



Newsletter

of

The Van Voorhees Association

ORGANIZED 1932

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PRESIDENT'S COMMENTARY

Your Association engages two research associates who are actively exploring the Van Voorhees Family. I thought that you might be interested in what is happening.

Florence Christoph is a Certified Genealogist with an extensive background in early Dutch families and the New Netherland era. She has been a genealogist for some thirty years, professionally for the past twenty, and has delivered numerous lectures on the subject. Florence's objective is to complete Volume II of the *Van Voorhees Family*, which will encompass the Fifth Generation. Considerable material has been compiled by Al Stokes, but there remains much to be done. The Association envisions that Volume II will be available within two years, and perhaps sooner. David R. Voorhees and Adrienne Haney are transcribing the data onto computer disk as it is prepared.

Adriana Millenaar-Brown is locating and translating the original documents in the United States that pertain to Steven Coerts, his wife, Willemkje Roelofs Sueberinge, children, grandchildren and other immediate members of that Family era. The objectives are to produce a sequel to *Through a Dutch Door*, if the research warrants, and to validate long-standing historical facts about the Family. Adriana's research is in a very early stage. Dr. Charles Gehring, Director of the New Netherland Project, is a consultant for this effort. Adriana is a native of the Netherlands and, thus, is well versed in the Dutch language. She is married to a professor at Williams College in Massachusetts.

Fr. Bill Lydecker is supervising our genealogical and historical endeavors. We look forward to new products that will maintain our place at the leading edge among family organizations.

Manning W. Voorhees

AL STOKES GENEALOGIST EMERITUS

The Executive Committee in its meeting of October 9, 1993 awarded Albert L. Stokes the designation Genealogist Emeritus and granted him an Honorary Life Membership in the Association. The Committee recognized Al's eighteen year dedication as our Genealogist, the publication of Volume I of the *Van Voorhees Family* and compilation of considerable material toward the publication of Volume II. Thank you, Al - your designation is well deserved. Incidentally, this is the first time that the Association has capped someone as "Emeritus". Al's award is doubly distinctive.

NEW ASSOCIATION OFFICIALS

Barney Ward was elected Treasurer at the Annual Meeting and Reunion on October 9, 1993. Barney is the chief financial officer for the Association.

Margaret Ramsay was appointed Representative for the Aeltje Line and Bob Lydecker was appointed Representative for the Hendrickje Lines. Margaret and Bob will serve as the first Line Representatives for the descendants of Steven Coerts' daughters. The Representative position for the Jantje Line is vacant.

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ANNUAL MEETING AND REUNION, OCTOBER 8, 1994 IN THE AREA OF NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY -- MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND PLAN TO ATTEND. OUR SPEAKER WILL BE DR. FIRTH HARING FABEND, AUTHOR OF A DUTCH FAMILY IN THE MIDDLE COLONIES, 1660-1800.

UPDATE ON VAN VOORHEES PARK

At this writing, the New York City Council had not taken the final step in condemning Van Voorhees Park in Brooklyn. Kathy Fitzsimons, of the Friends to Save Van Voorhees Park, spoke at the October, 1993 Annual Meeting and discussed their efforts to prevent the City from condemning the Park. At the earlier Executive Committee meeting that day, Tom Van Voorhies volunteered to rescue the Steven Coerts plaque that is embedded in the cobblestone of the Park. Tom has met with the Assistant Director for Engineering of the Long Island Hospital. The salvage effort will await conveyance of title to the Hospital.



THE 1888 GENEALOGY

Frank Van Voorhis, Representative for the Coert Line, advises that a reproduction copy of Elias W. Van Voorhis' *The Van Voorhees Family*, originally published in 1888, may be obtained from: University of Michigan, Microfilm/Film Press, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor MI 48106, telephone (800)521-0600, ext. 34903. The cost of this six pound book is \$180 for paperback and \$192 hardback, and the catalog number is O P 47736. Frank credits Betty Muller, of Pearl River LA, for this information.

The Elias genealogy is the ground-breaking work for the Family and is highly valued by many of us. Note should be made, however, that subsequent research has identified many mistakes, but they do not detract from the importance of the book. Your Editor recently saw an 1883 genealogy for the Family. There appeared to be about 30+ pages devoted to our Family, but the page size is materially larger.



MILESTONES

Genevieve Halline Smiley, of Detroit IL, passed away on June 29, 1993 at the age of 90 ... her cousin, Garret Voorhees survives her.

Ellen Voorhies Lindsay was called on June 28, 1993 at the age of 89 ... she was a resident of Decatur IL ... two daughters, Ann Gardner of Bettendorf IA and Ellen Dern of Estes Park CO, and brother Dr. Norton W. Voorhies of New Orleans LA, ten Grandchildren and sixteen Great-Grandchildren survive her.

Raymond Curtis of Caldwell OH died on April 25, 1993 at the age of 90 ... he is survived by his wife, Eileen.

Mrs. R. C. Beaty of Johnson City NY passed away in 1993.

We learned of the death on July 9, 1993 of John J. Voorhees of Mitchville MD by the return of the August, 1993 Newsletter as "undeliverable".

Joseph B. Cejka of Rumson NJ was called on November 19, 1993 at the age of 78 ... he is survived by Florence V. Cejka, who served for several years as the Treasurer for Savings Accounts of the Association.



NEW MEMBERS

Tom Van Voorhies, Membership Chairperson, has announced that the following cousins have joined the Association. The listing is dated November 20, 1993.

Martha Conover Waddell, Waseca MN	Bruce D. Chilton, Annandale NY
Larry Leon Vorhies, Indianapolis IN	Anne S. Voorhees, Seattle WA**
Bertha Williams, Redding CA	Esther Jean Lackey, Guysville OH
Melinda C. Wicks, Dorset VT	Martha A. Lawton, Milford PA
Dorothy M. LaPlante, Roy WA	Richard Burr McElvein, Mt. Brook AL
Randolph C. Blyth, Gulf Breeze FL	Donald Roth Gerue, Milford CA
James Albert Corscaden 4th, Damariscotta ME*	Larry M. Rolfe, Conroe TX**
Robert P. Engwall, Crystal MN**	Daniel Clayton Shyers, Felton DE*
Jack Brigham, Tallahassee FL	Larry W. Voorhees, Fairbanks AK
Glee Krapf, Tamaqua PA**	Robert Michael Van Voris, New York NY**
Clarice B. Sydor, Farmington MN	Jeanne Van Voorhis White, Iowa City IA**
Elizabeth Cave, Oak Harbor WA	William R. Voorhees, Norcross GA**
Robert E. Vorhes, Lima OH	Mary W. L. Lynyak, Little River, Nova Scotia
David B. King, Jr., Vicksburg MS	Elaine E. Abruzzo, East Northport NY
Linda Reed Evatt, Conway AR**	* = Junior Member
Larry M. Miley, Allentown PA***	** = Sustaining Member
	*** = Contributing Member

Welcome aboard! We are very pleased that you have joined us and we look forward to talking with you at our next Annual Meeting and Reunion.

RECOMMENDED READING

Our early forebears had a very complicated system for naming children. The English could not understand it in 17th century New York (following the surrender of New Amsterdam) and many of us do not comprehend it easily today. However, Rosalie Fellows Bailey has come to our assistance. The National Genealogical Society published her *Dutch Systems in Family Naming, New York-New Jersey* that goes a long way toward explaining the rationale for early Dutch children's names. Anyone interested in understanding why and how this complicated procedure worked should read her pamphlet. In addition to its title, it is also known as Special Publication No. 12; it was copyright in 1965 and has 21 pages. Contact the National Genealogical Society, 4527 17th Street North, Arlington VA 22207 - cost is \$6.50 plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling. Please pay by check. Telephone: (703)525-0050.



VAN VOORHEES WHO'S WHO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Aeltje Line: Ms. Margaret A. Ramsay, 402 Lincoln Ave.,
Highland Park, NJ 08904-2729 (908)846-3159
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Short Hills, NJ 07078 (201)376-2128

Jantje Line: vacant

Members-at-Large

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Wilmington DE 19810 (302)475-2801

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Newsletter

♦ **Editor:** Manning W. Voorhees (see above)
♦ **Publisher:** Robert E. Van Voorhis, Jr. 3821 So. Lawn Rd.,
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* = not a member of the Executive Committee

SPELLING OUR FAMILY NAME

Frank Van Voorhees, of Kendall MI, sent us a note commenting on an article in a recent Newsletter that details the many spelling variations for our Family name. On the cemetery monument for his father, mother, grandfather and grandmother, the side for his grandparents spells the name "Van Voorheis" and the reverse side for his parents sets forth "Van Voorhees".

