

# De Nieuw Nederlandse Mercurius



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“De Nieuw Nederlandse Mercurius”

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## Events & Exhibits

**Ongoing:** “The Hudson River School: Landscape Paintings from the Albany Institute.” The Albany Institute holds a large and important collection of nineteenth-century American landscape paintings, works often associated with the term “Hudson River School.” They number more than ninety paintings and range in dimension from large wall-sized canvases to small business card-sized oil sketches on paper. In the summer of 2017, the Institute opened a reinstallation of its Hudson River School paintings in the Hearst Gallery on the museum’s third floor. For the first time, nearly all ninety paintings from this important collection are on view.

These landscapes, painted by artists like Thomas Cole, Frederic Church, Jasper Cropsey, Asher Durand, and numerous others, capture America’s scenic grandeur in all its magnificence, from rugged coastal scenery to imposing mountains and rivers.

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**Ongoing:** “Traders and Culture: Colonial Albany and the Formation of American Identity” at the Albany Institute. The character and culture of Albany and the Upper Hudson Valley have roots in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the early

inhabitants of the region, their beliefs, relationships, and interactions. This exhibition looks at those diverse peoples who shaped colonial Albany and the objects that reflect their interests, values, commercial, and social interactions. The values they held and culture they shaped have defined us today as Americans. The exhibition is organized around four themes: Trade, Commerce, and Conflict; Cultures; Life and Work; and Social Identity. Highlights include limner portraits (likenesses made by self-taught painters), Albany-made silver, branded furniture, ceramics, textiles, maps, and manuscript materials with documented family histories. See [albanyinstitute.org](http://albanyinstitute.org).

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### September 13–15, 2018.

Registration is now open for the fourth New York State Family History Conference. For the first time, this event comes downstate to Tarrytown at the DoubleTree hotel. The 2018 conference features two and a half days of lectures, workshops, and field trips, as well as a vibrant exhibit hall. Read the full conference schedule to see the range of topics the 45 sessions cover. NYSFHC 2018 is the only statewide conference focused on New York genealogy and family

history. In addition to educational opportunities, the gathering provides networking and social events alongside the latest tools and methods for tracing New York families. See [nysfhc.newyorkfamilyhistory.org](http://nysfhc.newyorkfamilyhistory.org).

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**Until October 8, 2018.** “Thirsty River: 400 years of Drink, Life & Reform in the River Valley,” a feature exhibit at the Connecticut River Museum in Essex CT, explores the role of alcohol in the Connecticut River Valley—past, present and future. Trace its story beginning both as a commodity and as sustenance in the daily human experience. Learn about how different beverages were created from local agriculture and how immigration, trade, and changing fashion altered the availability and popularity of certain beverages, generating new tastes for new generations. Temperance, prohibition, and the effects of the reform movements are also a part of the story. See [ctrivermuseum.org](http://ctrivermuseum.org).

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**October 24th, 2018.** Hofstra University will mark the 25th anniversary of its oldest international student exchange program with a symposium entitled “New

Netherlands, New Amsterdam: A Celebration of Dutch Heritage and Transatlantic Exchange.” Russell Shorto will deliver the keynote address and NNI/NNRC will host a panel discussion.

### Publications

*Jan Pieterse Mabee, wife Anna Borsboom, and their Farm* (paperback). Kim A. Mabee and Patricia D. Barrot, authors. This 28-page booklet is a historical overview of the Mabee Farm Historic Site and Jan Mabee family in upstate New York on the Mohawk River. It is the oldest home in the Mohawk Valley and now a living history museum. Offered on Amazon for \$5.00.

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*Annotated Bibliography of New Netherland Archaeology in Rensselaer and Albany Counties.* Prepared by Paul R. Huey & Hartgen Archaeological Associates Inc., with financial support from the Consulate General of the Netherlands. This annotated bibliography summarizes the contents of written resources concerning archaeological finds related to Dutch colonial occupation and settlement during the 17th and 18th centuries in Rensselaer and Albany Counties, New York. See our website under Research/Online Publications.

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*Council Minutes, 1656–1658.* The latest volume in the *New Netherland Documents* series is now available for sale in the NNI shop. Be sure to purchase a copy for yourself or your favorite library.

### Save the Date & Call for Papers

**Proposals due July 9th, 2018** for the 68th annual meeting of the New York State Association of European Historians (NYSAEH) to be held at D’Youville College in Buffalo, NY on October 5–6, 2018. The NYSAEH invites proposals for papers or panels on any topic in European history or Europe’s relationships with the wider global community. See [nysaeh.wordpress.com](http://nysaeh.wordpress.com).

