

2012 Annual Report of the New Netherland Institute

March 2013





New Netherland Institute

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New Scholars Present Recent Research on New Netherland Historic Mabee Farm Site of 2012 Seminar

The 35th annual New Netherland Seminar, “New Research, New Netherland,” was hosted on September 14-15, 2012 at the historic Mabee Farm Historic Site. The oldest standing home in the Mohawk Valley, the more than 300 year-old Dutch farm is set along the beautiful banks of the Mohawk River on Route 5S in Lower Rotterdam Junction (near Schenectady), NY. A property of the Schenectady County Historical Society, the Mabee Farm is a museum and educational center where visitors can view furnishings, heirlooms, and historic documents and papers.

Groups participating in this year’s program included The Holland Society of New York, the New Amsterdam History Center, Holland Dames, the Schenectady Historical Society, and the Schenectady-Nijkerk Council. The program featured presentations by ten researchers who have been funded for pursuing research in the rich resources of the New York State Library and New York State Archives and offered the public a view of the latest research by these alumni of the New Netherland Institute’s senior and student scholars and Quinn Research Residencies

Speakers and topics included:

- Alena M. Buis, PhD candidate Art History, Queen’s University, Toronto: “Imagining New Netherland: An Art Historian’s Perspective on the Visual Culture of New Netherland”;
- Jeroen van den Hurk, Architectural Historian, Coastal Carolina Research: “Buildings on Paper: Our Current Knowledge and Understanding of New Netherlandic Architecture”;
- Bethany Romanowski, Guest curator of the Vander Ende-Onderdonk House in Queens, New York: “Curating Van der Donck’s New Netherland”;
- Virginie Adane, EHESS, (L’École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales), Paris: “Trading places: men, women and the negotiation of gendered roles in the port of Nieuw Amsterdam”;
- Deborah Hamer, PhD candidate in History Columbia University: “Marriage Law in New Netherland, 1621-1664”;
- Eric Ruijsenaars. “A man and his sloop. Abraham Staats on the North River and beyond”;
- Dennis Maika, “New Light on an Old Story: Re-examining the English Invasions of New Amsterdam, 1660-1664”;
- Brecht Cornelisse, Rijksuniversiteit Leiden: “The New Netherland *Landdag*, the development of a Dutch assembly (1649-1664)”;
- Stephen T. Staggs, Western Michigan University: “The View from the Dutch Republic: Protestant Conceptualizations of Indians”;
- Andrea C. Mosterman, University of New Orleans: “Researching African and Dutch Exchanges in Early New York.”

The 36th annual New Netherland Seminar will feature presentations on the theme of the influence of the Flemish in New Netherland. In commemoration of the 400th anniversary of Govert Loockermans, the New Netherland Institute has commissioned the translation of Govert Loockermans’ letters in the collections of the New-York Historical Society.

The New Netherland Research Center at Work

In 2012 the New Netherland Research Center (NNRC) continued to make the records of the 17th- century colony of New Netherland accessible to scholars, educators, historians, and others.

An important record of the heritage of the Capital Region, the de Hooges Memorandum Book contains documentation of the legal and financial affairs of the patroonship while Antonie de Hooges served as principal business manager of the colony. This important document, which details business and other transaction in the Dutch settlement, is now online and accessible via the NNI's new website. Formerly at great risk, the manuscript was largely unavailable for study and research because of damage suffered by the manuscript over time and in the 1911 Capitol fire.

The book features a record of one of the most unusual and notable events in the history of the New Netherland colony - the sighting of a white whale in the Hudson River near Fort Orange, now the City of Albany. Many have speculated on the impact the event might have had on author Herman Melville, who could trace his ancestry back to New Netherland through the Gansevoort family in the maternal line.

The New Netherland Research Center enriched its outstanding resources on New Netherland in 2012, incorporating the Jacob Schiltkamp collection of rare books and documents to its home at the New York State Library. The collection throws light upon the relationship between New Netherland and Curaçao and the activities of the Chartered West India Company in the Caribbean.



The NNRC collection also includes Curacao Papers, original records from Petrus Stuyvesant's tenure as Director of Curaçao including the "Resolution Book of 1643 and 1644." Dating from 1640 to 1665, the papers further illuminate the growing commercial relationship between New Netherland and the West Indies. This book was kept by Stuyvesant during his tenure on Curaçao and represents the administrative decisions made by Stuyvesant and his councilors from January 5, 1643 to November 9, 1644.

The NNRC's Dr. Charles Gehring worked with Dr. Schiltkamp before Dr. Schiltkamp's death in 2010 to translate the Curacao papers. Both Dutch and English translations can be found on the New Netherland Research Center website at <http://bit.ly/15TM7Xd>. The original Curaçao Papers are held in the New York State Archives.

Resolution of Curacao
(1640-1652)Book

New Publications in 2012

A publication reception at the Dutch Consul General's office in Manhattan this December celebrated release of Dr. Firth Haring Fabend's *New Netherland in a Nutshell. A Beautiful and Fruitful Place* Volume 2 of Selected Rensselaerwijck Papers from the widely praised annual Rensselaerwijck Seminars, features critiques and research from leading scholars on the distinctive regional history of New Netherland as well as the colony's many relationships with Europe and the 17th-century Atlantic world. From the domestic life of the colony to the history and significance of the West India Company, the southern frontier lands of the colony, foodways and Dutch beer production, the papers provide an indispensable source of information about and understanding of New Netherland life and legacy.

