

AADAS News

Association for the Advancement of Dutch-American Studies

Volume 6, No. 2

Spring, 2006

From the President

by Janet Sjaarda Sheeres

So many stories!

The last couple of months have been pretty exciting: we're working on an AADAS website, as well as a brochure with matching graphics. More about this project from Martin Rustenburg. Once that is completed, you will have the proceedings of AADAS conferences right at your finger tips whenever you wish to reread one or more of the papers or cite something from one of them. We all know how valuable the internet has become for research. For instance take compilations. They're not great historical chronicles, but oh so useful for research. Who hasn't quickly scanned a list of obituaries, marriages, and ship passenger lists, to name a few, looking for certain names or other data? Certainly if you do genealogical research, compilations are indispensable tools. And having them as close to your own laptop—well, that's even better.

So, when I retired last December and began volunteering one day a week at the Calvin College Heritage Hall Archives, I knew exactly what I wanted to do with my time there: compile the records of the Dutch who immigrated to Canada after World War II. I have begun to key in all the data of these post World War II Dutch immigrants who came to Canada and to the United States.

One of my sources is a comprehensive list generated by the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. The GKN formed a committee called the Algemeen Bureau van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, headquartered in Utrecht. This committee requested that all Gereformeerde congregations in the Netherlands forward the names of families from their congregations who intended to emigrate and where they intended to settle. The committee compiled lists almost weekly and forwarded this information to the Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids which, in turn,

(Continued on page 3)

From the Editor

In this issue we have a lot of valuable information and exciting news. We finish presenting the Board members to you. We also give you the rest of the summary of the 2005 Conference held at Dordt. We are grateful to Richard Harms for writing that summary.

The exciting news is the creation of our own web site. We are grateful for the partnership we have had with the Joint Archives in Holland, Michigan but we were ready to step out on our own. The Board feels strongly that AADAS has a lot to offer to the academic community and are pursuing new avenues to make people aware of our existence. We are taking active steps to increase our membership. The web site is an important piece in that effort. Pending their approval, the server will be hosted by Calvin College.

Another step is the development of a brochure. Now that we have a Website to list, a prototype will be produced for the Board to examine and approve (or improve). As far as graphics and/or a logo is concerned, perhaps the Board may want to consider having members send in suggestions.

Reading Janet's description of her project at the Calvin Archives reminded me of a book I read recently by the late Rev. T. Hofman about the history of the Canadian CRC. It is a good introduction on how the Field men helped the new immigrants.

Martin Rustenburg

Board Members Profiles

(Continued from the last Newsletter)

Paul Fessler

As far as Paul knows, his family lacks any trace of Dutch blood—but he *did* eat enough *oliebollen* at Ridgewood (NJ) CRC church fairs to make up for it. That makes him a rarity for AADAS! Though confirmed as being of German Lutheran of German descent, he was slowly introduced to the Dutch Calvinist tradition by attending Christian schools filled with mostly Dutch-Americans. While he often heard “If you’re not Dutch, you’re not much,” he eventually convinced his classmates that Lutherans were indeed Christians! Despite such trials, he wound up attending Calvin College for his undergraduate education (where he also met his non-Dutch wife)! Growing up as an outsider amid the Dutch Diaspora, he became fascinated with immigration. He found that he could play Dutch bingo through friends and acquaintances—even though he was not Dutch himself. He earned his MA and PhD at Texas A&M University where he studied German-American immigration and the impact of bilingual education in American public schools of the 19th century. Even though he focused on German-Americans, he was the defacto Dutch-American expert as well. His studies have included research into the intersection of Dutch and German ethnic groups at Grundy College in Grundy Center, Iowa in the early part of the 20th century. He and his wife live in Sioux Center, Iowa with their two children.

Gerlof Homan

Born in Appingedam the Netherlands in 1929, Gerlof immigrated to the United States in 1952. He graduated at Bethel College, No. Newton, Kansas. He received his Ph.D in History from the University of Kansas in 1958. He taught in Oklahoma and Kansas before coming to Illinois State University in 1968. Here he taught European, Contemporary World, and Peace History. He has published on American, French, Dutch, and Mennonite History. He retired in 1994 but keeps active as a scholar and in church work. His wife, Roelie, was also born in the Netherlands and left for the United States in 1952. She is a homemaker and church secretary. They have three sons and two grandchildren.

