



Newsletter

of

The Van Voorhees Association

ORGANIZED 1982

JAN. - FEB. 1987

54th ANNUAL MEETING

The 1986 Annual Meeting of the Van Voorhees Association started unofficially on Friday evening, Oct. 10, 1986, when thirteen of our members met for dinner at O'Connor's Colonial Farms Restaurant in Franklin Twp., NJ. This was not a casual choice of eateries for the group, since Colonial Farms was the property of Voorhees' as early as 1717. During the Revolutionary War, Garret Voorhees' six room house, entry and kitchen were burned down by the British. From the indemnities paid him for the burning, Garret rebuilt the house in 1793. Two generations followed Garret at the Colonial Farms.

Later that evening, Don and Lois Vorhis hosted thenow-traditional "icebreaker" reception at the Somerset Marriott.

Annual Meeting Day, Oct. 11, dawned bright and brisk - a breezy New Jersey autumn day, as members from around the country gathered at the Somerset Marriott Hotel outside New Brunswick.

Following the morning's Executive Committee meeting, the General Meeting started shortly after noon with a delicious luncheon. This was followed by the business meeting (see meeting minutes elsewhere in this Newsletter), with the election of Membership Chairman Arthur Voorhees to the post of Vice President, succeeding Donald Sinclair, who had decided not to stand for re-election. Don has been a member of, and served the Association for 50 years, and will continue to

do so as a member-at-large of the Executive Committee. Based on Art's past performance as Membership Committee Chairman, we know that he will prove a worthy successor to Don.

The afternoon's highlight was the talk by Peter Christoph, Curator of Manuscripts and Special Collections of the New York State Library, and head of the New Netherland Project. Following a discussion of the on-again, off-again history of the translation of the Dutch records of New Netherlands, Mr. Christoph discussed a series of documents relating specifically to the Van Voorhees family. Some of these have been published (NY Genealogical and Biographical Record, v. 113, no. 4, p. 193-197, Oct. 1982), and are interesting to read of the legal dealings of typical colonists, between the Netherlands and Nieuw Amsterdam in the late 1600's. Translation of the Dutch records is shedding new light on the history of the Dutch colony, which was previously based primarily on records from the adjacent, and not always friendly, English colonies.

As the latest Annual Meeting drew to a close, those present shared the bond of kinship, new and old remembrances, and looked forward to the next meeting, at the closing Social Hour.

Our thanks to Scott Voorhees and his helpers on the success of his first effort as Program Committee Chairman.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Chairwoman June Wick advises us that the Association will have an exhibit table at the Heritage Day Exhibit at the Old Paramus Church, East Glen Ave., Ridgewood, NJ (Bergen Co.). The Exhibit will be on Monday, Feb. 16 (President's Day) from 10 AM to 5 PM. Anyone who can help out, or who has ideas or materials which would be appropriate to display are requested to contact June.

Another group has been added to our newsletter exchange program:

Demarest Family Association
270 Forest Ave.
Glen Ridge, NJ 07028

GENEALOGY COMMITTEE

Chairman Bill Lydecker has advised us that since the Annual Meeting, Genealogist Albert Stokes has completed the research on the fifth generation, and started work on the sixth.

In Memoriam

LILLIAN VOORHEES BARROW, 89, passed away Feb. 22, 1984 at New Iberia, LA. The wife of the late Leonard J. Barrow, and daughter of Alexis Voorhies and Louise Chabonnet, Mrs. Barrow had been active in numerous civic and hereditary organizations. In 1973, she received the Outstanding Civic Service Award from the Greater Iberia Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Barrow is survived by two brothers, four half-sisters, a son, two daughters, nine grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

BLANCHE VOORHEES BROWN died at Paoli, PA in February 1986. A graduate of Temple University, she taught health and physical education, and coached women's basketball and track and field from 1919 to 1925. A well-known women's field hockey and basketball official in Philadelphia, she was elected to the Temple University Hall of Fame in 1972.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

55th ANNUAL MEETING - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1987



Coat-of-Arms

During the 54 years of the Association, we have been blessed by having had Mrs. Richard Segoine to paint the coats-of-arms, followed by her daughter, Ruth Segoine McCabe. Mrs. McCabe has now laid aside her brush due to illness.

Her interest and talent have meant a great deal to the Association over

the years. We thank her and wish her better health.

This important task has now been taken up by Esther Van Dyke Reid of Lakewood, NJ. Mrs. Reid has inquired if anyone knows of a Van Dyke coat-of-arms. Anyone who can provide information on this is requested to contact:

Mrs. Joseph Edgar
423 Harrison Ave.
Highland Park, NJ 08904

A Favorite Ancestor

There are numerous interesting personalities among the descendants of Steven Coerte. The story which appears below is from the Dec. 16, 1896 Republican (Knox Co. OH). The Rev. Charles Van Voorhis who is the subject of this article, is the gr-gr-grandfather of Frank J. Van

Voorhis, Jr., and is mentioned in Frank's article which appears elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Anyone who has an interesting Van Voorhees ancestor is welcomed to send us an article to be printed in a future Newsletter.