Ethelyn Vooris, of Nassau NY, discovered that the office records of a small cemetery in Castleton, NY, listed several internments under "Van Voorehas" and she wondered if a new spelling had been found. Florence Christoph's genealogical data reveal that this 19th Century family interchangeably used the names "Voorihis", "Van Voorhees", "Voorhis", "Voorhees" and "Van Voorhis". Ethelyn found markers with "Van Voorihis". The office records were wrong, but who could blame the confused clerks?

All of this seems very unfair to Family researchers!

COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARD CONTACT PERSON NEEDED

Tom Van Voorhies, our Membership Chairperson, is looking for someone to be the Association's contact person on computer bulletin boards. Perhaps the function will require more than one contact since a single person will probably not subscribe to all of the services such as CompuServe, Prodigy, On-Line America and so forth. The job will entail monitoring inquiries, responding and channeling data to Tom. If interested, please write to Tom at 9 Purdy Ave., East Northport NY 11731-4501.

DON SINCLAIR

Our long-time member, worker and now Executive Committee Member-at-Large, Don Sinclair, has published *A New Jersey Biographical Index*. It provides an easy and fast access to 100,000 New Jersey biographies contained in almost 2,000 volumes of 237 publications.

Based upon work that commenced in 1942 and ended in the late 1980's, all one need do now is to look in the *Index*, find the publication reference and then obtain the original published biography. The *Index* does not contain references to individual biographical books or pamphlets, but is limited to collective sources. Publications that are largely genealogical in nature have been excluded except for *Early Germans of New Jersey* and *Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey*.

The 859 page *Index* may be purchased from the Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1001 North Calvert Street, Baltimore MD 21202-3897 for \$60.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling.

Congratulations, Don! You have made the job of family research many giant steps easier. We also understand that you have written the preface to a publication about famous unsolved New Jersey murders. Hmmm....

Sources: November, 1993 Newsletter of the Monmouth County Genealogical Club and an earlier New Jersey Historical Commission Newsletter.

FAMILY HISTORIES

Clarence Voorhees, of Sun City AZ, writes that he has completed the first draft of his family history - some 78 pages. He has sent out about 50 copies to family members for their review, but is missing the personal stories of about 80 family members. We have heard about Clarence's work before, and it certainly sounds very impressive.

Many members of the Association have written their family histories or may perhaps be in the process now. We would like to hear about them. In any event, please be sure to send Steve Shyers a copy so that the information can be entered into his data base.



1995 TRIP TO HEES

Association members enjoyed trips to the Netherlands and Hees in 1984 and 1991. A trip in the Fall of 1995 may be feasible. However, before a travel agent in this country and a tour packager in the Netherlands are approached to see if they wish to arrange a trip, it is desirable to ascertain the level of members' interest. The Van Voorhees Association will not make any of the business arrangements for the trip; these will be determined, contracted and managed by independent professional travel and tour people.

The itinerary would probably be similar to the two earlier trips: tour the country, visit Amsterdam among other cities and towns, and spend some time in Drenthe, Assen, Ruinen, Hees and outdoor historical museums of the 17th century, over a period of approximately two weeks. The 1991 trip cost \$3,197 per person, including air fare, hotels, most meals and touring. There is no way to project a cost for the Fall of 1995, considering Dutch price fluctuations and the dollar-guilder exchange rate between now and then. The 1991 cost is cited merely as a potential indicator. As a generality, the more travellers in the group, the lower the per person cost. In 1991, there were 12 travellers.

If you are interested in joining a trip to The Homeland in the Fall of 1995, kindly return the attached coupon. Without an expression of sufficient interest, we will not approach the professional travel people and ask them to explore the details. By returning the coupon, you will not commit yourself to the trip. This will only be done upon your receipt of the travel brochure and your review thereof. You can decline to go on the trip if you return the coupon.

Yes, I am interested now in joining a trip to the Netherlands in the Fall of 1995. I understand that this expression of interest is not a commitment.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please return this coupon to: Manning W. Voorhees,
41 Oaklawn Road, Fair Haven, NJ 07704-3108.

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COORDINATION OF MEMBER RESEARCH

By Virginia V. Ward

The activities under this heading for the past year began the morning of the 1992 Annual Meeting and Reunion, at our well-received informal genealogy workshop. The Line Representatives, Steve Shyers and I tried to help numerous cousins find their places in the previously-recorded family lines. Notes were made of unresolved problems to be worked on at later dates.

Since then, I have responded to a dozen or so questions coming by mail in response to the Newsletter notices of our efforts.

The usual procedure is as follows: I receive the question, send a copy of it and any accompanying charts, etc., to Steve, and file the original. Steve searches the database to answer the question, and reports to the questioner and to me on his results. If he has been able to "close the line", that's that. If not, I go back to the original request and check my files for other cousins who are researching similar names, time periods, dates, etc., and put them in touch. I also prepare a query, and submit it for a future Newsletter (if there is no objection).

(In stubborn cases, I have found it useful to glance over the family publications, including my draft copy of the Fifth Generation text [Ed.- Volume II, *The Van Voorhees Family*], for possible clues. Doing this in at least one case let me give Steve a shortcut in his database search for the questioner's line.)

I do not now have statistics as to the number of questions received or problems solved, but there have been enough successes to convince me that this is a very worthwhile project. As more questions, family data, and offers of help come in, I will be better able to make connections among the cousins for their mutual assistance, as well as add to Steve's database.

Editor - The foregoing is Ginny's report to the Executive Committee for its meeting on October 9, 1993. We thought that it described very well her efforts to assist members of the Association with their genealogical research. Write to her at 15 Beverly Rd., Mt. Kisco, NY 10549 if you are researching a particular line or person. Ginny led our 1993 genealogical workshop at the Annual Meeting and Reunion and did a fine job.



DID YOU KNOW ...

That a good way to read the writing on old gravestones is to apply a small amount of shaving cream and smooth it over the hard to read letters with a squeegee? Use white shaving cream for dark stones, a tinted (sometimes menthol shaving creams are tinted light green) shaving cream for white stones.

Source: directly quoted from the September, 1993 Newsletter of the David Ackerman Descendants - 1662.



LT. COMMAMNDER BRUCE A. VAN VOORHIS - HERO

B. Roland Eichbaum, of Reno NV, sent us an article from the May 1993 *Desert Roundup*, published by the Naval Air Station at Fallon NV, that proudly discusses Lt. Commander Bruce A. Van Voorhis. The Air Station is officially known as Van Voorhis Field commemorating the only Nevada native to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Van Voorhis Field is said to be probably the most advanced air training center in the world and will be growing over time.

Cmdr. Van Voorhis was a bombing squadron commander who volunteered to pilot a PB4Y-1 patrol bomber to attack the Japanese during a naval battle near the Eastern Caroline Islands of the Western Pacific. Forsaking possible escape, Cmdr. Van Voorhis continued to attack the Japanese forces until the overpowering enemy aircraft downed his plane.

Born on January 29, 1908 in Aberdeen WA, Cmdr. Van Voorhis was a 1929 graduate of the Naval Academy. He died when his plane crashed on July 6, 1943. Cmdr. Van Voorhis' parents, W.A. and Lillie Van Voorhis moved to Fallon in 1917. His father died in 1919 - his mother married Leo Pinger in 1921 and she died in 1959. Lillie Van Voorhis was elected to the Nevada State Assembly in 1929 and was an advocate of children's rights. Cmdr. Van Voorhis' younger brother, 1st Lieutenant Wayne Van Voorhis of the Army, died during the infamous Bataan March on July 10, 1942.

In addition to naming the air training field after Cmdr. Van Voorhis, the Naval Academy dedicated the Van Voorhis Room in 1951. A destroyer escort was commissioned the USS Van Voorhis in 1956, and was subsequently decommissioned and scrapped in 1972. The Churchhill County Museum in Fallon has a large display dedicated to Cmdr. Van Voorhis.

REUNION OF HERBERT VOORIS FAMILY

by Joan M. Vooris

The Vooris family reunion of Herbert Vooris, who was in the Tenth Generation from Steven Coerts in the Jan Line, was held on July 11, 1993. One hundred and ten people attended the reunion at Cherry Plains State Park, near Troy NY, some coming from as far as Florida, Massachusetts and Long Island.

Tee shirts with *Vooris Family Reunion July 11, 1993* were available. Booklets were given out detailing the line of descent back to Steven Coerts and Edward Doty (who came over on the Mayflower). Lydia Doty was the mother of Herbert Vooris. The booklet also had pictures and stories from James Nelson Voorhees (Eighth Generation) up to and including Herbert's generation.

