

De Nieuw Nederlansche Mercurius



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“De Nieuw Nederlansche Mercurius”

June 2007

Events

June 7–9, 2007. “The Conference on New York History” will be held in Cooperstown, NY at the Farmers’ Museum and the Fenimore Art Museum. Of interest to our readers will be a presentation by George O’Connor, the artist who produced the graphic version of the Van den Bogaert journal. Your editor and William Starna will introduce Mr. O’Connor at the Friday afternoon session. For complete program information go to: www.nyhistory.com/cnysh/CNYSH2007Program.htm

June 7–9, 2007. Hope College of Holland, Michigan will host a Dutch-American Studies Conference. The ethnic literature and art of Dutch Calvinists in North America will be the focus of the 16th biennial conference of the Association for the Advancement of Dutch-American Studies (AADAS).

The event will feature presentations on a variety of topics by some two dozen scholars, artists, and authors, and will draw participants from around the country, as well as from Canada and the Netherlands.

The conference is open to the general public. Registration is \$25

for the entire event or a reduced amount for those attending only one day, with meals available for an additional charge.

Topics will range from the writings of disillusioned immigrants, to the role played by Dutch-American newspapers, to the family name as a reflection of cultural heritage, to the life experiences of Dutch-American women as portrayed in fiction and non-fiction, to discussions of Dutch-American writers and regional artists. The conference will also include tours of the Christian Reformed Heritage Center of Graafschap Christian Reformed Church and of the new Dutch Galleries of the Holland Museum.

The event will take place primarily at the college’s Maas Center, with additional presentations at the Haworth Inn and Conference Center and the Martha Miller Center for Global Communication in addition to the visits to off-campus sites.

The conference is being sponsored by the college’s A.C. Van Raalte Institute. The chairperson of the conference arrangements committee is Dr. Robert Swierenga, who is the A.C. Van Raalte Research Professor and an adjunct professor of history at Hope.

More information, including a complete schedule, may be obtained online at <http://www.hope.edu/vri/aadas>. Additional information may also be obtained by calling the conference registrar, Karen Schakel, at the college’s A.C. Van Raalte Institute at 616–395–7678.

September 15, 2007. The 30th annual Rensselaerswijck Seminar will be held at the Carole Huxley Theater of the Cultural Education Center in Albany. The theme will be “The Truce, 1609–1621.” The following speakers will explore the ramifications of this period of peace with Spain on developments in the Netherlands and the New World: Jaap Bruijn (emeritus, University of Leiden, the Netherlands), Henk den Heijer (Rijksuniversiteit, Leiden, the Netherlands), Joost Jonker (Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht, the Netherlands), Arthur Kirmss (Vander Ende–Onderdonk House, Long Island, New York), Kevin McBride (University of Connecticut), Janny Venema (New Netherland Project, Albany, New York). Keep checking our website. The complete program will be posted soon.

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September 18, 2007–January 6, 2008. “The Age of Rembrandt: Dutch Paintings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art.” The Met is home to the finest collection of Dutch art outside of Europe—including 20 works by Rembrandt himself—and all 228 of these masterpieces will be displayed together for the first time in this major special exhibition. The exhibition, which coincides with the publication of the first catalogue of the collection, will celebrate Rembrandt’s 400th birthday. On view will be a rich array of works dating mostly between 1600 and 1700—landscapes, genre pictures, still lifes, marine views, portraiture, and historical and biblical paintings—by Rembrandt and other celebrated Dutch masters such as Frans Hals, Johannes Vermeer, Gerard ter Borch, Pieter de Hooch, Jacob van Ruisdael, and Aelbert Cuyp. Broadly outlining how the collection was formed, the exhibition will reflect the taste for Dutch art in America and among New York’s great collectors of the past two centuries. Go to: www.metmuseum.org for further information.

Publications

For those of you who prefer to read Dutch works in Portuguese you can now read Johannes de Laet’s *Nieuwe Werelt ofte Beschrijvinghe van West-Indien* in a translation by Benjamin N. Teensma: *Descrição das Costas do Brasil*, published by Kapa Editorial in Petropolis, Brazil. I make note of this to remind you of Brazil’s interest in its Dutch heritage. Remember, Russell Shorto’s best

seller *The Island at the Center of the World* has not only been translated into Dutch and German but also into Portuguese as *A Ilha no Centro do Mundo*.

For a compact history of the Dutch republic consider: *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century: The Golden Age* (Hardcover) by Maarten Prak (Author), Diane Webb (Translator). Cambridge University Press, 2005; published by SUN of Nijmegen in 2002 as *Gouden eeuw. Het raadsel van de Republiek*.

