



# VAN VOORHEES NIEUWSBRIEF

Volume 20, Number 2

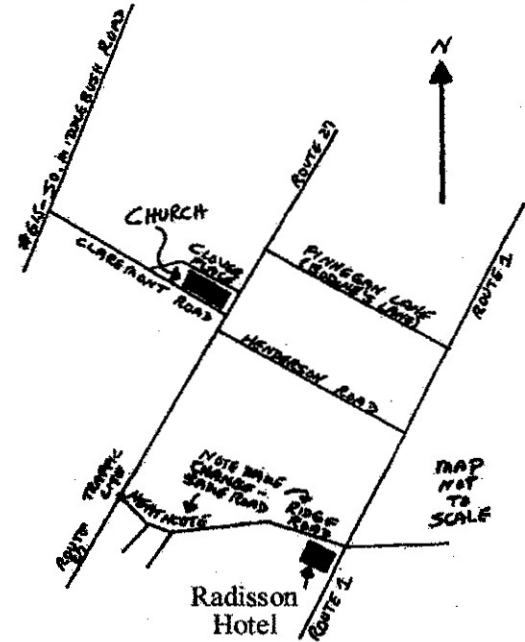
FALL/WINTER 2002

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## 70th Annual REUNION on OCT. 12, 2002

Once again we will meet at the Six Mile Run Reformed Church (shown on the 1st map) in Franklin Park, N.J. It is a charming church that has welcomed us several times in the past. The ladies always have a delicious lunch for us. Our guest speaker is Robert Fait Voorhees. His topic is The Voorhees Families of Montgomery County, N.Y. from the 1770's to the Present. Included in this speech are the lives of prominent family members, the Mohawk Turnpike and Eric Canal, and several other paths of migration. Florence Christoph will tell us about the progress on Volume II. As usual, David Voorhees has come up with an exciting program!

We have reserved a block of rooms at the Radisson Hotel in Princeton, N.J. for Friday night (Oct 11th) and a smaller number of rooms for Oct. 12th. N.J. For the hotel, use Turnpike Exit 9 or Garden State Parkway Exit 130 (shown on both maps). The Radisson tel. nos. are: 609-452-2400 (local) or 800-333-3333 & their website is [www.Radisson.com](http://www.Radisson.com).



**Radisson Hotel**  
4355 ROUTE 1  
PRINCETON

### Oct. 12th Agenda

- 8:00 a.m. Executive Committee Meeting
- 9:30-11 a.m. Registration, Genealogical Workshop, fellowship, and Sale of Books & Items
- 11:00 a.m. Special Program
- 11:45 a.m. Short Business Meeting
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch
- 2:00 p.m. Florence Christoph
- 2:30 p.m. Genealogical Workshop, fellowship, and Sale of Books & Items
- 5:30 p.m. Optional Dinner at O'Connors

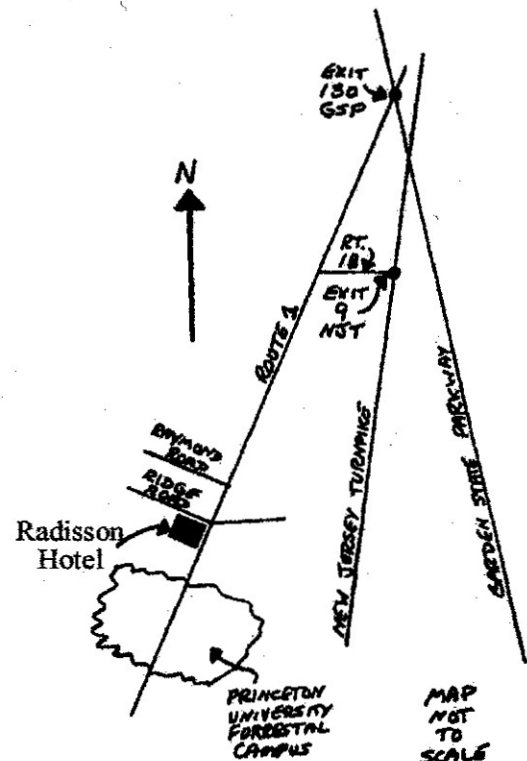
The cost per person for each meal is on the Reservation Form (page 3).

Lunch Menu: Tossed Salad, potatoes, green beans, rolls with butter, pumpkin pie, & a choice of beverages.

Dinner Entree Choices: Beef, Chicken or Fish.

### FEATURE ARTICLES

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## WELKOM VERWANTEN! (WELCOME, COUSINS!)

We are happy to list so many new members! We hope to see you at the Reunion on Oct. 12, 2002! This time we are listing the new members by state; because we hope that, when possible, the old members will be able to welcome them at the local level.

### *Regular Membership*

Cardella A. Tyrell – Lake Havasu City, Az.  
Virginia A. Jenkins – Denver, Co.  
Patricia Fince Fox – Rockford, Il.  
Martha Finch Monastero – Lincolnwood, Il  
Vicki N. Schoen – Centralia, Il.  
Lori Shepard – Pamell, Ia.  
Dr. Benjamine W. Van Voorhis – Baltimore, Md.  
Pamel B. (Hughes) Miller – Marblehead, Ma.  
Scott B. Van Voorhis – Quincy, Ma.  
Peter W. Van Voorhis – Worchester, Ma.  
Marilyn V. Knight – Hemlock, Mi.  
Sydney Lee Cagle – Las Vegas, Nv.  
Anne Desmond Marinho – Middletown, N.J.

Alfred F. Wolkomir, M.D. – Rumson, N.J.  
Louise E. Morton – Alto, N.M.  
David Benjamin (Ben) Miller – New York, N.Y.  
Elizabeth Hobart Hinchman – Cincinnati, O.  
Mark Zeno Vorhes – Claremore, Ok.  
Lisa Voris Frye – Nowata, Ok.  
Geneva L. Mills – Alvin, Tx.  
Angie O. Williams – Frisco, Tx.

### *Contributing Membership*

Michael Voorhees Dawes – Thompson, Ct.  
Wray Calvin Van Voorhis – Cincinnati, O.

### *New Life Membership*

Steven Coert Van Voorhees, Jr. – Acworth, Ga.  
Gerrit Stuart Van Voorhees – Lanexa, Va.  
Steven Coert Van Voorhees – Richmond, Va.

### *Upgraded to Life Membership*

Duane H. Anderson – Sacramento, Ca.  
Ruth A. Yos – Columbia, Md.  
David W. Voorhees – Crestline, O.  
John H. Van Voorhis – Greenville, S.C.



Very few families have an organization like ours. I'm sure all of us would like this to continue for the sake of our children and grandchildren. Please help us get the work done by volunteering your services and getting your relatives to join. "Many hands make light the work." If each one of you could act as a back-up to assist us, it would be much appreciated!

### *The Junior Corner: EENDENKOOI*

*by Marilyn Van Voorhis Voshall*

Did you know that the word, decoy, comes from two Dutch words, eend (meaning duck) and kooi (meaning cage)? The additional -en added to eend indicates the plural; therefore eenden means ducks. When combined with kooi (eendenkooi), it simply means decoy. Eendenkooi is pronounced as follows: een = long a + n (rhymes with mane), den = den, kooi = coy (rhymes with toy). The next time you see a carved wooden duck, remember that the word, decoy, comes from your ancestral language!

### **Ruinen Windmill**

*This reconstructed windmill of Ruinen, now a museum, was photographed in Sept. 1999 by Dr. Roy E. Voshall. Jan Tissing was instrumental in this reconstruction. Steven Coerte worked at the original mill for awhile before coming to Nieuw Amsterdam in 1660. Your editor thought this mill was a potent reminder of the changes in our family over many generations.*

## 2002 DUES PAYMENT FORM

Very few families have an organization like ours. Please help us get the work done by volunteering your services and getting your relatives to join. "Many hands make light the work." If each one of you could act as a back-up to assist us, it would be much appreciated!

Dues through Dec. 31, 2002 were payable Jan. 1, 2002. Please check the membership desired, note any change of address, use your entire 9-digit zip code (to save money in postage), add your email address (if you have one) and mail your dues to: Albert T. Van Voorhies, 9 Purdy Ave., East Northport, NY 11731-4501. Please make checks payable to The Van Voorhees Association. Your dues are deductible for Federal income tax purposes.

Please tell us the name and date of birth of any new member of your family, with the names of his/her parents and the immediate grandparents (with the Van Voorhees line).

### MEMBERSHIP DUES

Regular \$ 10.00                       Contributing \$ 30.00                       Junior 2.00  
 Life 200.00                       Sustaining 15.00

If you did not pay your dues in earlier years, please add that amount to your remittance:

Check here, and enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope if you wish to receive a 2001 membership card.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

VVA Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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### 70th ANNUAL REUNION RESERVATION

Please reserve the following places for me at the 70th (2002) Annual Reunion Luncheon:

#### Lunch Reservations

Children under 12 years: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ 9.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Adults \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$18.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Dinner Reservations

Persons \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$18.50 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Choose from:

Marinated Filet Tips

Chicken Parmigiana

Stuffed Filet of Sole

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Names of those in my group:

Adults: \_\_\_\_\_

Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this your first Reunion:  Yes  No

Please indicate your Line(s) of descent (check all that apply):

Coert                       Lucas                       Jan

Albert                       Aeltje                       Jannetje

Hendrickje (either)

Please enclose your check for the TOTAL amount and make it payable to The Van Voorhees Association.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

VVA # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

#### MAIL TO:

David R. Voorhees  
209 Lambertville-Hopewell Road  
Hopewell, New Jersey 08525-2810

*Reservations must be received not later than October 2, 2002. You may photocopy this form*

# THE Revolutionary War on the Western Frontier and the VOORHEES FAMILY MIGRATION TO KENTUCKY

by Larry Michael Voreis, April 2002

*The following article is Part II in a series on the migration of the Voorhees family to the Low Dutch settlement of Conewago in York County, Pennsylvania in 1765 and the subsequent movement to Kentucky in the spring of 1780. This installment describes the emergence of the Dutch settlement in nearby Berkeley County, Virginia and the events leading to the wartime migration to Kentucky. Larry is a descendant of Peter (VVA #249) and Sophia Vanderbogert Voorhees, the son of Jan VanVoorhees and Neeltje Nevius and is writing a book on the history of the Voreis family line. His email address is voreis@greenville.infi.net*

The first 120 years of the VanVoorhees family in America is marked by a series of migrations similar in nature to the first mass movement from Drenthe, Netherlands to the Dutch colony of New Netherland in 1660. The next movement was made by the second and third generations as they populated East New Jersey — led by Albert Stevense VanVoorhees, son of Steven Coerte, who settled there about 1684. The migration to the Conewago settlement in York County, Pennsylvania, beginning about 1765, represented a fourth generation push to the western frontier. The Conewago migration consisted of about 181 families as counted from Adams County Church Records by F. Edward Wright and the histories by the Rev. J.K. Demarest and E.M. Banta, referred to in Part I. Some of the Conewago Dutch did not tarry long, choosing to push on across the Potomac to the frontier settlement of Mecklenburg (later Shepherdstown), in Berkeley County, Virginia (now West Virginia).

