

# De Nieuw Nederlanse Mercurius



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“De Nieuw Nederlanse Mercurius”

Dec. 2011

## Events of interest

**Until December 16, 2011.** “A Journey Through History: The Artistic Works of Len Tantillo.” An exhibit sponsored by the Schenectady County Historical Society at the George Franchere Education Center, Mabee Farm, Rotterdam Junction, NY. For further information go to: [www.schist.org/mabee.htm](http://www.schist.org/mabee.htm)

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**February 1–May 26, 2012.** “Van Gogh Up Close” at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Vincent van Gogh was an artist of exceptional intensity, not only in his use of color and exuberant application of paint, but also in his personal life. Drawn powerfully to nature, his works—particularly those created in the years just before he took his own life—engage the viewer with the strength of his emotions. This exhibition focuses on these tumultuous years, a period of feverish artistic experimentation that began when van Gogh left Antwerp for Paris in 1886 and continued until his death in Auvers in 1890. For further information go to: [www.philamuseum.org](http://www.philamuseum.org)

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**Until February 5, 2012.** “Rembrandt & Degas, Two Young Artists” at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, MA. In 1856 Degas embarked on a three-year trip to Italy to study classical sculpture and Renaissance painting. While in Italy, he saw a number of prints by Rembrandt in Italian collections and copied several in his drawings and sketch books, developing one of them into his own etching after Rembrandt. Inspired by the Dutch artist’s example, Degas made a series of self-portraits that explored a range of tonal effects, from subtle shading to dramatic contrasts of light and dark, just as Rembrandt had done as a young artist in Leiden and Amsterdam. This series of some forty paintings, prints, and drawings dates to Degas’s early years, between about 1854 and 1862, when the choice of a non-academic role model helped to define Degas’s identity as one of the emerging leaders of the French avant-garde. This exhibition was organized by the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, in association with the Clark Art Institute and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. For more information go to: [www.clarkart.edu](http://www.clarkart.edu). The exhibit will be at the Met from February 23 to May 20. Go to:

[www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org) for further information.

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**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.

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**June 14–16, 2012.** The Conference on New York State History. Proposals for individual presentations, full sessions, panel discussions, work shops, and other program suggestions are now being accepted for the 2012 conference to be held at Niagara University. Diverse theoretical perspectives and innovative methodological approaches are welcomed.

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Presentations may consider any aspect of the history of New York State over the past 400 years. We encourage presenters to take a dynamic approach to their presentations, including the use of visual and audio aids, audience participation, and panel discussions. For more information go to: [www.nysha.org](http://www.nysha.org).

### Requiescant in Pace

A tribute to Howard L. Funk delivered by his daughter Rhoda at his funeral on 30 October:

“My mom, Elisabeth Funk, asked me Rhoda Fry, my sister Helene Funk, and Howard’s sister Barbara to say a few words about my dad at the funeral. She wanted me to write it out, so that I wouldn’t stumble too much. Since his passing was such a surprise and the October snow storm that took the power and phones out along with all the work that needed to be done, the following does not do him justice. With text in hand however, I can share it with you here. Many could not make it due to the storm. I think my dad was too modest to have a big fuss made over him...

Many of you knew my dad before I came along, a half-century ago, so you already know that he was always 1.5 steps ahead in everything he did. For our family, he was 1.5 steps ahead – literally. We were 3 ducklings trying to catch up – that’s how I learned to walk REALLY fast. Professionally, he had more than a job at IBM, he had a 40 year career: An engineer/inventor – who got patents.

More than a member of technical organizations like IFIP, AFIPS, SID and Internet Society, he held leadership positions.

In his second career, he created countless websites:

- He reluctantly accepted an award for the best town website from New York State for the Lewisboro site.

- He collaborated with my mom on the New Netherland Project.

- If he hadn’t built my husband’s website and patiently taught me how to maintain it, we’d surely be out of business now.

He generously shared his knowledge with anyone who would ask. He was thoughtful to others to a fault. His morning regimen was to deliver the newspaper from the road to our neighbors’ doorsteps, wearing only his bathrobe, much to my mom’s chagrin.

With me, he shared his hobbies of magic and his progressively updated state-of-the-art darkroom. He helped me with my math homework – in college – partial differential equations, no less. And, I bet he was still sharp enough to do it a week ago. He died too young.

About 20 years ago, he extended his planned life expectancy from 100 to 120.

