



Volume 25 Number 1

VAN VOORHEES NIEUWSBRIEF

Spring 2007

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General Membership Meeting: Announcement and Reminder October General Meeting

We made a great effort to obtain interesting speakers for a Reunion this year; however, all were unavailable for our dates. There will be a strictly a business meeting with elections or appointments. It will be held, as usual, in October and in New Jersey. The precise date and site

will be announced later.

At this point we definitely **need** someone to be our **Annual Meeting Chairman**. This job merely requires coordinating the various volunteers who secure the site, hotel accommodations, restaurants, and speakers.

Annual DUES: Still Only \$10.00!! (Life Members and other options on Dues Form, p. 18)

If you check, you will find that many organizations similar to ours have dues of \$25.00 or more. We have kept ours to a minimum to encourage maximum family membership. Your dues support continuing genealogical research, storage and handling of our books, and possibility of future CDs and books. Our bills come in every month. The 2007 dues were due on Jan. 1, 2007. To determine your dues status, please check the 1st line

of your mailing label. If the *mailing label* does not say *2007* or *Life*, we have made a mistake or your dues for 2007 have not been paid. Your dues are deductible for Federal Income Tax purposes. Please make **checks payable to The Van Voorhees Association**. Please send your dues to:

Tom Van Voorhies

Articles & Items

We are always looking for Articles. Unfortunately we do not have the time to contact each of you and make a

specific request. Please send them in anyway. They are always appreciated.

NEWS FLASH!

by Marilyn Van Voorhis Voshall

Several times in recent years I have been asked about the Van Couwenhoven family, because **Coert**, son of **Steven Van Voorhees**, married **Marretjie Gerritse Van Couwenhoven**. While I have not done extensive research (yet), I did find out that they came from Breukelen, Utrecht Province in De Nederlands.

founders of Breukelen (Brooklyn), NY, which was established circa 1645 along with Boswijk and Nieuw Amersfoort, where **Steven** bought a farm circa July of 1660 (ibid. *Through a Dutch Door* p.123).

Breukelen is about 1/3 of the way northwest on the major highway from Utrecht to Amsterdam. It is a small village less than 1/2 mile east of the highway.

If anyone would like to do further research to link Gerrit and Marretjie with as many details as possible about their lives, I would be delighted to publish it as an article in the *Nieuwsbrief*. We need to know more about our grandmothers.

Gerrit Wolphertsen van Couwenhoven was 1 of the 6

Feature Articles

De Drentse Boerderij 1500-1660	p-7	In Memoriam	p-17
Genealogy Committee Report et. al.	p-17	Dues Payment Form	p-18
160 Year Old Letter	p-14	Book Order Form	p-19
Who's Who	p-2		

~ VAN VOORHEES WHO'S WHO ~

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~ **MEMBERS-AT-LARGE** ~

Stephanie H. Capotorto

Ted L. Bogert

Glee Van Osdol-Krapf

June Wick

NOTES FROM THE GENEALOGY COMMITTEE, JAN. 2007

by Bob Voorhees

Flo Christoph will continue as the Van Voorhees association genealogist thru 2007 and hopefully beyond. Flo has been our genealogist for over 10 years and we certainly would not be where we are today without her. Members wishing to contact Flo can reach her at

As we have said before, probably over half of our genealogy information comes from our members so please feel a responsibility to input your data. My mailing address is:

and email is

We love to hear from our members.

Our Van Voorhees Master Genealogist (TMG) database now stands at 85,985 names (Voorhees and non Voorhees), an increase of 3,351 names since Jan of 2006. Our target timing for publication of the 9th generation CD is fall 2007. The Genealogy Committee continues to proof read and add to the material. As mentioned in our last letter, special thanks go to Ann Nunn in Gulfport, MS and Marc Hoover in Southfield, MI for the outstanding work they have been doing. We have found it necessary to add to our computer capability, particularly memory. Some files we are working with are large. Also some of the files, like the index that has to be sorted, take a lot of computer power. Some decisions are yet to be made, such as the pricing of the CD.

After we publish the CD we do plan to look into providing the 9th generation CD material in book form. This would probably be through a small-lot book publisher such as www.lulu.com. A 9th generation book would not be available until 2008 at the earliest and would be expensive when compared to the CD. We would supply the appropriate Adobe Acrobat files to Lulu and the book would be purchased directly from Lulu by the customer. This relieves us from any book inventory responsibility.

We use The Master Genealogist software from www.whollygenes.com. They do an excellent job. Their continued success will be good for us in bringing us software updates so, as an organization, we need to be supportive of them. They also sell genealogy books and CD's of old genealogy and history books. So keep them in mind if you are shopping for this type of product.

For those of you interested in genealogy news please let me mention several items. A new web site, www.eons.com, has compiled a database of 77 million

obituaries. It is easily searched and there are thousands of Voorhees, Voorhies, etc. Eons is an interesting web site. It is sort of a "Myspace" for the over 50 crowd—a social networking site. They offer a number of services to try and woo the over 50 crowd, one being the online obits. I have mentioned before that Ancestry.com, is our major supplier of online genealogy data. Their parent company has changed its name to The Generations Network. They have plans to try and catapult the family history category into the American mainstream. This is fine by me, but I hope they don't take their eye off the serious genealogist. Several of us on the Genealogy Committee are also members of the (1) New York Genealogical and Biographical Society and (2) the Holland Society. In the 4th quarter of 2006 NYG&B sold their building at 122 East 58th street for \$24 million. They are now looking for a new home to hold their offices and library (75,000 books and 30,000 Manuscripts). This is of some interest to us because we have talked about, when the time comes, donating the Van Voorhees collection, currently maintained by Judith Van Voorhis at her home in Niskayuna, NY, to the NYG&B. The Holland Society is impacted by this building sale, because they have rented office and library space from the NYG&B for decades. The Holland Society has already found new quarters in Manhattan.

The National Genealogical Society annual meeting is 16-19 May 2007 in Richmond, VA. The Federation of Genealogical Societies annual meeting is 15-18 Aug 2007 in Fort Wayne, IN. The genealogy software companies continue to sponsor genealogy cruises, because these are money makers for both the software company and the cruise line. Legacy by Millennia Software is sponsoring a 19 Sept to 1 Oct 2007 genealogy cruise from Vancouver to Hawaii (fly home). For the first time, RootsMagic is sponsoring an 11-18 Nov 2007 Caribbean Cruise on Royal Caribbean's *Mariner of the Sea*. Wholly Genes Software (maker of Master Genealogist) will sponsor their 3rd cruise--sail 10/28/2007--Eastern Caribbean--Princess Lines. My wife and I attended the two previous TMG cruises--one to the east coast of Mexico and one to the west coast of Mexico. I must say we thoroughly enjoyed them. (My wife has small interest in genealogy.) I especially appreciated getting to know the founder of Wholly Genes and some of the employees in addition to some of the speakers.