## The Dutch of Berkeley County, Virginia

In Conewago the Dutch were outnumbered by the Scotch-Irish and Germans who were the earliest to arrive and owners of the best land. There are several probable reasons some Conewago families decided to move to Berkeley County: local government was dominated by the Scotch-Irish and Germans; social and political upheaval brought on by the fast approaching Revolution, and the ever-present threat of Indian attack. The most likely reason, however, was the liberal land policy of Virginia that encouraged new settlement on the frontier. Whatever the reason, we know for certain that a small group of Dutch settlers left Conewago in 1769 and moved to Berkeley County. Over the next several years they were joined by other Low Dutch families: Voorheeses, VanArdsdales, Demarees, DeBauns, Durees, and Conines.<sup>1</sup>

Among the first Conewago Dutch to move to Berkeley County were Samuel and Wyntie Banta Duryea (Duree) who arrived in 1769, along with Andrew Conine and his family. Samuel and Leah Banta Demarest came in April 1773 and settled on land owned by Jacob Vanderveer.<sup>2</sup> Samuel Harris, whose father married a Demaree, said his family arrived when he was about 7 years old in 1770 or 1771. John Demaree's fam-

ily arrived when he was age 12, in 1772 or 1773. Cornelius VanArsdale said he lived within 5 miles of Shepherdstown.<sup>3</sup> Peter and Sophia Vanderbogert Voorhees arrived between 1770 and 1772, when their son John was 12 or 13 years old.<sup>4</sup> Andrew and Margaret Shuck arrived in Berkeley County in 1760, were accepted into the Dutch community, and later joined in the migration to Kentucky.<sup>5</sup>

Mecklenburg, chartered in 1762 in Frederick County, Virginia, was on the west bank of the Potomac River at Pack-horse Ford, 50 miles southwest of Conewago on the Philadelphia Wagon Road. The wagon road provided a convenient link to the Conewago settlement and allowed the two settlements to maintain close bonds. Mecklenburg was first settled in 1727 by Dutch, German and Scotch immigrants and was one of the earliest settlements on the upper Potomac. Dutchman John VanMeter, a fur trader, settled his family there in the 1730s. Mecklenburg, one of the principal fords on the Potomac, was used by hunters leading pack-trains — loaded with venison, ginseng, bear skins, bear grease and fur pelts — making their annual trip from mountain settlements to the markets in Philadelphia. Mecklenburg's strategic location provided a continuous source of news from Philadelphia — and from the hunter-explorers returning from the far-away province of Kentucky.<sup>6</sup>

When Peter and Sophia Voorhees arrived in Berkeley County, their family included Neeltje, 15; John, 12 or 13; Christina, 11; Jannetje, 9; Francis, 5; Peter (Jr.), 3; and infant Helena who was baptized in Conewago on 8 September 1771. Shaker records show Helena was born in Berkeley County, Virginia. Abraham, their 10th child and progenitor of the Voreis family, was born in 1772, probably in Berkeley County. We do know he was baptized at the Conewago Dutch Reformed Church on 11 October 1772. Daughter Margarita, about age 18 at the time the family moved to Berkeley County, married Peter Parsell circa 1772. Their five children were probably born in Conewago — they were baptized there between 1773 and 1783.<sup>7</sup>

## The Revolution on the Western Frontier

The citizens of York County organized their Committee of Observation in July 1774 to protest against the British. The Committee of Observation (also known as the Committee for Safety) evolved into a wartime body to recruit militia when called upon and to draft men when the situation became critical. Henry Banta III, the leader of the Conewago Dutch, was elected a member of the York County Committee at a meeting on 16 December 1774.<sup>8</sup> The York and Berkeley county militias were among the first to respond to the call of the Continental Congress to march to Washington's aid at the siege of Boston in July 1775. In the first call to arms, York County raised 3,349 volunteers out of a total population of 25,000. At the same time, Berkeley County raised 200 men out of a much smaller population. By 1778 York County had 4,621 men under arms, near-

ly 20 percent of its total population! Colonel Thomas Hartley was quoted as saying: "The York districts had armed first in Pennsylvania and had furnished more men for the war and lost a greater number of men in it than any other district on the continent..."<sup>9</sup>

In the New Jersey homeland, Voorhees farms in Bergen County were in the midst of several battles that raged back and forth through the area. In one particularly brutal event, the British burned the farmhouse of Albert and Magdalena Van-Voorhees Banta, killing three of their children: 12-year-old Albert and seven-year-old Gertruy died on 22 July 1776; their 9-year-old brother Samuel died one week later.<sup>10</sup> This atrocity must have galvanized the entire Dutch community to fight the British. The Dutch families in Conewago and Berkeley County settlements were fortunate, their homes and farms were not directly in the path of battle. They were, however, fully involved in the Revolution.

Albert Voris (Voorhees) of Conewago, the son of Cornelius and Magdalena VanNuys, joined Captain Richard Brown's company and fought in the Battle of Long Island on 27 August 1776. Albert later married Anna Banta, daughter of Henry Banta and Maria Stryker, in Conewago on 2 April 1783, before they moved to Kentucky and raised 14 children.<sup>11</sup> Other Conewago Dutchmen served in a company of York County Militia commanded by Captain Simon VanArsdalen. VanArsdalen's company fought at Perth Amboy in September 1776 and in the campaigns around Philadelphia and Trenton in 1776 and early 1777.<sup>12</sup> Some members of his company were Sergeant Cornelius Cosine, Jacob Smock, Francis Monfor, Abram Banta, Abraham Brewer, Lawrence Monfort, David Casart,<sup>13</sup> Samuel Banta,<sup>14</sup> John Comingore, Henry Comingore,<sup>15</sup> and George List.<sup>16</sup>

Each militiaman was required to supply his own clothing and weapon. For the privilege of fighting, he was paid \$6.65 per month in highly inflated currency — that is, if he was paid. Soldiers were not paid on a regular basis and this caused serious morale problems, and sometimes desertions. Unlike a Continental soldier who served a much longer enlistment, the state militiaman served for shorter periods, usually two to four months at a time, after which they returned home. Most militiamen, however, served multiple tours.

The Berkeley County Militia, after initial service in the east with General Washington, later served on the western frontier along the Ohio River where the threat was from Indians, allies of the British.<sup>17</sup> John Voris, son of Peter and Sophia Vanderbogert Voorhees, and his friend, Andrew Conine, served a tour of duty on the Ohio River frontier during the brutal winter of 1778-79. Vincent Aker's described their service in these words:

*"The young men of the Berkeley settlement who served in the Virginia militia saw their action on the western frontiers. John Voris and Andrew Conine served as privates in Capt. Robert Little's Company under Maj. William Morgan [later Colonel Morgan]. In April or May 1778 they marched from Martinsburg in Berkeley County, Virginia to Fort Pitt [Pittsburgh], then went down the Ohio River to Holiday's Cove, about twenty miles above Wheeling where they were stationed about*

*four months as guards to the frontier against the Indians. John Demaree and Garrett Vanosdalen entered service at Martinsburg in late 1778. They also marched across the Allegheny Mountains to Fort Pitt where they joined a brigade under General McIntosh which built Fort McIntosh on the north bank of the Ohio thirty-four miles below Fort Pitt. They also built another Fort or Stockade on Tuscarawas Creek in present-day Ohio. They spent the greater part of the winter of 1778-79 on the frontier. Vanosdalen recalled that the snow was very deep and they made boots out of bear skins with the wooly side in."*<sup>18</sup>

John Demaree joined Captain Barrey's Company of a Berkeley County Militia at Martinsburg, Virginia on 15 September 1778. Samuel Harris was called to duty in the fall of 1780 and fought in battles at Guilford, North Carolina, Camden and Eutaw Springs, South Carolina, where he was taken prisoner. Mathias Shuck was drafted as a private under Captain Jacob Linder and was present at the surrender of Cornwallis.<sup>19</sup>

### The Revolutionary War Service of John Voris

From his pension application we can read about the Revolutionary War experience of John Voris in his own words. His affidavit describes not only his service in the Virginia Militia, but also his service in the Kentucky Militia (described in a future issue). John served with various militias from September 1777 through 24 November 1782 including three tours with George Rogers Clark in Kentucky. His story is quite extraordinary. At the time of his affidavit, on 14 March 1833 in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, he was 74 years of age and a resident of the Pleasant Hill Shaker community.

*"I John Voris being of the denomination of people called the believers or Shakers do hereby solemnly affirm that I was born in the county of Middlesex near New Brunswick in the State of New Jersey and when very young I moved with my father to York County Pennsylvania and about twelve or thirteen years of age we moved to Berkeley County state of Virginia where I resided when I was called into the service of my country in the Revolutionary War as follows - viz In the fall of 1777 (September) I was drafted in a militia company commanded by Capt. Charles Morrow and in the regiment commanded by Col. Pendleton in a tour of three months. We rendezvoused at Shepherdstown and marched to a place about ten miles from Germantown where we arrived shortly after the Battle of Germantown, and we joined the American Army and lay at White Marsh when my company and regiment was attached to Gen. Potts Brigade and at the end of our time we were honorably discharged and returned home. Again in the spring of the year 1778 (I believe about the first of May) I volunteered as a private soldier in Capt. Little's Company in the Regiment commanded by Col. Morgan on a tour of three months, we rendezvoused at Martinsburg, and marched to Ft. Pitt and from there down the Ohio River to Holiday's Cove on the Ohio where we were stationed as a guard to the frontier and returned at that point making scouts until the end of my time when I was honorably discharged..."*<sup>20</sup>

continued on page 6

### A Scouting Party to Kentucky

From hunters passing through on their way to Philadelphia, the Conewago and Berkeley County Dutch heard stories of a distant place in the far west called "Caintuck," where there were vast lands owned by Virginia, just waiting to be claimed and purchased at the state price. The one thing the Dutch wanted most of all they were unable to achieve at either Conewago or Berkeley counties — the purchase of a large tract of land where they could live, worship and manage their affairs in the Low Dutch tradition. Even though the Revolution was still raging, the prospects of a dangerous journey to Kentucky offered the possibility of realizing their dream. Dreams were put into action when plans were made to send a scout to Boonesborough in the spring of 1779, to locate and claim a tract of land suitable for their first settlement in Kentucky. He was to report back by the fall of the year, so final preparations could be made. The man chosen for the mission was 56-year-old Samuel Duree, husband of Wyntie Banta the sister of Henry Banta II. The Dutch put their trust in the hands of one of the colony's most respected and experienced men.