The next reunion is scheduled for 1994. Mrs. Ronald Vooris planned this year's affair.

Ms. Joan M. Vooris, RD 1 Box 1673, Poestenkill, NY 12140.

MISSING COUSINS

The August Newsletter was returned "undeliverable, no forwarding address" for the following members of the Association. If you know the present address or whereabouts of anyone on this list, please advise Steve Shyers at 26 Laurel Lane, Newark DE 19713-1009. The last known address is listed.

Mr. Joseph M. Voorhies, Jr,
218 Sunrise Ave., Nashville TN

Mr. John D. Van Voorhis,
2335 Mary Ann Ave., Saugerties NY

Mr. Van J. Voorhees,
4548 Bonney Road, Virginia Beach VA
Mrs. Arthur C. Silberbauer,
1213 Long Meadows Dr. #401, Lynchburg VA
Mr. William Heidgerd, PO Box 446, New Paltz NY
Dr. Harold R. Voorhees,
1700 Bronson Way #233, Kalamazoo MI
Mr. David V. Levy, 308 East 79th St., New York NY
Ms. Ann Voorhees McMullen,
14855 Morningside, Poway CA

These cousins will be lost forever to the Association unless we can find their new addresses.

WHEN YOU MOVE...

Please send us your change of address when you move. We lose contact with many members each year because the Newsletter is mailed after the relatively short period of time that the Post Office will return mail to us marked with the new address. Above, we have listed those cousins whose August Newsletters were returned "undeliverable, no forwarding address". Don't become a missing person! Mail your update to Steve Shyers at 26 Laurel Lane, Newark, DE 19713-1009.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Name _____
Old Address _____
Old City _____ Old State _____
Old Zip _____
New Address _____
New City _____ New State _____
New Zip _____
VVA # _____

Kindly enter the five-plus-four zip if you know the last four digits. Mail to Steve Shyers at 26 Laurel Lane, Newark, DE 19713-1009.

A RETURN TO HEES

by David H. Voorhees

On a recent business trip to Amsterdam, I had the opportunity to stay a couple of extra days to "see the sights" of the city and also to venture out into the countryside to the Village of Hees, the birthplace of Steven Coerts. The following are some observations, reflections, and lessons learned from these travels. As part of my business in Amsterdam, we drove across to the eastern side of the Netherlands to visit some geological features. During this Sunday drive, we noticed that for several kilometers along the canal by Hooegeveen, a town 10 kilometers southwest of Hees, fisherman were spaced methodically and almost purposefully every 20 meters. Although the integrity of the fish caught there today would be suspect, it was easy to picture "Grandpa" Steve fishing at the same spot for his family's Sunday dinner. As a point of interest, I was told that Hooegeveen means literally *high peat*, because it is (was) a topographically high area that is composed of peat which was used for fuel and fertilizer.

Following the completion of my business in Amsterdam, I was able to visit the Village of Hees on my own. Details and logistics of this trip are provided at the end of this article. I began my trip on a Saturday morning, which of course was cold and rainy (the entire previous week while I was on business was warm and sunny!). I arrived at Centraal Station from my hotel after a short tram ride at 9 AM. Centraal Station is the busy main train station in the center of Amsterdam through which all local and foreign trains pass. The previous day I had purchased my train ticket, so I was able to go straight to the platform. True to European tradition, the train departed within 2 minutes of its scheduled time, not a place to be late!

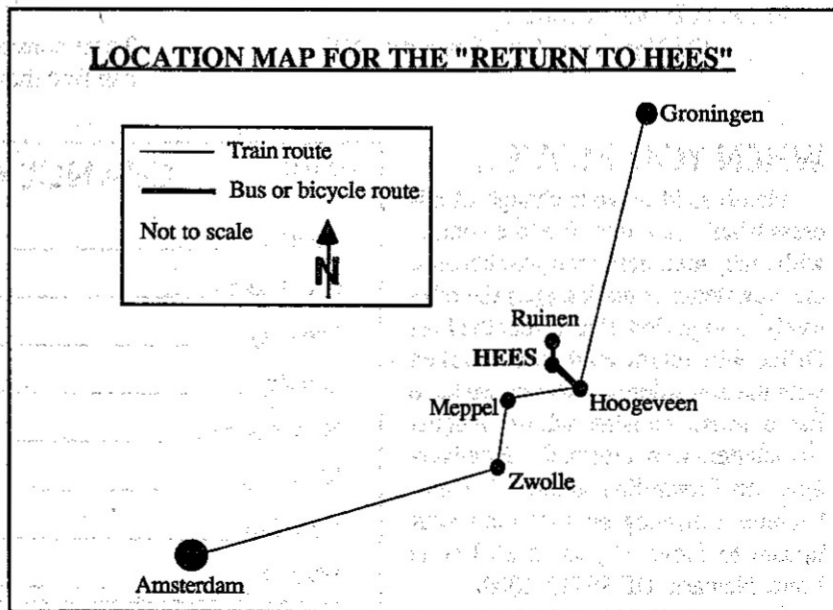
The train ride to Hooegeveen was spent rereading *Through a Dutch Door*, and imagining how much the countryside had changed in 300+ years, if at all. From Hooegeveen, it was a short bus ride to Ruinen, and then a short walk to the Village of Hees. While walking to Hees, it was not hard to transport myself back 300+ years to when Steven Coerts was walking these same, yet different, pathways. The region is still rural and dominated by farming, and therefore likely looks much the same. The farmers may be more affluent today because of the ubiquitous cows and sheep, which contrasts with the poor economic conditions of 300 years ago prior to Steven Coerts leaving Hees, as described by Drs. J. Folkerts and Drs. D. J. Wijmer, in *Through A Dutch Door*. Unfortunately, my time travelling was quickly cut short whenever a car passed by and sprayed me with water (it was raining).

When I reached Hees, a weird feeling of *dejà vu* came over me, or perhaps it was just a feeling that I had come back home. It was especially strong when I looked to the south at the Joosten house (Photo 1, p. 52 in *Through A Dutch Door*), the most likely modern analog of the Van Voorhees farm. I stood there for a

while looking out over the Joosten farm, imagining what it was like to live here 300 years ago, without our modern technology and advancements. Quite a different lifestyle! While walking up the single narrow road through the Village of Hees ("Main Street"), I was struck by the superior condition and upkeep of the houses and barns. They were, almost without exception, very well cared for and decorated. There is even a Heeshof! I counted 22 houses and 11 barns on my walk through Hees, and one house is currently under construction across the street from the Joosten house. Upon returning to Ruinen, I stopped in at the VVV (an agency that provides tourist information in the Netherlands), and the woman working in there said that she has talked with many Voorhees' from the US "rediscovering their homeland". She was also familiar with the Van Voorhees Association "in America".

In conclusion, if you find yourself in Amsterdam, I strongly recommend a trip to Hees. It was a most rewarding and enlightening trip that I will remember for a long time. I hope the feeling of wholeness and serenity after my visit to Hees will last for a long time as well. As described below, it is also an easy day trip from Amsterdam via public transportation. Happy travels!

LOGISTICS—From Centraal Station in Amsterdam, take the train to Hooegeveen, which terminates at Groningen. It will take about 1 3/4 hour, and cost Dfl 55,00 (at current exchange rates this is about \$39) for a one day round trip (Dagretour). Note that 2 one way tickets are more expensive, so you need to ask for a Dagretour if you are just going for the day. Trains leave for Groningen roughly every hour from 7 AM to 10 PM, with a similar schedule for the return from Hooegeveen to Amsterdam. If you take this trip on a weekday, there is apparently a bus that goes directly to Hees from Hooegeveen. On the weekend, despite what you are told when you call up for train information, there is bus service to Ruinen from Hooegeveen. This is the #47 bus, which runs every 2 hours during the day on the weekends, and is a 15 minute ride through the pastoral Netherlands countryside. It cost Dfl 6 (about \$4) one way,



when I purchased my ticket on the bus from the bus driver. An easier and cheaper alternative is to purchase the Nationale Strippen Kaart, available at the train station; you will need 2 strips per person per trip to Ruinen. The bus drivers that I encountered spoke little English; luckily I had a map of Hees so I was just able to point and ask if he went there. Despite this, I'm still not sure he understood what I was asking. Another alternative is to rent a bicycle at Hooegeveen for a what would be a delightful and picturesque 12 kilometer ride through Boswachterij Forest Preserve to Hees. There were several bicycle rental shops near the train station. Once in Ruinen, it is a short 15 minute walk south to Hees. The bus from Hooegeveen will drop you off in Ruinen across the street from a map which you can use to get your bearings, and also the VVV for further information (which has very little in English).