STATUS of the VOORHEES SURNAME DNA PROJECT

by Bob Voorhees

We are extremely pleased to report that we now have male Y-Chromosome DNA test results for 6 living members of the Voorhees family and, importantly, we have at least one sample from all 4 family lines—Coert, Lucas, Jan, and Albert. These were the 4 sons of the immigrant ancestor, Steven Coerte Van Voorhees. Two of our samples are from the Coert line, two from the Lucas line, and one each from Jan and Albert. On 12 markers these 6 individuals are a perfect 12 out of 12 marker match. There is a 99.9% likelihood that these 6 individuals share a common ancestor within a genealogical time frame. Through our traditional genealogy we know that the most recent common ancestor (MRCA) for these 6 individuals is the immigrant ancestor, Steven Coerte Van Voorhees. We have firmly established the 12 marker DNA signature for the Voorhees surname. I might add that we probably are extremely lucky to be able to show results such as these. The individuals that have been tested are 9th, 10th, or 11th generation, and all it would take is something like one adoption in the chain to break the chain for that individual.

3 of our individuals went to 25 markers (which includes the 12). One Coert line sample and one Lucas line sample were perfect matches on 25 markers. The second Coert line sample matched on 24 out of 25 markers. The one mutation is in the group of markers that change or mutate at a faster rate than others. These particular mutated markers can be very helpful in splitting lineages into sub sets, or branches, within a family tree and only slightly decrease the probability of two people in the Voorhees surname group, who match 24 out of 25 markers, not sharing a common ancestor. My Y-Chromosome DNA (Coert line) has been tested at the

37 marker level, so this bench mark exists for anyone interested in testing at the 37 marker level.

We consider this a very successful start to our Voorhees surname DNA project. We would like to get more Voorhees surname individuals tested. Our goal is 40 individuals. We would especially like to urge those in the 'unknown' category to join the project. 'Unknowns' are those lines we cannot connect to the immigrant ancestor, Steven Coerte Van Voorhees. I counted up the "unknowns" we list in the database and came up with over 700 names. Living individuals that descend from these 'unknowns' might be especially interested in joining the project. The majority of our "unknowns" are spellings that you would expect such as Voorhees, and Voorhis. But there are 33 Voris 'unknowns.' There are more than 5 each of Vores, Vorhis, Vorys, and Vooris. There are 2 or more of Vories, Vorce, Vohris, Voores, and Vorris. Some of the other more unusual names (one each) are Phores, Vanvoors, Vanvoorst, Vanvoras, Vanvoris, Vohres, Vohrus, Voiers, Voohis, Voores, Vooresen, Voorhise, Voorhus, Voorhys, Voorum, Voorus, Voras, Voress, Vorheas, Vorhies, Vorhus, Vorigs, Voriss, Vorous, Vorres, Vorus, and Voures. Hopefully individuals with names such as these will be interested in joining the project. If an 'unknown' line is shown to be part of the Voorhees line we can increase our effort on that line. Conversely, if an 'unknown' line does not match the Voorhees signature, we can reduce our effort on that line.

End note: The immigrant ancestor was Steven Coerte Van Voorhees. Note the "e" on the end of Coerte. His son's name (Coert line) was Coert Stevense Van Voorhees. Note no "e" on the end of Coert.

Note: The following article is reprinted from an earlier Nieuwsbrief.

Spelling of the Voorhees Name Not a Consistent Art

by Bob Voorhees

Judith Van Voorhis, Van Voorhees Association computer resource, was kind enough to sort Flo Christoph's total Van Voorhees database of 56,614 surnames by name. This would include all the names in Volume I (1st 6 generations plus the children of these 6), Volume II (7th & 8th generations plus the children of these), and later generations where the information is available and entered into the database. The following data and observations are not meant as a scientific

study, but rather presented as an interesting generalized look at the database when sorted by surname. For example, we know for sure that many of the Voorhees names are repeated more than once.

In this database 21,940 names (39%) are Voorhees name variations and 34,674 (61%) are other names -- over 8,500 different surnames other than Voorhees. Of the Voorhees name variations, 15% retain the *Van* in front of and part of the surname.

Spelling of the Voorhees Name Not a Consistent Art continued

In the data presented below, the names with the *Van* have been added to the names without the *Van*.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
Voorhees	11,324	51.6	Vorhees	290	1.3	Voorhess	37	0.2
Voorhis	3685	16.8	Vorhes	256	1.2	Vorus	36	0.2
Voorhies	2121	9.7	Voorhes	150	0.7	Vorce	28	0.1
Voris	1335	6.1	Vooris	130	0.6	Vorheis	22	0.1
Vorhies	606	2.8	Voress	122	0.6	Vorhus	19	0.1
Voorheis	528	2.4	Vorous	61	0.3	Voores	19	0.1
Voreis	326	1.5	Voorus	60	0.3	Other	78	0.4
Vorhis	320	1.5	Vorys	41	0.2	Total	21,940	100
Vories	292	1.3	Vores	37	0.2			

Other Voorhees name variations with small frequency are:

Vorris	Vorhese	Voorheez	Voures	Vohres
Voriss	Voorhese	Voorhus	Vooreis	Voors
Vorres	Vorhease	Voras	Voohis	Voorst
Vorhise	Voorhys	Vorheas	Vohris	

The higher frequency (Voorhees family) non-Voorhees surnames are shown in the following 2 Tables.

TABLE I is in Numerically Descending Order.

<u>Name</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>No.</u>
Smith	311	Vandoren	97	Zabriskie	70	Vanarsdale	60
Miller	238	Taylor	96	Martin	70	Stillwell	59
Demarest	181	Stewart	91	Westervelt	69	Scott	58
Brown	166	Hoagland	90	Suydam	69	Robinson	58
Johnson	154	Hall	89	Gulick	68	Jackson	58
Davis	154	Brokaw	89	Brinkerhoff	68	Dubois	58
Ackerman	145	Baker	88	Morris	67	Peterson	57
Schenck	142	White	87	King	67	Perrine	56
Clark	137	Hegaman	86	Lewis	66	Cooper	56
Wyckoff	133	Bergen	86	Anderson	65	Sutphen	55
Williams	133	Terhune	84	Walker	64	Reed	55
Jones	131	Williamson	83	Myers	64	Polhemus	55
Stryker	128	Cortelyou	83	Mouton	64	Wright	53
Conover and variations	125	Stevensen	75	Garretson	64	Stoothoff	53
Thompson	117	Harris	75	Vanderveer	63	Phillips	51
Moore	109	Quick	74	Campbell	63	Stevens	50
Nevius	106	Adams	74	Young	62	Patterson	50
Banta	104	Wood	73	Cook	62	Davidson	50
Wilson	101	Allen	72	Bennett	62	Covert	50
Hopper	101					Bell	50

TABLE II is Table I in Alphabetical Order for your convenience.

