

# A. C. Van Raalte Institute

Annual Report 2015-2016

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2016**

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A. C. Van Raalte Institute, Hope College

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# Annual Report 2015-2016



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# A Message from the Director

As the director of the Van Raalte Institute of Hope College, it is my great pleasure to introduce our annual report for 2015-16.

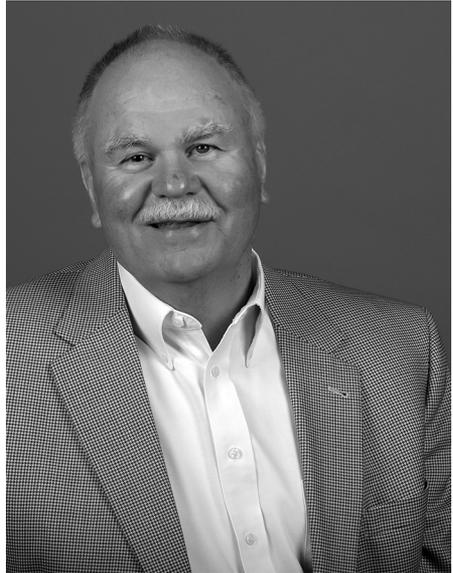
The institute has grown considerably from its modest beginnings in January 1994 when our sole staff member was founding director Elton Bruins, whose office was located in the corner of a small room in Van Zoeren Hall which was dedicated to retired Hope College faculty.

Today the institute is composed of nine senior research fellows and an editorial associate who share space in the Theil Research Center with the Joint Archives of Holland. These highly productive scholars are dedicated to the original mission of the institute: to research, write, and publish resources on Dutch American culture and influence.

## *Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of Hope College*

During the past year, the Van Raalte Institute has played a central role in the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the founding of Hope College. The centerpiece of our contribution to the celebration has been a study of the history of the college, *An Enduring Hope: A Sesquicentennial History of Hope College 1866-2016* (forthcoming 2017), Jacob E. Nyenhuis, lead author and general editor.

Although a table of contents of the impressive two-volume study of Hope College is included in Jack's report, it is important to point out that the senior research fellows of the institute have been heavily invested in this project. In addition to his role as lead author and general editor, Jack has contributed a chapter which details the architecture of



Dennis Voskuil

the college, including every building that has been constructed by the institution since its inception. Jack has also contributed a chapter on the academic program, as well as section of the book which focuses on the board of trustees, the presidents, faculty members, student enrollment, and honorary degree recipients.

Among the scholars who have contributed to this project are senior research fellows Robert Swierenga, who detailed the financial history of the college; Elton Bruins, who provided a list of notable alumni; and James Kennedy, an honorary senior research fellow, who wrote the introduction, an historical overview of Hope. It is my privilege to have produced a chapter which focuses on the long-standing relationship between the college and the Reformed Church in America.

Those of us who have participated in the production of *An Enduring Hope* are certain that it will quickly become regarded as the signature history of the collage—at least until 2066 when the institution celebrates its bicentennial. Built upon careful research, copious notations, and bibliographies, the publication is a scholar's delight and a pleasure to read.

During the sesquicentennial year, members of the institute were called upon to reflect upon the rich history of the college in multiple venues; these events are mentioned in the following reports.

#### *Other publications*

Since our last annual report, the Van Raalte Institute has either published, or is preparing for publication, a number of books in addition to *An Enduring Hope*. Don Luidens, a visiting research fellow in 2014-15, appointed as a senior fellow in 2016, has published the first fruits of his research regarding his parents, Edwin and Ruth Stegenga Luidens, long-term Reformed Church in America missionaries in Iraq, India, and Lebanon during and after the Second World War. *Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Hate: A Love Story (Begins)* (Van Raalte Press, 2016) is an expanded version of the visiting research fellows lecture which Don and his wife, Peggy, presented in the fall of 2015.

As Don continues his research, aided by a remarkable cache of letters which his parents had sent from their mission post to relatives in the states, he is preparing a volume which will tell the entire story of his parents' experience during a time of significant cultural and political change in the Middle East and India.

Senior research fellow Donald Bruggink has been the general



Van Raalte Institute colleagues and friends gather to celebrate the presentation of Don Luidens' lecture, Sept. 2015. L-r: Nella and Bill Kennedy, JoHannah Smith, Henk Aay, Erma and Don Bruggink, Lee and Jack Nyenhuis, Don Luidens, Hans Krabbendam, Peg Luidens, Elton and Elaine Bruins, and Dennis and Betty Voskuil

editor of the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America since 1968. Under his careful and steady leadership, the Historical Series has produced almost ninety outstanding publications related to the RCA and, more recently, the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The latest volume of this outstanding historical series is, *Kemp: The Story of John R. and Mabel Kempers, Founders of the Reformed Church in America Mission in Chiapas, Mexico*, by Pablo A. Deiros (Eerdmans, 2016). A noted scholar from Argentina, Deiros has employed a creative and compelling narrative of the life and ministry of the Kempers, who were vital partners with the National Presbyterian Church in ministering to the Maya cultures in Chiapas during a time of social and political revolution in Mexico.

The stack of manuscripts on the desk of our remarkable editorial associate, JoHannah Smith, attest to the fact that the pipeline is full of forthcoming publications; the senior fellows will elaborate on some of these in their reports. Here is a list of those works which could be published in the coming year:

Earl Wm. Kennedy. *A Commentary on the Minutes of the Classis of Holland, 1848-1876: A Detailed Record of Persons and Issues, Civil and*

*Religious, in the Dutch Colony of Holland, Michigan.* Van Raalte Press and Eerdmans.

Kenneth A. Schaaf. *In Peril on the Sea: The Forgotten Story of the William and Mary Shipwreck.* Van Raalte Press and Eerdmans.

J. P. Verhave. *A Constant State of Emergency: Paul De Kruif and the Health of Americans.* Van Raalte Press.

*Old Dutch and New Dutch.* AADAS 2015 conference publication. Van Raalte Press.

### *Visiting Research Fellows Program*

During the fall of 2016, Jan and Anthonia Boersema returned to the institute to continue their research on the impact of the natural environment upon the Dutch immigrants in America. Jan is a scholar at the Institute for Environmental Sciences at Leiden University in the Netherlands and was a visiting research fellow in 2014-15. We were delighted to welcome Jan and Anthonia back to our community of



Bert and Karin Bos visited the institute from the Netherlands in 2016. Bert and Karin, Hope supporters who had earlier provided logistical support to Dr. Huw Lewis's tour of historical churches with his organ students, attended the alumni and friends gathering in the Hague following the Van Raalte Bicentennial International Conference in Ommen in November 2011

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scholars last fall. Coffee time discussions were rich and wide ranging, especially around the process of the American presidential election.

Beginning in the summer of 2016, Mark Mulder, professor of sociology at Calvin College, also joined us as a visiting research fellow. Mark, author of *Shades of White Flight: Evangelical Congregations and Urban Departure* (Rutgers University Press, 2015) is doing research for a proposed book-length study of Robert H. Schuller, the Crystal Cathedral, and religious innovation in the United States. We are delighted to have Mark join us at the institute.

### *Conclusion*

This has been a remarkably busy year for the Van Raalte Institute. We are grateful that we were invited to play a significant role in the celebration of the sesquicentennial anniversary of Hope College. We continue to appreciate the unique role that we are able to play in the mission of the college. We recognize that this would not be possible without the support of our administrators, board of trustees, and faculty. In addition we are greatly indebted to Peter J. Huizenga for providing encouragement and financial support.

As a fledgling director of the institute, I wish to express deep appreciation to my colleagues, the senior research fellows, and to JoHannah Smith, our editorial associate, for your hospitable embrace. It is a great privilege to work with such a wonderful community of scholars.



# Reports

## Dennis N. Voskuil

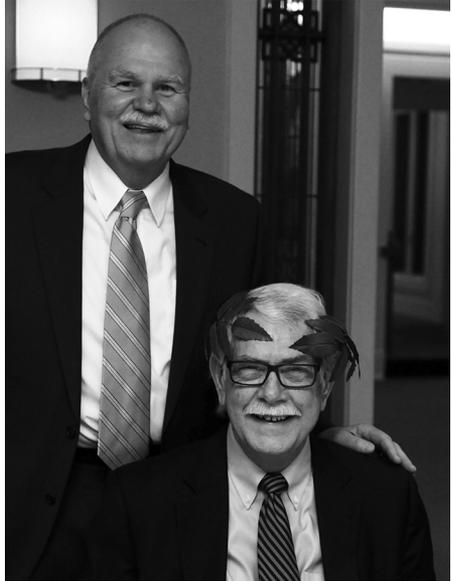
Now well into my second year as director, I continue to be impressed by the productivity of my colleagues. As you read the reports of the senior research fellows and our honorary member, J. P. Verhave, you will find ample evidence of their publications, presentations, and research projects. The VRI has become one of the premier Dutch American study centers in the United States and Canada.

As visitors to the VRI quickly discover, the centerpiece of our scholarly community is the 11:00 a.m., daily coffee time, during which discussions ensue around such diverse

topics as college basketball, nineteenth-century Turkey, politics in the Netherlands, Hope College graduates, footnotes, Easter Island, Dutch Royalty, and our presidential election. The discussions may be vigorous, but they are always genial. Learning and laughter are an attractive compound of VRI coffee times.