The AADAS Newsletter is the official publication of the Association for the Advancement of Dutch-American Studies. It is published biannually.
www.aadas.net

AADAS Officers and Board Members

President	Janet Sjaarda Sheeres (2-year term, until 2007)
Vice-President	Suzanne Sinke (2-year term, until 2007)
Secretary/Treasurer	Richard Harms (2-year term, until 2007)
Membership Secretary	Geoffrey Reynolds (4-year term, until 2007)
Members-at-Large for four years:	
Kathleen De Haan.....	(until 2007)
Paul Fessler.....	(until 2009)
Gerlof Homan.....	(until 2007)
Don Sinnema.....	(until 2009)
Newsletter Editor	Martin Rustenburg (4-year term, until 2009)
Contact with newsletter items at mcpr@rustenburg.net	
Publisher.....	Lori Trethewey

Don Sinnema

Don grew up in southern Alberta, and studied at Dordt College in Iowa and the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto. He completed a doctorate in historical theology at St. Michael’s College, University of Toronto. After serving in a church in Ottawa and as a campus chaplain at the University of New Brunswick, he has taught theology at Trinity Christian College in Illinois since 1987. His scholarly interests include Reformed theology in the Post-Reformation era and Dutch-Canadian immigration before World War II. Last year he published: *The First Dutch Settlement in Alberta: Letters from the Pioneer Years 1903-14* (University of Calgary Press), and a booklet in connection with the centennial of the CRC in Canada, *Pioneer Church Life: The Beginnings of the First Christian Reformed Church in Canada 1903-1911*.

From the President (continued from page 1)

sent out field men and ministers to “catch” these people as they arrived in their new homeland. These lists were kept by the CRC and recently donated to the Archives at Calvin College. They are a vital source of information for future generations who want to find out when their ancestors came to Canada and to the United States and where they came from in the old country. To speed up the process I photocopy some of the pages to continue the compilation at home in my spare time.

Being an immigrant child myself, I have embraced this project with my whole heart. In fact, as I key in the information, I find myself getting emotionally involved. Many single young men, some as young as eighteen years old, came by themselves. Would I as a mother have let my son go to a country I knew nothing of? What happened to them? Did they find the better life they hoped for? Romance? The list includes many young couples just beginning their married life together. Did the hardships of immigration bind them closer together? Or did it cause a permanent rift. Many large families—seven, eight, ten children—headed into unknown territory. How did they manage? Two married couples well in their sixties left all to start over. One thing for sure, the Christian Reformed Church stepped forward and embraced their fellow believers as they stepped ashore. Not only did it help the people on this side, but in many instances, it also put at ease the hearts of those left behind to know that their sons and daughters, especially the single ones who came on their own, would be welcomed and enfolded. I would be happy to hear from those of you who belong to other denominations to find out if you know of additional records so we can incorporate those as well.

History of AADAS

On November 2, 1979 members of the Dutch-American Historical Conference proposed and formed a new organization called the Association for the Advancement of Dutch-American Studies (AADAS).

The organizational intent was stated this way: “The purpose of the Association shall be to encourage research and nurture a continuing interest in the history, life and culture of the Dutch in North America. The Association may analyze and describe the development of religious and governmental institutions, industry, science and the arts, education, and North American Netherlandic relations; and it may publish and distribute information concerning the

same. The Association shall also serve as a meeting ground for persons who share these interests.”

A constitution was worked out and adopted. The first biannual conference was planned for 1983. The original Board officers were Dr. Henry Ippel, president, Professor John Yzenbaard, vice president and Mr. Conrad Bult, secretary. Two members at large made up the rest of the Board. They were Dr. Robert Swierenga and Dr. Elton Bruins. Membership dues were set at five dollars per person annually.

The next step was to register the articles of incorporation as a nonprofit organization. The original document from the State of Michigan is on file in the Archives at Calvin College. It is dated August 12, 1980.

A Newsletter was planned. The statement of intent reads: “. . . to disseminate information about all aspects of Dutch-American studies under categories such as these: Collections/Acquisitions, Bibliographies, Research/Publications, Meetings/Conferences, Requests for Information, Activities of members.”

The first Newsletter appeared in July of 1980. In the next issue, the First Conference was announced. However, it was called the “Third Bi-Annual Conference on Dutch-American Studies”. It was scheduled to be held in October of 1981 on the campus of Central College in Pella, Iowa. This conference was reported on in the Newsletter issue of June 1982.

A questionnaire was sent out in 1985 to individuals in the academic field who were deemed to be interested in and/or willing to contribute material to the Newsletter. The Newsletters are professionally bound and kept in the Calvin Archives.

