



NEW NETHERLAND INSTITUTE

2009 Annual Report to the Members

Made for each other – The New Netherland Institute and the Quadricentennial Year

The Quadricentennial Year of 2009 was a year made for the New Netherland Institute — or was it the other way around? The wave of interest in the observance of the 400th anniversary of the arrivals in America of Henry Hudson and Samuel de Champlain increased public awareness of the Institute and the New Netherland Project.

Quadricentennial achievements

Four years ago, the New Netherland Institute (NNI) initiated four special projects: the *Light on New Netherland* exhibit; *Explorers, Fortunes and Love Letters*, a collection of essays; *Uncovering America's Forgotten Colony*, a documentary DVD about the New Netherland Project; and participation in a Henry Hudson exhibit at the Museum of the City of New York.

32nd Annual Seminar

The 32nd Annual Rensselaerswijck Seminar in October, entitled, *Kiliaen van Rensselaer's Colonie: The Beginning of European Settlement of the Upper Hudson*, drew a record crowd for the twin themes of history and genealogy, indicating the importance of this annual event to scholars and others interested in Netherlandic or American colonial history.

The royal visit

A most memorable event in the NNI calendar was the visit at the Cultural Education Center of Crown Prince Willem-Alexander and Princess Maxima in September. The royal couple voiced their appreciation of the work of the New Netherland Project and presented a matching grant of Euro 200,000 over a three year period from the Dutch government.

Explorers, Fortunes and Love Letters: A Collection of Essays by Scholars of the New Netherland Colony

Explorers, Fortunes and Love Letters, published as an NNI Quadricentennial Project, is now in its second printing. Dr. Martha Dickinson Shattuck of the New Netherland Project edited the collection of essays by distinguished scholars of the Dutch colonial period. The authors also took part in a round table discussion at NNI's 32nd Annual Rensselaerswijck Seminar in October. The book can be purchased via the New Netherland Institute website, www.nnp.org.

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Uncovering America's Forgotten Colony: the New Netherland Project, a DVD

Uncovering America's Forgotten Colony: The New Netherland Project is a NNI documentary DVD about the work of the New Netherland Project. More than 18 volumes of the official archives of New Netherland have been transcribed, translated, and published to date.

The 30-minute video provides historical background about New Netherland and explains the use of documentary evidence. It makes clear why the documents are unique and important and gives examples of the fascinating information found in these early records. Charles T. Gehring, Ph.D., director of the translation project, relates the journey the documents took from 1674 to the present. He dispels some of the misinterpretations of the Dutch in sources such as literature, history books, and social history.

Containing interviews with Gehring and Janny Venema, Ph.D., the director and assistant director of the New Netherland Project, the video is produced by Mogul One Production, LLC, for showing on PBS and commercial television. A shorter version accompanies the traveling exhibit.

Accompanying the DVD is the publication *Dutch Renaissance: The Story of the New Netherland Project*. Both items are available in NNI's online shop at www.nnp.org.

Publications

To transcribe, translate, and publish the Dutch colonial documents that were created from 1636 until 1674 in New Netherland: this mission continues apace for the New Netherland Project. During that period, New Netherland extended from the Connecticut River to Delaware Bay, including within its boundaries much of the present states of Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and western Connecticut.

When the Project began, print was the only format available. Now the definition of "publication" also includes digital formats.

Fort Orange Records, 1654-1679, translated and edited by Charles T. Gehring and Janny Venema, was published in April 2009 by Syracuse Press. It in-

cludes the records of the Fort Orange Court translated from the original Dutch. The court tried civil and minor criminal cases, with jurisdiction over Fort Orange, the village of Beverwijck, Schenectady, Kinderhook, Claverack, Coxsackie and Catskill until 1661. The Court of Fort Orange/Beverwijck served as a judicial, legislative and executive body for the West India Company's region on the upper Hudson. An order form is available on www.nnp.org.

The following recent NNI publications are available for purchase at www.nnp.org:

Explorers, Fortunes and Love Letters, a collection of essays by noted scholars, published as a Quadricentennial Project by the New Netherland Institute.

Uncovering America's Forgotten Colony: a DVD about the New Netherland Project, has been broadcast on commercial television as part of the quadricentennial schedule.

Dutch Renaissance: the Story of the New Netherland Project, a booklet by Peter A. Douglas, accompanies the *Light in New Netherland* exhibit and the above DVD, and can also be purchased separately.