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**Proposals due July 19, 2018.** Celebrate New York History Month at Researching New York this November. This annual conference brings together a broad community of historians, archivists, public historians, graduate students, museum curators, teachers, documentarians, and more to share their work on New York State history. Conference organizers invite proposals from any period and any methodological perspective on all aspects of New York State’s rich history. Submissions for workshops, roundtables, panels, and individual papers are sought from scholars, public historians, educators, archivists, librarians, and others engaged in the study, teaching, and presentation of New York State History. See [nystatehistory.org](http://nystatehistory.org).

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**September 22, 2018.** The 41st Annual Conference of the New Netherland Institute will convene at the New York State Museum in Albany on September 22nd. We thank everyone who submitted paper proposals; we were very pleased with the response. The annual dinner will follow that evening. Keep

an eye on our website for more details.

### News

Indian Ladder Farms in Albany County’s town of New Scotland is now growing a heritage apple of Dutch origin called the *Swaar*. This varietal was first recorded in Esopus (Kingston, NY area) in 1805, but may have been around long before then. The apples are large, round, and have a rough, dull yellow-green skin with some russetting. *Swaar* (“heavy” in Dutch) refers to their density and weight for their size. Their unremarkable appearance belies an excellent flavor, unique among apples. The creamy and fine-grained flesh is rich, spicy, nutty, and sweet and only gets better with storage. The texture also softens over time, turning buttery and tender. In fact, the flavor also improves when slightly bruised through slicing. The *Swaar* has a high sugar content and is one of the last apples to remain on the tree as winter takes hold. They are also more rarely known as Hardwick apples.

### Dutch Language Course

Summer language course “Joos Florquin” at the Leuven Language Institute from July 27–August 24. This intensive course is intended for those who wish to begin learning Dutch or improve their knowledge of the language. There are 5 levels: Elementary, Intermediate A, Intermediate B, Advanced A, Advanced B. The teaching language is Dutch. Passive knowledge of English and/or French is an advantage. Prior knowledge will be tested on the first day. Students will be

given the results on the following day. See [ilt.kuleuven.be/english/cursus/andere\\_zomercursus.php](http://ilt.kuleuven.be/english/cursus/andere_zomercursus.php).

### Website(s)

**Dutch Heritage World Tours.** On this site you will find all kinds of information about Dutch Heritage abroad: anything from old forts, farms, mills, homes, churches with cemeteries and warehouses, to a legacy of Dutch influence in culture and language all over the globe. In many countries where the Dutch settled there is still evidence of their presence. This information is offered primarily in the form of audio tours, which DHWT has developed and published in the travel-and-museum app izi. TRAVEL for smart phones and tablets. See [dutchheritageworldtours.nl/#home-en](http://dutchheritageworldtours.nl/#home-en).

### Requiescant in Pace

On April 19th our good friend and supporter Ralph DeGroff Jr. died after a long battle with lung cancer. Ralph was a retired investment banker who spent his entire career in New York City. He was also a lifelong member of the Holland Society of New York. As a member of this prestigious organization he was following in his father's footsteps. It was Ralph Sr. who initiated the resumption of the Dutch translation project in the early 1970s. As head of the Society's publication committee he led a search for a translator to resume the work which had been suspended by the 1911 Library fire. By chance, your editor was available to fill the position and develop a friendship with both father and son. Over the years, the New Netherland Project

benefited from the strong support of both Senior and Junior. After his father's death, Ralph Jr. played an active role in maintaining our relationship with the Holland Society. During his tenure as head of the Society's publication committee he was honored with the Society's Distinguished Service Medal as well as the New Netherland Institute's Alice P. Kenney Award. Both were presented in recognition of his significant contributions to colonial Dutch studies. Our latest volume of translations, *Council Minutes 1656-1658*, is dedicated to Ralph. *De appel valt niet ver van de boom.*

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On April 16th, Robert Cornelis Braeken, our good friend and supporter, died in Utrecht at the age of 72. Rob was a bit of a mystery even to his close friends. We do know that he graduated from the Gymnasium in Apeldoorn; studied "non-Western Sociology" in Utrecht; lived in a house considered a cultural monument in Utrecht; left Vietnam in 1975 by swimming across a river to safety in a hail of bullets; and eventually gained enough knowledge and experience in the world of antique Dutch maps to become curator of the Smeets map collection on Curaçao. It is during the 1990s that we met Rob as an employee of CITCO. We rarely knew of his whereabouts; but whenever we had a conference or public activity Rob would be there. Every year he produced a beautiful calendar drawing on the maps of the Smeets collection. Not only did his calendars grace CITCO's 62 offices around the world but our office in Albany as well. I had a bad feeling when we didn't receive one for 2017. *Rust in vrede*, Rob.

### NNI News

2018 Charles W. Wendell Research Grant: Congratulations to the recipients Michael J. Douma (Georgetown University), who is researching Dutch-speaking slaves in 18th- and 19th-century New York and New Jersey, and Sabine Go (VU University Amsterdam), who is researching the impact of the Amsterdam insurance market on the the U.S. marine insurance industry.