Looking through the earliest mailing list, I was struck by how many Historical organizations were listed along with the Departments at a variety of institutions. The list itself was 240 addresses long. There was no indication as to how many of the individuals on the list were due paying members.

It was refreshing to discover that AADAS as well as the Newsletter has not strayed from the original vision and purpose. It is my commitment to maintain the same scholarly caliber that characterized the organizers over 25 years ago.

Martin Rustenburg

AADAS 2005 Biennial Conference Dutch Immigrants on the Plains

Summary by Richard Harms, Part Two

Building Culture

Gerlof Homan

“Adriaan J. Barnouw’s Cultural Work
in the US, 1919-1960”

An immigrant to the United States in 1919, Barnouw, a productive essayist, began his career as a literary correspondent, then associate editor at the *Weekly Review*, ultimately joining the faculty at Columbia University. An historian, who used only secondary and derivative sources, he also wrote on sociology and philology.

Pieter Hovens

“Moccasins and Wooden Shoes:
Indians and Dutchmen on the Plains Frontier”
[read by Herm DeVries]

Dutch immigrants began moving into the Dakota Territory during the 1870s and firmly establishing their presence during the next decade. During this process they interacted with Native Americans with both groups profiting from mutual trade. These economic relationships continued for decades to the point that in the 1885 July 4th celebration in Grand View, Indians participated in the parade. The Dutch, like other Anglo Americans, were known to encroach on reservation lands.

Religion and Dutch Immigration II

Robert Schoone-Jongen

“Clapboard Chapels on the Prairie:
The Founding of Dutch and Ostfrisian
Congregations in Central Minnesota (1885-1899)”

Successful settlements were those that followed railroad lines, or were located near to where these lines were ultimately built. The railroads working through their land agents were responsible for drawing settlers, many of whom came from the Roseland section of Chicago and other locations in Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, and Iowa. Although CRC and RCA Dutch were cooperative, the Oostfrisians remained ethnically separate, due to language.

Donald Sinnema

“Rev. S.A. Schilstra: An Early (American) Promoter
of Dutch Immigration to the Canadian Prairies,
1902-1905”

The Dutch were relatively few and late to the Canadian land rush, but Schilstra was a strong advocate for settling in the Canadian West beginning about 1902. Although he traveled farther west than Pennsylvania, his articles based on government reports and newspaper accounts ultimately resulted in four separate groups moving to Canada. By 1905 the Canadian land rush was over, but at least one group, at Nijverdaal, had successfully established itself due to Schilstra’s writings.

Peter Ester

“Still Bowling Together: Social Capital
of Dutch Protestant Immigration Groups
in North America”

Dutch settlements tended to succeed because they established strong social capital (network ties, normative values, social identity, and social participation). They demonstrated that they could build social capital within their communities, particularly because of the preeminent place of religion in these communities, but were not particularly successful at bridging their social capital to other groups.

Sioux County and the Dutch

Maria Mulder-Brown

“Stanley Wiersma’s/Sietze Buning’s Literary
Struggles in Sioux County”

Wiersma came to recognize that the complex social structure of Dutch community made Sioux County a unique cultural crossroad. Initially he struggled against these cultural forces, but military service and life experience abroad led him to conclude that these cultural forces had the correct focus; rather than struggling against them, he accepted them.

Brian Beltman

“From Sioux County, Iowa to Douglas County,
South Dakota 1880-1900”

Dutch settlement in Iowa formed a V-shaped pattern across five townships, with Pella roughly at the apex. During the Dakota land boom of the late 1870s and 1880s the second generation of these Dutch settlers moved northwestward but brought with them the institutions of the original settlements.

Jonathan Warner
“Charles Zylstra and Stamped Scrip:
How a Dutch Immigrant Sought a Solution
to the Great Depression”

A Frisian immigrant with an interest in economics, Zylstra was one of a number of people in the United States who developed scrip plans during the early years of the Great Depression. His unique contribution was that it was to be a municipally backed plan, not limited to a specific employer or locale; the scrip replaced money and its system's structure prevented hoarding.

