

De Nieuw Nederlansche Mercurius



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“De Nieuw Nederlansche Mercurius”

Sept. 2011

Events of interest

Until October 10, 2011. “Frans Hals in the Metropolitan Museum.” The Metropolitan Museum of Art holds the most important collection of paintings in America by the celebrated Dutch artist Frans Hals (1582/83-1666). His portraits and genre scenes were famous in his lifetime for their immediacy and dazzling brushwork. This exhibition presents thirteen paintings by Hals, including two lent from private collections, and several works by other Netherlandish masters. Several of the Museum’s paintings by Hals are famous especially the early “Merrymakers at Shrovetide” (ca. 1616) and the so-called “Yonker Ramp and His Sweetheart” (1623), both bequeathed to the Museum by Benjamin Altman in 1913. Also included in the exhibition are two loans from private collections in New York—the small, exquisite *Portrait of Samuel Ampzing* (1630), on copper, and the well-known *Fisher Girl* (1630–32). A selection of other Dutch paintings from the Museum’s collection and a few engravings set Hals’s work in the context of his native Haarlem and help

clarify how exceptional his animated poses and virtuoso brushwork were at the time. For more information go to: www.metmuseum.org.

October 24-25, 2011. An International Bilateral Conference “Albertus C. Van Raalte, Leader and Liaison” Celebrating the Bicentennial of the Birth of the Reverend Albertus C. Van Raalte DD (b. 17 October 1811). To be held October 24-25, 2011 at Hope College in Michigan. Program: <http://bit.ly/onFOMD>

Until October 30, 2011. “Rembrandt and the Face of Jesus” at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669) is universally acclaimed as the greatest master painter of the Dutch Golden Age, the 17th-century efflorescence of art in the Netherlands. Thanks to an inventory of his home and studio conducted in July 1656, we know that Rembrandt kept in his bedroom two of his own paintings called *Head of Christ*. A third painting—identified as a “*Head of Christ, from life*”—was found in a bin in Rembrandt’s studio, awaiting use as a model for a New Testament composition. Today, seven paintings survive (from what was likely eight originally) that fit

this description, all painted by Rembrandt and his pupils between 1643 and 1655. Bust-length portraits, they show the same young man familiar from traditional artistic conceptions of Christ, yet each figure also bears a slightly different expression. In posing an ethnographically correct model and using a human face to depict Jesus, Rembrandt overturned the entire history of Christian art, which had previously relied on rigidly copied prototypes for Christ.

November 17-18, 2011. “Upheaval & Disaster, Triumph & Tragedy: AFTERMATH.” The annual Researching New York conference at the University at Albany. The New Netherland Research Center will chair an off-campus session on Thursday at the NYS Library concerning the aftermath of the English takeover of New Netherland in 1664. For more information go to: <http://bit.ly/a2YHCM>

November 18, 2011. The 30th Peter Stuyvesant Ball will be held at Pier Sixty on the Hudson. For more Ball information go to: www.thenaf.org.

De Nieuw Nederlanse Marcurius 2

Until June 2, 2012. A new exhibition has opened at the New York State Museum in Albany. This exhibit, entitled “From the Collections,” will feature objects from many important collections, including the South Street Seaport Museum collection of over two million artifacts that arrived at the NYS Museum in 2006. Among the objects that will be on view is a 1590 token from Amsterdam that was found in the cobbled floor of the warehouse built by Augustine Herrman. The cast of a basket as well as its contents, retrieved from the lot formerly owned by Cornelis van Tienhoven, will also be featured. In addition, objects once used and crafted by silversmith Daniel Van Voorhis, a later resident of Manhattan of Dutch ancestry, will be on display.

Publications

A Beautiful and Fruitful Place Selected Rensselaerswijck Papers, Volume 2. Edited by Elisabeth Paling Funk and Martha Dickinson Shattuck. New Netherland’s distinctive regional history as well as the colony’s many relationships with Europe and the seventeenth-century Atlantic world are featured in the second collection of papers from the widely praised annual Rensselaerswijck Seminar. Leading scholars from both sides of the Atlantic critique and offer the latest research on a dynamic range of topics: the age of exploration, domestic life in New Netherland, the history and significance of the West India Company, the complex era of Jacob Leisler, the southern

frontier lands of the colony, relations with New England, Hudson Valley foodways and Dutch beer production, the endurance of the Dutch legacy into nineteenth-century New York, and contemporary genealogical research on colonial Dutch ancestors. 238 pp. ISBN: 978-1-4384-3596-1. \$34.95. www.sunypress.edu.