On 1 March 1779, Samuel Duree joined a party of 11 men that left Shepherdstown for Kentucky. Other members of the expedition were Colonel William Morgan and his son Ralph Morgan; Thomas Swearingen, eldest son of Thomas Swearingen, who established the ferry at Shepherdstown in 1775; Benoni Swearingen, a younger son of Thomas; Major George Michael Bedinger who, along with Benoni Swearingen, was employed as a surveyor for the party;<sup>21</sup> John Taylor, John Strode, James Duncan, John Constant, and two Negroes belonging each to the Swearingen brothers. Samuel Duree was not the only Dutchman in the group — the Swearingen brothers were also from a Dutch family. George Bedinger was well known and respected in both the Conewago and the Berkeley County settlements; his family first settled on Conewago Creek in the 1750s, before the arrival of the Dutch. All of the other men were from the Berkeley County settlements around Shepherdstown. I will refer to this group as the Morgan party, since Colonel Morgan, a veteran of the French and Indian War, held the highest rank.<sup>22</sup> The men of the Morgan party were experienced frontiersmen, most were veterans of the Revolution and all were well prepared for the rigors that lay ahead.

The Morgan party traveled to Kentucky on the "Valley Road or "Warrior Path" from Philadelphia to the Yadkin River in North Carolina, that passed through Shepherdstown and continued to Frederick Town. The Valley Road was nothing more than an Indian trail once used by the Six Indian Nations of New York on their expeditions to the Virginia Valley to war against the Catawba Indians of western North Carolina. When they reached the blockhouse fort at the forks of the Holston they followed an Indian trail through the Powell River Valley to Cave Gap, first discovered by Dr. Thomas Walker in 1750 and later named the Cumberland Gap. At this point they found Skagg's Trace that led to Sinking Creek where they joined Boone's Trace, the trail blazed by Daniel Boone in 1769. After several narrow escapes from the Indians, they arrived at Boonesborough

on 7 April 1779, after a 38-day trek that covered over 550 miles. The men of Boonesborough cheered their arrival, the unmanned fort had been under Indian siege for the past year.<sup>24</sup>

Indians, allies of the British in the Revolution, were a constant threat during the spring of 1779. In spite of the danger, the men of the Morgan party went about the business of scouting for land. Under Virginia land law, in order to make a land claim there had to be an "improvement" made on the site. Making "improvements" usually meant starting the construction of a cabin. Not too much time was spent trying to finish the job; just enough work was done to let someone else know the land was spoken for. At Boonesborough, one group of 10 men banded together as a company to make improvements, one for each of them, then to draw lots to decide ownership. Led by Captain John Holder, this group was casually known as Swearingen's company and included Samuel Duree, Thomas Swearingen, Benoni Swearingen, William Morgan, Ralph Morgan, George M. Bedinger, Joseph Donathan, John Constant, and John Taylor. Forming an alliance among groups of explorers was a common practice on the frontier and a practical solution to the problem of security, since it was foolhardy for a man to go out exploring by himself.<sup>25</sup>

The party began making improvements on Muddy Creek, below Little Muddy, in present-day Madison County, Kentucky. Three improvements were constructed and balloted for as they moved down the creek. George Bedinger marked his claim on 4 May 1779 when he "cut an oath on a tree."<sup>26</sup> The next day Samuel Duree marked out a claim on Muddy Creek at a location he thought suitable for a mill site. Others in the party considered it a poor piece of land and gave it to him without drawing lots. Above the mill site Duree also staked a claim on a piece of land for his son-in-law, which he named "DeBaun's Run." The men in the Morgan party referred to Samuel Duree as the "old man." He, of course, referred to them as "the boys." He was known as a little eccentric by the inhabitants of Boonesborough, who thought he must have been at least 70 years old and later recalled that he spoke broken English. Duree made it known that he intended to take up the Muddy Creek lands for the Low Dutch Company, much to the amusement of the others who considered it a poor choice.<sup>27</sup>

The work completed, Major George Bedinger returned to Shepherdstown in November 1779 accompanied by several men, including Samuel Duree.<sup>28</sup> Before departing, the men who had established land claims each appointed someone to represent them at a court session held by the Virginia Land Commission at Boonesborough on 29 December 1779. Samuel Duree was represented by Samuel Westewall (Westerfelt?). Duree's claim was upheld and recorded in the following entry.

*Sam'l Deryea by Sam'l Westewall this day claimed a pre-emption of 400 Acres of land at the State price in the District of Kentucky lying on Muddy Creek including a Mill Seat & the said Deryea improvement by making an Actual Settlement in April 1779 satisfactory proof being made to the Court they are of the Opinion that the said Deryea has a right to a preemption of 400 Acres of land to include the said improvements & that a certificate issue accordingly.*<sup>29</sup>

### The Migration to Kentucky

In 1779 there were two primary routes that brought settlers to Kentucky: the overland route down the Valley Road and through the Cumberland Gap; and the Ohio River route, which required a difficult crossing of the Allegheny Mountains to Fort Pitt (present-day Pittsburgh). Each route had its advantages and disadvantages. The overland route, the one used by Samuel Duree and the Morgan party, favored small parties traveling on horseback hauling their possessions by pack train and driving livestock ahead of them. For family groups traveling with children, farm implements, household goods and livestock, the Ohio River route offered many advantages. It was no less dangerous than the overland route, but it was the easiest way to make the move with farm tools and household goods, things large Dutch families commonly owned.

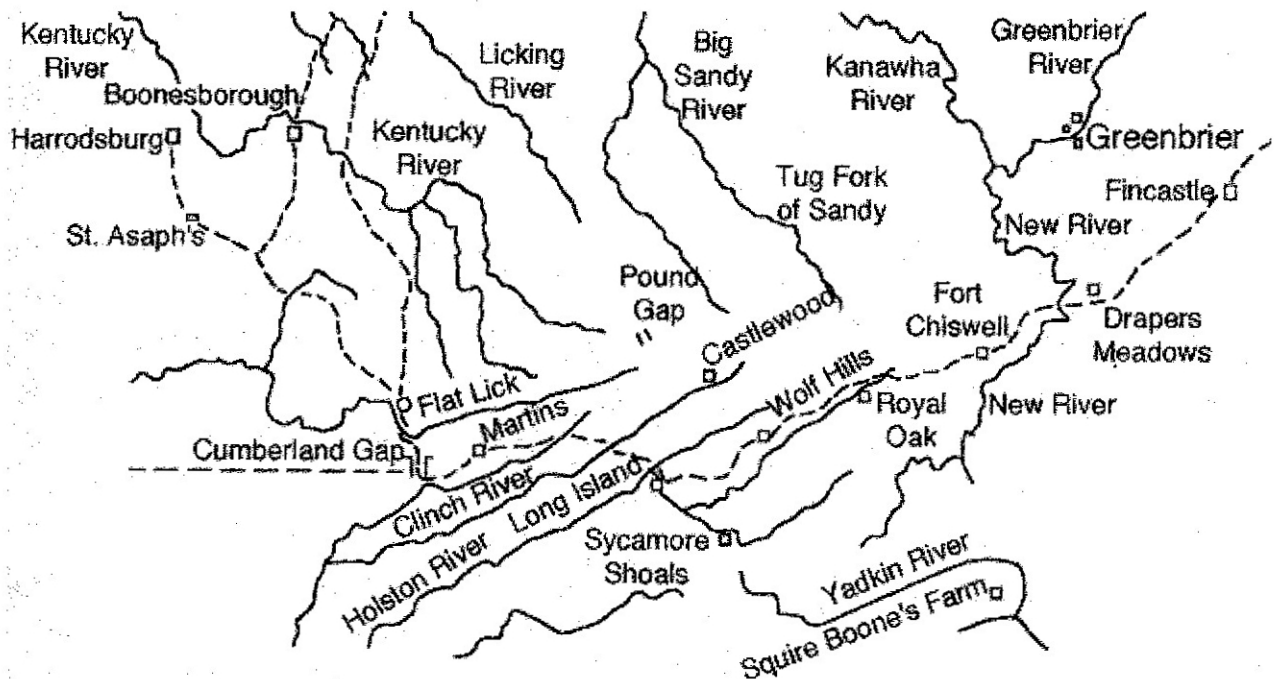
The migration to Kentucky was a two-pronged movement: One group, mainly families with young children, would travel the river route from Fort Pitt to the Falls of the Ohio (present-day Louisville); the second group would travel the overland route to White Oak Spring Station, six-tenths of a mile south of Boonesborough, in the Kentucky River bottomland of present-day Madison County. Two of the most experienced and respected men in the two Dutch settlements were chosen to lead the movement. Henry Banta III would lead the Conewago families on the river route and Samuel Duree would lead the second group of Berkeley County families on the overland route. By prior arrangement, both groups agreed to meet at White Oak

Spring Station in the spring of 1781, after harvesting their first crop of corn in Kentucky.<sup>30</sup>

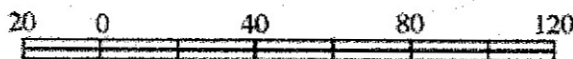
The Banta party left Conewago in November or December 1779, shortly after Samuel Duree returned from Kentucky. They had to leave in early winter to take advantage of frozen roads which made wagon travel easier. They also had to arrive at Fort Pitt early enough to allow for the building and provisioning of flatboats in time to take advantage of the high water and fast current offered by the first snow melt in early spring.

The Duree group timed their departure for late winter 1780, probably in early February — they arrived at White Oak Spring Station in March 1780.<sup>31</sup> The critical factor was that both groups had to arrive at their appointed destination in Kentucky by early April, 1780, in time to plant their first corn crop. Their survival depended on it.