<u>Name</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>No.</u>
Ackerman	145	Davis	154	Mouton	64	Stryker	128
Adams	74	Demarest	181	Myers	64	Sutphen	55
Allen	72	Dubois	58	Nevius	106	Suydam	69
Anderson	65	Garretson	64	Patterson	50	Taylor	96
Baker	88	Gulick	68	Perrine	56	Terhune	84
Banta	104	Hall	89	Peterson	57	Thompson	117
Bell	50	Harris	75	Phillips	51	Vanarsdale	60
Bennett	62	Hegaman	86	Polhemus	55	Vanderveer	63
Bergen	86	Hoagland	90	Quick	74	Vandoren	97
Brinkerhoff	68	Hopper	101	Reed	55	Walker	64
Brokaw	89	Jackson	58	Robinson	58	Westervelt	69
Brown	166	Johnson	154	Schenck	142	White	87
Campbell	63	Jones	131	Scott	58	Williams	133
Clark	137	King	67	Smith	311	Williamson	83
Conover and variations	125	Lewis	66	Stevens	50	Wilson	101
Cook	62	Martin	70	Stevensen	75	Wood	73
Cooper	56	Miller	238	Stewart	91	Wright	53
Cortelyou	83	Moore	109	Stillwell	59	Wyckoff	133
Covert	50	Morris	67	Stoothoff	53	Young	62
Davidson	50					Zabriskie	70

Dutch Proverbs

by Marilyn V. Voshall

All this data about genealogy reminds me of the rules our ancestors lived by. Steven Coerts Van Voorhees was an officer in every Dutch Reformed Church to which he belonged. I thought it appropriate to place

some of these proverbs (out of my collection of hundreds) next to the articles on the family name(s). Unfortunately I could not find the original Dutch for all of them.

*De deugd beloont zich zelve. Virtue is its own reward.
(The virtue rewards itself to myself/oneself.)*

Nobility of soul is more honorable than nobility of birth.

Better poor with honor than rich with shame.

Whoever makes no mistakes is doing nothing.

The best horse stumbles sometimes.

*Die aan God geen woord houd, houd geen woord ann menschen.
(They to God no word hold, hold no word to men.)
They who don't keep faith with God, won't keep it with man.*

De Drentse Boerderij (The Drente 'Farmhouse') circa 1500-1660

Part I: Blueprint and Construction

by Marilyn Van Voorhis Voshall

A *boer* is a farmer; therefore, *boerderij* is the farmer's home. This can imply the entire farm; or it can be (1) just one unit containing both barn (only 1 story) and house under 1 roof or (2) a compound of farm buildings. Within this compound would be a barn-house plus an outside well, a bake-oven (or bake house with meat-smoking capabilities), probably a shed for fuel (peat and wood), perhaps a sheep fold and dove cote on a high pole, maybe on wealthier farms separate small buildings for storage of grain and potatoes or other vegetables and in later years, an outhouse. Also there might be a hut dwelling (a tiny version of the barn-house) for a hired worker and his family, if he had one.

The known beginnings of our family (circa the very late 1400s) are found in Hees on farms and in the structures thereon. These Hees farms are mentioned circa 1180; but no presently-known record of our family is connected with them at that time. Local tradition claims they were always present there. Of course, we could go much further back in time to the Bog People, who were probably the original (prehistoric) Celtic and/or Germanic settlers; but, this is another story and a very lengthy one. Research and archeology on this subject are still continuing and the meaning of their finds debated. Yet, some of the Bog dwellings are merely more primitive versions of the ones included here. Not only that, the hut for a hired worker is almost identical to that (no windows) of a single Bog Family.

In this article (Part I) I'm limiting the subject to the construction of a *Drentse boerderij* and, in particular, what our family had. This includes the floor plans, building materials, and exterior appearance, etc. The first consideration was the needs of the people and what was available for construction.

This region was no different from the rest of the country. Nederlands (Netherlands) really means low lands – a marsh area. In this case the bog water was salty, from the sea. By 1500 it was well drained and filled in; however, some salt still remained. That is why this region was considered to be poor farmland. History states that Drenthe had unusually poor soil for farming. If creeks and canals backed up or a dam broke due to severe North Atlantic storms, saltwater returned. Combine this with normal weather problems of farming and we find a people constantly living on the borderline of disaster. Consequently, we read of crop failures, poor harvests, and extreme poverty. Both Church and government were reluctant to reduce rents (1/3 of the crop in good

years) and taxes, even when people could not pay either, and did so only in extreme conditions. The 1/3 crop for rent was determined by an estimate of what a field should produce – not by the amount actually harvested!

Natural plants for a northern salt marsh included scrub trees, bushes and reeds. (Dutch *hees* was a kind of very thick reed used as roofing material.) Today some of the remaining scrub material (locally called *heather*) is used for *antique* hand-held brushes. Back then those brushes were used for cleaning dishes, pots and pans. Longer twigs were made into brooms. Forests with timber trees were inland and rare.

By 1500 most of the timber forests were gone. They had been used for buildings, fences, firewood and clogs (shoes). Peat was the substitute for fire logs. Ship-building lumber was imported -- often from Denmark; and, by the 1600's, even from Norway. (Logs from Norway were used to build ships in Enkhuizen, including the *Bontekoe*.)

When wood was placed in direct contact with soil, it rotted and had to be replaced frequently. Other materials had to be utilized. Local governments created strict building codes. The reason was not to determine style or height but rather to divide the minimal wood supply among as many families as possible. By this time they were using stone foundations to prevent wood rot. One had to get permission to build any structure. A judgment determined the size of a barn-house according to the size of one's family, livestock and acreage. (Sometimes 2-3 married couples were in a house before getting permission to build a separate dwelling.) Final approval was then given for the household to be *allowed to purchase* a specified quantity of lumber (trees) including the precise number of pieces at specified lengths and widths. Many farmers planted trees on their land (often as borders) to have lumber for their children later in life. (I recall an old tradition of parents or grandparents planting a tree when each child was born. When I was old enough to understand its significance, my grandma showed me 'my tree' and each year thereafter we spent a few moments looking at it.) If the parents of the bride and groom could not provide enough trees for the new house or have money to buy it, they might borrow some from their neighbors. This loan had to be repaid when the neighbors' children needed it. Another option was to use brick and stone, perhaps as high as the window sill, and then use stucco or plaster over twig lath up to the roof beams.