Strangers and Pilgrims, Travellers and Sojourners. Leiden and the Foundations of Plymouth Plantation by Jeremy Dupertuis Bangs. Exalted in the 19th c. as virtuous exemplars of a proud pioneering spirit, and condemned in the 20th as crude oppressors of a peaceful native people, the Pilgrims’ unavoidable importance in the narrative of American origins is reinforced annually in Thanksgiving Day’s mythic commemorations. Do we not already know more than enough about them? This book starts over, not simply to add incrementally to what is already known about the Pilgrims in Leiden but instead to reconceive the question of *who* the Pilgrims were and what contributed to the choices that make them interesting. Leiden is where the character of the Pilgrim Church and its subsequent colony took form. Controversies in politics and religion, customs of family life and society, obligations of labor and chances to play, questions of free will, democracy, the separation of church and state, religious toleration, treatment of Indians – these form the matter of this book.

Published and distributed by The

General Society of Mayflower Descendants, ISBN 0-930270-45-2. 894 pp. plus xxxii, 134 ills., bibliography, index. Price is: \$55 plus \$12 S&H. MA residents please add 6.5% sales tax. Order from: Mayflower Families, PO Box 3297, Plymouth, MA 02361; 508-746-5058

Also by Jeremy Bangs, “Dutch Contributions to Religious Toleration,” in *Church History*, September 2010.

Empire at the Periphery: British Colonists, Anglo-Dutch Trade, and the Development of the British Atlantic, 1621-1713 by Christian J. Koot. In this work Koot examines the networks that connected British settlers in New York and the Caribbean and Dutch traders in the Netherlands and in the Dutch colonies in North America and the Caribbean, demonstrating that these interimperial relationships formed a core part of commercial activity in the early Atlantic World, operating alongside British trade. Koot provides unique consideration of how local circumstances shaped imperial development, reminding us that empires consisted not only of elites dictating imperial growth from world capitals, but also of ordinary settlers in far-flung colonial outposts who often had more in common with—and a greater reliance on—people from foreign empires who shared their experiences of living at the edge of a fragile, transitional world. 312 pages. ISBN: 9780814748831 \$39.00. www.nyupress.org.

De Nieu Nederlanse Mercurius 3

The Edge of New Netherland, written and illustrated by L.F. Tantilillo. Over three centuries ago, the Dutch colonized a large portion of the northeastern US. The area called New Netherland included New York, New Jersey, Delaware, most of Connecticut, and some of Pennsylvania. The fur trade drove a frontier economy. New Netherland was far removed from the political disputes of Europe, but not immune to the consequences that ensued. *The Edge of New Netherland* takes us back in time and gives us a glimpse of an emerging nation from a Dutch and Swedish perspective. It is an evocative look back along the banks of the Delaware River and an overview of New Netherland's interesting domain. To order, send \$22.50 plus \$5.00 for S/H to: The New Netherland Institute, Box 2536 Empire State Plaza Station, Albany, NY 12220-0536.

Before the Revolution: America's Ancient Pasts by Daniel K. Richter. America began, we are often told, with the Founding Fathers, the men who waged a revolution and created a unique place called the United States. We may acknowledge the early Jamestown and Puritan colonists and mourn the dispossession of Native Americans, but we rarely grapple with the complexity of the nation's pre-revolutionary past. In this pathbreaking revision, Daniel Richter shows that the United States has a much deeper history than is apparent—that far from beginning with a clean slate, it is a nation with

multiple pasts that stretch back as far as the Middle Ages, pasts whose legacies continue to shape the present. ISBN 9780674055803 Harvard U Press. 502pp. \$35.00

NNRC News

Eric Ruijssenaars, the New Netherland Research Center's first Senior Scholar in Residence, is the founder of Dutch Archives, a historical research firm in Leiden, the Netherlands. Although a specialist in the history of Russia and the Netherlands, he is also a scholar of the Brontë sisters in Brussels and has published two books on the subject. Currently he is researching the life of Abraham Staats.

In 1642, Abraham Staats arrived in the Dutch colony of New Netherland to serve as a surgeon on Kiliaen van Rensselaer's vast patroonship of Rensselaerswijck, now part of Albany and Rensselaer counties. Over the course of his life, Staats became a magistrate of the court, a captain of the burgher guard, the owner of a sloop that made regular trips to New Amsterdam (New York City), and an Indian language translator. Something of an oddity in rough-and-tumble New Netherland, he remained a very respectable man and was, for that reason, regularly called on to mediate disputes between his less respectable and more litigious neighbors.

Ruijssenaars will discuss his research on Abraham Staats at a luncheon on Wednesday, October 5 at the National Register-listed University Club of Albany, 141

Washington Avenue at Dove Street. The buffet lunch will begin at 12:00 noon, with the presentation commencing at 12:30 p.m., followed by a question and answer period.

