

# De Nieuw Nederlansche Mercurius



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“De Nieuw Nederlansche Mercurius”

November 2003

## Upcoming Events

**November 14, 2003.** The Netherlands-America Foundation announces the 22nd Peter Stuyvesant Ball at the Grand Hyatt New York. “The Black & White Ball, A Masked Ball” will be held in the presence of their highnesses Prince Maurits and Princess Marilène and their highnesses Prince Bernhard Jr. and Princess Annette. For further information please visit [www.theNAF.org](http://www.theNAF.org) or contact Mrs Age B. Diedrick at 212-355-6363 or [age.diedrick@rcn.com](mailto:age.diedrick@rcn.com)

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**December 5, 2003.** Various places will organize Sinterklaas activities. The Dutch embassy in Washington, DC will devote part of November 29th to this event; The Netherlands Club of New York will host a Sinterklaas event for members on December 2nd; The Netherlands Club of Chicago will celebrate a children’s Sinterklaas party on December 6th; and the Belgian Club of Florida will celebrate the saint’s birthday on December 7th. Sinterklaas will also appear at the Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum on Dec. 6, 12-4 p.m. 5816 Clarendon Road, Brooklyn, NY 11203. Tel: 718- 629-5400; or [info@wyckoffassociation.org](mailto:info@wyckoffassociation.org)

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**Through December 14, 2003:** Fleming Museum, University of Vermont, 61 Colchester Avenue, Burlington Vermont: “Rembrandt and the Art of Etching,” the first major exhibition of Rembrandt’s prints in Vermont. This collection of 115 original prints comes from the Rembrandt House in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. A rich selection of programs will accompany the exhibit, including an evening lecture, Wednesday lunchtime talks, Sunday films exploring aspects of Rembrandt’s life and art, and special tours of the exhibition. Every Saturday during the exhibi-



Rembrandt van Rijn  
Self-portrait, 1639

tion families can explore Rembrandt’s process and his sources of inspiration in Rembrandt’s cabinet, in the Museum’s Activity Room.

(802) 656-0750/2090. See also [www.flemingmuseum.org](http://www.flemingmuseum.org)

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**Through January 18, 2004.** “Rembrandt’s Journey. Painter, Draftsman, Etcher” at Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts. This exhibition takes the groundbreaking step of examining Rembrandt’s most expressive etchings in the context of his paintings and drawings. It appeals on many levels: the superlative quality of the works on view, the illuminating insight into the artist’s inventive use of technique, and the transporting character of the art itself, whether penetrating self-portraits, moving biblical narratives, fresh visions of the native Dutch landscape, earthy scenes of low comedy, or sensuous nudes.

An ambitious in-depth survey featuring major international loans, “Rembrandt’s Journey” consists of 23 paintings and oil sketches, 35 drawings, and 160 etchings and copper etching plates. Over two-thirds of the works are borrowed from collections public and private in Amsterdam, Berlin, Chicago, Los Angeles, Moscow, New York, Paris, St. Petersburg, and Washington, D.C.

Rather than following a strictly chronological survey, the exhibi-

tion and accompanying catalogue are arranged according to themes that Rembrandt returned to again and again over time. In his drawings and etchings he recorded—with totally fresh eyes—daily life in street and household, the fields and farms around Amsterdam, and touchingly realistic nude figures. His keen observation of facial expression, hand gestures, and body language gives new depth to his biblical narratives.

“Rembrandt’s Journey: Painter, Draftsman, Etcher” is a not-to-be-missed opportunity to savor a lifetime’s achievement, extending from the energetic Baroque works of the 1630s to the more serene, meditative pieces of the 1650s.

The exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated catalog authored by Clifford S. Ackley, Ronni Baer, Thomas Rassieur, and William W. Robinson.

