

A. C. Van Raalte Institute

Annual Report 2014-2015

**Hope College
Holland, Michigan
2015**

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A. C. Van Raalte Institute, Hope College

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Cover photo taken at the VRI on furniture from the A. C. Van Raalte home (*courtesy Tom Renner*)



Annual Report 2014-2015

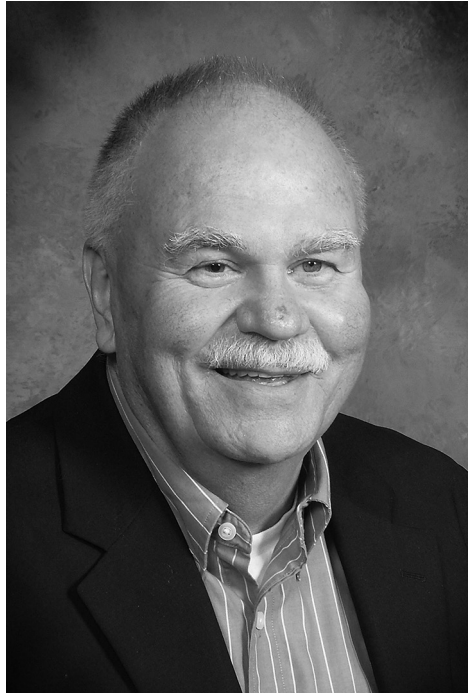


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A Message from the Director

As the recently appointed director of the Van Raalte Institute of Hope College, it is my honor to introduce our annual report for 2014-15. Established twenty-one years ago when Elton Bruins worked from a desk in an office for retired faculty members in Van Zoren Hall, the institute has expanded to include nine senior research fellows and an editorial associate who share space in the Theil Research Center with the Joint Archives of Holland. Although the institute has grown considerably over the years, its essential mission continues to be researching, writing, and publishing resources on Dutch American culture and influence. The institute is a vibrant and productive community of scholars.



Dennis Voskuil

Celebrating the leadership of Jack Nyenhuis

After thirteen years of stellar leadership, Jack Nyenhuis completed his tenure as director of the institute last August. He left a remarkable legacy of accomplishment which has immeasurably strengthened the productivity and reputation of the institute. A highly respected former dean of the Division of Arts and Humanities as well as provost of Hope College, Jack brought a wealth of administrative experience to the directorship. He not only shepherded the move of the institute into the newly purchased Theil building, he also designed the interior space of the building in consultation with Geoffrey Reynolds, director of the Joint Archives of Holland, which shares the space. With respect to staff, Jack attracted several highly qualified Senior Research Fellows, and he

established the Visiting Research Fellows program, especially including scholars from the Netherlands. When Jack came to see the importance of a publishing arm of the institute, he established the Van Raalte Press, which now publishes its own books and pamphlets, while also working in concert with the Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, to produce and promote books which are included in the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America, whose general editor, Don Bruggink, is also a Senior Research Fellow. In addition to writing and editing several books and pamphlets himself, Jack has been instrumental in securing financial support for the institute.

Considering the enormous impact Jack has had upon the development of the institute, it is reassuring for his colleagues to know that he will continue to be a Senior Research Fellow as well as the editor-in-chief of the Van Raalte Press.

Our celebration of Jack's directorship will continue throughout this academic year, but our gratitude for his visionary leadership will be celebrated for years to come.

Publications

Although members of the institute will elaborate on their publications and presentations in their own reports which follow, it is important to highlight the remarkable productivity of the Van Raalte Institute during the last year.

Since our last annual report, the following books have been published by our Senior Research Fellows and Visiting Research Fellows:

1. Eugene Heideman, *Hendrik P. Scholte: His Legacy in the Netherlands and in America*. This study of a leader of the 1934 secession movement in the Netherlands and founder of a Dutch settlement in Pella, Iowa, was the fruit of a visiting research fellowship which Heideman received during 2013-14.
2. Robert P. Swierenga, *Faithful Witness: A Sesquicentennial History of Central Avenue CRC, Holland, Michigan, 1865-2015*. This is the third volume in the Congregational Histories Series of the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America, published by the Van Raalte Press, the official publisher of this series.
3. Robert P. Swierenga, *Centennial History of Park Township, 1915-2015*. This fine volume marked the centennial celebration of Park Township.
4. Robert P. Swierenga and Jacob E. Nyenhuis, editors, *Historic*

Dutch Sites in the Holland/Zeeland Area: An Illustrated Guide. This booklet includes maps, photographs, and short written descriptions which guide visitors to important historic sites in the area.