De Drentse Boerderij circa 1500-1660 continued

All details of construction had to be approved – just as we must submit a blueprint of our house plans and get a building permit. There were rules on how far apart posts and beams must be, just as we have laws about the distance between studs and rafters. However, this spacing could vary a bit, as you will notice in the Figures. Everything was inspected as well.

The Hees farms, however, were owned by the government and supervised by a *Rentmeester* (rent master) at the convent at Dikninge (also government property) in Ruinen. Repairs and additions would be reimbursed by the *rentmeester*. There are records of this procedure followed by our family members. (ibid. *Through a Dutch Door*)

According to our Van Voorhees Association records, the Voorhees farm by 1626-1642 had the following dimensions for the house: 8 crossbeams, each 27 ft. wide. In addition there was a barn and sheep cote (Fig. 2). What I have seen in the Open-Air Museums at Arnhem and Orvelte (just a few miles north of Ruinen), the Ruinen Museum, and also have researched in several texts, a house was about 1/2 the length of the barn, thus making it only 1/3 of the total length of the entire building (barn-house/*boerderij*). This 8-beam house would be about 72 ft. 10 in. long by 27 ft. wide (exterior). Obviously this was a *boerderij*, not merely a house.

All the plattegrond (floor plan/blueprint) ideas in *De*

Drentse Boerderij Bijlagen (all given in meters) were adapted to fit the general profile of the Voorhees farm of the late 1500s and very early 1600s. I don't know if the Van Voorhees Association's recording of feet (e.g. 27 ft. for house beams) is in Dutch feet or an English approximation derived from the Dutch. Back then, the Dutch foot equaled 11.143 English inches. This could shorten the final results. For our purposes, I'm going to give all measurements in rounded-off English feet.

Since there is no detailed historical description of the Voorhees farm, I am drawing on my research and personal farming experience to place everything in a practical manner. One can validly rearrange the location of stalls, well, beds, fuel shed, etc.; however, the placement of the front door is historically accurate (the same as that of the present house), because it faces the entrance of the Ruinen Church.

In both Figures the black squares or dots represent posts for buildings, fences and stalls or pens. The larger ones also represent the 'crossbeams' (afore-mentioned). Smaller ones are just more posts and beams necessary for stability. The spacing closely resembles those in the *De Drentse Boerderij Bijlagen*. Ceiling height would be about 8-9 ft. (probably only 8 ft. here) with a loft for straw and hay above. A lattice 'floor' for this loft would be made from small branches extending between all the major crossbeams.

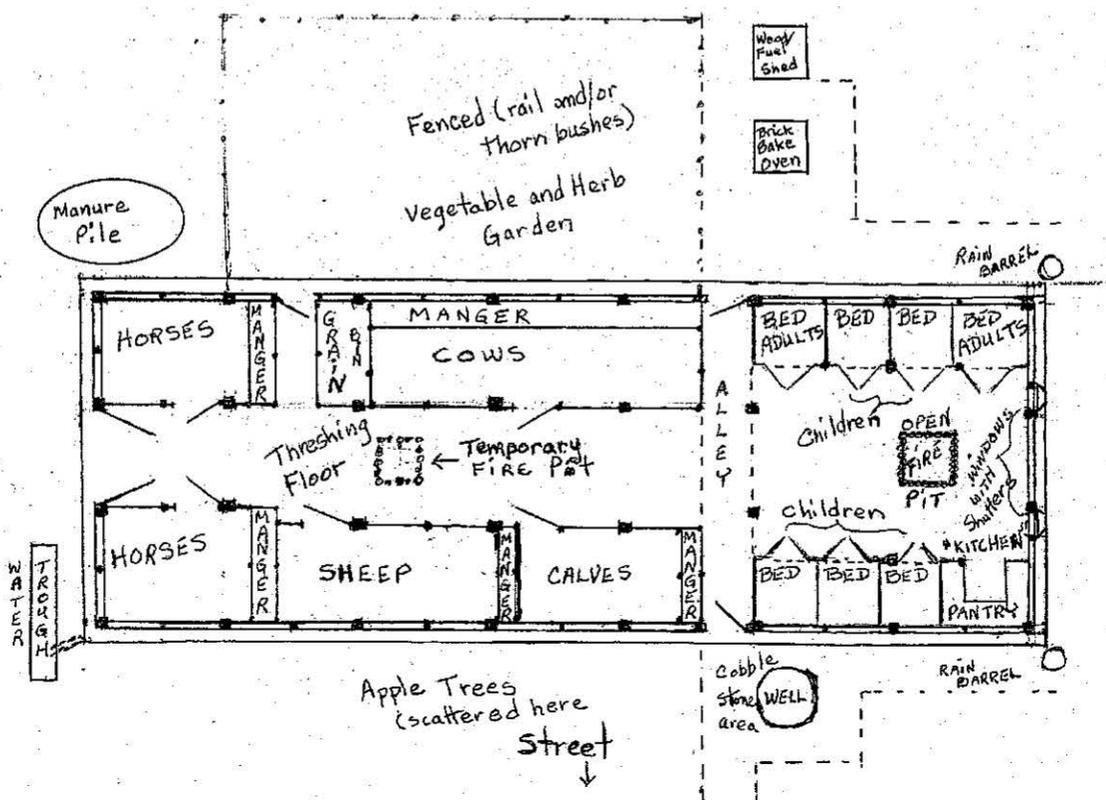


FIG. 1 Drenthe Boerderij Plattegrond (Floor Plan) circa 1500 to circa 1580-1596
Here larger black squares are spaced to represent the "8 crossbeams, each 27 ft. wide."

The House Area

In Fig. 1, the house portion is 22 ft. by 27 ft. (exterior) or 20 ½ ft. by 24 ft. (interior). There is a 1-ft. roof overhang all around. The 6-in. thick walls are filled with rubble and/or trash. Both exterior and interior walls would look alike – plaster covering a twig lattice between exposed posts. The large posts support the 8 crossbeams (27 ft. wide). Smaller posts are added to give stability to the walls. The distance between house beams is longer than that of barn beams. The length between the smaller posts varies according to the need for support in that area.

This front-door layout coincides with the that of the present *new* house (early 1700s), whose doorway faces the main entrance of the Ruinen Church. The earliest house would have no chimney. Herbs and fruits hung from the rafters would be dried by the smoke from the cooking fire. (Stones heated in a pit fire can be dropped into a pot of water and make it boil in about 10 minutes or less. By exchanging stones in a stew pot, one can cook the meal outside the fire, which can be used for other things. Any ash residue on the rocks will rise to the surface where they can be skimmed off.)