The institute is also blessed by the editing skills of JoHannah Smith; publications produced through the VRI must meet rigorous, scholarly standards.

Much of my time during the past year has been devoted to the sesquicentennial celebration of Hope College. My contribution to the two-volume history of the college, *An Enduring Hope*, is entitled “Continuity and Change: Hope College and the Reformed Church in America” and centers upon the relationship between the college and its founding denomination. As a result of this study, I was asked to join



Dennis adorning Jack Nyenhuis with a laurel wreath at Jack's retirement dinner at the Marigold Lodge, 22 January 2016



VRI colleagues meet at the home of Betty and Dennis Voskuil to discuss our many publications and projects and future plans.

Jack Nyenhuis and Elton Bruins for two presentations: “Hope at 150: How Rocky was the Road to Success?” at the Winter Happening on 23 January 2016, and at an alumni celebration on 30 April 2016. At the 3 February meeting of HASP (Hope Academy of Senior Professionals), I delivered a separate presentation on the history of the college, “Ten Things That You Do Not Know About Hope College.” It was a delightful privilege to participate in each of the special events.

It was also an honor to be asked by the Class of 2016 at Western Theological Seminary to deliver their commencement address on 9 May 2016. It was titled, “The Grace-Full Gospel for a Grace-Less Age.” During that same day, I delivered a Power Point presentation, “The History of Western Theological Seminary, 1966-2016,” at the Annual Alumni Lecture.

My major research and writing project during the next year will be on the topic I presented at the alumni lecture. In preparation for the celebration of Western’s sesquicentennial in 2019, I have been asked to write the first book-length history of the seminary. I look forward to this imposing challenge.

In addition to my work at the institute, I continue to teach a few online courses for Western Theological Seminary and the Ministerial Formation Coordinating Agency of the Reformed Church in America.

My wife, Betty, and I enjoy spending time with our friends, children, and grandchildren. We also delight in symphonic concerts,

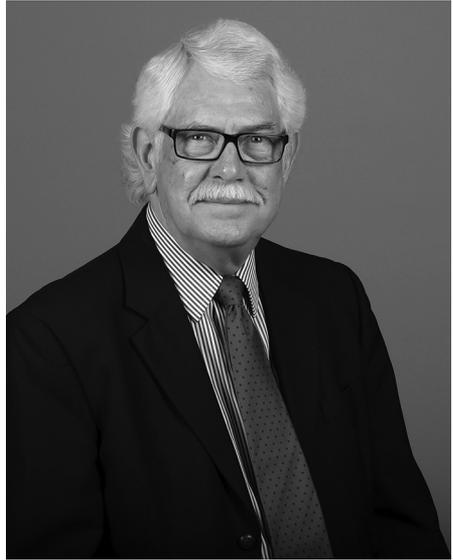


Dennis and Betty Voskuil with Don Bruggink at Hurley Reformed Church (1801), Albany, New York, during the AADAS/NNI 2015 conference

basketball games, traveling to and rooting for the Boston Red Sox, the Green Bay Packers, the Wisconsin Badgers, Hope College teams, and the various teams of our grandchildren. Oh yes, and I do love to play noon-hour basketball at the college.

## Jacob E. Nyenhuis

My thirteen-year tenure as director of the VRI ended on 31 August 2015, so my sole administrative responsibility during this past year has been in my role as editor-in-chief of the Van Raalte Press. I thus was freed up to devote most of my time to my research, writing, and editing of *An Enduring Hope: A Sesquicentennial History of Hope College, 1866-2016* (Van Raalte Press and Eerdmans, forthcoming). The largest demand on my time has been the completion of my chapter on the



Jacob E. Nyenhuis

architectural history of the college, a project for which I began gathering files well over a decade ago. It has been a fascinating and illuminating project. It is my hope that it will serve not only as a nearly definitive history of the buildings of Hope College but also as an interesting account of the sometimes tortuous progress of the college over the past 150 years. Because that chapter has taken so much longer than I had bargained for, I still have to finish chapters on the academic program and the story of diversity and inclusion at the college.

I chose not to offer a linear history of the college, except through the history of the buildings, but decided rather to take a thematic approach to telling the story of Hope. I have been blessed to have many coauthors working on this book, covering everything from finances, to sports, to student life, to alumni, to the relationship between the college and the RCA. The chapters of my coauthors help to provide a comprehensive view of the college.

I have also worked on the construction and editing of eleven appendices, the largest of which is a listing of all the faculty who have taught at Hope College since 1862; this listing includes a record of their time in each rank and any administrative roles that they filled. The table of contents reveals the nature of the other appendices, but

it is worth noting that the history of all the fraternities and sororities, as well as a listing of over two hundred student organizations, was compiled by student research assistant Mackenzie Schumborg '16 and that the appendix of college and alumni songs includes the full text of both "Centennial Hymn" and "Sesquicentennial Anthem."

Van Raalte Press has either published or is preparing a number of works, so my responsibilities have included reviewing manuscripts and making decisions on cover designs. During the past year, I also gave several presentations on the history of the college: at the Pre-College Conference in August, to college and community members at Winter Happening in January, to the Holland Area Historical Society, and to alumni in April.

My public service includes continuing service on the Dutch American Historical Commission, the Dutch American Heritage Day Committee, and coordinator of pulpit supply for 14th Street Church (CRC).

My presentations this past year include:

"Learning from our Past": Pre-College Conference Panel consisting of Elton J. Bruins, Alfredo M. Gonzales, Kelly Gordon Jacobsma, and Jacob E. Nyenhuis, moderated by Steven Bouma-Prediger, 27 August 2015.

"Hope at 150: How Rocky was the Road to Success?" Winter Happening, 23 January 2016, and Alumni Weekend, 30 April 2016.

"The Trajectory of Hope," Holland Area Historical Society, 12 April 2016.

"Pivotal Moments and Unexpected Twists in the Trajectory of Hope," Grand Rapids Luncheon Series, 26 April 2016.

### ***An Enduring Hope: A Sesquicentennial History of Hope College, 1866-2016***

#### Chapters

1. Historical Overview  
James C. Kennedy
2. Striving for Excellence in the Academic Program  
Jacob E. Nyenhuis
3. Continuity and Change: Hope College and the Reformed Church in America  
Dennis N. Voskuil

4. The Architecture of Hope  
Jacob E. Nyenhuis
5. Stewardship of Resources  
Robert P. Swierenga
6. From Dutch Monoculture to Rich Diversity  
Alfredo M. Gonzales and Jacob E. Nyenhuis
7. 150 Years of Student Life at Hope College  
John E. Jobson and Michael J. Douma
8. Strong and True for the Orange and Blue: Athletics at Hope College  
Thomas L. Renner
9. Sesquicentennial History of the Hope College Alumni Association  
Scott Travis
10. Conclusion

### Appendices

1. Board of Trustees (all members of the first Council of Hope College and of the Sesquicentennial Year Board of Trustees, plus a listing of all the presidents/chairs and their term of office)
2. Profiles of Leadership: Presidents, CAOs, CFOs, et alii
3. Faculty Member List, 1862-2016
4. Endowed Chair Holders (purpose of the chair, its donor and tenure of each holder)
5. Enrollment and Graduation Statistics
6. Financial Data
7. Honorary Degree Recipients
8. Alumni Achievements and Awards
  - a. Profiles of a few Distinguished Alumni
  - b. List of Other Notable Alumni  
Elton J. Bruins
  - c. Alumni Awards
  - d. Alumni Association Board (all members of the first board and of the Sesquicentennial Year board, plus a listing of all the presidents and their terms of office)
9. Student Organizations  
Mackenzie Schumborg '16
  - a. Student Congress
  - b. Concise History of all Fraternities and Sororities
  - c. Student Clubs and Honor Societies
10. Residential Cottages on Campus
11. Hope College Songs

Jacob E. Nyenhuis, "The Architecture of Hope," in *An Enduring Hope* (Van Raalte Press and Eerdmans, forthcoming)

An excerpt

*Architecture is inhabited sculpture.*

Constantin Brancusi, sculptor (1876-1957)

A college begins with an idea, a vision, but the translation of that idea into reality requires both people and buildings. When Dr. Philip Phelps Jr. conceived the idea of Hope College, he was principal of Holland Academy. He was living and teaching in what is now known as Van Vleck Hall, a beautiful brick building atop a knoll on the neatly fenced campus of sixteen acres; it overlooked the town and had a partial view of the harbor.<sup>1</sup> Holland Academy had evolved in 1857 from Pioneer School, which had begun in Orphan House in 1851. Both Pioneer School and Holland Academy were secondary schools; elementary education was provided by the public school. The academy served as a "literary institution," providing an education for Dutch immigrant youth. The construction of this building signaled a new degree of permanence for this young institution. This building initially served as both a residence for the principal and a dormitory for the students; it also contained lecture rooms, a reading room/library, a refectory, and a chapel.