The University Club of Albany Foundation, Inc. is presenting this event, and one need not be a member of the University Club to attend. The cost for the luncheon and lecture is \$25. Reservations are required and may be made by calling the University Club at 518-463-1151

Ruijssenaars will also moderate a panel on the impact of the 1664 English takeover of New Netherland at UAlbany's annual "Researching New York Conference" on November 17 at the New York State Library. For more information: <http://bit.ly/a2YHCM>.

Other speaking engagements are currently being planned. For more information or to schedule a presentation, contact Ann Pfau: apfau@mail.nysed.gov.

Totidem Verbis

[Picking up from the previous issue of our newsletter we continue our journey along the "New Netherland Highway" narrated by George Damiano:]

Route U.S. 9W serves the West Shore of the Hudson River paralleling the Palisades Interstate Parkway, considered one of the most scenic drives in the eastern United States. After traveling through Bergen County, New Jersey, Route U.S. 9W enters New York State in the community of Orangetown (Rockland County)

De Nieuw Nederlanse Marcurius 4

and continues on into Orange County, New York. Both Orangetown and Orange County were named in 1683 to honor the son-in-law of James, the Duke of York and Albany, Prince William of Orange-Nassau and his wife Mary, older daughter of James.

About 65 miles north of Fort Lee, NJ, Route U.S. 9W passes the U.S. Military Academy at the West Point.

Continuing on, Route U.S. 9W, before it reaches the City of Albany and rejoins Route U.S. 9, it passes through the following communities of Dutch interest in the New World: New Paltz – an early French Huguenot settlement encouraged to come into the area because of Dutch toleration. Also, New Paltz is the home of one of the oldest colleges in the State University of New York (SUNY) system.

Continuing north along 9W one encounters the early settlements of Esopus/Kingston/Hurley/Rondout, Saugerties, Catskill, Coxsackie, and Coeymans.

Now, turning again to the main stem of U.S. Route 9, it crosses the Hudson River over the George Washington Bridge, entering uptown Manhattan. This highway takes a turn left (northbound) upon entering Manhattan and continues in that direction on Broadway. This is the same Broadway that begins at the Battery in Lower Manhattan and then intersects Wall Street where the Dutch West India Company erected a palisade or stockade (hence the name Wall Street), reminiscent of a medieval enclosure, to delineate the municipality of New Amsterdam

(now NYC) chartered in 1653.

Broadway then continues northward after intersecting Wall Street through Times Square to a point seven miles to the North where it joins Route U.S. 9 coming across the George Washington Bridge from New Jersey. Some 140 miles later it reaches Albany, New York. In that 140 miles stretch, U.S. Route 9 is sometimes called “Broadway” and sometimes “Albany Post Road”.

Driving north from the George Washington Bridge, Route U.S. 9 crosses the Harlem River, at that point also called “Spuyten Duyvil”. This is a tidal strait with treacherous currents that connects the Hudson River with the East River, hence a Dutch colloquialism, which in English can be rendered: “In spite of the Devil”. Incidentally, it is these interconnected waterways that make Manhattan truly an island surrounded by arms of the sea. Upon crossing the Harlem River one enters Marble Hill, a jurisdictional enclave of the Borough of Manhattan on the mainland, and then the Riverdale section of the Bronx.

Here, high on the promontory overlooking the tidal turbulence of the Hudson River meeting with the “Spuyten Duyvil,” there is an impressive 100 foot Doric column honoring the memory of Henry Hudson, topped by a statute of the navigator/explorer. Dominating the landscape, at sea level, below the Henry Hudson memorial obelisk, is the graceful 840 foot steel arch bridge carrying the Henry Hudson Parkway over “Spuyten Duyvil”.

Continuing northward, the next

community encountered with Dutch roots is the city of Yonkers, which takes its name from Jonker (Squire) Adriaen van der Donck, now well-known from Shorto’s *Island at the Center of the World*. Traveling beyond Yonkers, almost immediately adjacent, is the literary venue of “Sleepy Hollow County” which is the embodiment for Washington Irving’s writings as well as for the other “Knickerbocker wits”.

Venturing further northward on Route U.S. 9, Dutch place names inhabit the landscape, such as: Tarrytown, Cortlandt, Verplanck, Peekskill and Fishkill. In the last community, the New York Revolutionary Convention met in the Dutch Reformed Church to draw up the State’s first constitution promulgated in 1777. It declared: “That the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever hereafter be allowed within this state...” Thus the human right of “liberty of conscience” was so stated twelve years before the U.S. Bill of Rights was adopted.

Some 25 miles north of Fishkill on Route U.S. 9, at Hyde Park, is the ancestral home of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. This is a national historic site and houses the FDR Presidential Library. Nearby is “Val-Kill”, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt’s office which also houses her memorabilia as “First Lady of the World.”

(to be continued)