Kiliaen van Rensselaer's Colonie: the Beginning of European Settlement of the Upper Hudson, a DVD of the two-day 2009 Rensselaerswijck Seminar.

Also available at NNI's online shop, but published by Manhattan View Press, is *The Mevrouw Who Saved Manhattan*, a novel set in the Stuyvesant era by Bill Greer, treasurer of the NNI board of trustees. Dr. Martha Shattuck, NNP editor, continues her work on The New Netherland Papers, part of the *Bontemantel Collection*, held by the New York Public Library. The original owner of the papers was Hans Bontemantel (1613-1688), a *schepen* of the city of Amsterdam from 1655-1672. The papers span the period from Usselinx's 1636 proposal for the formation of a fur company comprised of the United Provinces and Sweden, to 1660, holding a wealth of information on a variety of subjects that adds to our knowledge of the colony's history, its people and its problems.

Papers presented during the second decennium of Rensselaerswijck Seminars were transmitted to the publisher, SUNY Press, in the fall of 2009. The third decennium's Rensselaerswijck Papers are presently being collected for publication, also by SUNY Press.

Awards Presented by NNI in 2009

The New Netherland Institute encourages scholarship and contributions to the knowledge of the New Netherland Colony with a program of awards funded by generous donations.

The support of the **Doris Quinn Foundation** enables the Institute to join with academic institutions, the NYS Library and the NYS Archives in offering visiting professorships, fellowships and research residencies.

The **2009 Quinn Fellow** is Virginie Adane, a Ph.D. candidate at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris, France. She spent the 2008-2009 academic year at NYU as a Fulbright and Georges Lurcy Fellow and the fall of 2009 at the NNI in Albany, working on her dissertation, "Women in a multicultural colonial society - New Netherland, New York (ca. 1630–ca. 1730)."

Born in Paris, Adane completed her undergraduate work in Lyon at the École Normal Supérieure and holds undergraduate and master's degrees with a history and geography major.

Two **Quinn Library Research Residencies** for 2009–10 have been awarded, one to Andrea Mosterman and the other to Kim Todt.

Mosterman is a Ph.D. candidate in the history department of Boston University, where she specializes in Colonial American and Atlantic History. Her dissertation, "Sharing Spaces in a New World Environment: African-Dutch Contributions to North American Culture, 1626-1826," examines the development of African-Dutch practices and traditions in New York and New Jersey during that period.

Kim Todt is a Ph.D. candidate at Cornell University in Early American History. Her research is about the commercial networking between the Dutch and the British colonies of New Netherland and colonial New York.

Todt's dissertation is entitled "Let Us Comprehend the Mysteries of Commerce: The Transformation of Mercantilism in New Netherland and Colonial New York from 1630 through 1790."

The second **Quinn Archives Research Resident** is Stephen T. Staggs. A Ph.D. candidate in the History Department of Western Michigan University, he specializes in Colonial North American and Early Modern European History.

His dissertation, "Through the eyes of Faith: Indian-Dutch Relations in the Americas during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," will lend new insight into such topics as the extent to which Protestant conceptualizations of the New World and its inhabitants affected the interactions between the two groups in the Americas.

On October 9, Staggs gave a lecture for NYS Library and Archives staff. In the spring of 2010, he will begin teaching World History at Western Michigan University.

The **Hendricks Manuscript Award** was presented to James W. Bradley for his book "Before Albany: An Archeology of Native-Dutch Relations in the Capital Region, 1600-1664." He explores the interaction between Native Americans and the Dutch settlers living in the Beverwijck settlement, present-day Albany, discussing the mutual respect between the two groups and how, despite Albany's remote location and some conflicts, the liaison of Native people and the Dutch led to the settlement of the Capital Region.

The annual award is given to the best published or unpublished book-length manuscript relating to any aspect of the Dutch colonial experience in North America. The award, endowed by Dr. Andrew A. Hendricks, now carries a prize of \$5,000 and a framed Len Tantillo print with the Award recipient's name and the year of the Award.

The recipient of the Hendricks Award is also named a Fellow of the New Netherland Institute.

Manuscripts may deal with any aspect of New Netherland history. Biographies of individuals are eligible, as are manuscripts dealing with such cultural matters as literature and the arts.

The Alice P. Kenney Award was given to Prof. C. Carl Pegels, professor emeritus at the University of Buffalo, in recognition of his generous contribution to the Dutch-American section of the New Netherland Institute's website. This section is a major drawing card to many users and invites their further interest in the Institute.