Over the past 150 years, the campus has expanded exponentially from the original five acres on which Van Vleck

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Intelligencer* (29 October 1863), 2. *Holland City News (HCN)*, 5 May 1883, reported that the Council of Hope College at a recent meeting (27 April 1883) had renamed it Van Vleck Hall "in honor of the first principal of the Holland Academy." *HCN*, 14 July 1883, quoted a writer in the *Christian Intelligencer* identified as "H.P.T.," who asserted that Van Vleck had told him that he "had handled every brick that went into the building." Albertus C. Van Raalte and his wife, Christina De Moen Van Raalte, by warranty deeds, transferred the property to the General Synod of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church (the Reformed Church in America, since 1867) in two separate transactions. The first deed, dated 1 May 1858 and recorded 3 May 1858 in Liber Q, page 318, conveyed title to Block Forty-five (45). The second deed, dated 12 May 1860 and recorded 25 May 1860, Liber S, page 318, conveyed title to Block Fifty (50). The two transfers totaled sixteen acres and included property lying between 10th and 12th Streets on the north and south, respectively, and between Columbia Avenue on the east and College Avenue on the west. Vernon Ten Cate, attorney, to Mr. J. Arbenus, counsel, Housing and Finance Agency, Chicago, IL, 2 June 1955. JAH/HCA, copy in VRI files.

Hall was built. Its eastern gateway is now located at the corner of Fairbanks Avenue and Eighth Street, but parts of the campus extend well east of Fairbanks, wrapping around the northern portion of Pilgrim Home Cemetery on Sixteenth Street. The campus now spreads out over more than 150 acres, filling most of the area between Central and Fairbanks Avenues and between Eighth and Fifteenth Streets. The college also owns or has long-term leases on buildings as far west as the corner of Ninth and River. From the first permanent building (Van Vleck Hall), college properties have grown to nearly sixty major buildings, plus another seventy cottages used as student residences. Although President Phelps had a grand vision for Hope College—and for Hope Haven University as the umbrella for it and other institutions—and Rev. Van Raalte had high hopes for this fledgling institution in the community which he had founded in 1847, neither of them could have imagined the breadth and scope of Hope College in 2016.

Whereas some colleges and universities have established a consistent architectural style for their campuses, there has been no such architectural vision for Hope College. The story of the growth of Hope reveals a very eclectic style, ranging from Italianate Revival in 1858, to stunning Organic Contemporary in 2015. Certain imitative patterns appear at times, but no single architectural vision has influenced the design of new buildings. The resulting diversity of the architecture of Hope adds to the charm and appeal of the campus.



Book of Letters, presented to Jack and Lee Nyenhuis, written by friends and members of the institute

### Permanent Structures, 1890-1940

The second brick structure to be erected on campus was a home for the president, begun in 1886. Its completion was delayed for years due to a lack of funds but was finally completed in 1892. The presidency of Gerrit Kollen (1893-1911) proved to be an era of construction, due to his financial acumen and effective fundraising skills. Four major buildings were added during this period. Graves Library and Winants Chapel (1892-94) and Van Raalte Hall (1903) greatly strengthened the academic program of the college, whereas the construction of Carnegie Gymnasium (1906) provided much-needed facilities for athletics, and Voorhees Hall (1907) finally opened up educational opportunities for women by providing housing for them on campus. From the completion of Voorhees Hall until the construction of Science Hall in 1941, however, only one other structure was erected—Memorial Chapel. The architectural styles of these buildings varied greatly, reflecting shifting trends in taste: the Victorian style of the President's Home yielded to the Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style of Graves Library and Winants Chapel, and that in turn gave way to the Classicism of Van Raalte Hall, the Neo-classical style of Carnegie Gymnasium, the American Dutch Renaissance Revival style of Voorhees Hall for Women, and finally the Collegiate Gothic style of Memorial Chapel.

VRI colleagues and friends gathered at the Marigold Lodge, Holland, Michigan, on 22 January 2016 to celebrate the retirement of Jack Nyenhuis.

Founding director Elton Bruins and current director Dennis Voskuil offered words of appreciation, and a book of letters was presented to Jack and Lee, written by their friends and colleagues and collected and arranged by Betty Voskuil. It was a memorable evening to recap the growth of the institute and to thank Jack, with Lee by his side, for his wise, steady, and visionary leadership throughout the years.

A highlight of the evening was the Reader's Theater, a play written by Nella Kennedy, and performed by the members and spouses of the institute. The play, entitled, "If Only . . . or Aristophanes Hi-Jack-Ed," was a spoof of the ancient Greek playwright's *Lysistrata*, except in this case, the women schemed to withhold food from the men to convince them to cross the mighty western lake to the land of the cheese heads.

In the end, however, Atropos, one of the Fates, convinced the women that their destiny lay in staying put, and thus was born the Holland colony.



Nella and JoHannah work to strap Elton into his toga

Peg Luidens (*left*) and JoHannah Smith review stage directions while awaiting their cues



Nella Kennedy introduces her play and attempts to explain her use of *Lysistrata* for inspiration



Chorus of old men lament that the women are weaving a web of tyranny, and there is nothing worse than women—except other women

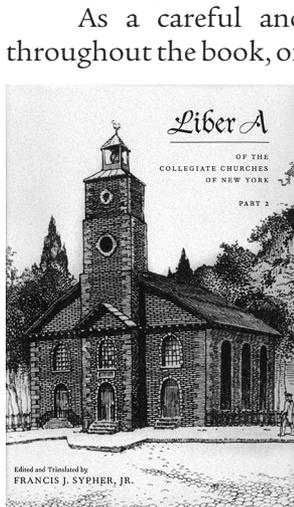


Ladies of the village listen to Atropos, the controller of destiny, explain to them that their destiny is not theirs to control, and they must accept their fate

## Donald J. Bruggink

*Liber A, 1628-1700, of the Collegiate Churches of New York, Part 2*, translated, annotated, and edited by Frank J. Sypher Jr. Eerdmans, hardcover, pp. lvi + 855, \$75.

*Liber A* is hardly a “grabber,” until, with a very little Latin and the subtitle, one is confronted by an important slice of our colonial history, which extends far beyond Manhattan. What at first glance would promise to be a newly translated volume of baptismal, membership, and marriage records turns out to be a genealogical treasure trove, with seventy-five pages of notes offering further insight into colonial life.



As a careful and consummate scholar, Frank J. Sypher Jr., throughout the book, offers page references not only within this volume but also to pages in the original records. Sixteenth-century Dutch frequently demands more than a cursory translation, and Sypher’s meticulous scholarship offers explanations for obscure phrases. Even his introduction of forty-two pages has required another ten pages to cover forty-six explanatory notes. One example of such explanation is the unraveling of the meaning of notations in the marriage records that a bride was married in her underwear (see excerpt).

Photographs of several pages of the sixteenth-century records should strike terror into the hearts of all but the most intrepid and knowledgeable translators. The record books themselves required another seventy pages of notes. There is also an essential glossary, an extensive bibliography,



Donald J. Bruggink

and indices of personal and place names. The index of personal names includes over fifteen thousand entries and has required another six pages of explanatory notes.

Translators of sixteenth-century Dutch will find this a source book to solve many problems; historians of the colonial period will find much helpful information, and genealogists will discover a carefully translated and annotated resource.

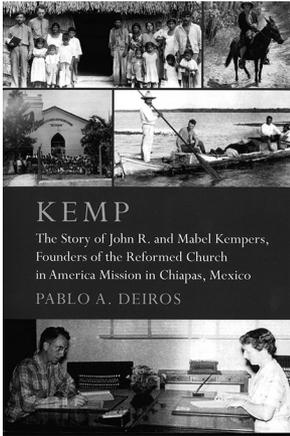
Individuals, scholars, and libraries with an interest in America's colonial history will consider this volume an essential possession. We all owe a debt of gratitude to Frank J. Sypher Jr.

*Liber A* (Eerdmans, 2015), xxix

An excerpt concerning the bride's underwear

Occasionally the minister would write in the book a comment of some kind about the marriage. A particularly striking instance is next to an entry registered on July 27, 1689, with the marriage on August 21, 1689 (*ms. page 662*). A Latin note describes the bride as "*nullis vestibus, nisi solo jndusio*" ("with no clothes on except only a shift"—the usual woman's undergarment at that period). In the published version of these marriage records, as edited by Samuel S. Purple (1890), this note is transcribed but not translated or explained. One might well wonder why the bride would have been married with nothing on but her underwear. One's first thought is that she must have been so poor that she had no proper clothes; but one would expect that, even if destitute, she would still have been able to borrow some clothes to wear for her wedding.

The explanation for this unusual circumstance is given by Peter Kalm in his account of his travels (mentioned above). When a man died and left his widow burdened with responsibility for debts that he had incurred, and she was unable to pay them off, all of her property, including her clothing, was liable to be seized to satisfy creditors—except her shift, which by law could not be taken from her. In the event that she wanted to remarry, a means for her to declare bankruptcy was to appear at her wedding dressed only in her shift—this was a public declaration that all of her property had been surrendered to creditors. After this she was no longer responsible for her deceased husband's liabilities. In this case it appears from the entry that the bride was indeed a widow (marrying a widower), and undoubtedly, her motive was to clear herself of her deceased husband's debts. Kalm writes that such cases were often mentioned in the church record books.



*Kemp: The Story of John R. and Mabel Kempers, Founders of the Reformed Church in America Mission in Chiapas, Mexico*, by Pablo A. Deiros. Eerdmans, paperback, pp. xxxvi + 522, \$38.