For more information go to: [www.mfa.org](http://www.mfa.org); or 617-267-9300

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**November 19, 2003–February 22, 2004.** A rare Vermeer will be at the MFA. Thanks to the generosity of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the MFA has been given the unparalleled opportunity to exhibit a beautiful and rare painting: Johannes Vermeer’s “Young Woman with a Water Pitcher.” For a limited time, this work will be on view in the Matthew and Edna Goodrich Brown Gallery along with a special installation of the MFA’s Dutch genre paintings.

For more information go to: [www.mfa.org](http://www.mfa.org); or 617-267-9300

## FNN News

At the June Board meeting, the treasurer reported that enough funds are on hand to support the New Netherland Project and the activities of the New Netherland Institute through the end of the year, but funds will need to be raised for the coming year. Later this month, an annual appeal letter will be sent to all FNN members.

Over 100 people participated in the 26th annual Rensselaerswijck Seminar weekend in New York City September 20–21, 2003 sponsored by the New Netherland Institute. The weekend events celebrated the 350th anniversary of the chartering of Nieuw Amsterdam as a municipality on February 2, 1653 and also the building in 1653 of the original northern defensive wall. The South Street Seaport Museum provided a behind-the-scenes tour of Schermerhorn Row, a 19th century hotel and counting house; an opportunity to view early Dutch artifacts found during archeological digs in lower Manhattan and a walking tour of Wall Street (the original northern defensive wall of Fort Amsterdam); and a special preview of 20 antiquarian maps of Nieuw Amsterdam/Netherlands that Bert Twaalfhoven, a Dutch venture capitalist and philanthropist has given to Fordham University.

At the Seminar speakers from both the United States and the Netherlands focused on the chartering of Nieuw Amsterdam in 1653 with papers on the charter itself as a transmission of governmental apparatus from the Old World, a com-

parison of the charter with that of contemporaneous Boston, and the problems relating to the establishment of the charter in the Atlantic context of the West India Company. It also addressed such matters as the acceptance of the newly arrived Jews from Brazil, Stuyvesant’s failure to make Nieuw Amsterdam a purely reformed city, and Nieuw Amsterdam’s restoration as Nieuw Orange during the third Anglo-Dutch war. The papers will be published in upcoming editions of *De Halve Maen*, the scholarly publication of The Holland Society, edited by David William Voorhees. In addition to the program, Roland Rogers, president of the 350th NYC Anniversary Committee, brought samples of a \$24 commemorative coin for sale; also, Janny Venema’s new book *Beverwijck, a Dutch Village on the American Frontier, 1652–1664*, was available for sale (both items now for sale through our website). Janny is a Project Associate with the NNP, which has been translating and publishing the official 17th century Dutch colonial documents since 1974.

Following the Seminar a group of 110 people gathered for a dinner cruise aboard World Yacht’s *Empress*. During the cruise Russell Shorto and David Voorhees took people back to the 17th century with an entertaining narrative of what one might see sailing by Nieuw Amsterdam. After dinner Benjamin Schmidt was presented with the Hendricks Manuscript Award for his book, *Innocence Abroad: The Dutch Imagination*

**Editor's Note:**

If you are considering a purchase through Amazon, such as Janny Venema's book, please remember to access Amazon first through our website. It's very simple. Just go to [www.nnp.org](http://www.nnp.org); click on Book Store in the left margin; a list of books will appear which will give us a royalty via Amazon when you click on the title and purchase. If the book order is at least \$25, it may qualify for Amazon's Super Saver Shipping; for example, Janny's book qualifies and will be sent without shipping charges. If you don't see the book you are looking for in the list, click on the Amazon box in the center of the screen. This will bring you directly to Amazon's website. ALL purchases made in this way (whether book or chainsaw) will also financially benefit the New Netherland Project.

*and the New World, 1570-1670.*

[See Firth Fabend's book review.]

On Sunday the South Street Seaport Museum hosted a breakfast and a tour of Schermerhorn Row. After touring the extensive restoration site, groups were guided down Wall Street to experience the extent of the original defensive wall constructed in 1653, which eventually became the city's financial district. Once the tour of Wall Street was completed participants were invited to a sneak preview of a New Netherland map exhibit at Fordham University's library arranged by Andrea Axelrod of the Netherland-America Foundation.

