

The Joint Archives *Quarterly*

Volume 10 Number 3

Winter 2000

Vander Jagt Congressional Papers Open

A luncheon, afternoon reception, and evening Dutch-American Heritage Day celebration were held on Thursday, November 16, to celebrate the opening of the Guy A. Vander Jagt Congressional Papers in the Hope College collection of the Joint Archives of Holland.



Vander Jagt, who is a 1953 Hope graduate, was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1966, serving the Ninth District of Michigan until 1992. "During his quarter century in the House of Representatives, a period of time that covered six presidencies, Congressman Vander Jagt played a significant role locally as well as nationally," said Larry Wagenaar, who is director of the Joint Archives of Holland. "The records in the collection provide a thorough look at both the major events during his time in office and the day-to-day activity experienced by a Congressman, and will be an important resource for developing our understanding of area history as well as our nation's history."

The materials cover not only Vander Jagt's service in Congress, but the decade before as well. His activities from 1957 until his election to the House included serving as news director of WWTV in Cadillac, practicing law at Warner, Norcross & Judd in Grand Rapids, and serving in Michigan's state senate during 1965-66.

According to Vander Jagt, his formative experience at Hope made the college-based Joint Archives the logical choice to house the collection. "Hope College is very, very special to me, for four of the greatest years of my life were on the Hope campus," he said. "I was impacted spiritually and intellectually in ways that shaped all the rest of my life, and so I thought it appropriate that the harvest of an entire career go back to where it all began."

While a student at Hope, Vander Jagt was debate champion for the state of Michigan for three consecutive years, and captured the National Oratorical Championship during his senior year. He was also student body president during his senior year. He served as a disc jockey at WHTC radio in Holland while working his way through school.

In addition to his degree from Hope, he holds a B.D. from Yale Divinity School, completed in 1957, and a J.D. from the University of Michigan Law School, completed in 1960.

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It's Done! Our Largest Collection Opens

Hats off to the Joint Archives staff!

Whew! It is finally done! Far outstripping our last "large collection" (the Willard Wichers papers), the Guy A. Vander Jagt Congressional Papers opened to the public on November 16.

The opening of these papers was the culmination of seven years of work on a collection with local, regional, and national significance. The former Congressman rubbed elbows with many well-known figures and was influential in a wide variety of circles. Not only will he be remembered for this,

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From the Director

The opening of the Guy A. Vander Jagt Papers was a major milestone for the Joint Archives. It marks the opening of our largest individual collection, and features a set of material with local, regional, national, and international significance. We were honored to have former Congressman Vander Jagt with us on November 16. During his luncheon speech, he shared with us his deep affection for Hope. Later that day, he spoke of the long and deep connection between the United States and the Netherlands as the featured speaker of Dutch-American Heritage Day.

His wife, Carol, and his daughter, Ginny (who flew in from Columbus, Ohio, to be a part of the day's festivities), accompanied Mr. Vander Jagt. Many other local and regional dignitaries were with us during a day that included a luncheon for supporters of the Congressional Papers processing project, a public reception, and the evening Heritage Day event.

In the weeks following this special day, we also welcomed a new face to the Joint Archives staff and said farewell to a long-term volunteer. Archivist David Andrews joined us for a one-year term position. He comes from the staff of the Carnegie Mellon University Archives in Pittsburgh. Our staff also said farewell to long-time volunteer John Maassen. He and his wife are relocating to Florida. See separate stories on David and John in this issue.

As we move through this special season, we wish you a very blessed holiday!

Larry J. Wagenaar

The Joint Archives of Holland

Hours

Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Special Holiday Hours

December 26-29, 1:00-5:00 p.m. only
Closed December 22 & 25, January 1

Wagenaar on Sabbatical

After a dozen years on the staff and faculty of Hope College as director of the Joint Archives of Holland, Larry Wagenaar will begin a sabbatical in January, 2001. He plans to undertake a study of other cooperative archival efforts in the United States, as well as conduct additional research in other fields of interest including Dutch American Studies, Michigan History and Archival Science.

The study of other cooperative archival programs will be the first ever done and the results will be valuable to the Joint Archives as well as other communities and organizations that are considering such ventures. It will add to the professional archival resources available, as currently no materials are available in archival professional literature on such cooperative ventures.

Over the past decade Wagenaar has been a consultant for several organizations that have or are considering joint or cooperative archival arrangements. He will rejoin the staff in August.

Joint Archives Staff

Larry J. Wagenaar

Director and Associate Professor

Geoffrey D. Reynolds

Collections Archivist and Assistant Professor

David A. Andrews

Visiting Archivist and Assistant Professor

Lori Trethewey, *Secretary*

Allyson Boggess, *Research Assistant*

Alicia Irvine, *Research Assistant*

Gregoor Passchier, *Research Assistant*

Abby Platt, *Research Assistant*

Volunteers:

Sue Brandsen, Lois Kayes, John Maassen,

Carolyn Nienhuis, Russ Norden, Jean Postma,

Bill Van Dyke, Shirley Weersing, Lee Witteveen

Vander Jagt Papers Open (continued from page 1)

During his time in the U.S. House of Representatives, Vander Jagt rose to the second-ranking Republican seat on the House Ways and Means Committee and to the ranking Republican seats on the Trade Subcommittee, the Select Revenue Measures Subcommittee, and the Health and Human Resources Subcommittee. He was also a member of the Joint Taxation Committee, among other committee appointments.