While the Banta party represented the larger of the two groups, about one-third of the total congregation of the Conewago church, a number of families chose to remain behind. Some would later come to Kentucky; others would migrate to the Genesee country of New York State. Two of Henry Banta's sons, Samuel and Peterius, and three of his married daughters stayed in Conewago for a while before coming to Kentucky.<sup>32</sup> Many waited until after the end of the Revolution to come; among those were Francis Monfort, Coert Voorhees and Jacob G. Voorhies.<sup>33</sup> George Brinkerhoff, a relative of Henry Banta and an elder in the Dutch church, elected to remain in Conewago. Brinkerhoff had substantial land holdings and owned sever-



**The Route to Kentucky - 1779**



Map courtesy of Neal O. Hammon, Shelbyville, Kentucky, author of *My Father, Daniel Boone: The Draper interviews with Nathan Boone* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999)

*continued on page 8*

al slaves. His descendants could still be found in the vicinity of Gettysburg at the time of his death in 1810.<sup>34</sup>

Sophia Vanderbogert Voorhees, now a widow, and her children John, 21; Francis, 13; Peter, 11; Helena, 8; and Abraham, 7 (ancestor of the Voreis line), joined the Henry Banta party for the journey to Kentucky. Her children Margarita, Neeltje, Christina and Jannetje, may have been with her; however, I have not been able to document their presence in Kentucky records. Her son Jacobus married Maria Doty about 1771 and lived in Somerset County, New Jersey; he never came to Kentucky. Sophia's husband, Peter, died sometime between 1772 and 1779, during the period the family was living in Berkeley County, Virginia.<sup>35</sup> Sophia must have moved her family from Shepherdstown back to Conewago in the fall of 1779, in time to join the Banta party for the journey to Fort Pitt.

The Akers manuscript identifies a dozen heads of families that traveled in the Banta party: Henry Banta III, Abraham Banta, Albert Banta, Simon VanArsdale, Samuel Demaree Sr. (father-in-law of Henry III), Peter Demaree, John Demaree, Gerardus Riker, John Westerfield, Christopher Westerfield, Catherine Dorland, and Sophia Voorhees. Also traveling with the Banta party were a number of unmarried men, many of whom served with militias during the Revolution — men who would soon make their mark in the Kentucky settlements. The bachelors were John Voorhees, Francis Voorhees, James Voorhees and Luke Voorhees; from the Banta family Henry Jr., John, Cornelius, and Jacob; from the Demarest family John, two Samuels and Jacob; also John Riker; Samuel Westerfield; John and Lambert Dorland; and Abraham Brewer.<sup>36</sup>

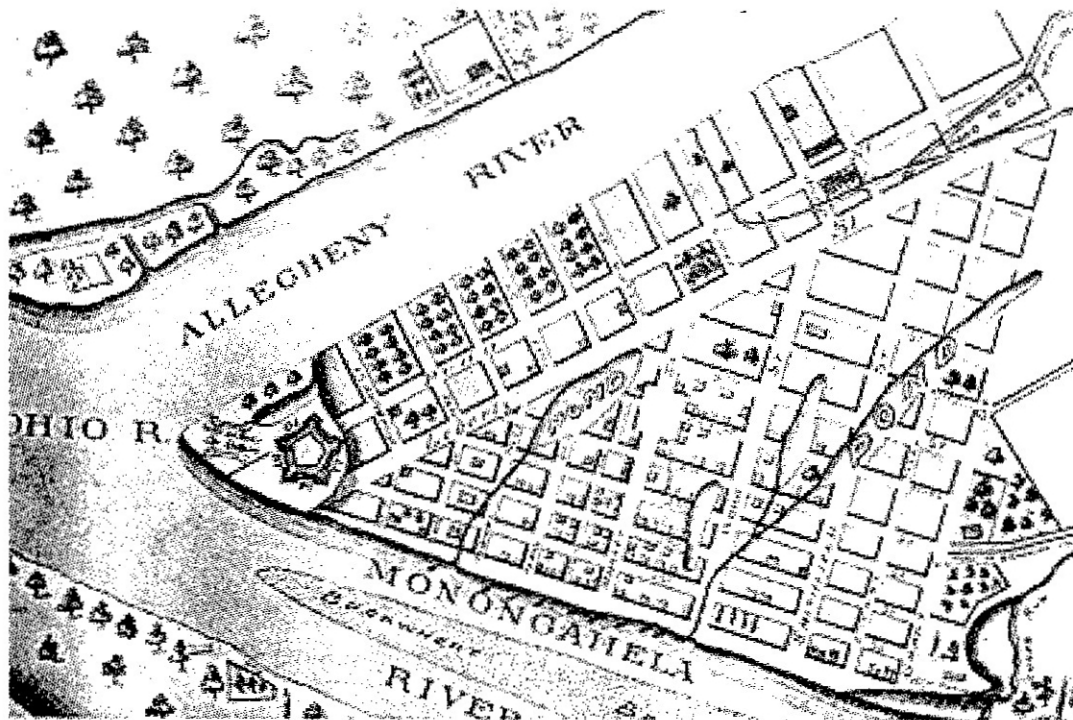
Several sources state that the Banta party numbered at least 75 persons, nearly half of them children under the age of 12.<sup>37</sup> I believe the total number in this group was much larger, per-

haps about 110. The three Banta families included 12 of Henry's 19 living children, five under the age of 12, and 19 of his grandchildren, almost all under the age of 12. This would put the total Banta family at 33. Sophia and her children numbered at least six, maybe more; the other nine families could have easily numbered 54 if they averaged only four children per family; the single men numbered another 12 (excluding John and Francis Voorhees who are included in Sophia's number, and the four Banta bachelors included in the Henry Banta count). This would put the total at a more likely 105. I am not sure how many people could travel on one flatboat, but my guess is the Banta party must have used at least four, possibly five, boats. They certainly had enough well-seasoned men to lead this number of boats down the Ohio. No doubt Sophia's children had plenty of company on the trek.

#### Fort Pitt in the Winter of 1779-1780

Fort Pitt was near the site of the old fort built by the French, Fort Duquesne, where the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers join to form the Ohio. The route to Fort Pitt was the military road built by General John Forbes in 1758 to attack Fort Duquesne. The Forbes Road began at the frontier settlement at Fort Bedford (present-day Bedford, Pennsylvania), at the terminal point of the Lancaster Pike that connected Lancaster, York, Gettysburg, Carlisle, Chambersburg and Bedford. This was the 200 mile route used by the Banta party to cross the Alleghenies in the winter of 1779. It was the only wagon trail to Fort Pitt at the time.<sup>38</sup>

When they arrived at Fort Pitt, the Banta party found a boom town operating in a wartime economy. Local farmers found newcomers an easy market for their produce. Warehousemen stored their goods while boats were being built or



Fort Pitt, 1795

From Robert B. Roberts, *Encyclopedia of Historic Forts, the Military, Pioneer, and Trading Posts of the United States*, (New York: McMillan Publishing Company, 1988), p. 690.



purchased. Merchants sold cloth and supplies at high prices. Printers sold river guides that were hastily put together and usually inaccurate. Money spent by immigrants became the driving force of the Fort Pitt economy. It only took 35 dollars to purchase a flatboat with a shed for shelter and a rail around the deck for horses and cattle. Flatboats, sometimes called "broad-horns," were much like a floating barnyard with livestock feeding on hay, chickens underfoot and children in the middle of everything.

Impromptu villages sprung up. Those who already had a flatboat were relatively comfortable as these usually had some sort of fireplace. Others, not so fortunate, built lean-tos or lived in tents. Livestock were corralled or hobbled in the open. Children and dogs were everywhere. The smart ones procured boats made of good-quality sawn logs, which could be either sold when they arrived at the Falls of the Ohio or disassembled and used to build their first cabins.

The best time for boats to push off was right after a spring flood and break-up of the ice pack signaled the start of a period of intense activity. If the flooding river did not float their boats off the river bank, they had to manhandle them into the water. Household goods were hastily loaded; chickens were cooped; horses, cows, hogs and oxen were cajoled on board and stowed on the aft end of the boat. Fodder was loaded and the wagon was hoisted on top of the crude cabin that was their temporary home. Knowing the Dutch, they probably had a rocking chair in the corner for grandmother. Finally it was time to push off! In March 1780, the great journey to Kentucky was finally under way.

The Banta party was among the first of a flood of many settlers making the trip from Fort Pitt to Kentucky. In 1780 alone, some 300 boats arrived at the Falls of the Ohio. Between 1780 and 1789 an estimated 850 flatboats made the one-way trip.<sup>39</sup>

### The Falls of the Ohio

When they landed at the Falls of the Ohio in late March or early April 1780, the banks of the river were covered with a thick growth of beargrass, which gave name to the creek they would first settle on. The exact date of their arrival is uncertain. Henry Banta put the date of arrival as April 1780 in his testimony in a court deposition over 20 years later. In John's pension application 53 years later, John and Peter Voorhees testified they landed in March 1780. John Demaree testified in his 1832 pension application that they landed on 9 April 1780. Akers points out in his manuscript that an earlier deposition by John Demaree was not so exact; in 1810 he testified they came to Kentucky in the spring of 1780. Henry Banta III recalled 53 years later that it was with great difficulty the group reached Kentucky "owing to the great numbers of hostile savages which roamed the wilderness at that time."<sup>40</sup>

In the next installment, "The Low Dutch Settlements in Kentucky."

1 Vincent Akers, *The Low Dutch Company, A History of the Holland Dutch Settlements of the Kentucky Frontier*, The de Halve Maen (Holland Society of New York), Vol. LV,

- No. 2 (Summer 1980), Part I, p. 2.
- 2 Elsa M. Banta, *Banta Pioneers and Records of the Wives and Allied Families*, (United States: E.M. Banta, 1983), pp. 101, 111. Samuel and Leah Banta Demarest moved from Bergen County, New Jersey to Conewago about 1765. Their daughter Antjin was the second wife of Hendrick Banta III who led the migration to Kentucky in 1780; Akers, *Low Dutch Company*, Part I, p. 2, citing Mary A. Demarest and William H.S. Demarest, *The Demarest Family*, (New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1938), pp. 60-61
- 3 Akers, *Low Dutch Company*, Part I, p. 2, Berkeley County arrival dates come from Revolutionary War pension applications of Andrew Conine (W9808), Jeremiah Conine (S42142), John Demaree (W7004), Daniel Harris (S36575), Samuel Harris (S10813), Cornelius VanArsdale (S4705).
- 4 Berkeley County arrival date for the Peter Voorhees family comes from the Revolutionary War pension application of John Voris (S14772), affidavit dated 14 March 1833, Mercer County, Kentucky.
- 5 Vincent Akers, *Shuck Family Notes* (Bargersville, Indiana: Akers, n.d.), pp. 1, 3.
- 6 Frederick Gutheim, *The Potomac* (New York: Rinehart & Company, 1949), pp. 109-116, 137.
- 7 F. Edward Wright, *Adams County Church Records of the 18th Century*, (Westminster, Maryland: Willow Bend Books, 1998), pp. 116-117. Helena's baptism date is noted as 8 September 1771 which is the date I have accepted — there are conflicting dates in Shaker records, however, Shaker records show Berkeley County as Helena's place of birth. See also Florence Christoph, *The Van Voorhees Family in America* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 2000), pp. 294-295.
- 8 Joan England Murray, *The Bantas of Pleasant Hill Kentucky, their ancestors and descendants* (Palatine, Illinois: Murray, 1985), p. 17, citing Pennsylvania Archives, Series 6, v. 2, p. 414.
- 9 Franklyn Frick, *A Summary of the Research on the Family Tree of Hendrick Banta III* (United States: Frick, 1984), p. 17.
- 10 Murray, *Bantas of Pleasant Hill*, p. 13; Christoph, *Van Voorhees Record*, p. 144. Magdalena VanVoorhees (VVA #368) was the daughter of Petrus Geesjen Romeyne VanVoorhees of the Albert Stevense VanVoorhees line (VVA #8). Albert Banta was the son of Hendrick Banta II and Gertruy Terhune and the brother of Hendrick Banta III, the leader of the Dutch settlement in Conewago.
- 12 Christoph, *Van Voorhees Record*, pp. 261-262. Albert Voorhees (VVA #758), son of Cornelius Voorhees (VVA #215); Bayless Hardin (Kentucky Historical Society) letter to R.W. Terhune (Martinsville, Indiana), 13 April 1943, citing Pennsylvania Archives, 5th Series, v. 2 (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Harrisburg Publishing Company, 1906) and D.A.R. Lineage Book, v. 88, p. 42. Revolutionary War pension file #387144, PA. Anna Banta was the granddaughter of Henry Banta III.
- 13 Akers, *Low Dutch Company*, Part I, p. 2.