David H. Voorhees, 601 East Washington Ave., Urbana IL 61801

GENEALOGICAL QUERIES

Compiled by Virginia V. Ward

CORRECTION: Shirley Goetz' query in the last Newsletter should have read as follows:

Need proof that ELIZABETH VOORHEES (b. ca. 1762, d. 31 Jan 1837), wife of Samuel Fisher of West Windsor, Middlesex Co., NJ is the daughter of William Voorhees (# 503 in Volume I of the *Van Voorhees Family*) and Anne Couwenhoven. Seek information from descendants of Elizabeth's probable brother Daniel (# 1341). -- Shirley H. Goetz, 94 Greenwood Rd., Murray Hill, NJ 07974

Seeking the parents of MARY MATILDA VAN VOORHEES, b. Woodbridge? Rahway? NJ, 22 Apr 1843. D. 1908, buried Evergreen Cemetery, Plainfield NJ. (Death certificate doesn't show parents - possibly related to Schenck family.) Married Ira Randolph Vail (b. 19 Aug 1838, d. 26 Apr 1890). -- Russel E. Vail, 477 B Buckingham Drive, Lakehurst, NJ 08733

Looking for proof of descent of ANNA VOORHEES, wife of James Hillyer (1761-1846), Revolutionary War veteran, probably married 31 Oct 1792 in Cranbury, Middlesex Co., NJ. Believe she was the daughter of Garret Voorhees and Ann (Annate) Beekman, who was bapt. 29 Jan 1775, Somerset Co., NJ. Known children: (1) Sarah Voorhees Hillyer, bapt. 27 Aug 1797, Kingston, Somerset Co., NJ, died Hamilton Co., OH, (2) Lydia Ann Hillyer, b. 27 Apr 1801, bapt. 21 May 1801 Cranbury., m. James B. Caldwell 27 Dec 1821, Butler Co., OH, and (3) Voorhees Hillyer, b. 1802, bapt. Cranbury, d. Aug 1849, Montgomery Co., IN, m. Sarah Ann Crane. -- Cyndi Pote, 1199 Hospital Road, Lot 57, Franklin, IN 46131

Seeking ancestry of SAMUEL VOORHEES (b. ca. 1810) m. 1835 Esther Drake (1812-1888). Their son Samuel b. 1842 had son Philip Craig Voorhees who m. Carrie M. and had son

Samuel b. 1896. -- Helen (Mrs. W. Kenneth) Faulkner, Pine Creek Farm, Route #2, Box 2674, Columbus, NC 28722

Seek info on WILLIAM VOORHEES, m. twice, once to Elizabeth Fern, lived in Peapack-Gladstone, NJ, worked in New York as a tailor. Had 21-22 children - known: James, b. 23 Apr 1861 and Sarah (daughter Alice?). James' children: William, Halsey b. 1897, Harriet b. 1900, Edgar, Maybelle-Mary b. 1908 and Eleanor. -- Maryann Aakjar, 9 Hawthorne Place, No. 3-P, Boston, MA 02114-2319

Seeking any family info., history, etc. on HELENE VAN VOORHEES (# 1092 in Volume I of the *Van Voorhees Family*) who m. Henry Monfort, son of Jacobus Monfort and Lea Banta. They lived in Warren and Preble Co's., OH until 1830's, probably moved to IN. -- Larry M Rolfe, 86 Stone Mountain Dr., Conroe, TX 77302

Please send your genealogical queries and news about your research activities/interests to Ginny Ward, who coordinates and assists members with their genealogical efforts. Ginny suggests that when you send her a query, that you tell her whether you have already checked with Steve Shyers to inquire if your line is in his family database.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, OCTOBER 9, 1993

The Committee approved the appointments of Bob Lydecker and Margaret Ramsay to be Line Representatives (see article on first page) ... Don Vorhis suggested the possibility of appointing Deputy Line Representatives ... Bob Vorhis requested that he be replaced as Representative for the Jan Line ... the Genealogical and Historical Committees were merged in view of the overlapping nature of their present activities, with Fr. Bill Lydecker as Chairperson (see President's Commentary) ... Tom Van Voorhies reported 67 new members have joined the Association since his April, 1993 report - there are now 839 members on the rolls ... June Wick and Tom plan a new member campaign, focusing for the moment on regional and local genealogical societies with advertising in the *Genealogical Helper* ... Tom will also address our inclusion on computer bulletin boards (the Association is presently carried on more than one BBS) with Adrienne Haney and David R. Voorhees ... Bob Vorhis reported that we have 220 copies of Volume I of the *Van Voorhees Family* and 1,773 copies of *Through a Dutch Door* on hand ... Fr. Bill Lydecker said that Florence Christoph has entered all of the genealogical material "in hand" on her computer disk and she is starting to move into the job of completing the assembly of data for Volume II of the *Van Voorhees Family* ... the Committee reviewed the first report from Adriana Brown on the "American Dutch Door" project and approved its continuation ... Ginny Ward will work with Tom Van Voorhies to ascertain those new members who might be interested in genealogical efforts in "the field" ... Judy Voorhees reported \$650 in sales of Association items since the April, 1993 meeting.

FRANCIS VORIS, PLEASANT HILL TRUSTEE/PEORIA BUSINESSMAN

By Jean C. Dones

Paper presented at the 19th annual Berkshire Shaker Seminar, Pleasant Hill KY, July 16, 1993

Among the earliest members of the Pleasant Hill Shaker Community was John Voris, who came from New Jersey with other Low Dutch families to the land of opportunity - Kentucky.



On the way they established a Low Dutch Colony at Conewago, near the present day Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. After several years there, they moved on to Kentucky, coming in two groups in 1780, one by way of West Virginia and the Cumberland Gap/Wilderness Road route, the other over the Appalachian Mountains to Fort Pitt, then down the

Ohio River to the Falls, the present day Louisville area. Their intention was for the two groups to meet and form a Low Dutch Colony in Kentucky.

But that was not to be. This was a rugged frontier with many problems, including land disputes and Indian attacks. The story of their struggle and search for settlement is a fascinating one. Many of the families came on to Mercer County, some remaining there and some moving to Shelby and Henry Counties where they acquired tracts of productive land from Squire Boone, brother of Daniel. The latter group included the family of John Voris. Here they farmed, established a community, and set up businesses.

We all know the stories of the Great Awakening or the Great Revival in Kentucky in the early 1800's, and the arrival of the three Shaker missionaries in 1805. As a result of their efforts, the first Shaker convert in Mercer County was Elisha Thomas, and he donated 140 acres of rich agricultural land to begin the community at Pleasant Hill.

Several of the Low Dutch families in Shelby and Henry Counties were early converts to Shakerism, including John Voris, who came to the Pleasant Hill community in 1810 with his wife, Rachel Montfort, and their eight children. The family included Francis, who was born in Mercer County in 1790. It is interesting that the eighth and youngest child, Hortensia, was born in November 1810, so it is likely she arrived after the family joined the Shakers. She is listed on Pleasant Hill records as a Believer as of that date.

Thus Francis Voris was twenty years old when he came to Pleasant Hill in 1810. His leadership qualities were apparent within a short time, and in 1812 he was appointed a Church Deacon.

By 1814 the community had grown and became more complex, and 128 members signed a new Covenant, providing that no member could take his property or claim compensation for his work if he left the Society. Among the signers was Francis Voris, who at the same time was appointed one of the

first three Trustees, along with John Bryant, Senior, and Abraham Wilhite.

There are many Journal references to the activities of Francis Voris as a Trustee. One record reports that on January 18, 1816, Francis Voris along with Abraham Fite "set out on that long disagreeable trip to New Orleans". It was May 30 before the travelers returned with the proceeds of their marketing trip. In this pre-steamboat era, the flatboats were dissembled in New Orleans and sold for lumber; then the traders would return home by foot or horseback. We wonder if their route back to Kentucky may have been the Natchez Trace with its thieves and other perils.

Other entries state that in 1818, Shaker-built flatboats transported their flour to Louisville, commanded by Francis Voris, Abraham Fite, and Robert Barnett.

South Union Journal entries between 1815 and 1825 record many visits by Francis Voris, oftentimes en route to Nashville markets with oil, brooms, and baskets or to West Union in Indiana where he often advised them on temporal affairs. In 1816, Francis Voris spent time there to help them close their community.