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2018 Alice P. Kenney Memorial Award: Congratulations to Ian Stewart of New Netherland Timber Framing and Preservation in Ghent, NY. See [newnetherlandtimberframing.com](http://newnetherlandtimberframing.com).

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"Bringing New Netherland Back to Breuckelen": NNI and NNRC would like to thank Kim Maier and the staff at the Old Stone House in Brooklyn for all their hard work at our event on June 1st and 2nd. Special thanks go to everyone who attended the event and made it a great success. We look forward to future visits to New York City.

### 'On this Day' News

A popular post on social media and websites nowadays is "on this day in history." Several sites have used this opportunity to highlight the date of the purchase of Manhattan. Despite these claims, we still don't know the date of the transaction. Some historians have inferred that it was in May, but few details of the event are known with any certainty.

While we're discussing the purchase, it appears the first appearance of the famed \$24 figure was

in January of 1844 in the Albany journal the *Northern Light*, in which budding historian E. B. O’Callaghan reported the news of that “trifling sum.” This figure has proven impervious to inflation.

### Museum News

The Rijksmuseum recently Tweeted about a “surprising gift” from the New York State Museum: a yellow clay brick that was shipped as ballast in ca. 1640 from the old Netherlands to New Netherland and used for a house near Fort Orange. “It’s quite literally a building block of New York history.” The exhibit “a small fort, which our people call Fort Orange” is now open at the NYSM.

### Totidem Verbis

#### *Zijn Daden Bennen Groot*

Piet Heyn and the Capture of the Silver Fleet, by Peter A. Douglas (part two)

In January 1629 Heyn returned home, the news of his success having beaten him back on faster ships. Thus, he was greeted with great celebration—the firing of salutes, the pealing of bells, ceremonial addresses, and choirs singing his praises. The unprecedented capture of the great Spanish Silver Fleet aroused huge public excitement, and with good reason. The prize was a prodigious haul of gold and silver, along with pearls, spices, indigo and cochineal dyes, sugar, hides, and silks. All told the value of the loot was put at some 12 million guilders. Heyn’s raid was a disaster for Spain, but 1629 was a very good year for WIC shareholders. In the years that followed, the

WIC never repeated Piet Heyn’s achievement, partly because after this the Spanish changed sea routes and departure times. In later years the WIC sent out smaller squadrons, which sometimes came back with impressive booty, but the days of big money were over.

Piet Heyn immediately became a folk hero, and he still is, occupying a place in the Dutch national pantheon comparable to that held by Sir Francis Drake for the English. Heyn, however, was somewhat irritated about how this easy success made him so admired and popular, whereas his earlier heroic deeds were forgotten. He has been quoted as saying to the mayor of Leiden, “Now they praise me because I gained riches without the least danger, but earlier when I risked my life in full combat they didn’t even know I existed.”



A 1938 medal commemorating Heyn. National Maritime Museum, London

This initial enthusiastic reception was far from the end of the Dutch love-affair with Piet Heyn, and public idolatry continued unabated, and even intensified following his death at age 51 in June 1629, as an active-duty Admiral, at the hands of the Dunkirk pirates, less than six months after his joyful homecoming. The elegiac lamentations marking Heyn’s death were equally intense and expressed the grief of a nation united in mourning. As for Admiral Benavides Bazán, he died too, the consequences of his ignominious defeat having proved fatal.

He was executed in Seville in 1634. The contrast with the reception given to his foe could not have been greater.

People clamored to pay tribute. The veneration of Heyn and the cult of hero-worship took many forms—pamphlets illustrating his exploits, songs and poems lauding his victory and lamenting his martyrdom, and a variety of objects commemorating his name—medals, busts, portraits, etchings of the battle, and even saltcellars. His deeds were celebrated in rhapsodic verses that encouraged patriotic ardor and created a collective and, as it happened, a multigenerational remembrance that embraced and fostered a national pride. To say *een zilvervloot winnen* became an expression for enjoying a big success, and the popular triumphal song quoted was written over two centuries later, testament enough to Heyn’s undying reputation in the nation’s memory.

Piet Heyn is also memorialized by his statue that stands by the harbor in Delfshaven, inscribed, like many dedicatory medallions, with his motto: *Goudt voor Zilver, Eer voor All*—gold before silver, honor before all. In the end, the general devotion extended to Heyn’s elaborate tomb in the Oude Kerk in Delft, where his marble effigy reposes above his bones. Fittingly, not far away is the tomb of Admiral Maarten Tromp, Heyn’s one-time flag captain, who died in 1653. Nearby too are the tombs of the painter Johannes Vermeer (1675), and the scientist Antonie van Leeuwenhoek (1723), so he rests in good company. And somewhere in the country, even now, someone is singing his name. Ω