Scholars exploring the Library of Congress’ rich collection of Dutch Americana will welcome the recent LC publication *New Netherland, 1609–1664: A Selective Bibliography* by Margrit B. Krewson, German/Dutch area specialist.

It cites essential reference works as well as more obscure titles likely to escape the notice of researchers investigating the political, economic, social and military history of the Dutch in North America.

The bibliography is available upon request from the Library of Congress, European Division, Washington, DC 20540–5530 or by calling: 202–707–5414.

FAQ

Where is the Livingston–Redmond Collection? If you did research in this manuscript collection at the Hyde Park Library back in the 1970s and have lost track of its whereabouts, wonder no more. After a short stay at the J. P. Morgan Library it is now a holding of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of

American History at the New–York Historical Society.
www.nyhistory.org.

News from the NNI

Kenney Award and Program

The Alice P. Kenney Award will be presented to Karen Hartgen & Charles “Chuck” Fisher (posthumously) on Saturday, June 9, 2007. The program begins at 1:30 p. m. at the Ten Broeck Mansion, 9 Ten Broeck Place, Albany. For driving directions, see: timesunion.memlink.com/default.aspx. Karen is President and the Principal Investigator of Hartgen Archaeological Associates, Inc. She has been an active participant in a variety of municipal and professional organizations for more than 25 years; and, she has been a trustee of the Rensselaer County Cooperative Extension, the North Greenbush Town Historian, President of the New York State Archaeological Association, and President of the New York Archaeological Council. Among the more complex projects that Karen has managed are several large urban projects in Albany and Schenectady where 17th and 18th century Dutch and English colonial sites were uncovered. Chuck’s untimely death is a great loss to his field of historical archaeology. He worked tirelessly to preserve and catalog remnants of Albany’s past dug up during various downtown Albany construction projects. In his capacity as curator of historical archaeology for the New York State Museum, Chuck was working on a large archaeological exhibit. His paper, “Archaeological Collections from New Netherland

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at the NYS Museum,” which he presented at the joint conference of the American Association for Netherlandic Studies and the New Netherland Institute held in Albany in 2006, will be included in the publication from that conference.

The Alice P. Kenney Award was established in honor of the distinguished scholar of the early period of American history and of the Dutch contribution to American society. Alice P. Kenney authored eight books and scores of articles. Before her death in 1985, Ms. Kenney edited Huybertie Pruyt Hamlin’s classic memoir, *An Albany Girlhood*. Our featured speaker will be Phoebe Bender, a member of the Albany Convention Center Working Group (ACCWG)

NNI invites you to join us as we honor Karen and Chuck and hear from Phoebe about the ACCWG’s involvement in the Albany Convention Center proposed site and what we hope will be the Center’s relationship to the historic buildings and archaeological remains that exist on that site. You will also hear an update on NNI’s four-part project for the 2009 Henry Hudson Quadracentennial celebration, particularly the publication of *Liber Amicorum* in praise of the Dutch-American heritage titled REFLECTIONS ON DUTCH AMERICA. As always, this June event is free to NNI members. Non-members are of course welcome, for a donation of \$10.00 per person. Please reply by June 5th. Fax us (518-473-0472), phone us (518-486-4815); or reply online via e-mail at <http://www.nnp.org/nni/Events/kenneyform.pdf>

The Institute wishes to thank Herman Prins Salomon, professor of Romance Languages and Dutch at the University at Albany, for the donation of a complete set of the yearbook, *The Low Countries, Arts and Society in Flanders and the Netherlands*, beginning in 1993; as well as the *Vlaams-Nederlands Cultureel Tijdschrift, Ons Erfdeel*, beginning in 1989.

Estate planning redux: In the last issue, I informed you of a rare opportunity to make a charitable contribution AND ease your federal tax burden at the same time. This unprecedented combination continues throughout 2007 ONLY. However, you must be 70.5 years of age or older AND the owner of a IRA, be it traditional, rollover, or Roth.

If you qualify, you can donate to the New Netherland Institute (or any tax exempt organization) any amount up to \$100,000 from your IRA Required Minimum Distribution. But to avoid paying income tax on the amount contributed, you MUST direct your IRA trustee (brokerage house, mutual fund, or bank) to send your gift to NNI and NOT to you personally.

While you cannot take a charitable deduction for the amount donated, you will avoid the income tax as long as your gift goes DIRECTLY from the custodian of your IRA to NNI.

Please consider doing so. If you have any questions, consult your tax advisor or contact me at 518-783-4251 (Siena office) or 504-508-1476 (cell phone) or jsefcik@mail.nysed.gov.