"A man prominent in many ways, and in point of service one of the oldest ministers in the state, passed away last Friday when Rev. Charles E. Vanvoorhis died at his home about three miles north of Bladensburg in Jackson Township of heart disease at the age of 87. Mr. Vanvoorhis was a noted character and one of the old rugged pioneers of the county, having spent the most of his life in the same township in which he died. He was a minister of the Disciple church, and enjoyed the distinction of being the first minister of the first Disciple church built in the state of Ohio, which was the Disciple church in Bladensburg, erected in 1828. Since that time he served almost continuously as pastor either of that church or of Dennis church, same township, until about four years ago, when by reason of the infirmities of advanced age, he was compelled to retire from active work as a pastor. Since then, however, he was frequently called upon to officiate at marriages and funerals.

"Although not what could be termed an educated man, Mr. Vanvoorhis made up in good common sense what he lacked in education, and was thoroughly familiar with the Bible. He was a powerful and influential preacher, his fame extending all over

the state and he was frequently called away to preach. His sermons were noted as being practical and forcible, and during his lifetime he accompanied much good in many ways. He was a careful and saving man, and accumulated a competency, much of which he bestowed on his children in his lifetime.

"He was born in Washington County, Pa., in 1809, and in his youth moved to this county, where most of his life was passed. He was twice married, his second wife preceding him to the grave about six months. He reared a large family, his descendants now numbering almost 100, including seven children, 41 grandchildren and 50 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Sunday at Dennis church, conducted by Rev. P.M. Woods, Rev. D.C. Robinson and Rev. J.L. Snyder.

In the death of Rev. Mr. Vanvoorhis, Knox County loses one of her most prominent pioneers, and good citizens, who has contributed so much to advancing her interests and welfare, and his loss will be sincerely regreted.

"In the history of Jackson Township, as related in the Knox County History,

is found the following concerning Mr. Vanvoorhis and his connection with the Disciple church in the county: 'The first Disciple church in Ohio was organized in the township in August 1828. At that date Alexander Campbell, and his co-laborers, were zealously laboring in Ohio and other states. A few copies of his paper, the Millennial Harbinger, were circulated in the township, and being carefully read, proved to be seed sown on good ground, yielding a large increase. Elija Harris, Washington Houch, and John Wheeler, with their wives, organized themselves into a Disciple church, which is claimed to be the first regular church organization of that denomination in this state. Rev. Charles Vanvoorhis, still living, was the first pastor, and only preacher for many years.

"Another Disciple church, known as Dennis chapel, was organized about 1830. It is situated in the southwestern part of the township. William D. Beatty and George Eley were the first elders, and William Braddock and Benjamin Eley the first deacons. Rev. James Porter was the first pastor, and continued in that capacity until 1839, when he was superceded by Rev. Charles Vanvoorhis, who has preached to the people most of the time since."

Questionnaire / 1987 Dues Notice

At the back of this Newsletter are a questionnaire and 1987 Dues Notice.

All members (including life members) are requested to complete the questionnaire. The information provided will be used to establish new expanded membership records, which will be combined with the existing membership and genealogical records. Your cooperation in returning the completed questionnaire is appreciated.

In conjunction with the questionnaire, we are seeking several members to assist in inputting the information into the computer. This requires IBM PC or IBM PC compatible computer, with minimum 256K available RAM. Software will be provided by us. Please contact:

George and Pat Davis
310 Rockland Ave.
River Vale, NJ 07675

In Search of Some Coert Line Ancestors

by Frank J. Van Voorhis, Jr.

We recently had the pleasure of a visit from a newly found second cousin, Margaret Van Voorhis Goldner of North Jackson, OH. Margaret gave me exact information on the burial site of my gr-gr-gr-gr-grandfather, Capt. Daniel Van Voorhis, and his son, Samuel Newton Van Voorhis. We decided that visiting these graves was something we must accomplish.

With great anticipation, we left Ohio a day early for the Association's 1986 Annual Meeting. After spending the night in Washington, PA, we proceeded in the morning East on I-70 to the Bentleyville A Exit. As we came off the exit ramp, we were confronted with a sign pointing to the town of VAN VOORHIS - 3 MILES. We went the three miles to Van Voorhis, stopped at the only gas station and store. The owner sold us a just off the press book on the history of Van Voorhis (\$18.00). We continued 3 miles north to the town of Hazelkirk, went through the town to the far end, and turned right (A small steel mill is at this turn-off point) approximately 100 feet, and parked in a lane on the left hand side of the road.

(Through the brush to our roots)

We donned old clothes and boots, and with clippers in hand, walked another 1000 feet up the lane to a mass of briars and an old abandoned cemetery. There, for 45 minutes, we clipped our way through the briars and brush, and found Capt. Daniel's grave. We had also purchased chalk to put on the gravestone lettering, and it was needed so pictures could be taken. Two of Capt. Daniel's three wives, Mary Newton and Nancy Myers, were also buried there. This was Capt. Daniels homestead and private cemetery. Many other descendants are buried there too.

