Haarlem*, and in 1651 he sailed again to the Cape. This time he was charged by the Lords with setting up the initial Dutch settlement in the future South Africa. It was made clear to Van Riebeeck that he was not establishing a colony, for the VOC had no desire for the conquest and administration of this new territory. He was just to raise the flag, improve the anchorage, and set up a fortified trading station for the convenience of ships passing that way. The need to re-supply was vital on such long voyages, and eventually the cape settlement would be familiarly known as *De Indische Zeeherberg* (*Tavern of the Indian Ocean*) or just the "Tavern of the Seas."

Van Riebeeck landed at the future site of Cape Town on April 6, 1652. There were five ships in his fleet, though only three arrived on this date: the *Dromedaris*, *Reijer*, and *Goede Hoop*. The *Walvis* and the *Oliphant* arrived later, having had to deal with 130 burials at sea, a horrific statistic that dramatically shows the perils of such a voyage. First of all, van Riebeeck constructed a fort with a moat and earthen walls, and laid out a large garden for the production of fruit and vegetables, and began trading for livestock and meat with the indigenous Khoikhoi.

The first winter was hard; nineteen of his men died, and supplies dwindled as gardens washed away. It became apparent that the local natives were unable to provide sufficient supplies, and, far from being able to provision ships, van Riebeeck's people found themselves short of food. He thus petitioned the VOC to release several company servants from their contracts to become farmers (free burghers), and twenty-acre plots were allocated along the Liesbeeck River in 1657. The enclosure of land led to conflict with the natives, who were pushed farther and farther back. Growth was slow, and it was difficult to find adequate labor, a deficiency that prompted the importation of slaves from Indonesia and Madagascar, a fateful move that led to the distinct multi-racial character of the present city, for many of these slaves were the ancestors of the "Cape Coloreds."

[to be continued...]