Pablo A. Deiros, minister, theologian, historian, and retired seminary president, has prepared a comprehensive and fully documented biography of John and Mabel Kempers, founders of the Reformed Church in America mission in Chiapas, Mexico. Written in the first person, in the style of narrative history, the book nevertheless remains completely true to John and Mabel by virtue of the extensive correspondence and articles which chronicled their lives together in Christ's service.

This volume, created in response to support gathered by Charles Van Engen, senior professor of biblical theology of mission at Fuller Theological Seminary, was deemed necessary in view of the principles of mission carried out in practice, and resulting is a church larger in numbers than that of Kemper's sending denomination. At the same time, it was deemed desirable to have a book which was eminently readable, both by seminarians and general readers. This goal has been beautifully fulfilled by Deiros, together with the assistance of JoHannah Smith and Sam and Helen Hofman. This inspiring volume, now in its second printing, deserves a wide reading, in both its English and Spanish editions.

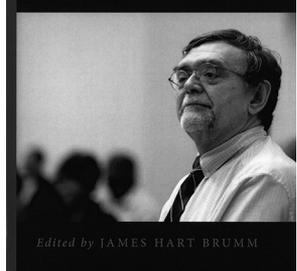
*"Yes! Well . . ." Exploring the Past, Present, and Future of the Church: Essays in Honor of John W. Coakley*, edited by James Hart Brumm. Eerdmans, paperback, pp. xviii + 324, \$30.

Students of New Brunswick Theological Seminary's illustrious professor of church history, John W. Coakley, will immediately recognize "Yes! Well . . ." as a fitting beginning for a festschrift in his honor. The phrase is more than a clever play on a professor's idiosyncratic lecture style. It is, as editor James

### "Yes! Well . . ."

Exploring the Past, Present, and Future of the Church

*Essays in Honor of John W. Coakley*



Edited by JAMES HART BRUMM

Hart Brumm points out, a tribute to Coakley's method of teaching. "Yes! Well . . ." is Coakley's response of both affirmation and challenge. "Yes," the listener is on the right track and has gotten things right as far as things went; 'well,' there is more to be said, further to go." "John would affirm all of us, but always challenge us to go further, to say more, to dig a bit deeper" (x).

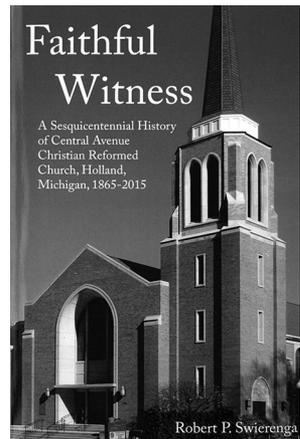
The festschrift is a cornucopia of essays on the past, present, and future of the church. They range from the past, dealing with such ancient luminaries as Theodore of Mopsuestia and the "Forgotten Syrian Saint," Mar Shamli, to a present day search for the RCA's preeminent historian, Edward Tanjore Corwin, and finding a record of student life at New Brunswick in the diary of Samuel M. Zwemer, to looks at the present with yet hope for the future in "More Loss than Loyalty" and "Making Room for All."

The above only scratch the surface of the fourteen essays which make this festschrift, so ably constructed by its editor, James Hart Brumm, a rich resource of ecclesial history.

*Faithful Witness: A Sesquicentennial History of Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Holland, Michigan, 1865-2015*, by Robert P. Swierenga. Van Raalte Press, paperback, pp. xx + 526, \$20.

This superbly researched and written history was published as the third volume of the Congregational Histories Series. I defer to the author to tell you more of this volume in his report.

Anticipating the future, volumes in varying stages of completion are:



*Elephant Baseball*, by Paul Heusinkveld, a captivating tale of "mish kids" at India's Kodai boarding school.

*Growing Pains in the Body of Christ: How Race Struggles Changed a Church and a School*, by Chris Meehan.

*An Enduring Hope: A Sesquicentennial History of Hope College, 1866-2016*, Jacob E. Nyenhuis, lead author and editor, two volumes, hard cover.

*A Commentary on the Minutes of the Classis of Holland, 1848-1876: A Detailed Record of Persons and Issues, Civil and Religious, in the Dutch Colony of Holland, Michigan*, by Earl Wm. Kennedy, three volumes.  
*In Peril on the Sea: The Forgotten Story of the William and Mary Shipwreck*, by Kenneth A. Schaaf.

*A Constant State of Emergency: Paul De Kruif, a Champion of American Health*, by Jan Peter Verhave.

*For Better or Worse*, by Janet Scheeres.

*Another Look at the Canons of Dort*, by Eugene P. Heideman.

### *Honorifics*

At the 2016 General Synod of the Reformed Church in America the general editor of its historical series received approval of Resolution 16-32 (see inset), followed by a sustained standing ovation.

This honorific marked the forty-eighth year of my tenure as general editor. In the past, such tributes have been given at each decade of service. That this was given two years short of another decade is cause for some puzzlement. Having missed a meeting of the Commission on History for the first time since a sabbatical in Rome in 1971-72, I presume that my absence occasioned the move to R 16-32, lest by waiting for a fiftieth year, the tribute be given in absentia or even postmortem. Being unable to prognosticate the future, I can only express my gratitude to the Commission on History for their thoughtfulness in putting forth the resolution and to the synod for so enthusiastically affirming such. I also wish to express my appreciation to James Hart Brumm, chair of the COH, for his expressed hope that I will be present for the fiftieth.

### **R 16-32 - Approved**

WHEREAS the Commission on History of the Reformed Church in America is marking its 50th year in existence, and

WHEREAS the Rev. Dr. Donald J. Bruggink has been general editor of the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America since its inception in 1968, serving as a consultant to the commission that entire time, and

WHEREAS Dr. Bruggink has faithfully stewarded the growth of both the series and its revolving fund so that they might be of continual service to the whole church, and

WHEREAS Dr. Bruggink is continuing that stalwart ministry,  
 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 210th General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, meeting at Trinity Christian

College in Palos Heights, Illinois, June 9 through 14, 2016, gives thanks to God for the faithful ministry of the Rev. Dr. Donald J. Bruggink as teacher of the church, consultant to the Commission on History, and general editor of the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America, and prays God's blessings on his continued ministry for as long as Dr. Bruggink is blessed to do so.

## Nella Kennedy

One may recall that the front cover of the 2015 annual report features not only the senior fellows and editorial associate but also two images of Rev. Van Raalte: the photograph with the memorable forelock and the small bronze replica of the life-size statue in Centennial Park. From his lofty perch, Van Raalte seems to be pointing directly at me (the woman with the purple vest), so I assume that he is urging me to write my annual report.

I made reference last year to a lengthy letter written to Van Raalte by a would-be Dutch

emigrant. The questions he raised—beyond those about possible employment in the United States—were no doubt typical of every emigrant contemplating such a major step. What should one take, and what should one leave behind? Hendrik Merckens, however, for reasons unknown, never left his homeland, and his life as a teacher in the Netherlands was filled with controversy due to his publications containing aberrant Bible interpretations and advocacy for homeopathy. My article about Merckens appeared in *Origins: Historical Magazine of the Archives. Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary* 34, no. 1 (2016), 40-43.

In the spring of 2016, I enlarged the shorter lecture “Of Men and Words: An Early Holland Debating Society,” which I had presented at the joint conference of the Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies (AADAS) and the New Netherland Institute (NNI), held in Albany, New York, September 2015. This will be published, with the other lectures, in the spring of 2017.

I have become a bit more involved with translation projects this year, and I have noticed that not much has been published about the



Nella Kennedy

life of Rev. Cornelis Vander Meulen in the Netherlands prior to his emigration to the United States. He was the first pastor in Zeeland, Michigan, as well as the colony's cofounder. His activities in Zeeland from 1847 on have all been well documented, but much less has been published in English about his life prior to that time. Vander Meulen seceded from the Reformed Church in 1838 and, as a gifted lay preacher in his seceded congregation, was urged by its members to seek ministerial training so that they could call him as their ordained pastor. The Rev. H. P. Scholte undertook the task of training Vander Meulen, and upon his ordination, Vander Meulen became an important participant in the often tumultuous Seceder church hierarchy. The minutes, documents, and inter-ministerial correspondence of this new "denomination" were gathered by Dutch historians Cornelis Smit and J. Wesseling and subsequently published in nine and ten volumes, respectively. Vander Meulen's name appears frequently in them. Since they are not accessible to non-Dutch-speaking scholars—with the exception of some prior translated material—I began to peruse and translate Vander Meulen's ecclesiastical activities as communicated in the aforementioned books. My intent is to make his life prior to 1847 more well known.



Nella, seated next to an inlet of the Rotterdam harbor, with the former Holland America Line building in the background. Bill and she disembarked here many years ago, having just met each other the day before on the ship that had carried them from New York

For many decades Elton Bruins has gathered and categorized crucial documents pertaining to Van Raalte in the Netherlands and in Michigan. These findings constitute the majority of the files on Van Raalte at the VRI; they are comprised of original English-language documents and letters, as well as translations of some of these from Dutch. Many of the translations have been saved in digital form, but some earlier ones are accessible only by perusing the paper files. The folders are arranged chronologically, and I am adding or supplementing brief descriptions of the contents (while frequently retranslating material). When finished, all of these files will be available to be preserved digitally.

I continue to be a part of the Dutch Heritage Coordinating Council, as well as to have an advisory role in the Holland Museum. Next year I will be the curator of an exhibition at the museum on “work,” which will span three centuries and contain Dutch art from its own collection.