Capt. Daniel Van Voorhis, Jr. was b.

in 1738, and d. 2 Dec. 1819. As a Captain in the Continental Navy, Daniel Jr. was twice captured by the British during the Revolution. His father, Daniel Van Voorhis, Sr., was b. 17 Dec. 1701, but his date of death is not known. Daniel Sr. was a gr-grandson of Steven Coerte, who emigrated from Holland in 1660. I would like to find his grave, but chances of this are not good. Oyster Bay, NY area would probably be the place to look.

After this great experience, we were encouraged to find the resting place of Samuel Newton Van Voorhis (Capt. Daniel's son), that Margaret Goldner had also told us about.

On Oct. 29, 1986, we did just that, and again were excited and thrilled in doing so. His grave is in a well-kept cemetery near Galion, OH, and can easily be reached by car. Samuel Newton's son is my gr-gr-grandfather, Rev. Charles Edward Van Voorhis, who is buried at Dennis Church in Jackson Twp., Kent Co. OH. (ed. note: see article elsewhere in this Newsletter)

To reach Samuel Newton Van Voorhis' grave, proceed as follows: Start at Worthington, OH. Go north on I-71, 24 miles to State Rt. 61. Go north on SR 61 to Galion OH (26miles). Turn left (west) on Rt. 19 and go 5.9 miles to Parcher Rd. Turn left on Parcher Rd., and go .6 mile to a lane on the left side (there is an abandoned brick school on the right). Go down the lane $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to the cemetery located on the north side of the lane. Samuel Newton is buried under the pine trees on the far NE corner. His stone, made of sandstone and quite indistinct, is broken, and I will see that it is repaired as soon as possible. His wife, Sally, is buried next to him (b. 1784, d. 9-20-1848, aged 64 years). Samuel Newton's stone says b. 7-10-1774, d. aged 83-6 mo.-12 days.

Book Review

What's In A Heritage?

Many of us are aware of the fact that there are schools in both this country and India that bear the family name Voorhees. Those who have read the Association's Historical Handbook will recall that the naming of these schools grew out of the benefaction of two very caring members of the family: Ralph Voorhees (1838-1907) and his wife, the former Elizabeth Nevius Rodman, who also was descended from Steven Coerte through the Lucas line. But what led these fine people to give substantial sums of money to a small school in Denmark, South Carolina, that is now Voorhees College?

Probably the best source of answers is in J. Kenneth Morris' book Elizabeth Evelyn Wright (1872-1906), Founder of Voorhees College. Here is a very moving story of a most remarkable young woman, half-negro, half-Indian, rising up from utter poverty and degradation to enter Tuskegee Institute where she was captured by the dream of Booker T. Washington that the negro of America might through education and training find a more productive and respected place in American life. With unique dedication, determination, grit and perseverance, this young lady of frail health worked against almost insuperable odds to establish a training school in South Carolina which took the name Voorhees in return for considerable financial support from Ralph and Elizabeth Voorhees. The school became a high-school level institution in the 1920's and grew to be a full-fledged and accredited college in the 1960's.

One of the most poignant parts of this book, and one of the most interesting from our family standpoint, deals with Elizabeth Wright's visit in Clinton, New Jersey, with Ralph and Elizabeth Voorhees on behalf of her school. She had expected perhaps ten minutes in which to make her appeal

but was received in a gracious and relaxing manner beyond all of her expectations. While she was quite surprised by Mr. Voorhees' total blindness, and marveled at how normally he managed with this handicap, she was even more struck by the overall experience, this being "the first time she had eaten with a white family in their home and was treated as a social equal."

Elizabeth Wright was clearly impressed by Ralph and Elizabeth Voorhees, but Ralph and Elizabeth must have been equally impressed with Elizabeth Wright, as shown by the support they gave to her school. This book gives us a very good picture of the unique heritage possessed by Voorhees College, a heritage with which we of the family and the Association can find interest and take pride.

The book has 246 pages plus a good index, and is available in either hard cover (\$20) or soft cover (\$10) from: BOOKS, The University of the South, SPO 1145, Sewanee, TN 37375. Add \$2.50 per package for postage. (Residents of Tennessee must add 7.75% sales tax.)

Don Vorhis

New Item For Sale

Now available to members is an insignia of the Association. It is a shield about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch by $\frac{3}{8}$ inch, gold plated sterling silver, with solid red enamel background, on which appears a castle (see coat of arms) in gold, with gold lines showing castle detail, and across the top "VAN VOORHEES" in gold block letters. The insignia is available either as a tie tack or charm (please specify). \$14.00 each, post paid (make check payable to the Van Voorhees Association) from:

Mrs. Joseph Edgar
423 Harrison Ave.
Highland Park, NJ 08904



Minutes of the Annual Meeting
Van Voorhees Association
11 October, 1986
Somerset Marriott Hotel
Somerset, NJ

The 54th Annual Meeting of the Van Voorhees Association was called to order at 2:15 p.m. by President Donald Vorhis. The Rev. William J.F. Lydecker gave the Invocation.

The Minutes of the 53rd Annual Meeting having been printed in the Newsletter and read by the membership, the Secretary's report was suspended by motion and vote, and the Minutes accepted as printed.