Forthcoming books

1. Kenneth A. Schaaf, *In Peril on the Sea: The Forgotten Story of the William & Mary Shipwreck*, which will be published by the Van Raalte Press and Eerdmans as part of the Reformed Church in America Historical Series.
2. Henk Aay, *Projecting the Netherlands: Dutch Films in America*. This project is the fruit of a Visiting Research Fellowship which Aay received in 2012-13 (lecture no. 13), before he became a Senior Research Fellow.
3. Jan Peter Verhave, *A Constant State of Emergency: Paul de Kruif and the Health of Americans* (tentative title). Another former Visiting Research Fellow and present honorary fellow, Verhave has written an important study of de Kruif, a native of Zeeland, Michigan, the famous “microbe hunter” and writer during the first half of the twentieth century.
4. Jacob A. Nyenhuis and James Kennedy, coauthors, *Keeping Hope Alive: A Sesquicentennial History of Hope College, 1866 - 2016*. Due to be published in May 2016, this major study will mark the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of Hope College.
5. Earl William Kennedy, *A Commentary on the Minutes of the Classis of Holland, 1848-1876: A Detailed Record of Persons and Issues, Civil and Religious, in the Dutch Colony of Holland, Michigan*. After years of exhaustive research, Kennedy’s commentary will be an invaluable resource for scholars of the Reformed and Christian Reformed Churches, as well as on Dutch American culture.

Visiting Research Fellows Program for 2014-2015

Jan Jacob Boersema of the Institute for Environmental Sciences at Leiden University in the Netherlands and the author of two textbooks in the field of environmental sciences as well as a study on Easter Island, spent his time with the Van Raalte Institute researching the impact of the natural environment upon Dutch settlements in America. During the first half of his sojourn in Michigan, Jan was joined by his wife, Anthonia, who assisted Jan with his research.

Last September, Jan and Henk Aay, who had also studied the impact of environment upon the Dutch settlements, teamed



Jan and Anthonia Boersema

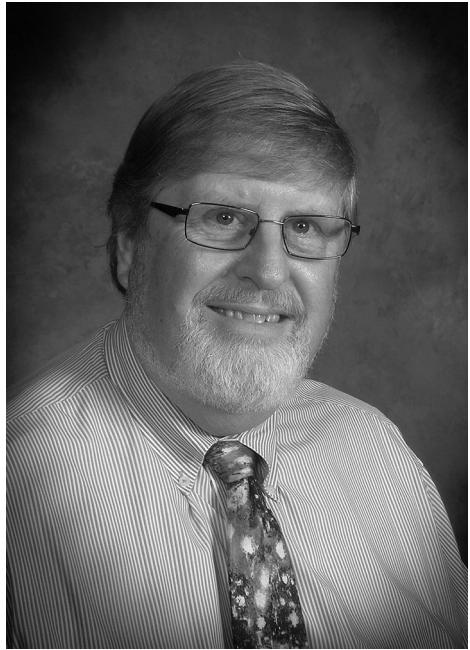
up for a presentation at a conference in Albany, New York, jointly sponsored by the New Netherlands Institute and the Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies, which featured the results of their research. Two weeks later, Jan and Henk again shared their conclusions in a lecture sponsored by the Van Raalte Institute: “We made the wilderness to blossom’: Nineteenth-Century Dutch Immigrants and the Natural World.” This lecture (no. 16) will be published as a monograph by the Van Raalte Press.

The other Visiting Research Fellow during 2014-15 was Dr. Donald A. Luidens, professor emeritus of sociology at Hope College. The focus of Don’s fellowship was a memoir/biography of his parents, Edwin and Ruth Stegenga Luidens, who served as Reformed Church in America missionaries in Iraq and Bahrain from 1944 to 1957. Drawing upon letters from the field, which his parents faithfully wrote to members of their family, Don is working on a monograph of his parents’ experiences against the backdrop of international politics, religious developments, and cultural changes in the Middle East during the years following the Second World War. In September 2015, Don and his wife, Peggy, delivered a compelling public lecture, “Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Hate: A Love Story (Begins)” (lecture no. 15).

Appointment of a new Senior Research Fellow

The Van Raalte Institute is pleased to announce that Don Luidens has been named a Senior Research Fellow. As noted above, Don has been in residence as a Visiting Research Fellow in 2014-15, working on a memoir/biography of his parents who were missionaries in the Middle East. During his thirty-seven-year tenure as a professor of sociology at Hope College, Don authored or coauthored over a hundred articles

and reviews and five books, including: *Reformed Encounters with Modernity: Perspectives from Three Continents* (2001), *Vanishing Boundaries: The Religion of Mainline Protestant Baby Boomers* (1994), and *Divided by a Common Heritage* (2006), a study of the relationship between the Reformed Church in America and the Christian Reformed Church. A graduate of Hope College (1969) with a major in history, Don earned an MDiv in church and society at Princeton Theological Seminary (1972) and his MA and PhD degrees in sociology from Rutgers University (1974, 1978). As a child of missionary parents, Don brings an international perspective to the institute. While serving on the faculty of Hope College, Don was a visiting fellow at Tantur Institute for Advanced Theological Studies in Jerusalem (1985) and at Selly Oaks College in Birmingham, England (1985). We warmly welcome Don to our community of scholars.



Don Luidens

Conclusion

As we celebrate thirteen years of the fruitful and faithful leadership of Jack Nyenhuis as director, we express deep gratitude to all of our major donors for their generous support of the Van Raalte Institute. Their vision and encouragement have allowed the institute to expand and flourish.

We also express unqualified gratitude to JoHannah Smith, our talented editorial associate, who not only efficiently manages the day-to-day affairs of the institute but also expertly edits the barrage of manuscripts which come across her desk. The Senior Research Fellows are deeply indebted to JoHannah for her remarkable dedication.