Institutional Spotlights

Heritage Hall Calvin College

Our single largest addition to our manuscript collections was 60 cubic feet of the papers of Dr. Peter Steen, Calvin alumnus and philosopher. The collection is particularly rich in the background of work of those involved with the Institute for Christian Studies, a Christian graduate school affiliated with the Toronto School of Theology at the University of Toronto. We have begun organizing this collection but, because of its size, this will take some time. We have also received the papers of Dr. Bernard Fridsma, internationally recognized scholar on Friesland, who died last fall at the age of 100. This collection is rich in the culture and history of Friesland. We continue to receive and process regular transfers of records from the College, Seminary and denomination. Among these are records from the college registrar, seminary committee, and several denominational synods.

Thanks to his diligent labor and generosity of Gerben Oosterbaan we now have an index to the translation of Henry Beets' 1918 *The Christian Reformed Church in North America: Sixty Years of Struggle and Blessing*. We have just completed and made available in PDF format via our website an index to anniversary, birthday, wedding, and obituary announcements from the *Banner*, the official publication of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, for the years 1996-2005. The entire list of just under 12,000 entries is available in alphabetical increments at <http://www.calvin.edu/hh/Banner/Banner.htm>. If the data were published, each entry contains the name of the person and their place of residence on the first line, spouse or

married name on the second line, the type of citation, date and page number on the third line, and any detailed data from the notice beginning on the fourth line. If a woman's maiden name is included, she is listed under this name with names of her spouse (or married name) in a subsequent field. If a spouse was named in a notice, entries were made under both names. Names were keyed in as published, with or without spaces, so that "DeVries" is in a different part of the list than "De Vries."

R. Harms

Joint Archives of Holland Hope College

The Joint Archives summer 2004 history project, conducted by Michael Douma, which concentrated on the history of the Veneklassen family and their many West Michigan brickyards titled, is now available. It was published in September by Eerdmans Publishing Company and is titled *Veneklassen Brick: A Family, a Company, and a Unique 19th Century Dutch Architectural Movement in Michigan*. For information on ordering the book visit the Joint Archives of Holland website, www.jointarchives.org.

The Joint Archives of Holland also received 35 19th century ledgers for the City of Jenison, Michigan, a community inhabited since the 1840s. These items were discovered by our former research assistant, Michael Douma, while conducting research for Dr. Robert Swierenga's forthcoming book on the history of Holland, Michigan. Once this collection has been processed by our staff the research community will be alerted to its availability. Another important collection received in January was the oral history collection (audiotape cassettes) of Robert Grunst, a former commercial fisherman and now an English professor at The College of Saint Catherine in St. Paul, Minnesota. Grunst's donation represents one of the best collections of the voices of commercial fisherman there is. We look forward to copying the collection, ranging in age from the 1970s-present, to digital format as well as transcribing to hard copies.

Staff News

Geoffrey D. Reynolds continued his research and writing about the boat building industry in Holland, Michigan, for a future book on the subject. Another article dealing with a major portion of this history, "Slick Craft: A Family's Business," was published in the September/October 2005 issue of *Classic Boating*.

The Fulbright-Dow Distinguished Research Fellowship of the Roosevelt Study Center 2007-2008

The Roosevelt Study Center (RSC) in Middelburg, the Netherlands, is a research and conference center on modern American history and culture. Housed in a twelfth-century Abbey in the heart of Middelburg, the center offers a library with documents on twentieth-century U.S. history that are unique in Europe. The RSC also serves as the venue for European and American historians of the U.S. and American Studies scholars. Affiliated with the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, the RSC has a research program focusing on aspects of U.S. political, social and cultural history, as well as on European-American relations.

Under the auspices of the Fulbright Scholar Program and co-sponsored by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences and Dow Benelux, the Roosevelt Study Center offers a 4-month residential fellowship for advanced research in the area of twentieth-century American history or American studies (including political science, sociology, economics, law, and religious studies), preferably with an emphasis on American-European relations.

Candidates for this fellowship should be senior scholars having a significant publication record. They are expected to devote most of their time to writing (and finishing within reasonable time after the fellowship period) a book-length scholarly study under contract or article(s) for a peer-reviewed journal/periodical. In addition, they are expected to give a small number of guest lectures at universities and for the general public, and to participate in the conferences and other scholarly activities of the Roosevelt Study Center.

The 4-month fellowship carries a stipend of € 20,000, paid in instalments of € 5,000 per month, and office, library and computer facilities are provided as well as reimbursement of round trip travel costs, in-country travel costs for guest lectures, the costs of a residence permit, and a contribution to the costs of health and accident insurance— all for the grantee only, not for his/her dependents. The Roosevelt Study Center will try to help finding housing accommodation, but renting a house or apartment remains the responsibility of the grantee.