G. Harold("Bob") Buttler gave the Treasurer's Report, which was approved as presented, by unanimous vote of the membership.

Our checking account showed the following activity:

Balance on Hand, 1 Oct., 1985	\$ 2994.98
Income	10194.58
Disbursements	11394.89
Balance on Hand, 1 Oct., 1986	1094.67

Our 4 savings accounts earned a total interest of \$5035.79, from 1 Oct. 1985 to 1 Oct., 1986.

Arthur Voorhees, Membership Committee Chairperson, reported that we have gained 43 new members so far, this year. This figure includes 3 Life members, 3 Jr. members, and 3 Sustaining members. Last year's new membership figures were higher, due to the publicity generated by San Francisco Tours involvement. However, Art is anticipating that we will gain some more new members this year, for a probable total of around 70.

Manning Voorhees, Historical Committee Chairperson, discussed his Committee's interest in hiring a new search of the Assen Archives in the Netherlands, in an attempt to discover any new information regarding Steven Coert's motives for emigration to the New World.

Manning met the Groningen State Archivist, Dr. Jan Folkerts, recently, at a meeting of the New Netherlands Project; and since Assen, in the Province of Drenthe, is very near Gronigen, Manning has been corresponding with Dr. Folkerts regarding a possible research project to be financed by the VVA. The Executive Committee, at their meeting this morning, authorized further inquiries into the feasibility of such research.

William J.F. Lydecker, Genealogical Committee Chairperson, noted his committee's need to expand, and asked for volunteers to represent different branches of the Van Voorhees family--either by spelling or by lineage. He also noted that our genealogist, Albert Stokes, is overwhelmed by queries; and that the Genealogical Committee needs to be more active in responding to such correspondence.

George and Pat Davis, our Newsletter Editors, were formally recognized for a job well-done. George then discussed the forthcoming computerization of the mailing list, and announced that there will be a membership questionnaire in the January Newsletter, whose purpose is to gather membership data. A directory of Association members will be published, eventually.

George also requested contributions, from the membership, to the Newsletter.

June Wick, the Publicity Committee Chairperson, also requested help from any members who are interested in serving on the Committee. She reported on the numerous periodicals and associations which she has contacted in her efforts to gain exposure for our organization; and President Vorhis noted that her efforts were certainly working, since he had received many letters requesting information.

Bob Voris, Chairperson of the Publications Committee, announced that our sales of The Van Voorhees Family, Vol. I, total nearly \$15,000. Because of the delayed publication, we also accumulated nearly \$1,000 worth of interest on pre-paid orders. The advance from the Underwriters' Fund, which helped pay our publication expenses, has been returned to the Treasury.

Bob noted that there are about 600 books, out of the original printing of 1600, left in inventory. He noted that the reviews of the book, which have appeared in several genealogical publications, have been very favorable; and that it is time to start thinking about Vol. II.

The Publications Committee's search for descendants of the original Underwriters has located 36 of the 68; and three of the original Underwriters are still living.

The next item of business was the nomination and election of an officer to fill the position of Vice-President of the VVA. Our incumbent Vice-President, Donald Sinclair, has decided not to seek re-election. President Vorhis noted that Don Sinclair has given over 50 years of service to the Association and has been "a strong pillar of support" to all of us. The membership then rose and gave a formal, standing vote of confidence to Don Sinclair, who will continue to serve on the Executive Committee as a member-at-large.

Cornelia Voorhis Mason, as Chairperson of the ad hoc Nominating Committee, then proposed the name of Arthur R. Voorhees as a candidate for the position of Vice-President. The motion was made, seconded and accepted; and as there were no alternative proposals from the floor, a vote was called for, and Arthur R. Voorhees was unanimously elected as Vice-President.

President Vorhis noted that, since Art will be spending half the year in Florida, the President's philosophy that people from all over the country need to be involved in the running of the organization will be well-served!

President Vorhis then thanked his Executive Committee in whom, he said, the work of the organization centers; and had them all rise, to be formally recognized.

Albert Stokes, the VVA Genealogist, then gave a brief report on his work, noting that Generation V is progressing and is, already, larger than Generations I, II, III, and IV, put together. He discussed some of the documentary evidence he has collected, including such items as testimony by a Voris man contained in the well-known Livingston Papers, and a photocopied Civil War diary by a Coert Stevens van Voorhies, who participated in General Sherman's march across Georgia.

Scott Voorhees, Program Committee Chairperson, announced that the popular Reception after the Meeting would take place; and he then introduced our featured speaker, Peter Christoph, who, as curator of the Manuscripts and Special Collections of the New York State Library in Albany, heads The New Netherland Project.

Mr. Christoph gave a most interesting talk about Dutch colonial history, and the early Dutch records which The New Netherland Project is translating. He noted that there were, literally, tens of thousands of records in 17th-century Dutch which could not be translated because of the archaic language usage and the indecipherable handwriting. It wasn't until after 1900, when A.J.F. Van Laer, who had a background in etymology, began translating the manuscripts that any adequate translations were done. Prior to that time, the translators had little knowledge of the Dutch language of the colonial period, and often mistook the meanings of the documents.