Only 2 windows with exterior shutters are in this plan, mainly because openings create a massive heat loss and drafts. You could plaster around windows to seal them, but this was no substitute for the sealants we have to-

day. On warm sunny days work could be moved outside. In winter everyone worked inside near a fire.

Location of the pantry and beds was my choice. The precise placement can be shuffled around. The pantry was not really a kitchen, as we think of it, because there was no sink or running water. A large pan or bucket served as the wash basin and was placed on the ledge. Storage would be underneath and shelving above. There might be a locked cabinet for spices, which were extremely expensive in those days.

The house and alley floors could be of packed clay or cobblestone. I made the alley 4 ft. wide to accommodate a wheelbarrow or 2 buckets on a shoulder yoke; but it could be made slightly narrower than that.

These cupboard beds were completely enclosed (top, bottom and sides plus front doors or curtains) with storage space beneath. Each adult bed could hold 2 people. The children's beds could hold 3, if they were small enough. Notice that they have the same width as, but are shorter than, adult beds.

Furnishings would be quite simple – a dining table and benches, a spinning wheel, 1-2 simple chairs, a cradle, some small stools. There might be a chest for clothing or sewing supplies. It wasn't much compared to our homes today.

The Barn Area

The barn section is 46 ft. 10 in. by 27 ft. (exterior) or 45 ft. 4 in. by 24 ft. (interior).* This size indicates a large farm with many animals. According to Dutch rent rolls, it was a 4-horse farm.

**When we lived on our farm, the barn, built c.1929, was 2-story and about 40 ft. by 30 ft. Separate structures were a corn crib, tractor garage, pigpen, chicken coop, milkhouse, summer kitchen with a fireplace for cooking and a 2-hole outhouse. Cars and trucks were outside.*

At this time (historically) cows would roam freely in the large stall. They probably would be led out and tied for milking. Calves would be kept separate, so they couldn't deplete all of the mother's milk. They would have a chance to drink after the mother was milked. This procedure increases the amount a cow gives. All animals would be kept outside except in very cold weather. In this early *boerderij* the sheep would have a pen rather than a separate sheep cote.

It is possible (probable) that animals were specially bred on the Voorhees farm. By selling some young and eating the old, the numbers could be kept within the limited building space and available acreage. Still, as the number of animals increased, a separate sheep shed

would be built. (Notice additions in Fig. 2.)

Before bringing animals in for the winter, stall areas would be dug down to a depth of about 2-4 ft. below floor level. The manure would then pile up to just above floor level before this excess was removed and piled outside the barn. This 2-4 ft. of manure-and-straw mix in the stalls provided heat for both animals and people. Just before spring plowing, the manure pile would be distributed over fields and gardens.

The temporary hearth in the barn was used to dry grain, stored in sheaves in the rafters. It could be removed at threshing time and replaced for smoking fish and meats. The smoke also got rid of vermin in the straw and hay, also stored in the rafters. Storing straw over-head provided insulation against the winter cold.

Farm equipment consisted of 1-2 wagons, a cart, a 1-furrow plow, a wheelbarrow and perhaps a "primitive disc" to break up the plowed clods. (We have no record of exactly what our family had.) In winter all implements would be stored in the center of the barn. Flails, machete-style grain knives, buckets, and hoes were the basic hand tools. Grain was hand planted by scattering it 1 handful at a time from a sack strapped

De Drentse Boerderij circa 1500-1660: The Barn Area continued

over 1 shoulder. Vegetables and herbs for a 'kitchen' gardens were hand planted the same way as today.

Normally in those times a *boerderij* didn't have a complete wall of separation from the barn. There were some positive aspects to having only fencing, or a low wall, between the house and barn areas. (1) The fire warmed the animals and heat from the animals and manure warmed the house. (2) The wife could supervise the animals and do her housework, while the men were

outside performing other farm tasks. If crises arose, she could summon the men to assist her. (3) Milking was nearby, so you didn't have to carry it far. (4) Children could help by attending to some chores under her watchful eyes. (5) Both the temporary hearth fire in the barn and the cooking fire in the house could be supervised by the housewife. These fires could easily get out of control – a spark rising to the hay mow or straw roof (*Through a Dutch Door*: p. 5, "a fire" circa 1592-93).

The Exterior Items

Items outside the *boerderij* are placed where I think they would be. There is no historical reference to indicate their exact position on the Voorhees farm. Rain barrels may have been at all corners except one where rainwater was channeled into a watering trough. Rain water is free of ground pollutants. (My grandmother used it for washing everything, including her hair.)

The well was in the front of the house, away from most contaminants. The apple trees are also there to beautify the yard as well as keep them away from animal appetites.

The bake oven was just far enough away to avoid burning the house, since it would be much hotter than an ordinary cooking fire. In the heat of summer it also would be used for cooking, thus keeping the house cooler. It would be built of brick and have some type of roof to shelter it from rain and snow. The fuel shed, containing dried peat and twigs, would be nearby. Big logs were too valuable to burn.

The garden would need fencing, which probably was made of thorn bushes, some type of thick hedge or perhaps a combination of both with a few posts for extra strength. In any case, it had to be strong enough to repel animals.

Notice that there is no provision for chickens, pigs or a separate dove cote. I could not find any mention of them in the tax records referenced in *Through a Dutch Door*. A big variety of animals means extra work, requires a larger barn with more compartments, and has added risk factors. It takes special fencing to retain hogs. If the pigs are not let out, larger pens are necessary. Chickens also require special housing and more work. Probably our family traded other goods for them. A common procedure of bartering may have occurred in the fall at butchering time. One family could kill a ram and share with a 2nd family; then later the 2nd would repeat the procedure with maybe a pig, and half the meat would go to the 1st family, etc.

Additions and Remodeling of the Voorhees Boerderij in Fig. 1

Coert tho Hees, son of Albert tho Hees, moved to Voorhees c.1600 just before Steven Coerts was born. By this time Coert already had a wife and probably 2 sons – maybe even his daughter. Coert died c.1620 and his son, Albert Coerts, Steven's older brother, took over the farm at Voorhees. The farm had become profitable and continued to do so. (ibid. further details in *Through a Dutch Door* with some early Family Trees on pp. 84–92.)

In 1630 there was a "common shepherd living at Voorhees." This shepherd (*schaapherder*) took care of sheep from more than 1 farm – most likely the 3 Hees farms, all occupied by our family members. Also stated was that 10 people lived there then. These were Albert Coerts (Steven's older brother), his wife, probably a girl (sleeping in the house) to assist Albert's wife with all their young children, and the 'common shepherd.' There surely was a worker's hut for the shepherd. Steven probably lived with his brother until his marriage to Aeltje Wessels (between 1630 and 1637 or 1638).