Co-sponsors of the Seminar weekend events included the Acorn Foundation, Consulate General of the Netherlands, Friends of New Netherland, The Holland Society of New York, Lucius N. Littauer Foundation, Netherland-America Foundation, New York State Library, New York Genealogical and Biographical Society,

Society of Daughters of Holland Dames, Colonial Lords of Manors in America, St. Nicholas Society, and South Street Seaport Museum.

**Omission:** The FNN gratefully acknowledges the contribution of Westnet, Inc. under the Magistrate level, which was unfortunately left off the August 2003 donorlist.

**Book review**

The winner of this year's Hendricks Prize is Benjamin Schmidt for his book *The Dutch Imagination and the New World, 1570-1670*, published by Cambridge University Press in 2001. This work explores the process of encounter that took place between the Netherlands and the New World in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although it dwells only briefly on New Netherland, it contributes to the scholarship on the Dutch colonial experience in America—a criterion of the Prize—in its documentation of Dutch images of America, particularly in Chapters 1 and 2. Schmidt establishes a strong foundation for the case that American reaction to British tyranny had its earliest model in the rebellion of the Dutch against the Spanish, an important observation, taking as we do the Dutch colonial experience in America to extend to the Revolution. His subject is America's reception in the Netherlands, which he deals with by focusing on Dutch representations of Wicked Spain and Innocent America—a stand-in for the Innocent Netherlands. At the end of the 16th century, a new iconography of America developed, he says, an America of pastoral quiet, virginal grace, Arcadian, and newly valu-

able—i.e., Gold vs. God. “Gold unravels America, draws the greedy Europeans to ravish it, when they should have been saving it for God.” Later still, America is seen no longer as innocent, but in the language of “revenue, plunder, and violation.” The work is beautifully written, sure, sophisticated, and authoritative. He has a rich and varied vocabulary, uses quotations effectively, is convincing, and always entertaining. A polished, knowledgeable, and lively work with excellent, meaty footnotes and wonderful illustrations, it can be enjoyed by a wide readership. Benjamin Schmidt is Assistant Professor of History at the University of Washington. [Review by Firth Fabend, historian and NNP fellow.]

**News**

If you were unable to accompany the group on September 21st to Fordham University for the preview of the New Netherland map exhibit or attend the official opening on October 24th, you can now view the 20 maps on our website. Not only can each map be quickly accessed but, thanks to our webmaster, Howard Funk, a free program can be downloaded which enables the viewer to zoom in on map details.

**Websites**

Looking for a winter project? How about **The Eighty Years War**? A good place to start is a Leiden University website, which has an extensive bibliography and complete texts of documents, such as the *Unie van Utrecht* and the *Plakkaat van Verlatinghe*. Just go to: <http://dutchrevolt.leidenuniv.nl/>

## Totidem Verbis

Twenty years ago Janny Venema visited the NNP looking for a map of New Netherland to take back to her students in Haarlem. Eventually she would settle in the Albany area, making it possible for her to work on the Project. In addition to learning to transcribe the 17th-c Dutch mss, I asked her to begin work on a map of Beverwijck. Research for the map led her deeply into the lives of the inhabitants of the Dutch village. As a result of this research she has received a PhD from the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam and authored a book entitled *Beverwijck, a Dutch village on the American Frontier, 1652-1664*. Following is a sketch of one of those families who walked the streets of Beverwijck, now Albany, the capital of New York State.

### A foot print in Beverwijck

One of the most important founders of Beverwijck on the upper Hudson was Pieter Hartgers. As a 23-year old he had come over to the patroonship of Rensselaerswijck in 1643, but at the age of forty he lived back in the fatherland. His brother Joost, whose bookstore was on De Dam, at the corner of the Kalverstraet in Amsterdam, had loaned him *f*260 for the journey to New Netherland. At Joost's store people could buy, among others, Joost's 1651 publication of the *Beschrijvinghe van Virginia, Nieuw Nederlandt, Nieuw Engelandt en d' eylanden Bermudes, Barbados en St. Christopher*, which was a compilation of previously printed texts, to which Pieter may have contributed.