However, after Van Laer retired as Curator of the NYS Archives, in 1939, no new translations were done until 1974, when Dr. Charles T. Gehring, a Germanic Linguistics professor at the State University at Albany, was hired by the NYS Library to translate some of their Dutch colonial manuscripts holdings. He was paid entirely through grant money; and Mr. Christoph noted that never, in the subsequent 12 years, has Dr. Gehring been on the NYS payroll, his salary still being paid through a combination of grant money and private contributions to the New Netherland Project. Through the auspices of The Holland Society, Dr. Gehring's work is being made available in published form.

Mr. Christoph mentioned that the scope of The Project includes virtually every known 17th century Dutch document relating to New Netherland, a collection which has been amassed through Dr. Gehring's extensive travels to both American institutions and Dutch archives in the Netherlands. The eventual publication should run to 24 volumes.

Mr. Christoph then addressed himself specifically to a matter of interest to the Van Voorhees family: the question of why Steven Coerts decided to emigrate to the New World. He said that Dr. Jan Folkerts, the Groningen Archivist, had written an article on the rather extensive emigration, in the year 1660, from the Province of Drenthe to the North American colonies. 98 people, that year, left their Drenthe homes for the New World. Why?

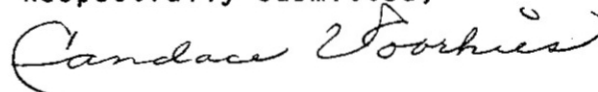
Well, said Mr. Christoph, it seems to be significant that the documentary evidence shows that Jan Suebering, the brother of Steven's wife, Willempie, had already emigrated to the New World, but returned to Drenthe in the year 1660, apparently for a visit, since he sailed, again, for the New World that same year. It is postulated, Mr. Christoph remarked, that he was acting as a "real estate agent," telling people back home about the good life to be had in the colonies. It is known that there were economic pressures and difficulties in the Province of Drenthe, at that time; and, in fact, Steven Coerts was probably less successful than his brothers since he was the only one to be tempted by "The Promised Land."

Where, then, did Steven get the money to sail to America? Well, noted Mr. Christoph, he probably didn't have it, since the list of passengers which tells us Steven and his family sailed on "De Bonte Koe" was, in reality, a list of passengers who owed money to the company! But all's well that ends well, since Steven obviously prospered in the new land.

After this informative talk, President Vorhis awarded a prize of tulip bulbs to the VVA members who had come the farthest: Kathleen and Harold Voorhees, of Rochester, NY.

The meeting was adjourned, with a Social Hour to follow, at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Candace Voorhies, Secretary

Genealogical Queries

GQ-9 Miss _____ Van Voorheis, b. ca 1750, Franklin Twp., NJ, m. Jihn Lake⁵, son of John Lake⁴ (Nicholas³, John², John¹ of Gravesend, NY) ca 1783-4 in White Creek, Old Albany CO. (Charlotte Co., Washington Co.) NY. Is she the Dau. of Martinus Van Voorheis, b. 26 Mar 1714, son of Jan Lucas Van Voorhees (Lucas², Steven¹) and Mayke Schenck, dau. of Roelof Martensen Schenck and Anntie Pieterse Wyckoff, and Lebeche, who have other children bapt. at 6 Mile Run Church, Franklin Twp., NJ. Need her given name and birth record. John Lake and Miss Van Voorheis had: Benjamin b. 1784, Annis b. 1786, and John Jacob b. 1788 in White Creek, Old Albany Co., NY. Would appreciate any information regarding all above. Mrs. Doris Gray Emerson, 3162 Madeira Ave. Costa Mesa, CA 92626.

GQ-10 Need information about Fanny Voorhees, b. 13 Feb. 1809 in NY State, possibly Amsterdam, NY. Her father was Luke Voorhees b. 24 Feb 1781, m. Nov. 1806 Mary Petty/Petee. The family moved to Steuben Co., NY ca. 1811. Fanny m. Silas DeVore. She was probably a second wife. They moved to Crawford Co., PA ca. 1840. She is missing from family in 1850 Census, so may have d. in this period. Mrs. Paul DeVore, 6464 Nixon St., Lakewood, CA 90713.

EXCERPTS FROM 1986 ANNUAL MEETING SPEECH

BY PETER CHRISTOPH
Curator, Manuscripts and Special Collections
New York State Library, Albany

"THE NEW NETHERLAND PROJECT"

A great many of the early records of our country were kept in Dutch. There were the records of the provincial government of New Netherland, and the records of local governments at Albany, New York and Kingston in New York, as well as in various localities in what are today New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. There were the records of the semi-independent colony of Rensselaerwyck. Beyond the official records we have many records of churches, and a small amount of private business records and personal correspondence has survived. We have to remember that the end of the use of the Dutch language in official records in 1664 did not mean that the language disappeared. For example, records of some churches were kept in Dutch up to 1800, and family usage continues on well beyond that.

In short, there were a great many records in Dutch. Limiting our attention just to the 17th century we still find several tens of thousands of pages. We have enough material to get a very good sense of the history, life, culture, hopes and ambitions of the early settlers.