*continued on page 10*

- 14 E.M. Banta, *Banta Pioneers*, p. 109.
- 15 Murray, *Bantas of Pleasant Hill*, p. 14, Pension File #R479, PA citing pension records from N.A.R.A..
- 16 Abstracts of Pensions, *Soldiers of the Revolution, 1812 and Indian Wars who Settled in Kentucky* (Louisville, Kentucky: The Filson Club), v. 4, Section 60, pp. 36-37; John Comingore is Pension File #S1190, PA; Henry Comingore is #W1391, PA.
- 17 Howard M. List, *List Family Notes* (Battle Creek, Michigan: List, 1984), p. 7, citing Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, v. II, p. 548.
- 18 Dansk Dandridge, *Historic Shepherdstown* (Charlottesville, Virginia: The Michie Company, 1910), pp. 78-81.
- Akers, *Low Dutch Company*, Part I, p. 2, citing Revolutionary War pension applications of John Voris (S14772), affidavit dated 14 March 1833, Mercer County, Kentucky; Andrew Conine (W9809), affidavit dated 3 December 1832, Henry County, Kentucky; John Demaree (W7004), affidavit dated August. 9, 1832, Mercer County, Kentucky; and Garrett Vanosdalen (R10829), affidavit dated April. 5, 1834, Morgan County, Virginia.
- 19 Abstracts of Pensions, John Demaree (#W7004 VA); Samuel Harris, (#S10813 VA). Akers, *Shuck Family Notes* (Bargersville, Indiana: Akers, n.d.), pp. 1, 3.
- 20 Revolutionary War pension application of John Voris (S14772). Holiday's Cove is located near present-day Wheeling, West Virginia.
- 21 Draper MSS 1A1-2.
- 22 Draper MSS 1A12, interview with G.M. Bedinger, Lower Blue Licks, Kentucky, July 1843, gives a roster of the men and the date of departure.
- 23 Draper MSS 1A1-18, 1A12, 1A104; Akers, *The Low Dutch Company*, Part I, pp. 2-3, citing the deposition of George M. Bedinger, 12 May 1814, Henry Banta vs. Green Clay, Madison County Circuit Court Record Book D, pp. 414-420; deposition of Ralph Morgan, 6-7 February 1815, Banta vs. Clay, Box 68, Bundle 135, Madison County Circuit Court Records, State Archives, Frankfort, Kentucky. Also Dandridge, *Historic Shepherdstown*, pp. 200-201, describes the expedition to Kentucky giving a list of the men, departure date, and return date.
- 24 Draper MSS, 1A111, shows 7 April 1779 as the date the Morgan party arrived at Boonesborough.
- 25 Akers, *Low Dutch Company*, Part I, p. 3, citing depositions of G.M. Bedinger and Ralph Morgan in Henry Banta vs. Green Clay, Madison County Circuit Court Complete Record Book D, pp. 414-420.
- 26 Draper MSS 1A16.
- 27 Akers, *Low Dutch Company*, Part I, p. 3; also described by Akers in *Henry Counties Low Dutch Company*, pp. 1-2.
- 28 Draper MSS 1A16, 1A31, 1A152-153, deposition of Joseph Protor, 8 June 1815, Beddinger vs. William Martin and heirs of Joel Walker. Protor testified that Samuel Duree returned to Virginia in the fall of 1779 and brought his family back to Kentucky and settled at Boonesborough at White Oak Spring.
- 29 The land claims of the men in Swearingen's company are documented in the Certificate Book of the Virginia Land Commission, 1779-1780, printed in *The Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society* (Frankfort, 1923), v. 21, pp. 96-97.
- 30 Murray, *Bantas of Pleasant Hill*, p. 24; Akers, *Low Dutch Company*, Part I, p. 4. citing William G. Eaton, III *Fated White Oak Spring Station Was Built Near Boonesborough in 1779* (Lexington Sunday Herald-Leader, Jan. 10, 1965, B-2).
- 31 Akers, *Low Dutch Company*, Part I, pp. 3-4; E.M. Banta, *Banta Pioneers*, p. 111.
- 32 Theodore M. Banta, *A Frisian Family, The Banta Genealogy* (New York, 1893, reprint by Higginson Book Company), p. 51.
- 33 Samuel Banta was living in Kentucky by June 1783 when his son Lambert Dorland Banta was born (Murray, *Banta's of Pleasant Hill*, p. 23); Peter Banta probably came with Samuel — his first child, Henry P. Banta, was born in Henry County in January 1787 (T.M. Banta, *Banta Genealogy*, p. 157); Francis Monfort arrived by May 1784 when his son Francis was born (Vories, *Vories - Monfort Record*, p. 48); Coert Voorhees arrived between 1785 and 1788 (Christoph, *Van Voorhees Record*, p. 421); Jacob G. Voorhies first appears in Kentucky records when he bought land in Mercer County in 1784 (Christoph, *Van Voorhees Record*, p. 429).
- 34 E.M. Banta, *Banta Pioneers*, p. 112.
- 35 Christoph, *Van Voorhees Record*, pp. 106-107, 293-298. This source indicates Peter died "after 1772 but before 1780," however, since the Banta party started their trek to Fort Pitt in the winter of 1779, I believe Peter must have died sometime between 1772 and 1779.
- 36 Akers, *Low Dutch Company*, Part I, p. 4, citing the signers of the 1780 Low Dutch petition to the Continental Congress, and the Dutchmen mentioned in Jefferson Co., Minute Book A, prior to 1782, specifically those included in the list of persons granted 400-acre "poor rights" by the court on 3 Dec 1781, including Sophia and John Voris. Alvin L. Prichard, ed., *Minute Book A, Jefferson County, Kentucky, 1781-1783*. Part I, *The Filson Club History Quarterly*, v. 3, no., 2, January 1929, pp. 55-83.
- 37 E.M. Banta, *Banta Pioneers*, p. 113; Murray, *The Bantas of Pleasant Hill*, p. 24.
- 38 R.E. Banta, *The Ohio*, (New York: Rinehart & Company, 1949), p. 98; E.M. Banta, *Banta Pioneers*, p. 112.
- 39 Murray, *Bantas of Pleasant Hill*, p. 25, citing Walter Havighurst, *Ohio*, 1976
- 40 Akers, *Low Dutch Company*, Part I, p. 4, citing the Revolutionary War pension applications of Henry Banta (R480); John Demaree (W7004); and John Voris (S14772).

# VOORHEES AND STEVENSON FAMILIES

by Manning Voorhees

Genealogists for many years have been interested in a possible relationship between the Stevenson Family of Rockland County, New York, and the Van Voorhees Family. Are these Stevensons descended from Steven Coerts van Voorhees?

Elias van Voorhis, in his watershed *The Van Voorhees Family*, published in 1888, revealed very little on the question. Albert Stokes, our late Genealogist Emeritus, dismissed the Stevenson connection on pages 67-68 of *The Van Voorhees Family*, Volume I, published in 1984. Florence Christoph, our Genealogist, says starting on page 747 of *Van Voorhees Family in America*, published in 2000, that she found no records to support the Stevenson relationship. Both Al Stokes and Flo Christoph refer to the work of the late John Bright Stevens who claimed that there is a relationship. The latest development in this genealogical challenge is an article by Henry Hoff in the October 2001 issue of the *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, pages 243-247. Mr. Hoff concludes that the Stevensons of Rockland County are descended from Steven Coerts van Voorhees.

There are two key personalities in this scenario: Steven Stevenson, who Mr. Hoff says is the son of Lucas Stevense van Voorhees (whose father was Steven Coerts van Voorhees), and Maria Wyckoff (using her contemporary given name), daughter of Cornelis Pieterse Wyckoff, son of Pieter Claessen the original Wyckoff immigrant, and Geertje Symons van Arsdale. Steven Stevenson was born circa 1677.

Mr. Hoff supports his conclusion by adding some new data and logic utilizing the Dutch patronymic naming system and the ordering of children in Cornelis Pieterse Wyckoff's will. Cornelis Pieterse Wyckoff had two daughters: Marije, baptized on 11 December 1681, and Marrytje, baptized on 1 May 1701. Did the older daughter die before the 1701 baptismal date of the younger or did the younger die between 1701 and the 1726 date of the father's will? Did Cornelis Pieterse Wyckoff have two daughters alive at the same time with interchangeable names that transliterate to Maria today? The ordering of names in the father's will is said by Mr. Hoff to be significant in this regard. Based thereon, and considering birth data for some of the children, Mr. Hoff concludes that the younger Maria was deceased when the father wrote his will and that the older Maria was alive at that point in time. This conclusion is critical to Mr. Hoff's analysis.

John Bright Stevens stated that Steven (or Stephen) Stevenson married Marrytje Wyckoff (the older daughter baptized in 1681) and that this Steven is descended from Steven Coerts van Voorhees. Mr. Hoff agrees, saying that the first born Maria was alive and old enough to marry Steven and bear his children. The later Maria would have been too young. Mr. Hoff also analyzed children's names under the Dutch patronymic system to support his conclusion.