Now he wasn’t a USA Today type of guy. He read the New York Times, Science Magazine, and Foreign Affairs, among others. He planned trips around the best restaurants.

When I moved to California, he was in his mid-fifties and serendipitously had more business trips there. We had some great times. He was not an outdoorsman but was a true sport about hiking through

dunes or descending and ascending 300 steps to see the Point Reyes lighthouse. I would not undertake these feats today. His only fitness program was forgoing the elevators and taking the stairs at work.

In spite of, or should I say in addition to, his stellar intellect, he was a thoroughly personable gentleman. My husband Bill looked forward to his company and conversation when running mini-errands like a trip to town to purchase gas or a light bulb. He was not an idle man.

He always had just the right thing to say. On my wedding day, he told Bill, “She’s your problem now!” He had an enormous sense of humor, a formidable joke repertoire, and a mischievous look that I see in my son, Justin.

Finally, he had this amazing knack for getting great parking places – a gift that he delighted in. Every time that predictably perfect parking spot magically appeared, he proudly proclaimed: ‘HOWARD, YOU LIVE RIGHT.’ And he did. Don’t you think?”

Everyone at the NNI and NNRC will sorely miss our webmaster and friend.

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William Lee Frost, 84, Chairman of the Lucius Littauer Foundation died 7 September 2011. Through Mr. Frost the Littauer Foundation has been one of the Institute’s most generous and loyal donors. After working as a Foreign Service Officer with the U.S. State Department Mr. Frost returned to the legal profession specializing in management and investment and

became president of the Littauer Foundation. Always interested in health, Mr. Frost served on the NY State's Public Health Council and as treasurer and director of the NY Heart Association. He was a trustee of the Brearley School, the Collegiate School, Marlboro College and Radcliffe College. He was chairman of the NY State Archives Partnership and served as trustee of the P.E.F. Israel Endowment Funds, Inc. and as president/director of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

### News

For 15 years the quarterly newsletter *New Netherland Connections* was the backbone of research relating to the ancestors and descendants of the 17th-century Dutch colony. Although Dorothy Koenig has ceased publication of the newsletter, the contents of the 60 issues are now available on-line. For access to the searchable site go to: [www.americanancestors.org](http://www.americanancestors.org).

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The Frick Art Reference Library and its partners in the New York Art Resources Consortium (NYARC)—the libraries of The Museum of Modern Art and the Brooklyn Museum—are pleased to announce that through a complex process of data migration, all of the photoarchive's research database records created since 1996 (and all future records created both for the existing collection and for new acquisitions) may now be accessed via NYARC's online catalog at: [arcade.nyarc.org/search~S7](http://arcade.nyarc.org/search~S7)

### Publications

Rob Naborn (PhD, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) transcribed, translated, and annotated the *Memoirs of Eilardus Westerlo*. Westerlo was Pastor of the Dutch Reformed Protestant Church of Albany, NY (now the First Church) in Albany, NY (1760-90). The Memoirs show what kind of life an immigrant late 18<sup>th</sup>-century pastor led in Albany, NY. Together with three other unpublished documents, they provide insight into the Dutch-American community in and around Albany between 1760 and 1790. Copies of the book are for sale (\$22.50) at the Albany Visitors Center, 25 Quackenbush Square, at the Albany Institute of History and Art, 125 Washington Avenue, and at Historic Cherry Hill, 523½ South Pearl St. You can also obtain a copy by e-mailing: [naborn@hotmail.com](mailto:naborn@hotmail.com) (\$22.95 including S&H. [ISBN: 978-3-89323-767-8]. 274 pages, softbound, with an index of the names and places mentioned.

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C. Carl Pegels, our website's author of the popular "Well-known Dutch-Americans," has now authored *Prominent Dutch American Entrepreneurs, Their Contributions to American Society, Culture, and Economy*. The publication presents the stories of successful businesses started by Dutch Americans from the Van Cortlandts to the Koch brothers. Paperback and hardcover editions can be purchased directly from Information Age Publishing at: [www.infoagepub.com](http://www.infoagepub.com).

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Gijs Rommelse, *The Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-1667), Raison d'état, mercantilism and maritime strife*. Hilversum: Verloren 2006. Although published only five years ago, this important study is difficult to access in US libraries. However, it can still be bought directly from Uitgeverij Verloren in the Netherlands. Go to: [www.verloren.nl](http://www.verloren.nl) Rommelse work is a must read for an understanding of the political and economic climate leading up to the war, before which New Netherland was lost.