The award, which now carries a prize of \$1,000, is given to an individual or group that has made a significant contribution to colonial Dutch studies and/or has encouraged understanding of the significance of the Dutch colonial experience in North America.

Alice P. Kenney, an associate professor of history at Cedar Crest College, Allentown, PA, was keenly interested in the Dutch-American experience. A descendant of 17th-century Dutch settlers, among them the colorful Anneke Jans, she grew up in Albany, N.Y. She received her B.A. from Middlebury College and her M.A. and Ph.D. from Columbia University.

Her books include *The Gansevoorts of Albany* and *Stubborn for Liberty*. She also wrote a bicentennial history of the Revolution in Albany, a survey of Dutch artifacts in Hudson Valley museums and many journal articles.

The Howard G. Hageman Citation for 2009 was presented at the annual meeting to John and Sally Van Schaick upon Mr. Van Schaick's retirement from the NNI Board of Trustees (2009), in grateful recognition of exceptional service and promotion of the work of the New Netherland Project.

The Citation honors Dr. Howard G. Hageman, a founder of the Friends of the New Netherland Project, later Friends of New Netherland and now the New Netherland Institute. He was the organization's first President from 1986 until his passing in 1992.

A Special Award to Len Tantillo was announced at the 32nd Annual Rensselaerswijck Seminar, in recognition of his contributions of historical paintings accompanying *Light on New Netherland* and other projects of the Institute.

Starting the Year With a Look at *de Halve Maen*

From hot type to heated discussions, Dr. David Voorhees recounted his experiences as editor of *de Halve Maen* when he addressed the NNI annual meeting in January 2009, at the historic Mansion at Cedar Hill, Selkirk. When Dr. Voorhees was appointed editor of The Holland Society's publication in 1990, the pages were set by typographers in what is called "hot type." In his presentation, he tracked the transition to today's desktop publishing through a succession of word processing programs, each with its own learning curve.

De Halve Maen began in 1922 as a single sheet, folded in half to be four pages, printed on orange paper. As the membership of the society spread across the country, the newsletter grew in content and circulation to reach members outside New York. Today the publication is a quarterly journal on glossy stock, with a different piece of art on each issue's cover and a rich selection of illustrations.

Twin Themes of History and Genealogy Draw 180 Registrants to the 32nd Annual Rensselaerswijck Seminar

Noted author Russell Shorto opened the 32nd Annual Rensselaerswijck Seminar with the question, "Oh, Henry: What Has the Hudson Year Wrought?" on October 1 at the NYS Library. Shorto used the resources of the New Netherland Project in writing his 2004 book about New Netherland, *The Island at the Center of the World*.

A DVD of the seminar is available from the website at www.nnp.org.

The NNI enjoyed an enthusiastic response to the topic "Kiliaen van Rensselaer's Colonie: The Beginning of European Settlement of the Upper Hudson," as it returned to the seminar's roots as a platform for local historians to present their research on the only successful patroonship in New Netherland. A score of scholars and historians from this country and the Netherlands presented information about the development of Rensselaerswijck, a million acres that encompassed

what is now Albany, Rensselaer, and Columbia counties.

History and genealogy, the major themes, drew a registration of 180 people, including attendees of the Voorhees Family Reunion.

The two-day program was composed of the following: "Kiliaen van Rensselaer: An Image of One of America's Founding Grandfathers," by Janny Venema. A panel of contributors to *Explorers, Fortunes & Love Letters: A Window on New Netherland* discussed their work in progress, with Martha Shattuck, its editor, moderating.

"Maria Van Rensselaer, the Woman Who Saved Rensselaerswijck," Peter R. Christoph, former head of the Manuscripts and Special Collections unit of the New York State Library and founding director of the New Netherland Project.

"New Netherlanders and their Dutch background: Dutch Contributions in Research 1994-2009," Nico Plomp, former deputy director of the Centraal Bureau voor Genealogies in The Hague, the Netherlands.

"What's New at 'The People of Colonial Albany Live Here' Website?" Stefan Bielinski, senior historian for

the NYS Museum.

"Regional Patterns in Dutch-American Culture," Jan Folkerts, general manager of the municipality of Littenseradiel, Friesland, the Netherlands.

"Brant van Slichtenhorst's Indian Grievances: Mohawks and Mahicans at Rensselaerswijck," Charles Gehring.

"Researching Dutch Families in New York and New Jersey," Henry Hoff, editor of the New England Historical and Genealogical Register.