Earlier genealogical assumptions were that the older Maria was deceased when the younger Maria was baptized consistent with typical Dutch practice during the 17th century when a child died and a successor child was given his/her name. Al

Stokes assumed this to be so. He also said that the younger Maria married Steven Voorhees, son of Gerrit Coerte van Voorhees #21 in Van Voorhees Family in America. Flo Christoph says that this Steven (#106) was born circa 1698, which is seventeen years after the baptism of the older Maria, and that he married Marytie Wyckoff circa 1720. Maria was baptized in 1701. Therefore, it would seem that Maria, wife of this Steven, was the younger daughter. Based upon Mr. Hoff's analysis, their marriage was terminated by Maria's death sometime before or in 1726 up to the time that Maria's father wrote his will. Thus, the picture is complicated by the younger Maria marrying another Steven. But then — why should things be simple with the Voorhees tribe?

Genealogical relationships among our Dutch forebears are often far from conclusive. Documentary verification frequently is not available and conclusions are made based upon the "preponderance of the evidence" that is available. Mr. Hoff's contribution to the Stevenson-Voorhees challenge is welcomed. We eagerly await reaction to his conclusion. Please forward your comments and information to Florence Christoph with a copy to me. Our addresses are in *Who's Who*.



*Mr. Hoff's article is much too detailed for further elaboration in the Nieuwsbrief. His article can be obtained by purchasing the October 2001 Record at a cost of \$7.50 each. Please write and send your check to: The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 122 East 58th Street, New York, New York 10022-1939. Ask for the October 2001 Record, Volume 132, Number 4. The Society's telephone is 212-755-8532 and its Internet address is <<http://www.nygb.org>>.*

## ***The Wyckoff Assn. Invites Us: Alstublieft komt u en verbindt u met ons!***

The Wyckoff Association represents the descendants of Pieter Claesen Wyckoff who emigrated to Nieuw Netherland earlier than Steven Coerts. This Association administers the Wyckoff House Museum in Brooklyn, N.Y. as well as on-going genealogical and related activities for members. The Wyckoff House was built circa 1652 and occupied by Pieter and Grietje Claesen Wyckoff about 1655. It is the number one landmark property in New York City and the oldest standing house in New York State. It remained the home for Wyckoff descendants for 250 years after Pieter and Grietje first occupied it.

The Wyckoff Assoc. will sponsor a multi-day festival in October to mark 350th years since Pieter arrived. On Sat., Oct. 5th, from 1:30-4 p.m. the House is featured during a Historical Fair with historic interpreters, craftspeople and performers. Many Van Voorhees have Wyckoff ancestry and these Wyckoff 'cousins' have invited us and the public to attend. There might be a small admission charge. [For further details contact the Wyckoff House Museum (5816 Clarendon Rd., Brooklyn, N.Y.) at P.O. Box 100-376, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11210.]



# SINTERKLAAS

by Marilyn Van Voorhis Voshall

## Sinterklaas History & Traditions

Did you know that there are two bishops by the name of Nicholas? Both lived and died between 250 and 546 A.D. The lesser known was Nicholas, Bishop of Pinora. St. Nicholas was Bishop of Myra, now in Turkey and called Demre. Pinora, Myra, and Patara were in Lycia, then known as Asia Minor.

St. Nicholas was born in 271 A.D. in Patara and died on Dec. 6, 342 or 343. Recently his original tomb was found by archeologists. His family was Christian and moderately wealthy. When he was only 9 years old, his parents died in an epidemic. Since the church took him in, he later gave all his wealth to the poor and became a priest. Eventually he was made the Bishop of Myra. There are many legends about his good works. The people loved him and he was regarded as a saint.

Around 1087 the Muslims captured Myra. Christian sailors, financed by local Christian merchants, took the bones of St. Nicholas to Bari, a seaport in southern Italy. Here they built a mausoleum for him. Bari then became the center for worship of St. Nicholas. For an unknown reason the Dutch later had the saint sailing to the Netherlands from Spain.

In the 12th and 13th centuries the Netherlands built 23 churches named for St. Nicholas. He became the patron saint of Amsterdam as well as several other European towns. Because he so often aided poor children and traveled a lot, he became their patron saint too. Today he is also the patron saint of merchants. Guess why!

In the 14th century, the choir boys of St. Nicholas churches were given money and a holiday on Dec. 6th. Later monks teaching in convent schools would disguise themselves as Sinterklaas (an abbreviated form of Sint Nicolaas/St. Nicholas) and either reward or punish the students according to their behavior.

Also in the 14th century the convent schoolboys paraded through the streets during the Christmas season. One was dressed as a bishop. The others collected money for the church. Today in certain areas children, sometimes dressed as the magi, still collect food and money for the poor. Special songs are sung during this event. They also play a unique drum (called the foekepot or rommelpot) and usually some type of flute.

Zwarte Piet (Black Peter) originally was a Turkish orphan who became a helper or servant of Bishop Nicholas and traveled with him as his constant companion. His dark features were a big contrast to the blond Dutch so they envisioned him as black. Another tradition attributes his blackness to soot from all the chimneys he has to climb down. (Coal dust is extremely hard to wash off! There is more about chimneys later.)

In Medieval and Renaissance paintings Sint Nicolaas is shown with long white hair and beard, wearing a bishop's

vestments (a mitre and red cloak over a white robe) and carrying a gold crosier (staff). On the other hand, Zwarte Piet is depicted with bright red lips and dark curly hair, wearing a gold earring and colorful clothes styled from the middle ages. His costume may vary a little from place to place except for the puffed hat with its long feather.



Sinterklaas always rides a Schimmel, a white or light grey horse. Zwarte Piet walks beside the horse (or sometimes rides another horse) and carries a bag of sweets and presents and perhaps a roede (rod) or switch (for whipping naughty children). In inclement weather they have been known to ride in a horse-drawn carriage. Somehow through the ages Sinterklaas was thought to come from Spain, and he obviously modernized his ship from sails to steam. *I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In*, an old English carol, evolves to *Zie ginds komt de stoomboot* (*See, Yonder Comes the Steamboat*) for the Dutch.

Supposedly Sinterklaas departs Spain for the Netherlands a few days after Martinmas held on Nov. 11th. He traditionally arrived on Dec. 5th but now it is in mid-November. Today he usually has many helpers (about 20 Zwarte Pieten). The Mayor of Amsterdam and a delegation of dignitaries welcome him along with large crowds of people, usually with children. TV cameras broadcast the show live. During the parade the Zwarte Pieten throw pepernoten ('ginger snaps') to the crowds from large bags. Children are told that,

if they are bad, these empty bags will be used to carry them off to Spain. (Pepernoten are listed later under Sinterklaas Holiday Treats.) Every town has a reception for Sinterklaas with the Mayor and his delegation. Children who wonder at the sight of so many Sinterklazen are told that he could not possibly make the rounds without lots of help; so hulp-Sinterklazen (people who dress up like him to help) are necessary. This explanation sounds familiar, doesn't it?

Gifts are given on Strooi avond (St. Nicholas Eve or, literally, straw evening), the night of Dec. 5th. This evening may also be called Pakjesavond (Parcels Evening). Sinterklaas usually rides his horse over the roof tops and Zwarte Piet goes down the chimney and leaves the gifts or a switch or lump of coal for bad children in the klompen (wooden shoes) left by the hearth. Another version has Sinterklaas dropping the gifts down the chimney so that they miraculously land in the right place. The gifts dispensed by Sinterklaas or Zwarte Piet are usually various kinds of sweets. A third story has Sinterklaas & Zwarte Piet knocking on the door with his bag of presents. Opening his large book, he calls out the name of each person who must then answer questions about his/her behavior throughout the year. Gifts go to the good and a switch or lump of coal to the bad. Sometimes, when the door is opened, Zwarte Piet will throw pepernoten onto a white sheet purposely laid on the floor. The children sing Sinterklaas songs as they try to get as many cookies as possible. For home visits Sinterklaas & Zwarte Piet, under their disguises, look amazingly like the father and/or uncle or family friend. In all versions the children provide treats for the horse by putting straw, a carrot, and a lump of sugar in their klompen, and perhaps a bit of water in a pan too

When adults exchange presents, it is done differently from what we normally do. They disguise the contents of the package and usually add a poem, serious or humorous. A small item might be inside several larger boxes with a verse for each. These poems must be read aloud to all in the room. There could even be a humorous gift wrapped beautifully with a poem on the card. This disguise and verse may have the recipient going several places in the house only to find another box with another verse. The last one contains the gift. Often the recipient is expected to guess what the present is before opening it. Sometimes the worst-wrapped box will contain the most expensive gift. I vividly recall this procedure in my family. One year we carefully wrapped up the old broom by the kitchen door and handed it out to my parents before giving them the nice present. We also often wrote amusing poems for the gifts. From personal experience I can say that it is both a challenge and lots of fun as everyone tries to guess what the gift will be. Until now, I didn't realize that this was a Dutch custom.

Sometime on Dec. 6th, according to tradition, Sinterklaas secretly boards his steamboat and goes back to Spain. There he remains until the following year.

#### **Sinterklaas feestdag lekkers (holiday sweets)**

Some of the traditional treats eaten during this season are listed here. My three Dutch recipe books differ slightly on the

details and names for the same item. Apparently the Dutch are very fond of gingerbread (lots of allspice with an occasional pinch of ginger) and almond paste. These ingredients are in many of the Sinterklaas recipes.

Pepernoten are the hard gingersnaps/gingerbread-biscuits thrown by the Zwarte Pieten to the crowds or through the door onto a white sheet in private homes when they visit. The children sing Sinterklaas songs as they try to get as many as possible. (Pepermoot is a ginger nut or gingerbread nut. Peper is pepper and noten are music notes. The name comes from the spicy/peppery ginger plus the round shape like music notes.)

Kerstkrans (Christmas wreath/circle) is a white bread molded into a wreath and decorated with white frosting plus red and green candied cherries plus perhaps apricots or candied fruit peels. To top it off they add a red ribbon and holly sprig, both of which are inedible.

Letterbaket (fancy letter cake), sometimes called Boterletters (butter letters), has a flaky dough similar to that of pie crusts wrapped around an almond paste filling. For added zest there might also be some grated lemon peel mixed with the almond paste.

Speculaaspoppen (hard, brown, spiced, doll-shaped cookies), also called Speculaas Koekjes (cookies), are traditional gingerbread-people cookies formed in wooden molds. When these molds are in the shape of Sint Nicolaas, the cookies are called Sinterklaaskoekjes (Sinterklaas cookies).

Suikerbeester (sugar beasts) are animal-shaped sugar cookies loved by children everywhere.

Taaitaai (literally, taai means tough or hard), a very hard cookie with anise flavoring, is molded into fancy doll shapes.

Besides pastries there are special candies. Instead of candy canes they give a Chocolate Initial (for the first name only) to each person.