Sixteen years ago, I was placed in charge of the manuscripts collections at the New York State Library, and it was then that I had to face a most frustrating problem. I had in my custody tens of thousands of records that nobody could read. Imagine how annoying that is for a librarian whose purpose in life is to make material available to people.

There were, in fact, many problems. The first is the language. There just are not many people in this country who read Dutch. And those who can read the modern language discover very quickly that the 17th century language is significantly different. To use English as an example, most of us do not read 17th century literature, such as Shakespeare, or the King James Bible, without checking the footnotes and the commentaries regularly. Imagine reading a document from that period with no footnotes, containing words and expressions that the experts have never seen before.

A second problem is handwriting. Handwriting styles change greatly over time. I could show you 17th century English documents, written neatly by professional scribes, that most people could not read and that at first glance they might not even recognize as English. The same is true of Dutch documents. Most modern Dutchmen cannot read 17th century documents because they cannot decipher the handwriting.

There had been frequent attempts in the past to overcome these difficulties, to find someone who knew Dutch, more or less, and who could translate the records. Several attempts in the 19th century were largely unsuccessful because the translator either did not know Dutch very well, or did not know English very well. Obviously a translator has to be completely fluent in both. And secondly, they did not have much in the line of dictionaries to help them out. For instance, the unabridged Dutch dictionary was not begun until 1882, and today - a hundred and four years and 23 volumes later - is still not complete. But at least we have most of the dictionary: the 19th century translators had almost none of it. Nor did they have many of the encyclopedias and histories that we have today.

Therefore, we have to face the fact that almost everything in print prior to 1900 - that is, prior to the work of A.J.F. van Laer - is really dreadful. The old translators have often totally missed the meaning of a document, so that it may mean exactly the opposite of what the translator indicates. Unfortunately, most of American history relating to the Dutch has been written on the basis of such translations, so that a great deal of the written history of early New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware is pure nonsense. In addition, we must note that many historians consulted neither the Dutch records nor the translations, but rather sought information on New Netherland from New England records. Of course, the New Englanders were no enthusiasts for the Dutch, so that the records used by historians have completely prejudiced the writing of American history against the New Netherland government. For instance, the Peter Stuyvesant we find in the Dutch records is nothing like the ogre of American history; rather, he is young, energetic, a good administrator, and a good negotiator and diplomat who usually got the better of Yankee officials.

The English seized control of the colony in 1664, but one does not go to bed a Dutchman on Thursday night, and get up an Englishman Friday morning. The records from the early years of the English government contain a great many documents in Dutch and although the number decreases with time, they remain a significant portion of the records even a quarter century later. The Holland Society early on encouraged us not to limit our efforts just to the period of Dutch government, but to translate and edit later materials as well. However, we felt that we should agree on some sort of limit as to how far we would go, and finally settled on Leisler's rebellion as a cutoff point, since that was, at least arguably, the final administration of the colony by Dutch nationals.

It has fallen to my wife and me to edit the records of the English government, from the English takeover in 1664 to the fall of Leisler's administration in 1691. This actually is a separate project from the New Netherland Project.

There are all sorts of challenges and problems. Some people did not write very well, and some wrote very badly. A petition written by someone who does not have occasion to write anything from one year to the next is usually not a well written document. On the other end of the social scale, but no more readable, was Governor Sir Edmund Andros who had the peculiar habit of writing with a blunt piece of lead, or maybe it was a musket ball, and sometimes he used some sort of red crayon. It can take a couple of hours to figure out one sentence in his handwriting. Paper being scarce and expensive, people tended to crowd their words together, and crowd the lines together, and then write between the lines, which is not helpful. There were no spelling rules back then -- the first English dictionary did not come along until a century later, so most people had their own personal spelling rules, and some seemed to use no rules at all. You will often find a word spelled three or four different ways on the same page. You don't always have much to go by when the handwriting is bad and the spelling is inconsistent.

Further compounding the problems are various sorts of damage to the documents. At one time all the documents dealing with Indian land titles on Long Island were bundled together, and some thoughtless rodent ate a hole right through the middle of the bundle, so that all those documents are lacking a chunk right out of the center.

A fire at the state capitol in 1911 destroyed many pages of documents, and singed the edges of many others. Often what we have is an oval, a page with the corners and edges burned away. This is a great problem in the Dutch records as well -- it is not easy to translate a sentence with the subject missing, or the verb or both.

Yet somehow we manage to overcome the obstacles and get the books published. So far we have published 16 books in 12 years, which isn't bad. These include two volumes of local New York City records edited by Ken Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, two volumes that they and I edited of Kingston records, two volumes of provincial records dealing with the Delaware region, translated by Dr. Gehring, and the rest are records of the colonial government, 2 translations by Dr. Gehring, 4 by A.J.F. van Laer, and 4 volumes transcribed and edited by my wife and myself.