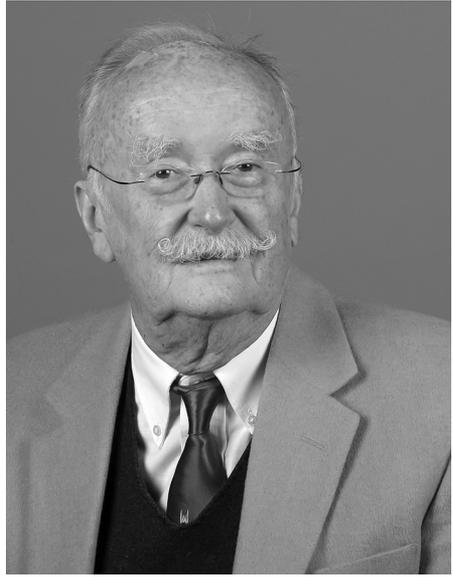
Vander Meulen to H. P. Scholte, 11 September 1838. Vander Meulen explains why it is challenging for him to come to Scholte in Utrecht, under whom he was to begin his ministerial studies

An excerpt

I hope that the Lord will clear the burdens on my way. It certainly costs me much to leave behind a sickly wife and the three small children whose education I would like to oversee. But in this, I desire to deny myself, although the Lord’s trials are many and heavy. . . . As far as the domestic needs of my wife are concerned, she cannot do it with less than about five guilders and that with the greatest economy. Everything is so expensive now. If the cost of 130 [*sic*] guilders for half a year cannot be raised by [seceded] congregations, she is satisfied with less. My wife supports me wholeheartedly.

## Earl Wm. Kennedy

My latter-life, mega-project of publishing an annotated version of the Classis of Holland Minutes during the A. C. Van Raalte era (1848-76) has become much closer to realization in the past year. The small-font footnote “annotations” have been promoted by my editors to normal-font status and renamed “commentary.” My work will thus be accessible to seniors and (other) visually-impaired. Moreover, it has been given a (tentative) number, somewhere in the upper 80s, in the Historical Series of the



Earl Wm. Kennedy

Reformed Church in America, probably in three hard-cover volumes. The entire text of minutes and commentary (about two thousand words in the new format, before index and introduction) has been edited by our copy editor, JoHannah Smith, and formatted and provided with an every-name index to be assembled by Russell Gasero, the archivist of the RCA. I am starting to feel as though I have left the starting gate and am actually on the runway, somewhere between a holding position and actually taxiing in preparation for takeoff.

The “holding position” has to do with the fact that I still have the challenging task of preparing a subject index for the combined minutes and commentary. Others have warned me that subject indices are not easy, and, from what I have already seen, I am inclined to believe them. Furthermore, I have been making last-minute corrigenda et addenda to the document—without disturbing the format. I have also devoted a few months to writing a comprehensive forty-plus-page introduction to the entire work, aiming to provide some context for the reader, including an in-depth account of the creation of the admirable forerunner of my work, the 1943 edition of the minutes of the Classis of Holland from 1848 to 1858, without (many) footnotes.

Other tasks, not entirely onerous, have served to impede my normal snail-like working tempo. One of these “diversions” was the final preparation and delivery of the paper (mentioned in last year’s report as forthcoming) on the Dutch Reformed Church and slavery around 1855. It was delivered without incident at the joint conference of AADAS and NNI, held in Albany, New York, in September 2015. The conference was quite profitable and enjoyable and was coupled with a bus trip partway down the Hudson River Valley from Albany to see some of the old Dutch settlements there. Most of the members of the institute were able to attend the conference, many of them traveling on a rented bus which traveled from Grand Rapids to Albany.

The slavery paper was subsequently developed into a twenty-five-page document (with footnotes packed with “essential” material from the body that would otherwise have had to be discarded because it would have made the paper exceed the prescribed number of pages). Many other papers given at the conference are also slated for joint publication in the near future.

The paper-cum-article that I produced a few years ago on the maverick minister A. G. Zigeler has continued to arouse a bit of interest, and I have recently corresponded with one of his descendants on the subject, as well as with a Belgian scholar who encouraged me to try to publish in the Netherlands an expanded version of the article already published in the United States.



Bill in front of Dresden, Germany, church. The tablet expresses remorse in not having supported the Jewish people during Nazi era



Bill and James Kennedy in front of renamed streets in Cracow, Poland

In addition to the foregoing institute activities, I remain a board member of the Dutch Reformed Translation Society, and I prepared a detailed six-generation *Ahmentafel* (all ancestors back to at least the great-great-great-grandparents) for some local residents of Dutch descent. I also continue to pluck away at my own memoirs. Finally, my wife and I, besides our annual trip to the Netherlands, took a marvelous three-week tour of some of the former Eastern European Soviet-bloc countries (Czechia, Slovakia, Poland, western Ukraine, and Eastern Germany); we did this in two horseless carriages in the company of our son, his wife, and their three teenage children. Strenuous but delightful.

“Slaveholding: The Dutch Reformed Church’s Debates of 1855,” paper presented at 2015 joint AADAS/NAF conference

An excerpt

In 1855 the General Synod of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church (henceforth RPDC) rejected the application for membership of the German Reformed Classis of North Carolina, some of whose clergy and laity were slaveholders. The classis had recently declared its independence from the German Reformed denomination, located mainly in the North. The proposal of the

classis was broached and extensively discussed at the June 1855 regular annual meeting of the synod and was debated at even greater length and finally turned down in October at the extraordinary session of synod called to consider the issue further. The main stumbling block for union, as appears repeatedly in the religious and secular press, as well as in several RPDC pamphlets written at the time, was slavery. It is therefore surprising that the published minutes of the General Synod for 1855 say not one word about slavery and contain no hint that the South's "peculiar institution" was at the very heart of the synodical deliberations. A review of the course of events may help explain this apparent anomaly.



A disgruntled Bill Kennedy, unable to gain entrance to the locked medieval St. Martin's Roman Catholic cathedral in Spis, Slovakia. The Slovakian name for the church is Spisska Kapitula, dedicated to St. Martin of Tours (d. 397) of France. It has Romanesque and Gothic architecture and was built between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries as a monastery

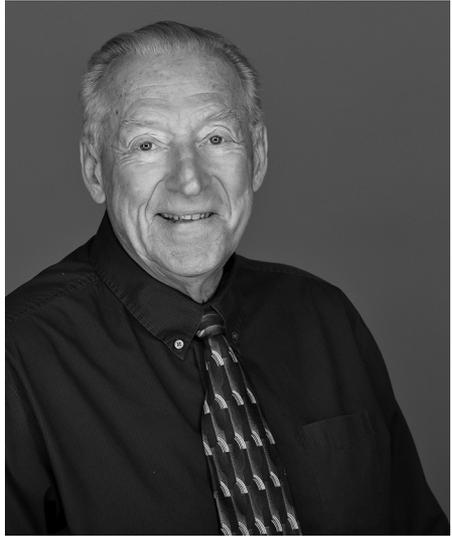
## Bob Swierenga

This academic year began with a bang. Dianne Ritsema and I were married on 8 August 2015, followed by a honeymoon trip along the Lake Superior shore of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

In September I got back to work, completing a lecture on the relationship between the "Old Dutch" immigrants of the seventeenth century and the "Young Dutch" immigrants of the nineteenth century, which I presented in mid-September at the 2015

AADAS conference at Albany, New York. The conference, sponsored jointly by New Netherlands Institute (NNI), was titled, "The Dutch in America across the Centuries: Connections and Comparisons."

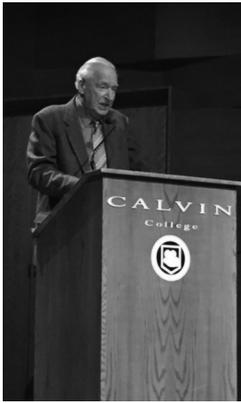
On 8 October, I led a bus tour of historic Dutch sites in the Holland area for Tulip Time trolley tour guides. The next week, 17



Robert P. Swierenga



Bob and Dianne Swierenga  
at the Van Raalte Institute  
retirement dinner of  
Jack Nyenhuis,  
Marigold Lodge,  
Park Township,  
January 2016



Bob Swierenga  
delivering Calvin  
College Heritage  
Alumni Lecture,  
27 April 2016

October, I presented a Power Point photographic history of the Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church at a dinner at Hope College's Haworth Inn to mark the congregation's sesquicentennial (1865-2015). On 1 December, I gave a Power Point lecture on the sesquicentennial of Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church for the Holland Area Historical Society. The meeting was held in the church sanctuary.

On 28 April 2016, I presented the Calvin College Alumni Association's Heritage Class lecture for 2016, "Retrospective at Eighty on a Scholar's Life," published in the fall issue of *Origins*. In July 2016, I lent my expertise to an effort spearheaded by Howard Veneklassen to produce a one-hour television documentary of Holland's history pitched to high school students. Retired

*Holland Sentinel* editor Ben Beversluis is writing the script, to be read by television newscaster Thomas Van Howe.



Bob Swierenga signing copies of his *Park Township Centennial* book at the Ottawa Beach Historical Society Pump House Museum, 19 August 2015.