Francis Voris had a business mind as evidenced by an 1824 invoice for a shipment of goods to St. Louis. The items listed included carpeting, fancy baskets, summer hats, seamless bags, sugar boxes, and brooms. He suggests retail prices, but states "such articles as you find by experience will not bear so high a price you must have discretion to reduce to the market".

Some of his speculation, however, was not always successful. In 1818 he invested in wheat with some of the profit from the sale of the Shaker ferry at Fulkerson's. A sure thing and a sound move, he believed. The flour manufactured by the Shakers was delivered, and they were to collect their money at the bank, only to find the bank had failed. This was the time of the Panic of 1819, which affected many of the Shaker markets adversely.

But 1819 to 1826 was an era of prosperity at Pleasant Hill when most of the major buildings were erected, a stable economy developed, and the communal lands increased to nearly 3,000 acres. Surely the business acumen of Francis Voris contributed to this period of growth and stability.

In addition to the Pleasant Hill journals, Francis Voris' letters tell us much about him: In 1820 he wrote a persuasive sales letter to Frederick Rapp, Harmonie, Indiana, offering top quality Merino wool for sale.

In 1826 Francis Voris wrote a letter to Henry Clay, then Secretary of State, requesting information on the cultivation of sugar beets and the manufacture of sugar from the beets. Francis Voris hoped the Shakers could benefit from the sugar beet experience in France, and asked thoughtful and specific questions. He was diplomatic, as indicated by the following paragraph:

As you know very well that our society does not meddle with or entangle themselves much in politics, I will only say one word on that subject, and that is the members generally of the society, are so as I have been able to collect their opinions were pleased with the measures of the present administration.

To my knowledge, there is no record of Henry Clay's response nor any indication that raising sugar beets and manufacturing sugar became successful activities at Pleasant Hill.

An especially interesting episode in the life of Francis Voris involves his relationship with William S. Byrd as recorded in *Letters From a Young Shaker*, edited by Stephen Stein. In his introduction, Stephen Stein wrote that in the summer of 1826, the Shaker Ministry at Pleasant Hill reported the arrival of a "nice young man", who came to their village "and opened his mind". The "nice young man" was William Silouwee Byrd, a descendant of the prestigious Byrd family of Virginia, whose father, Charles Willing Byrd, was a judge of the United States District Court in Ohio. At this time there were few recruits joining the community, and surely no one with the illustrious family background of young William Byrd.

Francis Voris, as a Trustee, saw the opportunity in this set of circumstances, both to benefit Pleasant Hill and to assist William Byrd and his father in making personal and business decisions. The letters between father and son include many references to Francis Voris, his advice, propositions, management, and sometimes subtle manipulations.

The relationship between the Byrd family and Francis Voris was probably mutually beneficial. Certainly Francis Voris persisted in dealings that would be helpful to the Shakers, but I believe he had a genuine personal interest in the young Shaker convert who struggled with his beliefs, ideals, and needs.

William Byrd had long had chronic health concerns, and his illnesses were aggravated by the death of his father and the internal confusion at Pleasant Hill in 1818. He rewrote his will in November 1828, leaving all his property and estate to Abram Wilhite and Francis Voris, Pleasant Hill Trustees. William Byrd died on January 19, 1829.

After Elder John Dunlavy's death in 1826 while on an extended visit to West Union, internal dissatisfaction developed in the Pleasant Hill Community. The rift within the Society included a decentralization of control over the temporal affairs of the community, departing radically from the Shaker ideal of a community of all goods. Francis Voris and Edmund Bryant, no longer Trustees for the Church as a body, were made stewards for the three families separately, carrying on their trade with the world but no longer accountable to the Ministry, but rather to the Family Deacons, "a very great departure from true Church order".

Delegations of the Ministry and Elders were sent from Union Village and New Lebanon to try to quiet the dissension at Pleasant Hill. Yet by 1830 forty-two pioneer members had departed from the Society, among them Francis Voris and his two younger brothers, Abraham and Samuel, and his sister, Hortensia.

According to Pleasant Hill records, the first of the John Voris sons to leave the Shakers was Abraham in October 1827. Next was Samuel in March 1829, then Francis in August 1829. Sometime later that year Hortensia also left.

After Francis' departure in August 1829, an interesting thing happened. He went to Shelby County, Kentucky where

he had lived as a youth, and in January 1830 he married Patsy Thomas - think about that name! She was the daughter of Elisha Thomas, the first Pleasant Hill convert. Patsy was also a signer of the 1814 Covenant and is listed as leaving the community in October 1829. We can only wonder about the circumstances!

Abraham, the first to leave, had gone to Salem, in Washington County, Indiana where he established a mercantile business. Francis joined him there and is listed in the 1830 census in Salem.

In 1833 the Voris brothers were contacted by Charles Ballance, a young attorney who had gone to Peoria, Illinois in 1831. Charles Ballance had also been a member of the Pleasant Hill Community and had known the Voris' there. In his *History of Peoria* (written in 1870), Charles Ballance wrote that he foresaw in the infant community "a rich harvest for some enterprising traders" and "knowing that Francis was a smart trader in things generally, and Abram was a good merchant, I informed them of the advantages of the place". The Voris' agreed and after an exploratory visit, immediately moved their store to Peoria. Ballance wrote that "they at once became, and for years were, the principal merchants".

In 1835 Abraham Voris, while returning from the South with the proceeds of a cargo of pork, died of cholera. Samuel then came to Peoria and joined Francis in the business, and in later years they were extensively involved in real estate development. Incidentally, Samuel had married Sarah Congleton, who was probably connected to the Congletons at Pleasant Hill, several of whom also left in the 1827-29 period. It is interesting to see the continuing connections among the Shakers who left the community at the time of the mass departure.

Newspaper and court records in Peoria report the involvement of Francis Voris in the establishment of schools, in the development of railroads and canals, leadership in civic organizations, and in local and state political activities, having served in the State Legislature representing Peoria County.

The obituary for Francis Voris in the *Peoria Weekly Republication*, May 21, 1852 includes the following tribute: He came to Peoria in 1833 ... "with which place he has identified his fortunes, and done as much as any other man in building up our beautiful city. He had long been a drudge to business, but to his active mind, business was one of his chief enjoyments. By shrewdness, perseverance, economy and unblemished integrity, he had amassed one of the largest fortunes in Illinois. ... Although past the meridian of life, he was cut down in the midst of extensive plans for improving his property and increasing his fortune. ... The loss of such a man will be felt not only by his family alone, but by the whole community."

There are many unanswered questions in the life of Francis Voris, including his marriage in 1830 (one year after leaving the Shakers) to Patsy Thomas, daughter of Elisha Thomas, considered the first member of the Pleasant Hill community.

I wonder if Abraham, the brother who died of cholera shortly after the move to Peoria, had a family.

continued on next page

We do know that Hortensia, youngest member of the John Voris family, born in 1810 at about the time the family joined the community at Pleasant Hill, was married in 1835 in Peoria to John David Hogan.

We also know much more about his brother, Samuel, who was associated with Francis in many business endeavors in Peoria and who continued as a community leader after Francis' death. The two sons of Samuel, Richard and Robert Voris, were beneficiaries of Francis, and were involved in Voris enterprises.

We know, too, that the only child of Francis and Patsy Voris died in infancy (according to the obituary for Francis Voris). We know that his will, handwritten in 1849 (three years before his death), left his entire estate to his wife, Patsy, stating that she should provide for their adopted son, Henry (at that time 13 years old). After her death, legacies were specified for the children of his sister, Hortensia, for Isabelle Congleton, and for Richard and Robert Voris, sons of his brother, Samuel. Executors of the estate were Patsy Voris, Samuel Voris, Charles Ballance, and Thomas Bryant. Thomas Bryant may also have been a Pleasant Hill Shaker who departed in 1831.

The will of Patsy Voris in 1866 names here "beloved Grand Nephew and adopted son, Henry T. Baldwin", Executor of her estate, and bequeathed to him her entire estate, revoking and annulling all former wills.

Henry Baldwin married Isabelle Congleton, who was included in Francis Voris' will. They both died in Rock Island, Illinois, and are buried in Springdale Cemetery in Peoria along with Francis and Patsy Voris and other members of the Voris family.

Henry Baldwin adds considerably to the complexities in the life of Francis Voris, and to the yet-unanswered questions about an unusual man who had two outstanding careers: Pleasant Hill Trustee and Peoria Businessman.

There is another reason I am interested in Francis Voris. My Mother's maiden name was Voris, and she grew up in Mercer County, Kentucky as did both of my grandparents. My ancestors came to Kentucky in the 1780's, well before Kentucky Statehood in 1792, and were among the Low Dutch families I mentioned earlier.