Borstplaat (fondant or fudge), Marsepein (marzipan: a confection made of almond paste and sugar) and Roomborstplaat (cream fondant or fudge) are three favorites. Like dough, these fondants and marzipan can be put into molds. When the molds are shaped like fruit or vegetables, a matching food coloring is used. There are three common flavorings – peppermint (with red and/or green food coloring), coffee, and cocoa.

#### **Sinterklaaslieder en Kerstlieder (St. Nicholas Songs & Christmas Carols)**

There are several Sinterklaas songs. Apparently he likes to hear children singing, so they sing for him both at the public appearances and at home. I am working on a music book, *Olde Dutch Christmas Songs and Carols*, with the original Dutch lyrics, a very literal English translation and other information about each piece. If you have copies of any old Dutch carols and Christmas Songs in Dutch, please send them to me! My address and email are in Who's Who.

Nu ik wens jullie een Zalig en Vrolijk Kerstfeest en Gelukkig Nieuwjaar! (Now I wish you all a Blessed & Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!)



## COUSINS IN THE NEWS

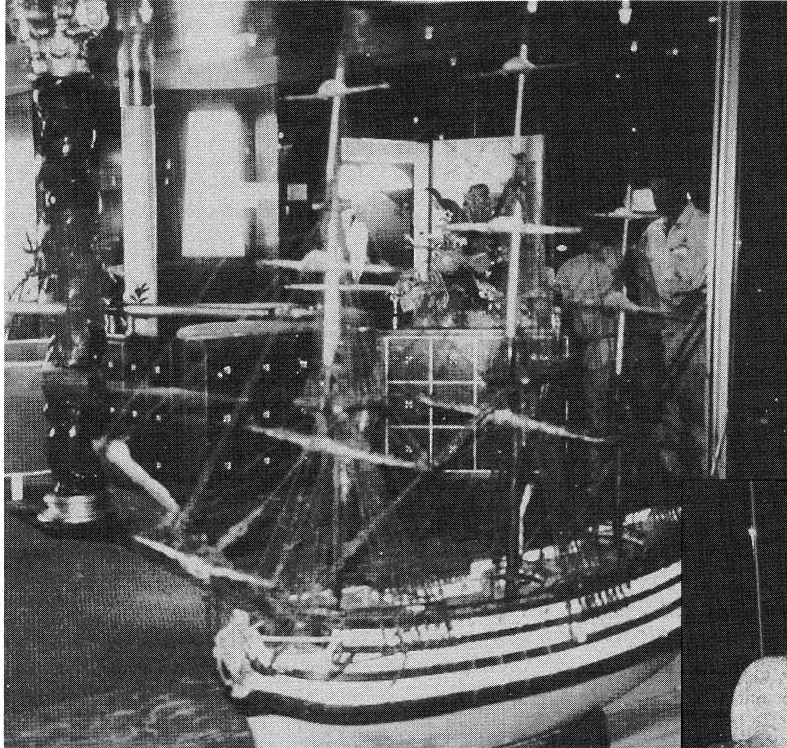
On May 1st, 2002 Glee Van Osdol-Krapf and Allen became grandparents of an 8 lb. 4 oz. and 21 inch long baby girl. Their daughter, Stacey, and son-in-law Jeff are doing fine as well. Congratulations!

Dr. Lee Van Voris has moved from Erie, Pa. to become the chief medical officer at St. Peter's Health Care Services in Albany, N.Y.

George Vorhies at the age of 82 was interviewed by the Fairfield, Iowa newspaper for a feature article about Pearl Harbor. After 60 years he still remembered the attack in detail. He was a chief machinist's mate at the Ford Island Naval Air Station on the morning of Dec. 7, 1941. At age 17, George fol-

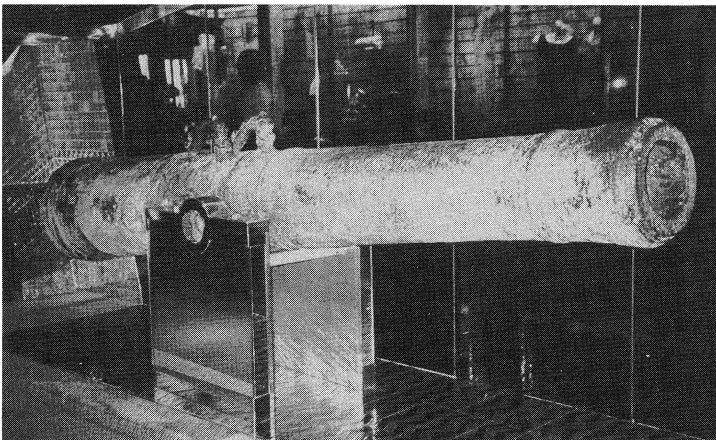
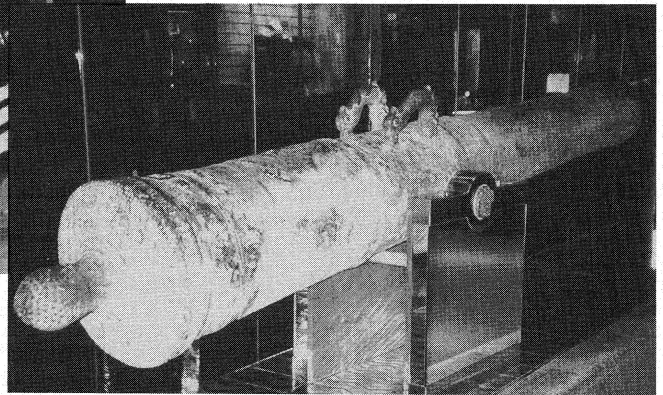
lowed his 3 older brothers into the Navy. Grant and Lester Vorhies had passed through Pearl Harbor months before the attack. As a member of a unit intercepting the U-505 (a German submarine) off the coast of Africa, Grant Vorhies later received the Presidential Citation; because this was called one of the greatest intelligence victories of WWII. Today George, a retired metal smith who still enjoys deer hunting, lives in Fairfield, Iowa. (This was submitted by Darlene L. Vorhies of Fairfield, Iowa.)

David William Voorhees, director of the Papers of the Jacob Leisler (1640-91), presented the Leisler coat of arms to the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society in a dedication ceremony which took place on May 16, 2002.



## OLDE SHIP PHOTOS

We want to thank Dorothy Combs for donating these ship photographs! The first is a museum model of a square rigger, the Statendam. While there are some differences between this style and that of the Bonte Koe, it still reminds us of how our ancestors came to Nieuw Amsterdam. Since the Bonte Koe was a chartered merchant ship, she would have carried cannon. The second and third pictures are of ship cannons in 1663; and the fourth shows cannon balls for them.



## DUTCH HYMN OF THANKSGIVING

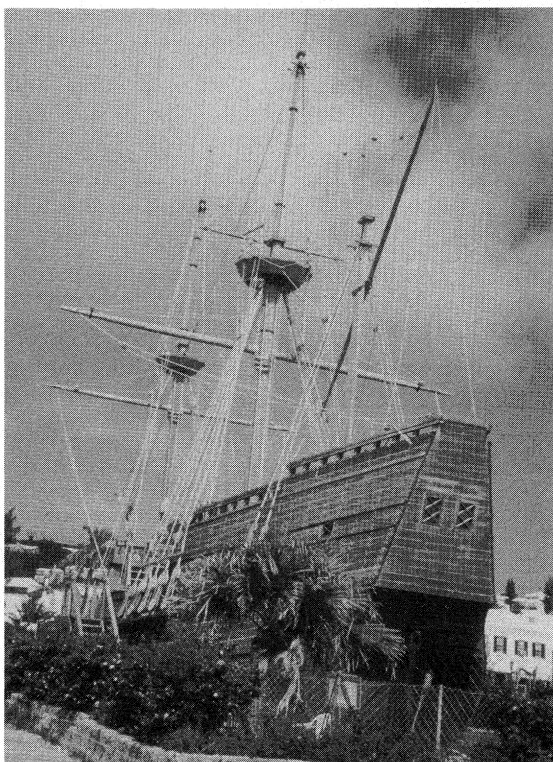
Your editor's association with this familiar favorite goes back many years. This was the first "anthem" that I ever sang, when at the age of nine I was a member of a Methodist Church Junior Choir in Englewood, N.J. The most common English title is, *We Gather Together To Ask the Lord's Blessing*. A recent Lutheran hymnal calls it, *We Praise You, O God*.

Several years ago while in The Netherlands, I acquired a Dutch Reformed Church hymnal. The original title is *Wilt heden nu treden voor God, den Here*. The composer is Adriaan Valerius, who was born in Middelburg circa 1570-1575. He died in Veere in 1625. After his death, it was published in *Nederlandsch Gedenckeklanck* in 1626. The familiar arrangement is by Edward Kremser (1838-1914) in D major. Later Adriaan Engels, born in 1906, arranged it with the same

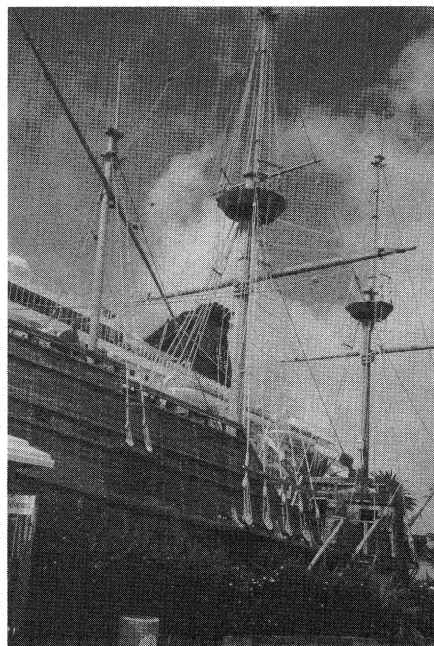
melody but different chords for the Dutch Reformed Church Hymnal, *Liedboek voor de Kerken*.

The hymn has only 3 verses in Dutch and both English translations. Neither the Lutheran nor familiar version is an exact translation of the original Dutch. Now, there is a 1-verse German version (given to me by a friend), which I suspect is recent, because it very closely follows the familiar English translation.

The story behind the hymn is that it was sung in thanksgiving to celebrate the Dutch liberation from Spanish rule. This was a giant step forward for Protestantism and religious tolerance. Every Thanksgiving when you sing this hymn, remember its history.



These are two views of the "Deliverance", a replica of the ship that set sail for Jamestown in 1610. It was built from Bermuda cedar and what could be salvaged from the "Sea Venture," a ship wrecked off the coast of Bermuda while car-



rying provisions and colonists from England to the starving colony of Jamestown, Va. in 1609. The "Deliverance" is docked at St. George in Bermuda.