In Rensselaerswijck Pieter had a brewery in 1646, and in the 1650s he collaborated with two other men in a farm and a brewery near the first kill in Beverwijck. His involvement in the fur trade allowed him to build up good contacts with the natives, which may have enhanced his trading options. Due to his success in the trade Hartgers frequently held positions in the court and the consistory of Beverwijck.

Some five years after his arrival, he married Sijtje Roelofs, the third daughter of the early settlers Anneke Jans and Roelof Jansz van Masterlant. Around 1650 the couple had two daughters, but life for the family changed dramatically following Sijtje's death sometime in, or perhaps prior to, 1659. Hartgers then went back to the fatherland, taking his eight- and ten-year-old daughters with him. In December 1660, he lived in South Holland and was married to his second wife Eva van Rijswijck.

In Beverwijck Hartgers had been one of the successful inhabitants, and in addition to the trading business he

continued, he had to take care of several pieces of property. As other successful burghers, he had invested money in various enterprises. In the summer of 1661 he was for a last summer in New Netherland to arrange many of his affairs. His share of the brewery he probably sold to the co-owners, and he arranged to sell and rent several of his houses and lots. Before his last farewell to New Netherland he gave a power of attorney to Gerrit Swart and Abraham Staets, who in the coming years would take care of his business in Beverwijck; in August 1662, they rented out three of his houses and sold the garden south of Beverwijck. His brother-in-law Johannes van Brugh dealt with property at Manhattan.

Analyzing some of Hartgers' property in Beverwijck could lead to interesting conclusions about the value of location. One lot between the Jonckerstraet and the first kill he sold for *f*2,700. A much larger lot with a house on the river, south of the third kill had cost *f*1910 in 1659, but in 1666 it was, along with some forty other houses and barns, destroyed by the ice, and whatever was left of it was sold for *f*160. A house and lot on the east side of Pearl Street including a garden south of Fort Orange was sold for the sum of *f*850. Comparing the differences in price between these three lots could lead to the conclusion that lots north of the *bijeenwoning* were more expensive than those east of present-day Pearl Street, but cheaper than those in the center of the *bijeenwoning* between the first kill and Jonckerstraet, which at that time seem to have been prime property.

In October 1661, Hartgers went back to the fatherland for good. Eva died before April 1663. She may have been a sister of schout Gerrit Swart's wife, Anthonia van Rijswijck. Not

only do their names suggest this, but when Hartgers left Beverwijck for the last time, he gave a power of attorney to manage his affairs to his friend Abraham Staets, and also to Swart. Usually, only relatives or good friends would perform services like this.

In January 1664, Pieter married again and had three more children. English authorities confiscated properties in Albany belonging to men in Holland in 1667; most likely they included Hartgers's possessions. He moved to Alkmaer, where apparently he worked as a brewer. When he died in 1670, his daughter Johanna had married one of Pieter's long-time business partners. Nearly at the end of the seventeenth century some people in Albany may have had some clear memories of the two girls who, together with their father, had sailed away from Beverwijck in 1659 to live in the fatherland. In 1698 Ryseck Swart (as Anthonia van Rijswijck, Gerrit Swart's widow, was called in the community) pawned a silver beaker with the inscription Rachel Hartgers to the deaconry in return for care, board and drink. It probably was the beaker that Rachel had inherited from her grandmother Anneke Jans in 1663, when the girl was already back in the Republic. By the time Ryseck was in need of care, Rachel had married as well and also became related to Johanna's business family. At the announcement of the banns on December 31, 1676, "Rachel Hartgers from Oranje living at the Princegracht" was assisted by her uncle and guardian, Joost Hartgers. It seems that in making the choice to go back to the fatherland, Pieter Hartgers definitely had the future of his daughters in mind. But by contributing much to the establishment of the community at Beverwijck, he left a clear footprint in the New World.