I have done a lot of research on my Kentucky background, but still have much to do - the difficult gaps that plague most of us working on a family history. My work is cut out for me. I want to know more about Francis Voris, both as a Pleasant Hill Trustee and a Peoria Businessman - and about a possible connection with my own Voris family in Kentucky.

So the story of Francis Voris is ongoing, and I anticipate exciting discoveries which will help us understand this unique individual who contributed to and succeeded in two very different communities.

Jean C. Dones, 3940 Mountview Rd., Columbus OH 43220

WHAT'S WITH THE COUSINS ...

Jessica Marie Van Voorhis arrived on October 19, 1993 ... she is the Great Granddaughter of Margaret and Milton Van Voorhis of Colton CA, the Granddaughter of Marion and Robert Van Voorhis and the daughter of Alison and Kevin Van Voorhis of Los Alamitos CA.

Jennifer Greenlees, daughter of Charli and Roger Greenlees of Pomona CA, graduated first in her class of 254 from Montclair High School ... she was Valedictorian and is now attending Washington State University in Pullman WA, majoring in International Business and Russian ... Jennifer received many awards upon graduation and four (!) scholarships. Congratulations.

If you have news, please send it to the Editor at the address under Who's Who.



FAMILY PICTURES SOUGHT

Marilyn V. McDaniel, in the Lucas Line, is seeking pictures of her Voorhees ancestors and asks if anyone can help her. She has a silhouette on foil of her Gr Gr Grandfather, Johannis Voorhees, but nothing else. He owned a stage coach line in Cincinnati, OH, and apparently was quite successful. The silhouette appears at right. Marilyn's Voorhees line is as follows:



A r t h u r
 A b r a h a m
 Voorhees
 14 Apr 1878 -



- 28 Feb 1962
- Anna Schmidt
- 7 Aug 1874 - 9 Mar 1963
- Benjamin Graves Voorhees
- 15 Nov 1838 - 19 Feb 1928
- Delila Virginia Babbs
- 7 Jul 1844 - 21 Feb 1917
- Johannis Voorhees
- 15 May 1780 - 25 Mar 1894
- Harriet W. Sayre
- n.k. - 25 Nov 1847
- Abraham Voorhees
- 16 Sep 1730 - abt. 1812
- Maria Van Doren
- 29 Oct 1735 - abt. 1811
- Minne Lucasse Van Voorhees
- n.k. - abt. 1733
- Antje Wyckoff 1 Sep 1693 - n.k.
- Lucas Stevense Van Voorhees
- Steven Coerte

Please write to Marilyn at: 3505 N. Robinwood Dr., Muncie IN 47304-2858.

*Johannis Voorhees
 1780 - 1894*



PRIMARY RESEARCH SOURCES: THE DEACONS' ACCOUNT BOOKS

by Janny Venema

Ms. Venema is a native of Drenthe and is a researcher with the New Netherland Project. The following is her presentation at the 61st Annual Meeting and Reunion, October 9, 1993. Her address is: New Netherland Project, New York State Library, CEC 8th Floor, Empire State Plaza, Albany NY 12230.

As die olde Steev'n Coerts now nog eleefd hadde, dan ha'k mooi dit hiele ver'aal int Dreins of kun'n stik'n. mar ja ... wat keie'j, as opiens een paar meins'n zomar utgaon naor een aander deel van de wereld ... Ze vergeet'n gewoon heur eig'l taal!

It is interesting to think about the past; about the people; how they would have lived, spoken with each other in such a different part of the world as where they came from. The words I just said in Drents are words old Steven Coerts would most likely have perfectly understood and immediately reacted to, while Fort Orange's surgeon Abraham Staets (who was 100% Dutch) may have shrugged his shoulders and continued his way.

Already in the seventeenth century New Netherland's population existed for 50% of non-Dutch inhabitants; in about 1642, 18 different languages were spoken in New Amsterdam, according to Gov. Willem Kieft, in which are not included the various dialects of Dutch. Truly a mix of people from the beginning of its written history, of which it is hard to even imagine what their daily lives would have been like. For a long time the history of New Netherland has been written through the perspective of English oriented historians who for various reasons neglected to consider the many thousands of uncovered Dutch documents, the main reasons probably being the incapability of dealing with the seventeenth century Dutch hand writing and language.

Fortunately this treasure of information is slowly but surely being revealed, not in the least part because so many of the documents are being translated into English (by the New Netherland Project!). In this talk I will try to make you aware of the problems a researcher has to face before he actually even can do his historical research. I also hope to show to you how careful analysis of these documents truly changes the view that has existed for so long regarding the province of New Netherland.

First of all then, the researcher has to face the hand writing. Official documents were usually kept in a good, readable hand by people trained for that work. Exceptions, however, confirm the rule (Johannes Dijkman). Other documents, such as correspondence or deacons' account books were kept by lesser trained people, which sometimes can cause problems. Necessary for dealing with this first obstacle is a good understanding of the Dutch language; how else could one understand certain abbreviations (*Bethele*), or the end of certain lines, when the paper is damaged! What also is important to realize is, that at

that time spelling rules were not applied, but one wrote according to pronunciation. If one is not familiar with the Dutch language and pronunciation, this could be a serious problem. (There are six spellings for one name Marietje Claessens: Marietje Claes, Jan svrow, Vergienes, *Noe ren buer gery*, Meschoveye and Hoesenbroch. Words like these, one will not find in a dictionary!) Problems may arise when



expressions are used ("*een oochin het seyl*") or simply with the fact that a seventeenth century word may have had a different meaning as today ("*roer*"). Of course, familiarity with the subject helps to understand the documents (*Bethele*). Translating requires the above and a good knowledge of the English language. It is important to provide in some cases a glossary and footnotes, explaining the meaning of a word, or possibilities for double meanings (*borstroekie*). Working with translated material one has to realize that even translating itself has a history: in the nineteenth century translators often selected what they thought was important (this omitting other information). In translations made around 1900 we often find remarks such as "improper language" or "untranslatable matter". My own Beverwijck map research illustrates how hard it is to work with unreliable translations (*belendenen aen/van*).

When a researcher has gone through all these steps and realizes that a translation is not pure primary source material, but an interpretation of the translator, he still has to deal with other matters than the language. First of all, there is the question: "What was brought over from the Dutch Republic?" In order to understand the society of the early New Netherland settlers, one has to study the background of these people at that time: the state of the country, the culture, the way people lived, believed, educated their children, socialized, built their houses. In which way were the Netherlands different from the rest of Europe? Study of the Dutch and European context is important to understand early New Netherland settlers' lives. Secondly the question: "What remained of this brought-over cultural baggage and when did people start leading their own

continued on next page

The Deacons' Account Books –
continued from page 11

“American” way? should be dealt with. How did landscape and climate, the French, Indians and English influence their lives? Only very careful analysis of the primary sources may provide the researcher with the demanded information.

By going through the various steps of my research on charity, I hope to show you the value of some primary sources and how one can work with them. In this case the basis of the research is made up by the deacons' account books of Albany's First Dutch Reformed Church. [Ed. - as a generality, the Church operated the welfare system of New Netherland.]

These books themselves are in beautiful condition. The first bears the title, *De Staet-Reekeningh vande middelen der armen soo in ende ontrent het Fort Orange, als inde Colonie Rensselaers-Wijck, gesteldt inden Jaere 1652, door A. de Hooges*. (Account of the State of the Poor Fund, both in and around Fort Orange and in the Colony of Rensselaers-Wijck, drawn up in the year 1652 by A. de Hooges.) Starting in 1654, a deacon-bookkeeper was appointed to keep the book for one year. He generally devoted one page to one month's income and one page to one month's expenditures. At the end he presented the balance, for which he was responsible, to the consistory and church members (“*inde kerck met opene deuren*” or “*in presentie van de oude en nieuwe kerkeraad*”). After approval, the books and the treasury were handed over to a successor.

The deacon's account books provide a wealth of information. In the first place they, as the title demonstrates, give information about the poor and the way they were taken care of. Before exploring that, however, I would like (within the frame of working with primary sources) to mention some other things that one could find, carefully analyzing such records as the deacons' account books.

1. First of all, then, the deacons' account books tell about the whole society: not just about the poor. They also show the wealthy. The influential people in the community were the ones that became members of the consistory; often they also occupied positions as magistrates. We can also find those who belong to the broad group of the middle class (*de middenstand*); Jochem Wesselsz Backer, and later Wouter de Backer (Albertsen van den Uythof) were many times paid for baking bread, Rut Arents provided many shoes for the poor at the costs of the deaconry, while tailor Jan Verbeeck was frequently paid for cloth, or making clothing for the poor. Local masons, carpenters, glaziers and blacksmiths were paid for their work at the deaconry's various projects.