While the "Deliverance" is not the "Bonte Koe," a trip aboard replicas of these old ships will give you a good idea of the hardships faced by all colonists in the 1600's.

Included with passengers and crew were provisions for the journey plus supplies for the colony. Some farm animals were also on board. Personal space was very limited, so there was no privacy. Several weeks of this was a real test of endurance. How many of us at the age of 60 (if a male) or pregnant (if a female) would attempt such a journey?



## Attic RECORDS and PHOTOS

by Marilyn Van Voorhis Voshall

It's time to clean out your attic. Those old records and photos of the family are a priceless heritage for you and your generations to come. If you have some records and/or photos that you would like to share with us, we'd be pleased to receive them. However, please send us COPIES and not the originals! Also please include as much additional knowledge as you have about each. For example, participation in the

military, occupation, special attributes, etc. I've been adding my childhood memories to a computer genealogy file. My grandchildren love their copies: Even if your memories are not something usable in a book, your descendants will love your efforts.

Peter R. Christoph is still seeking readable Photocopies of old Voorhees diaries revealing the life and times of our ancestors in the 18th and 19th centuries. His address is: Peter R. Christoph, 181 Maple Ave., Selkirk, N.Y. 12158

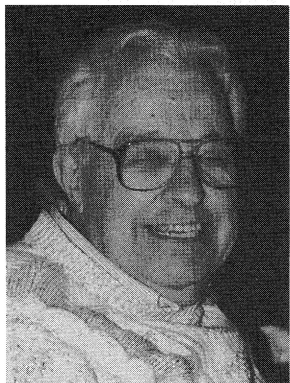


## IN MEMORIAM

### Robert Sites Voris (1920-2002)

by Manning W. Voorhees

Robert Sites Voris, known to all as Bob, was called by God on March 13, 2002. The Van Voorhees Family has lost a true friend and dedicated worker. Someone of Bob's qualities and dedication is rare, indeed, and he will be truly missed by the Van Voorhees Family.



Bob was a member of the Van Voorhees Association for several decades. In the later years, Bob managed our publications effort and was responsible for publishing *The Van Voorhees Family, Volume I*, in 1984 and *Through a Dutch Door* in 1992.

He negotiated with printers, ensured attractive and optimum presentations, and then stored the books in his garage. Bob fulfilled orders for the books and accounted for their sale. All of this was "real work," done faithfully and well. He spared the Association considerable expense by volunteering both his time and garage for the storage of unsold books. Bob often joked during meetings of the Executive Committee that he had "the cheapest storage around." He descended in the Jan Line and was the Representative for Jan descendants on the Executive Committee for many years.

Meetings of the Executive Committee have not been the same since Bob ceased attending them as his illnesses mounted. His counsel derived from a long experience with Association affairs and his keen sense of humor were immediately missed. Unfortunately, they will continue to be missed.

Bob held a B.S. in chemical engineering from Penn State and a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from the University of Illinois. He retired after 34 years of service with Hercules, Inc. as Manager of Research and Development in the Aerospace Division, specializing in chemical propulsion. Bob's biography, written by his son, John, can be read on [www.axs2000.net/jvoris/Personal/Robert.Voris.htm](http://www.axs2000.net/jvoris/Personal/Robert.Voris.htm).

Bob Voris is survived by his wife, Mary, and children James, Julie and John, five grandchildren and an expected great granddaughter.

### Judith Voorhees-Barro (1941-2002)

In April 2002 Judith Voorhees-Barro passed away at her home in Toms River, N.J. For many years she has been a dedicated worker for the Van Voorhees Assn. as Director of Product Sales Items, which were stored in her house. A practicing registered nurse for 40 years, she was a graduate of Elizabeth General Hospital School of Nursing, Elizabeth, N.J. In addition to the Van Voorhees Assn., she was also an active of the Eastern Star Faith Chapter and St. Mary-by-the-Sea Episcopal Church.

She is survived by Michael Barro (her husband), two sons and daughters-in-law (Carl V. and Virginia Jorgensen, and Kurt P. and Jamie Jorgensen), a daughter (Johanna B. Jorgensen), two grandchildren (Lacey C. Jorgensen and Jimmy I. Meyers), plus a brother and sister-in-law (Don and Iris Voorhees. Her infectious laugh, sense of humor, and presence will be greatly missed.

**Robert Carson Vorhis** at age 84 died Jan. 28, 2002. He was born in Ohio, son and grandson of Methodist ministers. A lifelong member of the V.V. Assn., he is also descended from John Alden and Priscilla Mullins of the Mayflower in 1616. A WWII veteran and retiree from U.S. Geological Survey Office in Atlanta, he has served in many places around the world, helping people to get pure water. He taught geology at Georgia State College. He was prominent in the study of the effects of earthquakes on water levels of wells. He was president of several organizations, professional and service. He sang with the Choral Guild of Atlanta. In S. Dakota his fossil discovery became known as *Voshisia vulpens*, assigned to the new family, *Vorhisidae*. His survivors include his wife Monique, son Chilton (St. Paul, Minn.), daughter Grace Rembert (Atlanta, Ga.), 2 sisters (Charlotte Knighton of Bennington, Vt. and Jeannette Bryant of Hudson, O.), 4 grandchildren, and 1 brother – Don G. Vorhis, a past president of The Van Voorhees Assn.

We just received word that **Edna Jean Voorhees Hughes**, 61, died on Aug. 3, 2001 in California. Survivors include 2 sons (Richard Cedar and Louis Hughes), 4 daughters (Debbie Knateal, Lori Clark, Shelly Hughes, and Janine Petruska), 2 sisters (Marion Shieck and Carol Burdick), 3 brothers (Harry Voorhees, Augustus Voorhees and William Voorhees), 4 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

We also just received notice of the death of **Daniel T. Freda**, 36, in Toms River, N. J. His survivors include his parents (Anthony and Mary VOORHEES Freda), 1 brother (David), grandmother (Catherine Voorhees), 1 niece, and several aunts and uncles.

On April 12, 2002, the 25th anniversary of the death of **James (Jake) C. Voorhis**, the Westwood (N.J.) Fire Dept. Engine Co. #2 honored him in a memorial service. At the age of 43, he died in the line of duty at a fire from a smoke-induced heart attack. Jake was Capt. of the Volunteer Fire Dept. at that time – Apr. 12, 1977. Jake's 3 sons followed in their father's footsteps as firemen. The eldest, Jim, is the Westwood Volunteer Fire chief, now a successor to his father. Thomas is a fireman in both River Vale and Westwood. Andrew is a former Westwood fireman. Daughter Arlene married a Westwood fireman and her son is a member of the Westwood Fire Cadet program.





## VAN VOORHEES FAMILY IN AMERICA: THE FIRST SIX GENERATIONS

This genealogy guide, available now (see Book Order Form, #1) consolidates data with more than 1,029 pages, over 3,777 footnotes, a user's guide, surname and place index, bibliography, Van Voorhees and given-name index, appendix, illustrations, and information about the author (Florence A. Christoph, a certified genealogist and specialist in Dutch Colonial history). The Introduction is by Dr. David W. Voorhees, a professor of history at New York University and editor of *De Halve Maen*.

Recently Ree Hopper reviewed the book for the *Archivist*, a publication of the Genealogical Society of Bergen Co., N.J. She says, "I have

spent some time with the book and can report that it is well done and very well documented."

The next edition, Volume II, of this series will start where the first stopped and proceed through the 19th century — approximately the 7th and 8th generations. It will also show dispersal routes via maps. I'm sure you will be excited about the second book. In the future there is hope that a third volume will bring us up to the present.

\*\* If you have any data that should be in Volume II, please send it to Florence Christoph immediately! The CUT-OFF date for Volume II information is at the Reunion on Oct. 12, 2002!

### THROUGH A DUTCH DOOR, 17th CENTURY ORIGINS OF THE VAN VOORHEES FAMILY

Along with the genealogy guide, this is also a unique book. It gives detailed records of our ancestors before and after coming to Nieuw Amsterdam. This is a valuable insight into our origins.

#### A RARE OPPORTUNITY!

Both of these books are outstanding! Their material comes from actual records gleaned from many sources. I know of no other family with such extensive genealogical data!

**NOW** is the time to **BUY**, because the **SUPPLY** is **LIMITED** (We no longer have copies of the *Historic Handbook*.) and there are **NO** Plans To Print **MORE COPIES** of these books!

Genealogical Data Chart for the Van Voorhees Family  
submitted by Judith K. Van Voorhis

Generation	No. of People	No. of Additions
1st	1	
2nd	11	10
3rd	91	80
4th	375	284
5th	1,198	823
6th	3,038	1,840
7th	6,825	3,787
8th	12,516	5,691
9th	17,959	5,443
10th	21,922	3,963
11th	25,208	3,286

This gives you a brief view of the work involved in our genealogical research. Thanks to our funds and volunteers who have made this possible! We hope you will help us continue!

## BOOK ORDER FORM

This genealogy guide, available now (see Book Order Form, #1), consolidates data with more than 1,029 pages, over 3,777 footnotes, a user's guide, surname and place index, bibliography, Van Voorhees and given-name index, appendix, illustrations, and information about the author (Florence A. Christoph, a certified genealogist and specialist in Dutch Colonial history). The Introduction is by Dr. David W. Voorhees, a professor of history at New York University and editor of *De Halve Maen*.

The next edition of this series will start where the first stopped and proceed through several more generations. It will also show dispersal routes via maps. I'm sure you will be excited about the second book. In the future there is hope that a third volume will bring us up to the present. This series is both unique and outstanding! I know of no other family with such extensive genealogical records.

Now is the time to buy, because the supply is limited and there are no plans to print more copies.

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Office: (212)237-8068 <bvoorhees@jjay.cuny.edu>

## ITEM SALES FORM

Due to the untimely death of Judith Voorhees-Barro (see page 15), the Item Sales are TEMPORARILY Unavailable. We hope to restore them by the Oct. Reunion 2002.

The Association continues to stock items of interest to members. All orders should be accompanied by a check payable to the Van Voorhees Association. Please do not send cash. All orders should be sent to:

**Mrs. Frederick (Marilyn) Brack, 24 Mary St., No. Haledon, N.J. 07508-3040**

Items for Sale	Members	Non-Members	Quantity
Handpainted Coat of Arms	\$13.00	\$15.00	_____
Coat of Arms Tile	\$10.00	\$12.00	_____
Coat of Arms Patch	\$ 5.00	\$ 6.00	_____
Van Voorhees Letters	\$ 2.50	\$ 2.50	_____
Coat of Arms, X Stitch Pattern	\$ 1.50	\$ 2.00	_____
TOTAL			\$ _____

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