As chair of the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC), he was a member of the Republican leadership, consulting on a regular basis with Presidents Ford, Reagan, and Bush and their Cabinets. He was the keynote speaker of the Republican National Convention in 1980.

Since 1992, he has practiced in the Washington, D.C. office of the law firm of Baker & Hostetler. With offices in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Denver, Houston, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Orlando and Washington, the firm is one of the 25 largest law firms in the United States. He concentrates his practice in the areas of tax and legislative law.



Vander Jagt was inducted by the Queen of the Netherlands as a grand officer into the Order of Orange Nassau in April, of 1982, and was named the Outstanding Dutch-American of the Year by the Netherlands Amity Trust Association in 1991.

Vander Jagt was also the keynote speaker for the Dutch-American Heritage Day event at 7 p.m. in the Haworth Inn and Conference Center. Over 200 people attended heard a speech that focused on the rich relationship between the United States of America and the Netherlands, stretching back over 200 years. The Dutch played a critical role in the early years of the Revolution and arguably were one of America's only friends at a time of grave need.

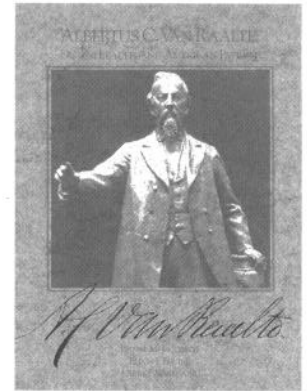
The Vander Jagt papers are open for research. A collection register of the entire collection can be found at: <http://www.hope.edu/resources/arc/collections/registers/hope/gvj.html>. You can also search the Joint Archives of Holland's other holdings at www.hope.edu/jointarchives.

**A. C. Van Raalte:
Dutch Leader and American Patriot**

by Jeanne Jacobson, Elton Bruins, and Larry Wagenaar

**SECOND PRINTING
NOW AVAILABLE!**

The first fully annotated biography of A. C. Van Raalte is a well-illustrated, 256-page hardcover volume that has been well received by reviewers. The book covers many events in the life of the Dutch pastor who led the Dutch to Western Michigan, including persecution in the



Netherlands, the harrowing journey to America, struggles in the first years, Holland and the Civil War, the great fire of 1871, his wife Christine, and Van Raalte's legacy today.

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Largest Collection Opens (continued from page 1)

but his papers will be sought out by students and scholars interested in the American political scene from the mid 1960s to the beginning of the Clinton years.

There are many people to thank in such a project, going back to Hope students David Evenhuis and Ryan Kreider who spent the summer of 1993 working to complete our first inventory of the collection. Back then it was a daunting mass of material that arrived mostly by semi-truck and came in at over 725 boxes (and over 1,000 linear feet)! It clearly was not going to be an easy project. Former Collections Archivist Jenifer Holman led our early efforts to gain an understanding of what this collection included.

All too often large and significant collections like this are left to languish for decades. We were committed not to allow that to happen. We knew our first task was to do a rough inventory to give us a good idea of what we had and where to start. The next step was to find the funds to make this project happen.



Carol and Ginny Vander Jagt review the collection

Congressman Vander Jagt's former chief of staff, the late James Sparling, helped us in this regard. Numerous friends of Mr. Vander Jagt contributed to the effort to process these papers in 1996 and 1997. This set the stage for us to hire our first graduate student summer intern, Helen Baer, in the summer of 1998. Two additional interns, Christina Schmidt and Sallie Garrett in 1999 and 2000 respectively, followed.

Each of these trained archivists (two from the University of Texas and one from the University of Michigan) did an excellent job. Before the second intern had completed her work, we had committed to opening the papers in November, 2000. Little did we know that the race to the finish in the last two months would be such a challenge. Writing the detailed collection register (inventory), finishing the last 17 boxes, and numerous "clean-up" activities to make it ready for the public,



Vander Jagt visits with Rep. Peter Hoekstra and State Rep. Wayne Kuipers

challenged us. Hats off to Collections Archivist Geoffrey Reynolds and our secretary Lori Trethewey for their intense work during the last months running up to the opening.

We also benefited from the diligent help of our student staff, Allyson Boggess, Alicia Irvine, Gregoor Passchier and Abby Platt, and Joint Archives volunteers Russ Norden, Bill Van Dyke, and Lee Witteveen.