In addition, information about the people is also given through the use of language and spelling: nicknames such as *Jan met de baert*, or *Griet met de billen* or *de malle Vries* reveal features about the people. Six different ways of spelling Marietje Claessens' name make us almost hear the people speak and greet each other, or when the deacon accountant refers to Rut Arentsz the shoemaker as “Ruttie”, it creates the thought that there was some kind of positive relationship there.

That there were no spelling rules brought the people probably even a little closer, as they would write matters down the way they pronounced them. Some 25% of the population was not of Dutch origin, and in for example Jacob de Hinsses's spelling this is very easy to notice (Jacob *svorw*). Also just looking at the names tells that many people were not of Dutch nationality; among the recipients of charity were among others: Croaet, Pieter de Wael, Hans/Karsten de Noorman, de Ierse *vrouw*, Iersman de Hyer, a Frenchman.

Combining several sources, such as court minutes or conveyances, with the information from the deacons' account books can even provide us with more information. Jan van Aken and Goossen Gerritsen, for example, always signed documents with a mark, until 1660. After that date they signed with their name, and the fact that they both even kept the deacons' account books for one year, suggests that they learned how to write in the New World. That means that during the winter evenings of 1658-59 these men probably went to evening school, maybe at Adriaen Jansen van Ipendam's.

The fact that these deacons' account books were kept in Dutch until 1791, and in 1697 even a “protest poem” against the use of English illustrates that a culture does not “all of a sudden” disappear: Although the English had taken over, the settlers kept using their own language for a long time. It suggests that also other elements of the Dutch culture continued to exist for a long time after the English took the colony over. For a long time historians have denied the Dutch roots of this society, but I agree with Charles Gehring [Ed. - Director of the New Netherland Project] when he states that “although the English brought their own unique cultural pattern and social traditions to their colonies in North America, when they gained control of New Netherland the non-English traditions were already firmly rooted. They were “new-comers in a foreign land, conquerors in a conquered land, a minority superimposed on a society with unfamiliar traditions and customs.”

2. The deacons' account books also provide the historian with information about the economy at the time. The deacons kept very meticulously the records: every expense they wrote down. Higher prices for corn or wheat usually indicate that there had not been a good harvest, or that the item for some reason had become scarce. High prices for linen often appeared during the Anglo-Dutch wars of 1652-54, 1665-67, and 1672. Combined with the carefully noted wages the deacons paid to various people (masons, carpenters, day workers) these prices are an indication of the standard of life: an 8-pound loaf of bread cost 12 stivers, and according to Van Deursen, a Dutch historian, a family with two young children ate about 35 or 36 pounds of rye bread a week. The wages of a day worker in Albany were £2.10, paid by the deacons, and if we suggest that he worked all week, he thus would spend 18% of the weekly income on bread. Among the distributions to the poor, however, there is never a mention of rye bread, and I suspect that people in and around Albany ate the more expensive wheat bread (wheat was grown more than rye, so it would in reality have been cheaper). According to Van Deursen, one became poor if one spent over 44% of the income on bread. Using the

information of the deacons' account books in combination with information drawn from other sources, or comparing this information with prices and wages in the Dutch Republic also may indicate why these poor people did not go back to the Netherlands, but stayed in the New World.

3. For genealogical researchers the deacons' account books are a source of information: the rentals of the pall tell when somebody died. A pall was a dark piece of cloth that was put on the coffin at a funeral. Because a pall was very expensive, most people did not own a pall themselves, but rented it from the deaconry for a certain price (f5.- for the small pall, f10.- for the large pall). When the poor are given children's clothes, it tells something about their family situation, wages paid to the surgeon reveal sometimes even more about the reason that somebody died.

4. The items given to the poor tell about the kinds of food that were common in seventeenth century Albany, certainly the food that was consumed by the poor. Distributions of wheat for example (and never of rye) suggest that everyone most likely ate wheat bread, in contrast with the poor in the Netherlands. Frequent distributions of meat suggest that meat was even common on the menu of the poor, different from the situation in the Netherlands. When this meat is only, or most often given to women, or families where the father is ill, can easily lead to the thought that probably everyone owned some animals, some chickens or a hog; and the fact that in fifty years only one person was given milk on a few occasions also makes believe that most people had their own cow or cows. In the deacons' account books we also learn about some customs regarding food; the deacons frequently paid for funerals, and often that did not just mean the coffin and the pall rental, but many times they also provided beer, brandy or wine at the funeral, and on several occasions things to eat: cookies, bread, ham and pipes and tobacco to be smoked.

5. Distributions of clothes and cloth for clothes contributes to knowledge about the clothing at that time for common people: several types of clothing, but also the materials they were made of, such as cloth, linen, duffel, kersey, deerskin for pants. Not very much is known about clothing of the common people in the seventeenth century. Distilling this information greatly adds to the knowledge

The deacons' account books are rich sources of information. One should, however, always be very precise in reading them. A line as: "one-third of the alms given to Tryn van den Bergh and Hendrick Marcellis should be paid for by the Lutheran church, as she was of that denomination" indicates that a Lutheran church at that time existed, and that they had a poor fund as well.

In order to organize the information regarding charity, after transcribing the material, I first organized and analyzed all of the information provided by the deacons' account books, listing every person and every other major issue (as food, clothing, wages). Then I searched for provisions for the poor by secular authorities in other sources, such as *Court Minutes* and *Laws and Ordinances*. [Ed. - these citations are publications of the New Netherland Project.] A portion of the fines which were imposed by the sentences of the court, for example,

was used for "the benefit of the poor". Several ordinances were written with the poor in mind: the poor were allowed to lay in a small amount of beer free of excise, and they were also exempt from a fee for weighing. Further, all secretaries, notaries and clerks were bound to serve the poor *gratis* and *pro Deo*, and when Evert Pieterse became schoolmaster in New Amsterdam in 1661, his instructions included the stipulation that the poor and indigent, who wished this, were exempt from fees for going to school (which were 60 stivers for reading, writing and *cijferen* or 50 stivers for reading and writing).

Reading through several secondary sources on Dutch culture I discovered that it is not so strange that a large part of charity was performed by the deacons of the Dutch Reformed Church. Although never a state Church, it was the dominant Church north of the rivers in the Dutch Republic and in Amsterdam. According to Calvin, God possessed all earthly goods, human possessions are only derived from it. God had entrusted these goods to the wealthy; not in order to rule, but much more in order to serve: in order to distribute of it among the poor. Rich was everybody who was entrusted the management of God's goods, poor were those who had to rely on mediation of others in order to get material goods. This way of giving is not a virtue but more the religious duty of anybody who possesses more than somebody else; wealth and poverty are only relative. Derived from the old Christian doctrine, Calvin had instituted the deaconry to watch whether the circulation of material goods (of which God had given supervision to the rich) really took place. They had to contribute to this task by receiving and distributing the means.

It is also not so strange then that in 1652 Stuyvesant, amongst many other patents in Beverwijck, also gave a patent for a poor house to the deaconry of the Church. The minister (Schaets) lived in it for several years, which was possible, as he wrote in 1657, because "there were not that many poor yet". But for a person in the seventeenth century, a world without poor was a utopia, did not exist. The building of the poor house, and later extending it with a poor farm, a bleach field and a garden is the anticipation of the unavoidable: a growing number of poor.

Various ways were used to support the poor, similar to those in the fatherland. The church of Albany/Beverwijck fell under the Classis of Amsterdam, and had to follow her laws and regulations. The deacons of the Dutch Reformed Church were always guided by the *rendements-principe*, or the efficiency principle. It means that with minimal amounts the deacons tried to ensure the highest level of poor relief. The indigent had to be well taken care of, but as cheaply as possible. This led to a policy aimed at keeping the number of poor at a minimal level, which in turn led to forms of preventive poor relief. This principle could work well in Albany/Beverwijck: the community was fairly small (about 1,000 inhabitants) and did not have many poor. The inhabitants had ample access to land, and the following three conditions made the efficiency principle work.

That the deacons in the first place tried to prevent poverty is very well illustrated by their actions in 1682: in December

continued on next page

of that year they went to the court and complained about the bad comportment of Claes Janse Timmerman, "who daily walks along the streets intoxicated, from which nothing else can be expected but that in a short time he will become a charge upon the deaconry". Ten years things went well thanks to the solution: tappers were forbidden to tap Claes and two guardians supervised, received his earnings and supported him from that. After that, from 1692 until his death in 1695, the deacons paid for his maintenance, together about f2,198.13.