My presentations this year included:

“Helping Hands: Old Dutch Aid Young Dutch.” Lecture for joint conference of AADAS and NNI, Albany, NY, 147-19 September 2015.

“Retrospective at Eighty on a Scholar’s Life and Calvin’s Shaping Influence.” Calvin College Alumni Association’s Heritage Class Lecture for 2016. Published in *Origins* 34, no. 2 (Fall 2016).

Power Point lectures on the sesquicentennial history of Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church, 1865-2015, at Central Avenue CRC congregational dinner, Haworth Inn, 17 October 2015, and Holland Area Historical Society meeting, at Central Avenue CRC, 1 December 2015.

Bus tour of Holland-area historic Dutch sites for Tulip Time trolley tour guides, 8 October 2015.

“Retrospective at Eighty,” commenting on the chapter on *garbios* in *Dutch Chicago: A History of the Hollanders in the Windy City* (Eerdmans, 2002)

An excerpt

I had planned for many years to tell the story of the Westside “Groninger Hoek,” where my great-grandfather settled in 1893. When I left the classroom for the Van Raalte Institute in 1996, I made this my priority. Deep into the project, I realized that this was the last opportunity to tell the story of all Chicago-area Dutch, including Englewood and Roseland. I could still interview people with living memories reaching back into the nineteenth century, such as my father, John R. Swierenga, who was born in 1911.

Most readers talk about the garbage chapter (“Business is Picking Up”) and the story of the “Dutch Mafia” who came to control the Chicago garbage business. The Dutch called them *garbios*, seemingly a negative variant of the Italian Mafioso. The haulers thought otherwise and used the term proudly. I can’t think of a better word.

I compiled a list of more than 450 Dutch garbage companies in the Chicago area by scouring city directories, telephone books, and garbage magazines. Several families came to dominate the trade: Huizenga, Evenhouse, and De Boer, among others. Picking

up ashes and garbage was a natural for the poor farm laborers. For a few hundred dollars they could buy a horse and wagon and be their own boss. They didn't have to speak much English, work on Sunday, or join teamster unions.

In the 1920s, the *garbios* formed the Chicago & Suburban Scavengers Association, which allowed them to control the industry by collusion. I learned the inner workings of the Dutch mafia by happenstance. Over food in the church basement after the funeral service of my brother-in-law, James A. De Boer, I mentioned my interest to his close friend Calvin Iwema. Cal told me his father, Bonne Iwema, was the first president of the association, and that he (Cal) had the minute books. He gave them to me. They read like consistory minutes, except the meetings closed with a keg of beer instead of prayer. The cardinal rule was: "Once your stop, always your stop." This eliminated competition and created an oligopoly.

...

Garbios faced three major threats: the teamsters union, the real Italian mafia, and the Illinois attorney general. In the 1920s, union goons demanded that the Dutch sign up. Except for Hendrik Evenhouse, who had socialist leanings and was pro-union already in Groningen, most refused to join for religious reasons, and some paid a high price. . . .

In the 1950s, the Italian mafia . . . formed the American Garbage Co. and took stops away from the Dutch by intimidating restaurant and tavern owners. The Dutch had the upper hand in what became known as Chicago's "garbage war"; they controlled the dumps. . . . The Dutch mafia proved more resilient than the Italian mafia.

In the 1970s, the Illinois attorney general went after the Dutch scavengers for price fixing and levied stiff fines. The days of the Dutch mafia were over. But no matter. The Huizengas—H. Wayne, Peter, and brother-in-law Wayne Buntrock—put their companies together to form Waste Management, whose common stock split eleven times and increased sharply in price, much like Microsoft in the 1980s. Many families sold their garbage routes to Waste Management and joined the conglomerate. Millionaires were made overnight, much to the enrichment of Christian institutions.

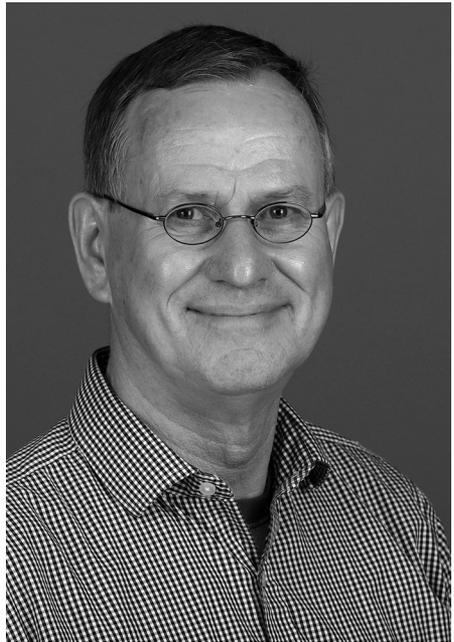
## Henk Aay

I can again report a very satisfying and stimulating academic year with a wide variety of academic endeavors, some near closure, others with some distance to go. No small part of that contentment is the VRI itself, as well our partner, the Joint Archives: caring and knowledgeable colleagues, editorial and research support, access to sources and resources, and, not to forget, *gezellige* “coffee” conversations.

My manuscript on the Dutch film library of the Netherlands Information Bureau/Service in Holland, Michigan,

is finally all but complete, except for some archival references, figures, stills, and appendices. It now counts some 250 pages, with a working title of *American Eyes on the Netherlands: Dutch Promotional and Propaganda Films in America, 1943-1974*. I hope it will be published in 2017. At the American Association for Netherlandic Studies (AANS) conference at the University of Michigan, 3-4 June, I presented a paper on several features of this Dutch film library.

My collaboration with Jan and Anthonia Boersema from the University of Leiden in the Netherlands on the relations between Dutch pioneer immigrants and the natural environment, as recorded in immigrant writings, has resulted in several academic presentations and future publications. Jan Boersema presented his findings based on immigrant memoirs at the joint conference of the NNI and AADAS, held in Albany, New York, 17-19 September 2015. In late September, Jan Boersema and I gave a presentation on our work at Hope College entitled “‘We Made the Wilderness to Blossom’: Nineteenth-Century Dutch Immigrants and the Natural World.” Jan and Anthonia’s NNI/AADAS presentation will appear in the volume of conference papers due out in early 2017. When the Boersemas returned to the VRI in the



Henk Aay

fall of 2016, we worked together to finish this project and prepare a final publication.

At the joint NNI/AADAS conference, I presented my research on the spread of RCA churches—and, along with that, the Dutch American culture—from the very beginning in 1628 to the dawn of the second Dutch immigration wave to the Midwest in 1847. From Manhattan and Long Island, to northern New Jersey, to the Hudson Valley, to the Mohawk Valley and upstate New York, and finally, into the Midwest, Dutch American culture spread from the coast into the interior. This paper will also be part of the conference publication scheduled for early 2017.

Christian schools, more specifically, those founded by Dutch Reformed communities beginning in the late nineteenth century, were the focus of my attention for a future chapter on education in the *Atlas of Dutch American History and Culture*. These schools were later organized under the banner of the National Union of Christian Schools (NUCS), which today goes by the name of Christian Schools International (CSI). Throughout their history, these primary and secondary Christian schools have been closely linked to Dutch American populations in terms of enrolment, faculty, and leadership. Hope and Calvin students scanned the yearly summary statistics (1890-2016) for these schools into editable Excel databases and converted them into maps, tables, and charts for the atlas. Next up for the atlas are the Christian Reformed Church records. Hope students at the VRI have been scanning the yearly summary statistics from the CRC Yearbooks (1875-current) into editable databases to prepare visuals for the atlas. This work will continue during the next academic year.

My work as lead editor for the publication of the NNI/AADAS 2015 conference papers has been ongoing since the September 2015 academic meeting in Albany. The other two editors of the volume are Janny Venema, associate director of the New Netherland Research Center, and Dennis Voskuil, director of the VRI. Communications with the authors have been continuing throughout the year. By the end of February 2016, twelve papers had been submitted for publication; these have now been carefully reviewed by the three editors. They were returned to the authors with our revisions and comments, and the final revised papers were due back to us by the middle of September. They have been copy edited by JoHannah Smith, and we are working toward a publication date of early 2017. The book has a tentative main title of *Old Dutch and New Dutch*.





Pieter Bronck, a Swede, with his Dutch wife, Helletje Jans, built their stone house in 1663. In 1738 Pieter's grandson, Leendert, built his brick house just north of the older dwelling. The family maintained continuous ownership of the farm for 276 years, eight generations. In 1939 the last family owner gave the eleven structures and surrounding acreage to the Greene County Historical Society (<http://gchistory.org/bronckmuseum.html>)

Outside the VRI, but with close links to it, is my work as vice president and now president of AADAS. As vice president, I was on the NNI/AADAS program committee for the September 2015 joint conference. I organized a one-day field trip for the conferees by motor coach to several Dutch American heritage sites along the upper Hudson valley.

In my capacity as president, and with the help of a terrific local organizer, I have taken the lead on organizing the AADAS 2017



Bronck Museum complex in Coxsackie, New York, was the first stop of the AADAS pre-conference excursion.

Standing in front of the oldest Dutch colonial home in the Hudson Valley are, /-r: Dennis Voskuil, Henk Aay, Don Bruggink, and Elton and Elaine Bruins



Bronck Museum director Shelby Mattice leads a guided tour of the site to conference attendees

conference in Fulton, Illinois, 16-17 June. The theme for this meeting is *Dutch Americans: Agriculture and Rural Life, Past and Present*; a pre-conference field trip (15 June) to local and regional Dutch heritage sites will be part of the program.