While editing the papers of Governor Sir Edmund Andors, I came across a curious document in Dutch relating to a chap named Jan Elting. What it was was a notarized certificate signed by several persons testifying that Jan Elting was the son of his parents and that there was no one else around with that name. One does not normally get such a document for no reason, so I became curious to find out what was going on. Elting was from Kingston, so I checked the translation of the Kingston Papers by Dingman Versteeg, which is not always to be trusted, and the Library's microfilm of the original Dutch record. I found that Elting at the same time that he had filed the notarized certificate with the provincial secretary, had also filed his will, his baptismal certificate, and a copy of a court record from the Netherlands in the Kingston city clerk's files. And finally, I checked our abstracts of the Amsterdam notarial records and found a document there relating to Jan Elting. So without stirring out of my office I could check records of colonial New York, the city of Kingston, the city of Amsterdam, most of them already translated, and find out exactly what was going on with Jan Elting. And that is what the New Netherland Project is all about: making records easily accessible that have never been available before.

I will tell you the story of Jan Elting. He had received word that his father had died in Drenthe, and since Jan Kiersen was going over there on a business trip, he gave Jan Kiersen power of attorney to collect whatever inheritance he had coming. Well, when Jan Kiersen got to Drenthe, he was told that the family had not heard from Jan Elting in many years, and had long believed that he was dead, and they certainly had no intention of handing over an inheritance to someone who might well be a fraud. And they produced witnesses in court who swore that Jan Elting was dead.

Jan Kiersen went to Amsterdam where he found some fellow businessmen from America visiting the old country, and they swore in court that Jan Elting was alive and in Kingston. With such conflicting evidence the magistrates didn't know what to do, so they decided Jan Elting would have to show up in court and prove he was who he said he was before he could get his money.

What he did, then, was to obtain a sworn statement from several persons originally from Drenthe but living in America as to the fact that he was who he said he was, that they had known him in Drenthe and they had known him in America and he was the same guy and still alive. And since they were from Drenthe the court in Drenthe should know who they were and that they were all telling the truth. Armed with this and other documents, Jan Elting set off for the Netherlands to claim his inheritance. I guess the moral of this is that you should write a letter to your parents once in a while so they know you're still alive.

But anyway, I thought it was an intriguing story, and genealogically interesting because everyone who signed any of these notarized statements gave some personal information, such as his occupation, or his home town, or his age, or something of the sort to identify himself or herself. I ended up writing a little article about the whole affair, which was published three years ago in the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, and then I sort of forgot about the whole business.

Until I was asked to come down here to speak about the New Netherland Project and it was suggested that you might like to hear a little about whatever I could

find out about the first Voorhees, so I would have some idea of what records he might appear in, and I noticed that Steven Coert was from Drenthe.

Aha, said I, causing strange stares from the people around me, I remember there were a number of people from Drenthe involved in that Jan Elting business. Perhaps there's a Van Voorhees among them.

What I found was that the people swearing that Jan Elting was really Jan Elting wer all members of one family: Steven Coert, who gave his age as 79, his wife Willemptje Roellofs, aged 60, his son Coert Stevens, aged 42, his son-in-law Jan Stryker the gunsmith, aged 64, and his wife's brother, Jan Subringh, aged 48. And the fellow that Jan Elting sent to Holland with a power of attorney was also a member of this family, Jan Kiersen, son-in-law of Steven Coert.



Guest Speaker
Peter Christoph

MILESTONES

RICHARD STUART CHAMBERS married Mary Beth Kerce on June 28, 1986. Richard is the son of Jane Voorhees Williamson.

A painting of the Statue of Liberty, titled "Beckoning Still", by artist DONALD VORHEES of Red Bank, NJ, has become the only art work by a living artist hanging at the White House. Painted in 1981, the watercolor depicts the Lady as seen from a distance, as if through a mist, with a rusting tug and damaged flag in the foreground. Prints have been distributed through galleries around the country.

Col. STEVEN V. BOYLAN was recently awarded the Great Cross of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany. Prior to his recent retirement, Steve served as Chief of the Liaison

Staff of the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Army in Europe, at the U.S. Embassy in Bonn. A 1956 graduate of West Point, Steve is the son of William H. Boylan of Fair Haven, CT.

The Feb. 16, 1986 New York Times noted that US District Judge DONALD S. VOORHEES of Seattle had recently made an important ruling in the Japanese-American wartime internment reparations case, when he overturned the 1942 conviction of Gordon K. Hirabayashi. Hirabayashi had refused to be evacuated to a wartime internment camp.

MARGARET PATER BENNETT of El Sobrante, CA, daughter of Cay Voorhees Thompson of Westchester Co., NY, has been selected as one of 6,000 Californians to appear in the 16th Edition of Who's Who in California, for her achievement as a performing and self-employed artist/designer. Margaret was also actively involved in the first American Festival of Arts, Crafts and Music held in Amsterdam in May 1985.

UNDERWRITERS' FUND

As mentioned in the November 1985 Newsletter, a great debt of thanks is due to those members who, nearly a half century ago, contributed to the "Underwriters' Fund". Due to the cooperation of our readers, representatives of over half of the Underwriters have contacted Publications Committee Chairman Bob Voris.