We can find the efficiency principle in several examples of almsgiving. Willem Jurriaenz, for example, was in 1650 described as being fully 70 years of age. In 1653 he was considered poor, but it was only in January of 1659, when the deacons started paying for Willem's house rent and for his laundry. The fact that Willem was 79 years old before he received any support reveals that one had to live on one's own means as long as possible. The rule, emerging from the efficiency principle, was that a person had to be incapable of surviving on his own, in order to receive assistance from the deacons.

Besides the fact that the needy were to keep working, if possible, it seems that it was also demanded that one should use up all his possessions, before receiving the deacons' help. Ryseck Swart, *schout* Gerrit Swart's widow, had to pawn several of her possessions to the deaconry and when she died, her estate, which was not very much, went to the deaconry.

As long as an indigent had a place to live and access to land and animals, he could provide for a good part of his own needs. Thinking in terms of the efficiency principle, this saved the deacons considerable expenses. This is clearly illustrated by the way Andries de Vos was taken care of. For two years he was given f25 a month and in return the deaconry received his house, lot, a piece of hopland on the Vossenkill, and a cow, fat with calf.

The deacons were well aware of the value of having access to land and to animals, and on various occasions they gave seed for sowing to the needy, money to rent a piece of land, the use of a cow for a period, or the use of a hog pen. They even gave f5 for oats for Poulijn's cow when she was sick.

Also in accordance with the efficiency principle was that when a needy person was ill or had an accident, he could turn to the deacons for medical help. Since 1664 the surgeon Cornelis van Dijck had a contract with the deacons "to serve and cure the poor" for an annual sum of f200. In addition to medical care the deacons also made sure that the sick were provided with proper care and beer or brandy, sometimes tobacco.

Another field in which the deacons helped was education. They paid f8 for the "going to school" of Daniel, the son of Adam Roelants and in apprentice contracts for poor children they often took care that learning how to read and write, or attending school was included.

Another way to help the poor was by providing loans. These loans were at an interest of ten percent, and in case of

emergency they could help out at the moment.

By following this efficiency principle, the deacons in reality exercised a form of preventive poor relief. The sick, or handicapped could in most cases go back to work. Those who were capable of working, could grow their own crops, milk their own cow, and keep their own chickens and hogs, so that they were provided with food. And by having poor children learn a trade, they prevented that he would become dependent on the deacons in later years.

In general the deacons followed two methods: they boarded people for a certain fee, and they gave support to people living on their own, usually able to take care of themselves. The various kinds of alms the deacons provided were often food (850 skipplles of wheat, 265 skipplles of corn, 60 skipplles of peas, bread, butter, beer) and blankets and firewood, and clothing such as shirts, stockings, coats, waist coats, cloth, yarn and buttons, shoes. They also provided assistance with funerals (they paid sometimes for the funeral, pall rental, the undertaker's services, etc.), house rent, and as we saw before, with education and health care. For those needy who were not able to take care of themselves, they paid for boarding and care (*oppassen*) (for example Hans Eencluyts, who boarded with Thomas Coningh, or for Elias van Ravensteyn, who was taken care of by Sara Rogers for f24 a month.

In exchange for the help, in accordance with the efficiency principle, the deacons expected the needy, as long as they were able, to work. Sometimes they had to board other needy and were paid for that by the deacons, or they took care of a sick person. Some indigent women were paid for helping out when a woman was in childbed, or for wetnursing children, if the mother was not alive anymore. In the idea of having the poor work for their alms the thoughts of the Spanish humanist Vives can be recognized: according to Vives one should not just give support to the poor, but they should be helped to heighten their morals, which is only possible if one looks at every indigent separately, and offers education and work. The poor, according to Vives, had become the victims of the (*bezitsvorming*) acquisition of property. So far they were thrown into misery that this material downfall brought along their moral downfall. This was not their fault, and work would help to gain back some respect.

The different alms recipients reflect that the population existed for 25% of non-Dutch people. Alms were given to Croaet, Susanna Jansen (from New England), Hans and Carsten de Noorman; an Irish woman, Bassie de Neger, Claes and Pieter de Wael, an Englishman from Canada, Jacob van Noortstrant, Sacharias Sickels (born in Vienna), some French ("a Frenchman who came walking out of Maquas country received a pair of shoes) and later some Indians.

It is remarkable, that voluntarily donated moneys were almost always sufficient to provide for the individual needs of the poor. This was money collected in church, in collections, or in strategically located poor boxes at various places in the village, or money donations as alms. (A not voluntary source of income was the rental of the pall.) In that sense Albany's charity practice was very different from New England's, where the care of the indigent was the town's business, and where

people were taxed. By the end of the century we find two indications that some of the English ways had been introduced: for two people, Jan Cornelisz Root and Ryseck Swart, the mayor contributed a large sum to their care. Analyzing the documents and comparing them with others, we find that Beverwijk/Albany's poor relief was a truly Dutch institution. By focusing on these church records and combining the information with materials from other sources, a larger picture of a society emerged. Instead of a community consisting of "200 greedy traders, not intending to build up a society" we find a community of over 1,000 inhabitants, who certainly seemed to be interested in making their community livable for all inhabitants. Only recognizing the original sources and taking the effort to work through them will reveal the true history of New Netherland.

Ed. - An extensive discussion entitled "Poverty in Seventeenth-Century Albany" by Ms. Venema can be found in the Spring 1991 issue of *de Halve Maen*, the journal of The Holland Society of N.Y., 122 East 58th St., New York NY 10022.

WHEN ORDERING...

Please note that when ordering Van Voorhees Association books and items for sale, that book orders should be sent to Bob Voris and item orders to Judy Voorhees. Extra work and delay are entailed when orders must be redirected or split between books and items. The addresses for Bob and Judy are listed under "Who's Who" and on the coupons provided.

HOLLAND SOCIETY LIBRARY

The Holland Society of N.Y. maintains an excellent research library in its headquarters at 122 East 58th Street, New York NY 10022, telephone (212)758-1871, which is dedicated to the Dutch in America.

There are about 7,000 books, of which 3,000 deal with local history, 3,000 are family histories and genealogies, and 1,000 are reference books. There is also an extensive collection of letters, photographs, genealogies and press clippings. Copies of early church records provide data on births, marriages and deaths in New Netherland and total 109 partially indexed volumes. The library subscribes to historical and genealogical society publications, and collects newsletters of family organizations with ancestry in New Netherland.

While the collection focuses primarily on New Amsterdam and Hudson River settlements, it also follows early Dutch migration in America.

The library is open Saturdays between 11:00 AM and 4:00 PM, and is closed on holidays and the month of August. Material of the library does not circulate and must be used on site. A fee of \$3.00 is charged for non-members of the Holland Society.

If you have news you would like to share, or comments about the newsletter, contact Manning Voorhees, 41 Oaklawn Ave., Fairhaven, NJ 07704. (908) 842-0086.

AL VOORHEES

We understand that there is a plaque on the exterior wall of a synagog directly across from the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem commemorating Al Voorhees, an historian from Red Bank (?), New Jersey. Does anyone know about Al and why he was so honored? Please write.

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER MEETS

by Cecilia Van Voorhis

On October 24, 1993 the Van Voorhees Association's New England chapter held its second meeting at the home of Adrienne Haney in Leominster, MA. Twenty Van Voorhees descendants came from Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut and Massachusetts to meet each other including Manning Voorhees, President of the national V.V. Association. We shared a wonderful potluck lunch, much conversation, and heard Manning tell us, with the help of slides, the story of the village and farm at Hees in the Netherlands; also were given a slide tour of several old towns and some of their history and architecture.

I don't know about the others, but for me the three hours spent with "family" felt like a home-coming. The realization that we all share at least a few genes was a heady experience.

Attending were:

Adrienne and James Haney
Marion McNiece
Lynette and Zachary McNiece, and child
Beth Ann and Harold Schied, and child
Francena and Lee Van Voorhis
Marlene and Bruce Van Voorhees, and child
Janine Corscaden
Marilyn Hansen
Kathy O'Neil
Lois and Manning Voorhees
Cecilia B. Van Voorhis

Ms. Cecilia B. Van Voorhis, 10 Maple St. #217, Newmarket NH 03857

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Executive Committee will meet on April 23, 1994 in the area of New Brunswick, New Jersey. Further information will be sent closer to the meeting

(cut here)

The Association continues to stock items of interest to members. All orders should be accompanied by a check payable to the Van Voorhees Association with your membership number ("VVL-xxxxx" on the mailing label). **PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH.** All orders should be sent to:

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