My larger life and my career do intersect at many—perhaps too many—points: streaming Dutch television, Dutch feature films, friends with Dutch interests, travel to and in the Netherlands, and so on. But, thankfully, I do have other interests and commitments such as biking, choral music, walking and jogging, and swimming. Christine and I have strong commitments to Alger Heights, our neighborhood in Grand Rapids and to Eastern Avenue Christian Reformed Church, where I serve on the consistory.

#### *Presentations*

“Expansion of the Dutch American Culture Region Measured by the Spread of Dutch Reformed Churches, 1674-1846.” Paper presented at the AADAS/NNI conference, 17-19 September 2015, Albany, New York.

(with Jan Boersema), “‘We made the wilderness to blossom.’ Nineteenth-Century Dutch Immigrants and the Natural World.” Paper presented at Hope College, Holland, Michigan, 29 September 2015.

“American Eyes on the Netherlands: Dutch Promotional and Propaganda Films in America, 1943-1974.” American Association for Netherlandic Studies (AANS) conference at the University of Michigan, 3-4 June 2016.

## Don Luidens

The past year has been a delightful one for me as I moved from Visiting Fellow to full-blown Senior Research Fellow in the Van Raalte Institute community. I have reveled in the camaraderie I share with my fellow Fellows and have found them to be most supportive of my research.

The “visiting” side of my year ended with the obligatory formal presentation of my scholarly findings last September. A responsive audience gathered in the Fried-Hemenway Auditorium to hear about my research into the early years of my parents’ mission careers in Basrah, Iraq. Edwin (’40) and Ruth Stegenga (’42) Luidens began their service in late 1944 and wrote vivid and fulsome letters for the next two decades, letters which form the basis of my ongoing research. The presentation that afternoon has become known in local lore as “the one in which Peg [my wife] participated.” Indeed, Peg



Donald Luidens



Don and Peg Luidens with Hans Krabbendam at their lecture series celebratory dinner

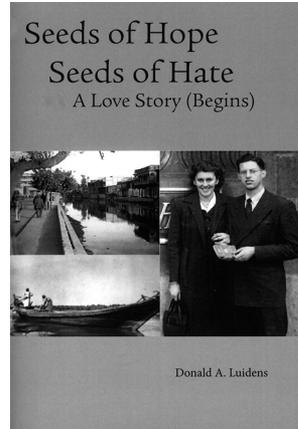
memorably spoke my mother's lines from selected letters, while I shared the narrative and excerpts from my father's mail.

In due course, the notes and pictures from that presentation were reworked and published in 2016 by the Van Raalte Press as *Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Hate: A Love Story (Begins)*. It represents the first two years of my parents' ministry and serves as a forerunner to a more complete volume to be produced in the coming years.

A significant portion of my year was spent working with Paul Heusinkveld on his poignant and inspiring memoir, *Elephant Baseball*. Scheduled to be published during the coming year by the Reformed Church Historical Series, this volume recounts Paul's childhood years as a "mish kid," the son of RCA missionaries Dr. Maurice and Eleanor Heusinkveld. Paul's family was stationed in Bahrain and Oman while he was away at boarding school in Southern India. The memoir recounts notable escapades in his early years as he shuttled between the Middle East, India, and the United States—finding cultural legs to stand on in all three.

For several years I have been a member of the "Arabian Mission Writers Guild," a collection of friends who are working on biographies of notable Reformed Church missionaries to the Middle East. As this group has grown to include additional authors, it has alerted me to the wide range of archival material which languishes in families' attics and basements. Missionaries to Arabia were voracious letter writers and diary keepers. We are now two and three generations removed from many of them, and these treasure troves have been passed down to descendants who do not always appreciate their value, especially to researchers and historians.

With this in mind, I have launched a concerted effort to encourage heirs who have documents and letters from their missionary forebears to share them with the Joint Archives of Hope College and Western Seminary. I have been gratified by the number of folks who have already agreed to do so, and I will continue to press this case in the years to come. While we VRI Fellows are not formally part of the Joint Archives, I greatly appreciate the mutuality of effort and support which we share together.



I enjoy my involvement in a Writers Workshop which was inaugurated several years ago through Western Seminary and under the sponsorship of a Lilly Endowment grant. A remnant of a larger seminar group, we gather several times a year to share our writing and to critique and support each other. These writers have been the initial beneficiaries of my scholarly work as I try out my author's voice and tone on them. I look forward to continuing to share with this set of friends in the years to come.

A highlight of the past year was a return to the Netherlands to reconnect with my family roots. I met with a seventh cousin, Jan Luidens of Kamerik, near Utrecht, whom I had never known; he is a contemporary in age but a product of the Luidens family branch which never emigrated and which bore the brunt of two world wars.

This happy encounter was wedged between visits with former Van Raalte Visiting Scholars, Jan and Antonia Boersema of the University of Leyden (no relation to Luidens), and Hans Krabbendam of the Roosevelt Institute in Middelburg. They escorted Peg and me around their towns and shared local history and cultural arcana. Jan and Antonia graciously hosted us on a nautical tour of Leyden, a never to be forgotten treat. This brief sojourn in the Netherlands served as a vivid reminder of the rich opportunities which are available through the Van Raalte Institute, for which I am most grateful. It is fun to be a full Fellow!



Jan on canal in Leyden

Hans pointing out sights in Middelburg



Jan Boersema welcomes Peg Luidens and Antonia Boersema to the renowned University of Leyden at its historic main gate. The robing room and examination chambers are to the left

*Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Hate* (Van Raalte Press, 2016), 1

An excerpt

“Given the cauldron of hostility and division which characterizes geopolitics in the Middle East today, it is hard to imagine the buoyant optimism, even joyful naiveté, with which Christian missionaries from the Western world approached that region at midpassage of the twentieth century. They brought a vibrant brand of hope nestled in a package of Christian goodwill. In large measure, this message was received with warm grace and heartfelt appreciation . . .

“Simultaneously, other forces brought less generous gifts, ones that spawned division and hatred. The inevitable dislocation of people that accompanied war was acute in these former Ottoman colonies. Refugees from Eastern Europe and the steppes of the Soviet Union—Muslim, Christian, Jewish, and secular—were swept into the restive Mandateships of Britain and France.”

# Honorary Member

## Jan Peter Verhave

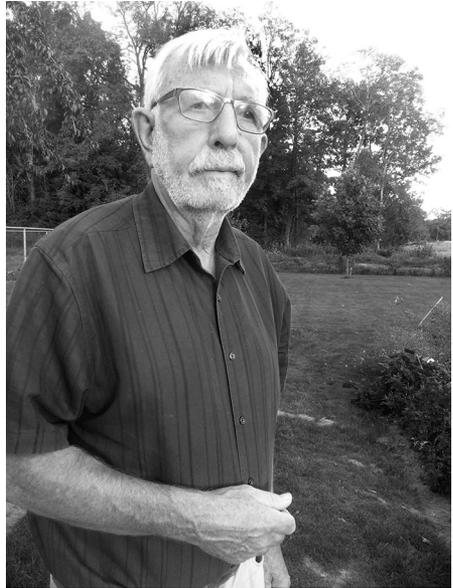
The editing of the manuscript of my biography, *A Constant State of Emergency. Paul De Kruif (1890-1971) and the Health of Americans*, has been ongoing, but has taken a back seat to the sesquicentennial history of Hope College, scheduled for publication in 2017. After that the biography is next.

Meanwhile, I had an article published on *Arrowsmith*, the book by Sinclair Lewis (1925) to which Paul De Kruif had contributed so much. The title of the article is “Arrowsmith, a Synergy of Talents” and it

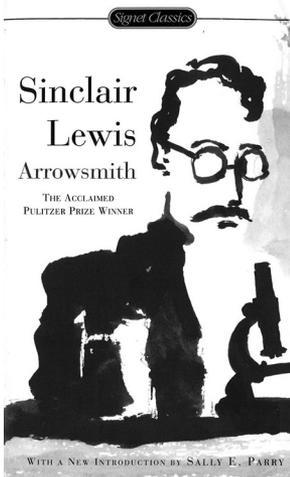
appeared in the *Sinclair Lewis Society Newsletter* 24, no. 2 (2016), 1, 12-19. I asked the following questions: What is the relevance of *Arrowsmith* for present-day science and its readers? Why was De Kruif seen for so long as merely a technical consultant? And why did it take scientists and historians some seventy years to recognize and appreciate the

medical experimentation of the early 1920s? I formulated the following conclusions:

- *Arrowsmith* was an inspiration to generations of doctors and scientists from 1925 to the 1970s, but *Arrowsmith* (as well as *Microbe Hunters*) no longer has the appeal and impact that it once had.
- The way in which Lewis describes the experiments and discoveries of Dr. Martin Arrowsmith reflects the way in which Dr. De Kruif expressed his love for the profession. The writing exercises, with Lewis as his



Jan Peter Verhave



teacher, was a way for De Kruif to come to grips with the fact that his life as a laboratory researcher at the forefront of bacteriology and immunology had ended. This can be seen as a process of partition.