By 1641 the Voorhees farm had 20 head of horned cattle and 11 people living there. Ten of these were Albert Coerts, his wife, and their 8 children. The 11th was the shepherd. The farm also had horses – probably 4 of them, since this was listed as a 4-horse farm. (The original source of these numbers is the Oude Staten Archieven.) Steven Coerts with his wife and 3 young children may have had prolonged visits or even lived there briefly between moving to other abodes. Steven's relationship to the Voorhees farm makes it of great interest to us.

In Van Voorhees Association records, the Voorhees farm by 1642 had these dimensions for its buildings: (1) House = 8 beams, 27 ft. wide; (2) Barn = 4 beams, 18 ft. wide; (3) Sheep Fold (*Schaapschuur*) = 4 beams, 25 ft. wide. The "house" (shown in Fig. 1) was actually a *boerderij*. By this time there were additions and renovations; however, we don't have the precise dates when each was made.

De Drentse Boerderij circa 1500-1660 continued

The only major change to the house section is the typically massive fireplace and chimney. This was not like what we have today. There were probably 1-2 kettle arms, but the fire was still on the hearth and quite open. The chimney would be either brick (probably) or stone with a smoke hole at the back of the hearth. You could roast a whole ox in it. (Cows in those days were smaller and wooly, and they looked much like the traditional Scottish Highland cattle of today.) There would be a mantel, perhaps with a decorative cloth 'valance.' Today these are often made of lace, however, then it could

The *Schaapschuur* (Sheep Barn) and *Schaapherderhuis* (Shepherd's Hut)

The *schaapschuur* is a very large barn, compared to the previous pen, for a lot of sheep. I did not outline the pens often used, because they are just too numerous. It is advisable to have a separate pen for each pregnant ewe about to give birth and to keep her in it for a few days thereafter. This allows her to bond with her lambs and keeps them from accidentally being trampled. It also gives the shepherd a chance to foist an orphan or twin lamb on her, if necessary. A ewe will not accept a lamb other than her own, and she sometimes rejects 1 of her twins. If her own lamb is stillborn or dies, the shepherd can, with care, put another ewe's twin on her. I won't elaborate on the process here. In any case, the number of pens depends on these special conditions. Rams can be quite aggressive, so they are often segregated – at least temporarily when in a cote. My system of pens (used when we had sheep) could be very different from that of the Voorhees farm.

The buildings are connected so that the family could be safe and snug under one roof. They didn't have to risk going very far outside in stormy weather during any season of the year – even to pump water from the well near the door, get rainwater from the barrel(s) or get snow (to melt), if the well was frozen. (I recall, when we lived on a farm, how hard it could be to go about 120 feet to our barn in winter.)

Placement and design of all structures in this article are based on actual Drenthe blueprints plus personal experience in farming. There are many variations possible, since we do not have the original plans and perhaps there was only an oral description to serve as the

be any colorful cloth.

The original barn area now has an empty stall that can house a bull, a pregnant mare about to give birth or 1 with a small foal, or a cow about to give birth. The cows are now tethered – not running free. Calves are still separated. The sheep have their own barn.

The 'new' hay and equipment barn allows more cows and horses to be kept in the original barn area. Furthermore, all that dust from threshing can be kept out of the house section. With more fields being cultivated, more hay and grain need more storage space.

The *schaapherderhuis* is very small and placed near an entrance to the *schaapschuur*. In lambing season, the shepherd would probably sleep in the barn with the sheep just in case he needs to 'mid-wife' any ewes. His hut contains a stall large enough for just 2 sheep, which he probably would receive as part of his wages. Since the pen is small, he could sell any lambs or simply raise a couple for market each year. It has no pantry/'kitchen' because he normally would eat all his meals with the family. Feeding farm hands at the owner's table (with or before the family eats) at noon and sometimes also in the evening (if they are working late), is an old custom still observed in the USA. If a shepherd has a wife and children, his hut would be larger and his wife would also probably work for the owner. There is no mention of a shepherd's family in *Through a Dutch Door*, so I designed the smaller dwelling. When it is this tiny, it normally would not have windows.

Conclusion

plattegrond. This does, however, give you a reasonably accurate picture of our family's farm in Hees.

Through a Dutch Door has the intimate family data used in this article. There are about 12 maps depicting the various fields cultivated by our family – some owned, but most rented. Exterior photos of a Drenthe *boerderij* and worker's cottage, large enough for a family, are on pp. 53 and 54 respectively. Sample Drenthe interiors, 1 of a barn and 1 of a house, are also shown (pp. 54-55). This article is intended to expand on that knowledge. The next article (Part II) will focus on the Drenthe homes of Steven Coerts and his family.

We still have copies of *Through a Dutch Door* available and I highly recommend it as Your Personal Reference Book!

SEE the BOOK ORDER FORM for a purchase price.



Figure 3: Hees, the Voorhees Farm in 1999

The shed in back may be on the site of the original *orderij*. The present house, not seen, is 'new' – circa the 1700s-1800s – and has been renovated several times. This barn is definitely **not dated from the 1600s**, nor are the cattle of the same breed.

Compass readings indicate that the front door of the present house faces the front door of the Mariakerk (Ruinen Church). These readings were taken separately

by both the author and her husband, Dr. Roy E. Voshall. The results were identical. This is in keeping with the traditional use of *voor* in a name. A church door should face West and the altar face East; however, it was built on a good approximation of a West-East axis. Both house and church doors are slightly off the East-West axis by the same degree.



Figure 4: An Original Wall Painting in the Mariakerk, Ruinen

This is an original painting of the Anunciation to Mary, found in the Mariakerk. As you face the altar, it is in the front on the left wall just before the organ balcony. Unfortunately you cannot see the original photo, which was in color. It is amazing how brilliant the colors (reds and yellow-gold with bits of royal blue here and there) still are! The Virgin's hair is flaming red and uncovered. Of course, she has a halo. The red border might have been a bit darker in the beginning – perhaps even maroon.

Because this is a Catholic portrayal, the painting had to have been made before 1500 – the date when the church peacefully voted to become a Dutch Reformed congregation.

These two photographs (Figs. 3 and 4) were taken by in September of 1999 by Dr. Roy E. Voshall.