### NNI News

Researchers exploring the history of New Netherland and the Dutch Colonial Atlantic World are encouraged to apply for the following research residencies, which carries a stipend of \$2,500:

#### **Quinn Library Research**

**Residency** consists of specialized research in Dutch-related documents and printed materials at the New York State Library. 2012 [applications](#) must be postmarked by January 27, 2012, and sent by regular U.S. Mail or Air Mail. A panel of scholars and library staff will review proposals. The panel's decisions will be announced by April 13, 2012.

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#### **Quinn Archives Research**

**Residency** consists of up to one year in Albany, working in the rich collections of the New York State Archives, the NYS Library, and the

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New Netherland Research Center. 2012 [applications](#) must be postmarked by January 17, 2012, and sent by regular U.S. Mail or Air Mail. This annual award is usually announced on May 1st.

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For 2011, Congress is allowing anyone over 70 1/2, who has a traditional IRA and who hasn't already taken their Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) for this year, to make a tax free transfer to the New Netherland Institute or any publicly supported charity. To do so, the individual MUST direct their IRA administrator (bank, brokerage house, mutual fund, etc.) to send an amount up to \$100,000.00 directly to NNI, for example. The money cannot go to the individual first; otherwise the tax advantage is lost.

The amount sent is not taxable as long as the above steps are taken but you cannot claim that amount on your income tax since it would already be passing tax free. Since this opportunity disappears in 2012 unless Congress agrees to extend it, you can use this to even prepay your membership for future years and enjoy the tax benefit this year. Have your IRA administrator send your donation to the New Netherland Institute (Tax ID # 14-1672400), P O. Box 2536, ESP Station, Albany NY 12220-0536, ATTN: Bonnie Urso. Since it takes them a few days to execute your request, please consider contacting your IRA administrator soon so as not to lose this valuable tax benefit. I invite you to contact me at [jfssrny@yahoo.com](mailto:jfssrny@yahoo.com) if you have any

questions. Thank you.  
Jim Sefcik  
Associate for Development and Special Projects

### **Totidem Verbis**

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

Continuing up U.S. 9, nearly 40 miles from Hyde Park, one encounters the home turf of another U.S. president also of Dutch ancestry, who served a century earlier, that is President Martin Van Buren of Kinderhook. Like FDR, President Van Buren's house is also a national historic site and is a source of pride to the surrounding neighborhood.

From Kinderhook to Albany, U.S. 9, now enters into the "Patroon's Domain"; that is the vast Van Rensselaer holdings (Rensselaerswijck) that were chartered to Kiliaen Van Rensselaer by the Dutch West India Company. This area was the focus of the early romanticized fur trade which was rapidly replaced by agricultural activity, making the Van Rensselaer patroonship one of the most important centers for food and fiber production in the New World. America's position as the world's leading exporter of grain began in Rensselaerswijck, and later on spread to colonial Pennsylvania. From there it went on to make the Mid-West and the Great Plains into "...amber waves of grain." Just before U.S. 9 (re)crosses the

Hudson River westward into Albany, it passes through the City of Rensselaer. Located here is the Fort Crailo State Historic Site on the East Bank of the Hudson River. This site documents various aspects of the Dutch Colonial Era and represents an effort to recreate the varied interests of the Van Rensselaer patroonship. The Crailo site dates back to the 1640s. After leaving the City of Rensselaer and its Crailo site, U.S. 9 proceeds into the City of Albany located on the west shore of the Hudson River and is rejoined by U.S. 9W. U.S. 9 with its single designation continues north through Albany County, and crosses the Mohawk River (a major tributary of the Hudson River) into Saratoga County with its famous summertime destination of Saratoga Springs. From this point northward, U.S. 9 takes on a more rustic flavor as it travels through the Adirondack Mountains/New York State Forest Preserve. U.S. 9 is the major thoroughfare or "Main Street" serving the resort Village of Lake George. This region is a popular vacation destination (both winter and summer) with its spectacular fresh water lakes and lofty mountains dominating the scene. From Lake George Village, U.S. 9 continues its course through the mountains for another 100 miles. Reaching Plattsburgh, New York, U.S. 9 now travels through farm country of similar terrain as exists on the Canadian side of the border. Our road trip from Delaware to Canada has come to an end.