We are publishing below the list of Underwriters and their last known addresses (ca. 1947) ((* - indicates

the Underwriter/representative has been "found")) and request that anyone who can help with locating the remaining Underwriters contact:

Robert S. Voris
802 Berkeley Rd.
Westover Hills
Wilmington, DE 19807

Copies of the Genealogy will be shipped in the near future to those Underwriters/representatives who have been located.

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2. J. Spencer Voorhees, Maplewood, N.J.
- * 3. Levi Van Voorhis, Huron, S.D.
- * 4. R. Clay Van Voorhis, Newark, O.
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- 68. Rev. Frank Lemert Van Voorhis, Storm Lake, Iowa
- 69. Alice Van Dyke Voorhees Quinan, 120 W. Highland Drive
(Mrs. George E. Quinan) Seattle, Washington
- 70. Raymond Voorhees Brokaw, 1408 Martine Ave. Plainfield, N.J.

Editor's Note

Contributions are requested and welcomed from everyone for all departments of the Newsletter. This is YOUR Newsletter and YOUR Association. Only through YOUR participation, input and ideas can the Association continue to grow. We thank those of you who have already donated items for print in the Newsletter. Contact one of the Committee Chairmen (or check the box on the Questionnaire) TODAY! Send your Newsletter contributions to the Editors!

Our apologies for the delay in the present Newsletter. Mailing was delayed due to a strike at Rutgers University where our mailing list is produced.

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

<u>Newsletter issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
April-May 1987	March 15, 1987
July 1987	June 15, 1987
January 1988	December 15, 1987

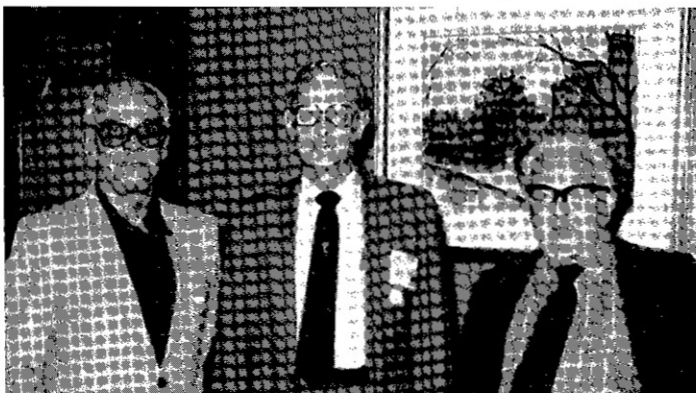


L-R

Program Chairman Scott
Voorhees; Guest Speaker
Peter Christoph;
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1986 ANNUAL MEETING

Part of the Group at
the Luncheon



L-R

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HELP WANTED

PAY....MINIMAL

REWARDS....IMMEASURABLE

The success of the Publicity Committee in making the Association's existence more generally known has created a new "problem". A growing number of inquiries regarding Van Voorhees ancestors/descendants are being received by the Association's Genealogist and Genealogical Committee Chairman.

Additionally, as work on the Genealogy progresses into the later generations, the geographical area in which the pertinent records are deposited grows much larger.

Those members who are interested in genealogical work can help in several ways:

1. Answer inquiries coming from people who spell the family name the same (i.e. Voris, Voorhis, Voorhees, etc.).

2. Answer inquiries regarding persons in a particular geographical area (county, township, state, etc.)
3. Perform basic research by abstracting wills, deeds, church and court records, gravestones, etc. in your local area. This is particularly important in the midwest, west and south.

Anyone who can help with any or all of the above please contact:
Rev. William J.F. Lydecker
19 Oak St.
Allendale, NJ 07401

Please note that experience is NOT necessary, and corresponding with your cousins can be a fun and rewarding passtime.

The Association continues to stock items of interest to the members. These are sold at cost plus a very small amount which goes into our fund supporting genealogical research and publication. The currently available items are listed below:

	Members	Non-members
Historical Handbook	\$5.00	\$6.00
Van Voorhees Letters 1684-1699 from Holland to Flatbush	1.50	1.80
50 th Anniversary History	2.50	3.00
Coat-of-Arms (hand painted)	10.00	12.00
Coat-of-Arms needlepoint/cross- stitch/hooked rug diagram	1.00	1.20
Coat-of-Arms ceramic tile	8.00	9.50

Orders for all of the above items should be sent, with your check made out to "The Van Voorhees Association", to: Mrs. Joseph Edgar
423 Harrison Ave.
Highland Park, NJ 08904

ORDER FORM

The VAN VOORHEES GENEALOGY, Volume I

Please enter my order for the following copies of Volume I of the Van Voorhees Genealogy:

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Other family groups
and/or lineage organ-
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Line of descent: Albert Coert Jan Lucas unknown
(Check all that apply) Hendrickje Jannetje Merghin

(to help us track your membership)
Approximate date joined VVA: 19____

Hometown when you joined: _____
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Name when you joined (if different than above): _____

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I would like to help on the following committee(s):

History Genealogy Planning Publicity Program
 Membership Publications Finance Newsletter

Ideas and/or activities the Association should try:*

Please send a membership application to:*

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