De Drentse Boerderij circa 1500-1660 continued

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About the Author, Marilyn V. Voshall

She and her husband, both from the 'city,' bought a 180-acre farm (about 20 miles from any large town) on which to raise their children. They began farming with a new tractor, mower, and plow plus a large flock of sheep. Before selling this farm years later (when the children left home), they had acquired all the necessary farm equipment (bought 2nd hand at auctions) plus 3 dogs (which she trained), a herd of dairy cows, pigs, and horses – preceded by ponies until the children outgrew them. (A self-taught rider after moving to the farm, she taught her children and husband to ride.) Every week in good weather, Marilyn rode horseback (1 mile each way) to a neighbor's farm for 3 dozen eggs (in egg cartons) which were stacked in her backpack as she rode home. (She never broke an egg.) They grew almost all their food and had 2 large freezers to store it plus numerous canning jars. Bread, jellies and butter were home-made.

She immediately learned to drive both tractors (with 12 and 14 gears respectively). She also did all the plowing, disking, harrowing, mowing, raking, and drove a tractor with an attached baler and wagon for baling hay while others stacked bales on the wagon. This was

necessary because Roy, her husband, was an electrical engineer for 40 hours a week. In her spare time, she continued to be a musician (organist, composer and ethnomusicologist) in addition to sewing her own costumes as a volunteer docent at a nearby archeological site with re-constructed log cabins.

The sturdy farmhouse, over 100 years old, was like a large wooden tent with a coal furnace (hand fed), no insulation, no storm doors or storm windows, and no indoor bathroom. The kitchen had only a cold water tap and coal/wood cook-stove (vital whenever the electricity was off). A *deluxe* 2-seater outhouse and summer kitchen (having a huge fireplace with kettle hooks) were in back. An old well was near the kitchen door. Immediate renovations, made by enclosing 2 of the 3 porches, were a 1st floor powder room, 2nd floor bathroom, laundry facilities and a new kitchen. Re-placement of the leaky tin roof was followed by a complete paint job inside and out. After the 1st winter with 2 inches of snow *inside* the window sills, storm doors and windows plus gas furnace were installed.

This background gives her valuable insight into the rural living conditions of our ancestors.

160 YEAR OLD LETTER

by Bob Voorhees

I was going through some papers from my great aunt Leslie and I found a letter almost 160 yrs old. The letter was written on 26 Oct. 1848 by a 25 yr. old girl (Jane Leslie Voorhees) to her 18 yr. old brother (James Leslie Voorhees, Jr.) who had recently left home to attend college. It's interesting to visualize what a letter like this would look like if it were written in 2007 versus 1848. I'll make a few comments at the end of the letter. The letter is quoted below.

"My Darling Brother, I have contemplated writing to you for some length of time but press of business in the kitchen, company, and indisposition have combined together to prevent. I have little now to communicate – something by way of advice and sundry bits of news collected since you left us.

Mrs. Mather of Troy [NY] has been spending a week with us and left on Tuesday morning.

Miss Mary Ann Powell became Mrs. H.A. Brigham this morning and left on the six o'clock train of cars for Boston.

Our cousin Lib who was dangerously ill when you left is slowly recovering and James [cousin] is failing.

John U. [cousin] has moved to Oswego and I think Elizabeth [b.Mar 1847] and her mother [John's wife] will spend the winter with us. Perhaps occupy the school room, as Peter will soon remove to his new dwelling.

Benager Upson has purchased the farm where Mr. McCarty now lives. I take it for granted that you are interested in all I am writing.

Mr. Buck told Urania a few days ago that he read the death of Miss Smith (in a western paper) you of course remember who you used to love so well.

Reuben Porter and Origen Herrick spent an evening with us last week. They are a couple of fine smart boys. Origen is intending to spend the winter in Cazenovia [NY, 19 miles southeast of Syracuse, Cazenovia College, founded 1824, still going strong today] at school. He is a good scholar and generally beloved. I hope my dear brother you will bear in mind all the advice I give. Remember you are forming habits now that will govern you through life and watch and strive to have them such as will adorn the man, be careful of the company you mingle in, see that your associates be virtuous and good never indulge in immodest conversation nor let an oath profane the lips, your sisters love to kiss, govern well your temper, and be respectful and obliging to all, become a perfectly honorable man, conduct yourself in such a manner as to be happy and beloved on earth, that when you die you

may with the righteous inherit eternal life and we shall yet have a brother to be proud of. Will you think of all these things and profit thereby.

Mother has had the rheumatism in her finger so long that she cannot wear her silver thimble and she has been making some *leather* ones, she thinks them *nearly* as good as metal. [emphasis in original]

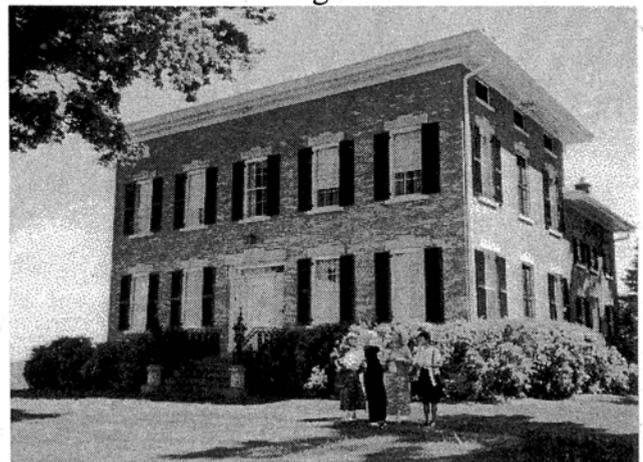
We will send you clothes as soon as possible and now write me a long letter and let us see how you improve in your spelling and penmanship, and see if you improve in your spelling and see if you improve in composition.

Do you go to church and Sabbath school regularly. I hope so. It is a capital recommend for any young man to be a regular churchman. Now do not neglect me but write me immediately. Take pains to please mother and believe me you're affectionate Sister Jennie L."

The letter was written from a home known as Whig Hill, built about 1831, 12 miles northwest of Syracuse. (See Figure 1 below). James Leslie Voorhees Jr. was attending Munro Collegiate Institute, Elbridge, Onondaga Co., NY. Jane Leslie was single when she wrote the letter, but in less than a year she would marry Dr. Orlando Martin Bryan and move to Chicago. Peter, mentioned in the letter, is the older brother of Jane Leslie and James Leslie. Peter was the oldest followed by 5 sisters (including Jane Leslie) and then James Leslie. James Leslie may have been anxious to get away from home and the guidance of 5 older sisters. Urania mentioned in the letter is one of the 5 sisters. John U. was a 1st cousin—full name John Upham Smith. Would be interesting to know who Miss Smith was.

Cousin Lib mentioned in the letter died in 1854 at age 29. James mentioned in the letter died 8 days after the letter was written at the age of 27. They were both 1st cousins.

Fig. 1



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Page 19 is the Book Order Form.