Work began in 2012 on *A Beautiful and Fruitful Place* volume 3, edited by Margriet Lacy, which will include selected papers from Rensselaerwijck Seminar XXI-XXX (1998-2007)

New President's Message

This year was the final year of the three-year matching grant from the Dutch Government. The grant was successfully matched, and with the partnership of the State Education Department, the Institute's diverse projects were developed and executed. Carried-over projects developed in conjunction with the grant have funding available, but new funds must be found for ongoing programs.



Our one-year, in-residence Senior Scholar for 2011-2012 is Dennis Maika. As a result of additional funds from the Holland Society, he will continue his research till the end of February, 2013. He began his Scholar in residence period in October 2011. The focus of his research is to establish the significance of New Amsterdam / New York City as a global city in the seventeenth century, important not only to the history of New York, but also to the broader narrative of American history.

The New Netherland Seminar – our oldest outreach program (formerly known as the Rensselaerswijck Seminar) – took place in 2012 for the 35th year. The beautiful and historic Mabee Farm Historical Site provided an appropriate venue for scholars and students to share research and information about the 17th-century Dutch colony.

We continue to reach out to new members and to seek funding to continue the important work of the New Netherland Institute. The Institute enjoyed historic growth from 2009 to 2012, and we are working to secure the support needed for the continuing work of the New Netherland Research Center.

Just a reminder that all member contributions are fully tax-deductible while helping to support further research and knowledge of New Netherland.

Congratulations to you all on a job well done. I look forward to working with you all to achieve more success in the coming year.

Bill Greer

Bill Greer, a trustee and the New Netherland Institute's Treasurer is moving on to other challenges particularly the development of a new New Netherland Institute website and will pass his duties to a successor. Members were asked to submit names of anyone interested in working with us in this important position. An interim Treasurer has been chosen.

Scholarships

Elizabeth Sutton, Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, is the 2012 recipient of the Quinn Library Research Residency. Her project title is “A study of how the Dutch visually presented their national identity in news, maps, prints and illustrated texts of West Africa, New Netherland, and New Holland.” As a grant recipient, Ms. Sutton will be expected to complete her research at the New York State Library by December 31, 2013 and will be asked to give a brief public presentation during the course of her research at the Library.

Student Scholar

Brecht Cornelisse continued his research as the 2012 Student Scholar. Brecht began his Student scholar time in January - February 2012, and then again in August - September 2012 as part of a three month research residency. Brecht received both his bachelors and masters degrees from the University of Leiden in the Netherlands where his studies focused on European prehistory and archaeology. Since then he has served as a member of the heritage committee of the municipalities of Binnenmaas, Cromstrijen, and Korendijk. He has been an active member of the historical association of Het Oude land van Strien and has conducted archaeological excavations on a prehistoric camp at IJsselmonde, a medieval district in the center of Rotterdam, and an early medieval burial place at Wijk bij Duurstede.

Brecht’s research at the New Netherland Research Center will focus on local government in New Netherland as exemplified in the *Landdagen* or general meetings of Dutch towns.

Senior Scholar-in-Residence

Dr. Dennis Maika continues as the 2012 Senior Scholar in residence. Thanks to additional funds from the Holland Society, Dr. Maika will continue his work through the end of February, 2013. Dr. Maika is a Fellow of the New Netherland Institute, the Holland Society of New York, and the New York Academy of History. He serves as a consultant on various local history and education projects and has written numerous articles and papers. He is currently working on a book about 17th-century New Amsterdam. Maika taught history and psychology at Fox Lane High School, Bedford, N.Y. He began his Scholar in Residence period in October 2011.

Summer Institute

In 2012, the New Netherland Institute and the New Netherland Research Center began a professional development initiative for teachers with a summer institute exploring the Dutch colonization of North America. Eighteen teachers and librarians attended the weeklong workshop in Albany. Among the topics they studied were:

- The exploration and settlement of New Netherland (later New York and other states) by the Dutch;
- The American Indian-Dutch experience in New Netherland;
- The people of New Netherland and daily life in the colony;
- Historical archaeology in the Capital District and Hudson River Valley;
- The economy of New Netherland;
- British versus Dutch colonization of North America;
- The Dutch political and cultural legacy in North America.

Summer institute participants attended presentations by prominent scholars, including Charles Gehring, Dennis Maika, William Starna, and Evan Haefeli. Among the highlights of the institute was a trip to a New York State Museum excavation at the Van Hoesen House in Claverack, a preview of the New York State Archives’ “Consider the Source” curriculum, and a walking tour of 17th century Albany led by archaeologist Paul Huey and historian Janny Venema.

Participating educators worked collaboratively to develop standards-based model lessons using New Netherland documents, artifacts, and images. A lesson on the fur trade is currently available on our website. Three more lessons—on global trade, Dutch-Indian diplomacy, and on conflict between the West India Company and the patroonship of Rensselaerswijck—are coming soon.

NNI is planning a second teachers institute for 2013, which we hope to hold in New York City. We are also planning future programs for teachers in upstate New York.

Board of Trustees Welcomes New Member



The NNI welcomes James F. Sefcik as a new trustee on the board in 2012. Sefcik has worked with the NNI as Associate for Development and Special Projects from 2006 to 2012. A native of Watervliet, New York, he holds degrees in history from Temple University and Saint Joseph's College in Philadelphia.

Sefcik served as the Director of Museum Operations at the New York State Museum, Director of Public Relations and Development at The Chrysler Museum, Assistant Director of the Office of State Museums and Director of the Louisiana State Museum. He has taught history at Pennsylvania State University, Russell Sage College, and the University of New Orleans and is an author of articles on topics including American history, fundraising, and museum management issues.

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