- The role of De Kruif in the making of *Arrowsmith* has long been underestimated. It was mainly due to himself that his decisive role in the making of the book remained underexposed for so long. He avoided this subject and put a moratorium on clues about who was who in the novel. Some of the more recent studies by historians have considerably extended our understanding of his significant input as a literary collaborator.
- The fact that De Kruif convinced Lewis to introduce a brand new discovery that plays a decisive role in the book (the plague agent killed by a bacteriophage), contrasts with the long time it took for medical and literary historians and medical scientists (70 years of analytical silence) to recognize and appreciate this bacterial novelty of the early 1920s.
- Medical historians needed an additional trigger to pay attention. The blossoming of immunology, and the beginning of molecular biology in the late 1980s, created a renewed or sympathetic view of the application of such sciences as epidemiology and control of infectious diseases. In that context, a new generation of professionals began to see the merits of literature and biomedical science and the dreams of writers from the early 1920s.
- The modern way of randomized clinical studies and controlled clinical trials to test new vaccines or drug candidates casts a special light on the fictive campaign against plague on the Caribbean island in the novel.
- Science as a religious pursuit may cause a tunnel view in the mind of a researcher. The focus on the project and the hunt for priority causes the empathy for suffering patients to fade. The scientist may even reject the social context in which he works as corrupting and become an unworldly eccentric (as did Martin Arrowsmith).
- Even though medical science has changed dramatically, *Arrowsmith* has retained some topicality. In particular, it is worthwhile to use it as a focal point in teaching medical and/or science history.

## VRI Visiting Research Fellows Lecture Series

*Dutch American Identity Politics: The Use of History by Dutch Immigrants*  
(2003)

Hans Krabbendam, Roosevelt Study Center, the Netherlands

*The Rain of God: Reformed Church in America Growth and Decline in  
Historical Perspective* (2004)

Lynn M. Japinga, Hope College

*Reassessing 1857: Overlooked Considerations Concerning the Birth of the  
Christian Reformed Church* (2006)

James A. De Jong, Calvin Theological Seminary

*Disease and Death among the Early Settlers in Holland, Michigan* (2006)

J. P. Verhave, Radboud University Medical Center, Nijmegen, the  
Netherlands

*Growing Up Dutch American: Cultural Identity and the Formative Years of  
Older Dutch Americans* (2007)

Peter Ester, Tilburg University, the Netherlands

*The Dutch Equation in the RCA Freemasonry Controversy, 1865-1885* (2008)

Harry Boonstra, Calvin College and Seminary

*“We live presently under a waning moon”: Nicholas Martin Steffens as Leader  
of the Reformed Church in America in the West in Years of Transition (1878-  
1895)* (2008/published 2013)

George Harinck, VU University Amsterdam

*Preachers, Pews, and Pupils: Commemorating the past in twentieth-century  
Dutch America* (2008)

David Zwart, Dordt College

*“Pope of the Classis”? The Leadership of Albertus C. Van Raalte in Dutch and  
American Classes* (2009)

Leon van den Broeke, VU University Amsterdam

*Dutch Americans and the Rise of Heritage Studies* (2010)

Michael Douma, Florida State University

*Hope: The Legacy of Van Raalte* (2011)

Rein Nauta, Tilburg University, the Netherlands

*Documentary Films of the Netherlands Shown in the United States, 1942-1973: Viewership, Representativeness, and Visual Rhetoric* (publication forthcoming)

Henk Aay, Calvin College

*Hendrik P. Scholte: His Legacy in the Netherlands and in America* (2015)

Eugene Heideman, RCA staff member, retired

*Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Hate: A Love Story (Begins)* (2016)

Don Luidens, Hope College

*“We made the Wilderness to Blossom”: Nineteenth Century Dutch Immigrants and the Natural World* (publication forthcoming)

Henk Aay, Calvin College, and Jan Boersema, Leiden University, NL

## **Applications Invited Visiting Research Fellows Programs for Academic Year 2017-18**

The Van Raalte Institute at Hope College invites applications from qualified scholars for a fellowship offered through the Visiting Research Fellows Program. Up to two fellowships per academic year will be awarded, each for not more than ten weeks in duration and with a stipend of up to \$3,000.

The Netherland-America Foundation Visiting Research Fellowship was established by a grant in 2006 from the Netherland-America Foundation. The goal of this fellowship is to promote international linkage between the Netherlands and the United States in order to enhance mutual understanding and respect.

**Criteria for Selection:** Proposals for support must demonstrate that the proposed research fits the mission statement of the institute, that the scholar is qualified to conduct such research, and that the resources of the institute and of the Joint Archives of Holland are essential to the conduct of that research. A current curriculum vitae should be submitted with the application. The NAF Fellowship is intended solely for respected scholars from the Netherlands.

**Application Process and Deadline:** The candidate is to submit a written application no later than 15 January 2017. Further information about expectations, arrangements, and the application process may be obtained from our website at [www.hope.edu/vri](http://www.hope.edu/vri).

## Van Raalte Institute Staff (2015-16)

- Henk Aay                      *Senior Research Fellow* (2013)  
BA (Hons.) Wilfrid Laurier University  
MA Clark University  
PhD Clark University
- Donald J. Bruggink      *Senior Research Fellow* (2003)  
BA Central College  
BD Western Theological Seminary  
PhD University of Edinburgh  
DD (honorary) Central College
- Elton J. Bruins              *Philip Phelps Jr. Research Professor* (2002-9), *Emeritus*  
(2009); *Founding Director, VRI* (1994-2002);  
*Blekkink Professor of Religion, Emeritus* (1980-92);  
*Professor of Religion* (1966-80); *Dean for Arts and*  
*Humanities* (1984-89)  
AB Hope College  
BD Western Theological Seminary  
STM Union Theological Seminary, New York  
PhD New York University
- Annika Gidley              *Student Research Assistant* (2016)
- George Harinck              *Honorary Research Fellow* (2009)  
BA Leiden University  
MA Leiden University  
PhD VU University Amsterdam
- Earl Wm. Kennedy      *Senior Research Fellow* (2003)  
AB Occidental College  
BD Fuller Theological Seminary  
ThM Princeton Theological Seminary  
ThD Princeton Theological Seminary

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- James C. Kennedy     *Research Fellow* (1997-2005); *Honorary Research Fellow* (2010)  
BSFS Georgetown University  
MACS Calvin College  
PhD University of Iowa
- Nella Kennedy     *Senior Research Fellow, Official Translator* (2010)  
AB Northwestern College  
MA University of Iowa
- Hans Krabbendam     *Honorary Research Fellow* (2009)  
MA Leiden University  
MA Kent State University  
PhD Leiden University
- Donald A. Luidens     *Senior Research Fellow* (2016)  
BA Hope College (1969)  
MDiv Princeton Theological Seminary (1972)  
Rutgers University (1974)  
PhD Rutgers University (1978)
- Jacob E. Nyenhuis     *Editor-in-Chief, Van Raalte Press* (2007); *Director Emeritus, VRI* (2002-15); *Senior Research Fellow* (2001-2); *Provost Emeritus and Professor Emeritus of Classics* (1975-2001)  
AB Calvin College  
AM Stanford University  
PhD Stanford University  
LittD (honorary) Hope College
- Cullen Smith     *Student Research Assistant* (2016)
- JoHannah Smith     *Editorial Associate* (2010)  
AB Hope College
- Robert P. Swierenga     *A. C. Van Raalte Research Professor and Adjunct Professor of History* (1996)  
BA Calvin College  
MA University of Iowa  
PhD University of Iowa

J. P. Verhave                      *Honorary Research Fellow* (2009)

BS VU University Amsterdam

MA VU University Amsterdam

PhD University of Nijmegen

Dennis N. Voskuil      *Senior Research Fellow* (2014); *Director* (Sept. 2015-)

BS (with honors) University of Wisconsin

BD Western Theological Seminary

PhD Harvard University

## Mission Statement of the A. C. Van Raalte Institute at Hope College

The Van Raalte Institute is a department of Hope College. Hence, its mission relates directly to and supports the mission of Hope College, an undergraduate liberal arts institution offering academic programs in the context of the historic Christian faith. The institute is closely related to another department of Hope College, the Joint Archives of Holland.

*The mission of the institute is to honor the memory and the vision of the Reverend Dr. Albertus C. Van Raalte, the founder of Holland, by studying his life and work. From this mission also is derived the scholarly investigation and publication of materials concerned with the immigration and the contributions of the Dutch and their descendants in the United States of America. Furthermore, the institute is dedicated to the study of the history of all segments of the community throughout its history.*

The institute derives its vision from a letter dated 27 November 1846 by A. C. Van Raalte, written shortly after his party landed in New York. As he was headed westward, he declared “I hope that a large colony can be established here in America which will focus its work on the Kingdom of God.” His vision also extended far beyond the boundaries of Holland, Michigan, to other colonies and to immigrants throughout the United States. The bold Christian vision that he had for the church, for education, and for the community continues to have an impact on the “colony” that he founded on 9 February 1847 and on the college which he helped to establish fifteen years later.

The institute carries out its educational mission not only through research and publication but also through the sponsorship of lectures and presentations by its members and invited guests. Through liaison with scholars and educational and cultural institutions in the Netherlands and other countries, the institute seeks to promote the understanding of the history of this community. From time to time, the institute will host visiting scholars from these countries to enable them to engage in research in our local archives and to provide a broader perspective to our own endeavors.