"Visualizing New Netherland: an Artistic Interpretation of 17th Century Life along the Hudson," by noted artist Len Tantillo, who provided the program's cover painting.

"From Dutch Patroonship to English Manor," a wrap-up by Martha Shattuck.

The Annual New Netherland Dinner followed the seminar, with William (Chip) Reynolds, captain of the replica ship *Half Moon* and director of the New Netherland Museum, as the dinner speaker. Captain Reynolds described his program of educating student sailors, using the authentic navigational instruments in the river named for the explorer Henry Hudson.

From the Director of the New Netherland Project

This has been a great year for the New Netherland Project, especially great in that we on the project staff have had an unprecedented number of opportunities to tell the story of our mission.

Somebody has called us the "go-to guys," and, as I look at the calendar for 2009, that seems to be a pretty good definition of the fact that Janny Venema and I have spoken at events up and down the Hudson River, from those of local organizations to major events in New York City.

Dr. Venema, the Project's Assistant Director, has accepted a new position of Senior Historian in the NYS Library and continues to serve as the assistant director of the Project. While continuing her work on Kiliaen van Rensselaer, for publication in the Netherlands, and with SUNY Press, Janny has also made many appearances, including at the New York Genealogical & Biographical Society in New York City, as well as at Albany area venues.

We have been interviewed by newspaper writers ranging from local and national newspapers to the *New York Times* and by electronic journalists on NPR, PBS and CBS, as well as those on European broadcast networks and Australia.

The international aspect of our studies continues to grow. I was asked to give remarks at the opening of the Flanders House in New York City, for example, and later conversations were about future collaboration.

In addition to being the "guest experts" for many events, we continued our usual mission of bringing New Netherland documents into correct translation and making them available in printed and digital form.

We take great pleasure, too, in serving as a resource for historians and students of the Dutch colonial period, working with researchers from the U.S. and overseas nations.

Martha D. Shattuck, Ph.D., continues her work on the New Netherland Papers in the *Bontemantel Papers* at the New York Public Library. She was the editor of *Explorers, Fortunes and Love Letters*, the NNI's quadricentennial book.

While I am reporting on the busy year we have had, I am reminded of the great teamwork we enjoy from the NNI.

There are others who deserve our recognition. Henry Hudson comes to mind. Thanks to his exploration, more people are learning about the work of the Project. I'd also like to recognize the unwitting contribution

made by the characters in New Netherland whose writings I have been studying for all these years. They created the fascinating story that we continue to tell, well beyond Henry Hudson's venture.

Charles T. Gehring
Director, New Netherland Project

Looking Ahead: the New Netherland Research Center That Will Give a Home to the Document Translation Project

A substantial matching grant of Euro 200,000 (approximately \$281,000) from the Netherlands to the New Netherland Institute was announced Sept. 8, when Crown Prince Willem-Alexander and Princess Maxima of the Netherlands visited Albany. In addition, the Dutch Ministry of Culture declared New Netherland a Colony of Dutch Legacy.

The commitment is intended to secure the establishment of the New Netherland Research Center, which will be part of the Office of Cultural Education and housed in the New York State Library. The New Netherland Project will be the heart of the new center.

Signatories of the grant's contract were Hugo Gajus Scheltema, Consul General of the Netherlands in New York City, and Charles W. Wendell, President of NNI and Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

The establishment of the New Netherland Research Center does not eliminate the important role of the Institute. On the contrary, NNI will continue its responsibilities as administrator of the three-year grant, as it does with other funds that have supported the New Netherland Project over the years.

Perhaps more important is NNI's responsibility to meet the challenge presented by the award's definition as a matching grant. Over the next three years, the NNI must continue to inspire donations and add membership in order to match the amount.

The New Netherland Institute remains a membership organization formed to lend support to the New Netherland Project. Membership is open to all and demonstrates a wide diversity of backgrounds, education, and interests. Members are not required to prove their descent from the New Netherland colonists. Instead, an interest in the history of the colony and the history of New York State is what leads people to join NNI.

The Institute maintains contact with its members and other interested friends by means of *De Nieuw Nederlanse Marcurius*, a publication of the Institute; NEWMARC-L, a newsletter distributed by email; and the NNP and NNI website at www.nnp.org. Their content gives information about NNI's activities. They also relate news items such as announcements of publications and the calendar of events of other organizations with similar interests.

For membership information, please go to www.nnp.org. Exciting times are ahead, and every member of the Institute has a rare opportunity to be involved as a supporter of important discoveries about New Netherland and its effect on our world.