Applicants should submit hard copies of a letter of interest (about three pages), a curriculum vitae including a list of major publications (maximum 8 pages), and a description of the research project to be worked on during the

fellowship period at the Roosevelt Study Center (maximum 5 pages). The fellowship period is from September through December or March through June. Deadline for applications for 2007-2008, to be sent to the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES), 3007 Tilden Street NW Suite 5L, Washington, D.C. 20008-3009, U.S.A., is May 1, 2006.

Further information may be obtained from the Roosevelt Study Center: rsc@zeeland.nl or the website: www.roosevelt.nl or CIES: phone (202) 686-4000. http://www.cies.org/ab_dc/ab_dc2007/award/Ful7029.htm

H. Krabbendam

Also from Hans Krabbendam at the Roosevelt Institute, there is Conference in Albany, New York put on by the New Netherlands Project.

See their website at www.nnp.org

Kudos

The paper, “The Plains and Beyond: Dutch Mormons in Utah in the last half of the 1800s” presented by Janet Sjaarda Sheeres at the 2005 AADAS Conference at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa has been published in the Spring 2006 issue of the *Utah Historical Quarterly*, the journal of the Utah State Historical Society. Janet renamed the article, “From the Dikes to the Desert: The first Dutch Mormons in Utah in the last half of the Nineteenth Century.” The article recounts the story of how the Dutch, who were converted in the Netherlands, crossed the Plains in wagon trains, and settled in Utah. The article allowed for a broader narrative on the subject and therefore more detailed than the paper.

New Books

Donald Sinnema: *The first Dutch settlement in Alberta: letters from the pioneer years, 1903-1914/translations, introduction and notes.*

Publisher: University of Calgary Press 2005; this book is volume XXV (2004) of the Canadian Journal of Netherlandic Studies and is being sent to all its subscribers.

There is a two day Conference in New York City on
Nederlandic history. The following is a schedule for the
New York City Conference.

MYTH IN HISTORY: HISTORY IN MYTH

Society for Netherlandic History
Third International Conference
New York City, June 5-6, 2006
Deutsches Haus, New York University

Monday, June 5

9:15-11:45 a.m.: Session 1

Historical Inspiration

Jan Blanc
University of Lausanne
Between History and Myth: Hugo Grotius (1583-1645),
Historian of Batavian Holland

Myth and Self-Image

Jill Stern
University College, London
The Orangist Myth and the Dutch Republic, 1650-1672

Wyger R.E. Velema
University of Amsterdam
The Eighteenth-Century Construction of the Myth of the
Dutch Golden Age

10:45-11:00 a.m.: *Coffee Break*

Jac. Geurts
University of Nijmegen
Myth, History and Self-Image on a Local Level:
Antwerp and Maastricht in the First Half of the 16th
Century

11:45 a.m.-2:00 p.m.: *Lunch*

2:00-3:30 p.m.: Session 5

The International Context

Hubert P. van Tuyll
Augusta State University
International Law and National Existence: The Myth of
Strict Neutrality (1918-?)

Ulrich Tiedau
University College, London
Myths in German Historiography of the Low Countries,
1920-1960

3:30-3:45 p.m.: *Coffee and Tea Break*

3:45-5:15 p.m.: Session 6

Emblematic and Useful Myths

Willem Frijhoff
Free University, Amsterdam
Emblematic Myths: Anneke_s Fortune, Bogardus_s
Farewell, and Kieft_s Son.

Donald J. Harreld
Brigham Young University
'How great the enterprise, how glorious the deed':
Dutch Circumnavigations as Useful Myth in the
Seventeenth Century

Publication Coming Soon!

Dutch Immigrants on the Plains, edited by Paul Fessler, Hubert R. Krygsman, and Robert P. Swierenga, containing selected papers from the 2005 AADAS Conference at Dordt College, was published in May 2006 under the auspices of AADAS and the Joint Archives of Holland. Members will receive a free copy of the \$19.95 book in the mail shortly. Non-members who join AADAS in the next year will also receive a free copy as a bonus.

The book, which is dedicated in memory of the late Professor Walter Lagerwey, contains thirteen chapters that relate to Dutch settlement on the North American Plains, including interactions with the native peoples in the Dakotas. Topics include the rigors of pioneering on the frontier, the planting of Reformed churches in the West, economic development, and struggles about ethnic identity and social bonding. The book provides a splendid companion piece to our 2004 volume, *Dutch in Urban America*, and will be a valuable resource for scholars.