Visit us at
www.hope.edu/jointarchives
or
www.jointarchives.org

DAVID ANDREWS JOINS STAFF

The Joint Archives is pleased to announce the appointment of archivist David Andrews to a one-year term as our Visiting Archivist and Assistant Professor. Most recently he has been processing the papers of artificial intelligence pioneers Allen Newell and Herbert A. Simon, the latter a Nobel Prize winner in 1978.

Andrews is a 1999 graduate of Duquesne University's archival studies program and comes to us from the staff of Carnegie Mellon University, where he has been a processing and project archivist.

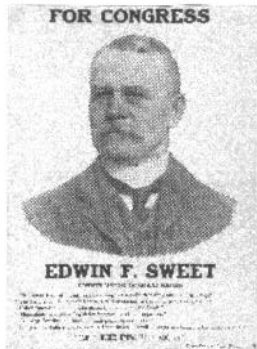


This position is designed to assist the Joint Archives staff while director Larry Wagenaar is on sabbatical, as well as to work on several targeted projects through the year. He joined the Joint Archives staff on December 4th.

David also has a variety of interests including the development of historical documentaries and film production.

Democrat Wins Holland District

With our area's heavy Republican voting record, I thought it would be informative to highlight a member of the area's Democratic Party that served as our representative to the U.S. Congress.



Grand Rapids Public Library

Edwin Forrest Sweet was born in Dansville, Livingston County, New York, on November 21, 1847. After attending local schools and a seminary, he continued on to earn a degree from the literary department of Yale University in 1871 and a law degree from the University of

Michigan in 1874. After he was admitted to the bar, Sweet quickly set up a law practice in Grand Rapids, Michigan. After some time, he began his political career with a seat on the Board of Education (1899-1906) followed by one term as mayor (1904-1906). There he refused to bestow political appointments to his supporters solely on his position in the Democratic Party, but instead sought and gained support for non-partisan politics at the local level. This would be his undoing as a bitter political fight emerged during the next mayoral campaign, in which he was defeated.

Sweet's next political position came with a close victory, with the slogan "Let the People Rule," over two-term incumbent Republican and former mayor of Holland, Gerrit J. Diekema, for the 5th U.S. Congressional District seat in November, 1910. This was probably due to his following in Kent County and Grand Rapids, then part of the 5th district (Kent, Ionia, and Ottawa counties) and splintering in the Republican Party due to the Progressive Movement. He held this position from 1911-1913, after which he was appointed Assistant Secretary of Commerce in the Wilson presidential cabinet. Sweet remained in that post until his resignation in 1916 to accept the nomination for governor of Michigan on the Democratic ticket. After being defeated for that position he returned to his former post with Wilson's administration.

Later political endeavors included an unsuccessful bid for the 1916 Michigan gubernatorial race, Grand Rapids board of education member (1923-1926), and an appointed seat on Grand Rapids City Commission from 1926 to his resignation in 1928.

Sweet retired to Ojai, California, where he later died on April 2, 1935. His body was returned to Grand Rapids' Oakhill Cemetery for burial.

Geoffrey D. Reynolds

Other Congressional Collections at the Joint Archives

Hope College Collection:

H88-0039. Diekema, Gerrit John (1859-1930).
Papers, 1868-1989. 3.00 linear ft.

H92-1165. Vander Jagt, Guy A. (1931-).
Papers, 1957-1992. 244 linear ft.

Holland Museum Collection:

T88-0179. Smith, William Alden (1859-1932).
Papers, 1900. 1 item.

T88-0055. Diekema, Gerrit J. (1859-1930).
Papers, 1876-1969. 3.50 linear ft.

Farewell to John Maassen

In early December, the Joint Archives said farewell to one of its long-time volunteers. Rev. John Maassen and his wife, Harriet, relocated to Florida to be closer to family and friends.

Rev. Maassen joined our volunteer staff approximately five years ago and played an important role assisting us with oral history transcriptions (essential to making these taped interviews available for research) and various processing tasks to assist the archivists. His work has been invaluable--including many hours listening to tapes that were a part of our Sesquicentennial Oral History Project. The Joint Archives completed over 170 interviews for that project.

Growing up in the Holland-Zeeland area, Rev. Maassen graduated from Hope College (1942) and Western Seminary (1949) before being ordained in the Reformed Church in America. Through his career he served churches in Palmyra, New York, Kalamazoo, Grandville, Hingham, Wisconsin, and Des Moines, Iowa. Before his move to Holland, he was a member of the staff of the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California.

We have been so fortunate as our volunteers come to be a part of the Archives and stay for years. All of them make a critical contribution to what we do and making historical materials available for research.

We will miss John here at the Archives, and wish the Maassens Godspeed in their new home!

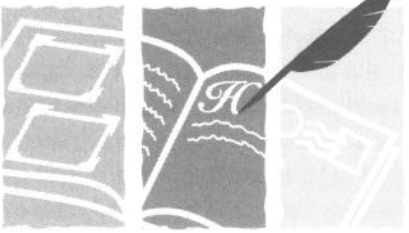


Hope College / Joint Archives

Hope College students take a break for wintertime fun

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The Joint Archives of Holland



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