Editor's Note: We appreciate all data for **In Memoriam** and also **Nieuws Verwanten (News of Cousins)**. In both cases, we can write only the information received. Unfortunately, sometimes it is extremely brief.

In Memoriam

by Marilyn Van Voorhis Voshall

In July 2005, **Roy M. ('Butch') Voris** passed away. Captain Voris graduated of Salinas Junior College in 1939. He joined the Navy in 1941 and was an Ensign and naval aviator by Feb. 1942. He is most famous for his involvement with the Blue Angels as part of their team. After leaving the Navy in 1963, he worked for Grumman Corp. In 1973 he joined NASA. In 1985, he retired to Monterey, Calif. with his wife, Thea. In 1993 the Air Force honored him as one of 20 international aviators who made significant contributions to world aviation. He was inducted into the International Council of Air Shows Foundation's Air Show Hl of Fame in Dec. 2001. He is survived by his wife, Thea, to whom he was married 53 years.

We are saddened to learn of the passing of **Virginia B. Jordan (VVA#12349)** on May 25, 2006 at the age of 96. She is descended from Sarah Van Voorhees (b. June 15, 1797), wife of Dr. Wm. Williamson Perrine through the **Coert, Lucas, and Jan lines**. We all had the privilege of meeting her via her article, *Sarah Voorhees Perrine*, on page 13 in the Fall 2005 of the *Nieuwsbrief*. Your editor was fortunate to have wonderful phone conversations with her regarding the article. She is survived by her niece, **Janet F. Barstad** of Tempe, Arizona.

Evelyn Ruth V. Findlay (b. Jan. 27, 1924) passed away on Aug. 3, 2006. She is survived by her husband, John Nebeker Findlay, whom she married on Apr. 22, 1946.

Alston B. Voorhees, Jr. of Silverdale passed away Dec. 9, 2006 at the age of 91. He was born in 1915 in Oswego, NY, the son of **Florence and Alston B. Voorhees**. A graduate of the Univ. of Mich. in

Aeronautical Engineering, he worked 33 years for Boeing on the B-17, B-29, B-47, B-52 and later the 707, 727, 747, and SST. After retiring from Boeing, he worked as a hydraulic design specialist for FMT Corp. in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He was a lifetime Boy Scout, earning an Eagle Scout badge, the Order of the Arrow, and Silver Beaver. He was Scoutmaster of Troop 439 in Bellevue and assisted with Scouts in Cedar Rapids. Other activities were sailing, gardening, golfing, amateur radio and church work. He and his wife, Kathleen Cooper Voorhees, whom he married in 1942, built their retirement home on Anderson Island, where he became involved in the Oro Bay Yacht Club, Riviera Country Club, and the Community Church. A memorial service was held on Dec. 16, 2006 at the Anchor of Hope Christian Reformed Church in Silverdale. The family suggests remembrances in his name be made to the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Boy Scouts of America, Alzheimer's Assoc., or Boeing Museum of Flight. He was preceded in death by Kathleen (his wife), Elizabeth Thibault (sister), Daniel Voorhees (Brother), and Ellen Voorhees (daughter). He is survived by **Anita V. Mastin** (daughter) of Fife; **Alston B. Voorhees III** (son) of LaCygne, Kansas; **Paul M. Voorhees** (son) of Seabeck; **Russell C. Voorhees** (son) of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; eight grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

Donald Wallace Voorhees died very suddenly on Jan. 2, 2007 at the age of 50. He is descended from the **Coert line** and lived in Spring Lake Heights, NJ all his life. At the death of his father in 1988, he assumed ownership of **Russell W. Voorhees'** (father's) plumbing business. He is survived by his wife, son, daughter, and brother, **David Voorhees**.

The Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum

by Marilyn Van Voorhis Voshall

The Wyckoff Farmhouse Museum is having a series of free events on the following dates. Sat., Feb. 24, 2007 is *African Lives in Old Brooklyn* and a lecture, *From the Ring Shout to Alvin Ailey's Revelations*; Sat., Mar. 3, 2007 is *Pieter Claesen Wyckoff Day Open House*; Sun. Mar. 25, 2007 is *Wyckoff Farm Spring Awakening Compost Festival & Volunteer Day*; and Sat., Apr. 28,

2007 is the *Wyckoff House & Association New Jersey Chapter Meeting* with a fee for lunch (call 718-619-5400); and May 20, 2007 *Pinkster: Pentecost in the Afro-Dutch World*. For more details & listings, email wyckoffassociation.org or visit their website, www.wyckoffassociation.org.

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You may have noticed that we always mail our *Nieuwsbrief* first class mail. We spend this extra money for postage because we routinely get at least 5% and sometimes more of our *Nieuwsbrief*'s back from the postman as undeliverable. There are, of course, various reasons for undeliverable, but the bottom line is often that **when we cannot find a new address and we have to remove that name from our mailing list.** This is especially true for our LIFE members, who make up more than a third of our members, since they are not sending in yearly dues. Also we have a handful of members that have two addresses (like Florida in the winter and Illinois in the summer), and we often get these back because we don't know which address to use or we don't know the correct address. So **please make every effort to give us a new address, if you move!** Notify our membership chairman, **Tom Van Voorhies,**

His phone number is _____ and his email address is _____
Unfortunately our website change of address form is not working correctly at the moment, so just **contact Tom directly.**

Unfortunately some of the *Nieuwsbrief*'s come back to us because the member has passed away. In this situation we are dependent on family members and friends

to notify us of the passing (although sometimes the postman will notify us). This brings up a point--**obituaries** are of great importance to us. If you are called to write an obituary for a Voorhees or if you know of one or see one in a newspaper **please make a copy and send it to us!** We like to have an obituary section (In Memoriam) in the *Nieuwsbrief*. Obituaries often contain valuable information for the genealogy committee and, of course, obituaries notify our membership chairman that an adjustment needs to be made.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our membership chairman, Tom Van Voorhies, for his many years of hard work maintaining the Van Voorhees Association membership list. He does an outstanding job and all of us look forward to working with him in the future. And while we are handing out kudos lets recognize our publications sales chairwomen, Marilyn Brack, who does an outstanding job. Many of you may not know that Tom and Marilyn are brother and sister, so we especially owe this family a debt of gratitude.

Obviously Marilyn Van Voorhis Voshall, our *Nieuwsbrief* Editor-in-Chief, is not writing this paragraph; but we want she and husband Roy to know that we all appreciate their hard work on the *Nieuwsbrief*. They do an outstanding job.

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**Picture of the Grain Mill, just outside Ruinen,
where Steven Coerts Van Voorhees worked.**

(Photo courtesy of Dr. Roy E. Voshall)