Thank you,

Jim Sefcik, Associate for Development for the NNI

Summer Language School

Intensive summer course at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. The course is intended for beginners or learners wanting to improve their knowledge of the Dutch language. There are 5 levels: Elementary, Intermediate A, Intermediate B, Advance A, and Advanced B. The teaching language is Dutch. Passive knowledge of English and/or French is an advantage. A level test on the first day will determine your knowledge of the Dutch language. For more information, please visit the website: www.kuleuven.be/ilt/summer-course.

Websites

For a listing of over 250 Dutch museums of culture, history, art, and science go to: www.museumserver.nl.

www.freesearching.com is a portal to practically everything. A feature of interest might be the World News available in languages from Afrikaans to Turkish (including Dutch, of course). For direct access to the news: wn.com/languages.

If you are having trouble pronouncing Dutch personal and place names in works such as Shorto’s *Island at the Center of the World* and Tuchman’s *First Salute*, go to: <http://homepage.mac.com/schuffelen/OldNewYork.html>.

For the text of the West India Company’s charter, go to: <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/westind.htm>.

Totidem Verbis

Following is the second installment of the life of Michiel de Ruyter by our contributing editor Peter A. Douglas. The portrait of De Ruyter was done by Ferdinand Bol in 1667.

Michiel de Ruyter, *Held van Nederland*, part 2

In 1637, De Ruyter became captain of a private ship whose job was to hunt for raiders operating from Dunkirk who preyed on Dutch merchant shipping. After sailing as *schipper* (skipper) of a merchant vessel named the *Vlissinge*, he was contacted again by the Zeeland Admiralty to become captain of the *Haze*, a merchant ship turned man-of-war carrying 26 guns in a fleet under admiral Gijssels fighting the Spanish, teaming up with the Portuguese during their rebellion.

The Dutch fleet, with De Ruyter as third in command, beat back a Spanish-Dunkirker fleet in an action of Cape St Vincent on November 4, 1641. After returning he bought his own ship, the *Salamander*, and from 1642 to 1652 he mainly traded and traveled, visiting Morocco and the West Indies, and amassing wealth as a merchant. During this time his esteem grew among Dutch captains from his habit of freeing Christian slaves by redeeming them at his own expense. In 1650 De Ruyter's wife, who in 1649 had given him a second son, Engel, unexpectedly died while he was at sea, and in 1652 he married again, this time to the widow Anna van Gelder. It was his intention then to retire, and he bought a house in Vlissingen. However, circumstances in the form of the First Anglo-Dutch War dictated that his blissful family life would not last long.

During the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652–1654), De Ruyter was asked to join the expanding fleet as a subcommander of a Zeelandic squadron of privately financed warships known as “director's ships.” After initially refusing, stat-



ing that he wasn't qualified for such a job, De Ruyter proved his worth under supreme commander Lieutenant-Admiral Maarten Harpertzoon Tromp, winning the Battle of Plymouth against Vice-Admiral George Ayscue. He also fought at the Battle of Kentish Knock and the Battle of the Gabbard. De Ruyter functioned as a squadron commander, being referred to as a Commodore, which at the time was not an official rank in the Dutch navy.

Tromp's death during the Battle of Scheveningen in August 1653 ended the war, and De Ruyter declined an emphatic offer from Johan de Witt for supreme command, considering himself “unfit,” and also being reluctant to bypass the seniority principle. Colonel Jacob van Wassenaer Obdam then became the new Dutch supreme

commander of the confederate fleet. De Ruyter, after wisely refusing to become Obdam's assistant, remained in service of the Dutch navy and later accepted an offer from the admiralty of Amsterdam to become their Vice-Admiral in 1654. He moved with his family to the city the following year.

In July 1655 De Ruyter took command of a squadron of eight ships in his flagship the *Tijdverdrif*, and set out for the Mediterranean with 55 merchantmen in convoy with orders to protect Dutch trade. After destroying many a privateer, De Ruyter returned home May 1656. The same month, the States-General, becoming ever more wary of Swedish king Charles X and his expansion plans, decided to intervene in the Northern Wars by sending a fleet to the Baltic Sea. The Swedes controlled this area after Charles had invaded Poland and made himself king there. De Ruyter once again embarked on the *Tijdverdrif*, arriving in the Sound the 8th of June, where he awaited Admiral Jacob van Wassenaer Obdam. After Obdam had assumed command, De Ruyter and the Dutch fleet sailed to relieve the besieged city of Gdansk on 27 July, without any bloodshed. Peace was signed a month later. Before leaving the Baltic, De Ruyter and other flag officers were granted audience by Frederick III of Denmark. De Ruyter took a liking to the Danish king who would later become his friend.
(to be continued)