As Hope College celebrates its sesquicentennial, the members of the institute thank President John Knapp, Provost Richard Ray, Dean Patrice Rankins, and the Board of Trustees for their ongoing support. We hope that through our research, publications, and interactions with students, we will be able to enhance the mission of Hope College for many years to come.



**A Tribute to Jacob E. Nyenhuis,
Director of the Van Raalte Institute,
2002-2015**

By Elton J. Bruins

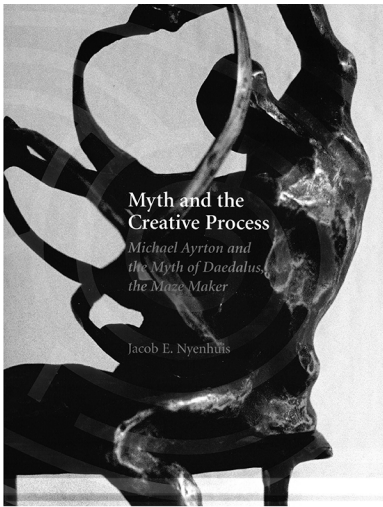
It is my pleasure to present a brief overview of the thirteen years of service that Jack Nyenhuis has given the Van Raalte Institute as director. The institute was founded in January of 1994 at the behest and with the support of Peter H. Huizenga. My initial job was the organization and development of the Van Raalte Institute and its research capacity. I started literally from scratch in the corner of the office for retired faculty in Van Zoeren Hall. That space served me well for two years. When Robert P. Swierenga joined the institute in 1996, our office was moved into our first suite of offices at 100 East Eighth Street.

Jack arrived at Hope College as the new dean of the Humanities Division in 1975, the year that President Van Wylen instituted a new administrative structure of having a provost and four divisional deans as the chief academic leaders at the college. I have benefited from Jack's appointment at Hope both professionally and personally.

In 1977 Jack asked me to serve as the chairman of the Religion Department and in 1984 to succeed him as dean of the Arts and Humanities Division (Arts and Humanities were combined in 1978). In 1989, when I finished my term as dean of Arts and Humanities, Jack asked me to fill in for him as provost as he received his well-deserved

sabbatical that fall. I concluded my teaching career in 1992, with two more years of part-time teaching, and Jack appointed me as the first director of the newly established Van Raalte Institute in 1994.

When Jack concluded his work as provost of Hope College in 2001, after serving in that role for seventeen years, my colleagues and I realized immediately that he would be a valuable member of the VRI and invited him to join us as a Research Fellow. There was an office at the institute available that he could have immediately upon vacating his office in the De Witt Student Center, and he moved in with one proviso: that he could spend the first year finishing the book on which he had been working for a very long time. His magnum opus was



published under the title *Myth and the Creative Process: Michael Ayrton and the Myth of Daedalus, the Maze Maker*. Wayne State University Press, the university where Jack taught prior to his coming to Hope, published this magnificent work in 2003. Jack succeeded me as director in 2002, at a time when I wanted to do more in my research field, the publication of the Van Raalte letters to Philip Phelps Jr.

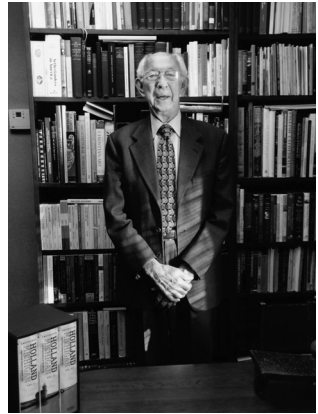
Within two years of Jack's directorship, the institute moved into roomier quarters at 9 East Tenth St., a former business building purchased by the college two years earlier. Jack's

work with a major donor led to gifts and bequests that provided all the funding for the acquisition and renovation of the building, which was named the Theil Research Center in honor of the donors. Jack also did most of the planning and designing of the interior space of our new quarters. He worked with Geoffrey Reynolds, the director of the Joint Archives of Holland (JAH) and our new partner at the Theil Research Center. The institute's area alone increased from four offices to eight. Sharing space with the JAH has facilitated our use of their valuable resources and programs as well as the increasing number of significant documents in their collection. VRI researchers use the archives on an almost daily basis.

Jack's experience as provost has been fundamental to the financial stability of the institute. He knew the operations and chief

administrators of the college and therefore could function effectively as our chief administrator. His twenty-six years as a high-level administrator gave him valuable experience: as dean of the Humanities Division beginning in 1975, as dean of the Arts and Humanities Divisions in 1978, and then beginning in 1984 as provost. Much of what he has accomplished as our director is due to his knowledge of and service in administration at Hope College. He has worked well with our major donors and with many others who have helped the institute fund its work. The many volumes that we have published have depended greatly upon the generosity of our donors. Jack also wrote a grant proposal to the Netherlands America Foundation that resulted in a considerable amount of money for some of our projects at the institute.

Another key component of the growth of the Van Raalte Institute came with Jack's invitation to Donald J. Bruggink, retired professor of Western Seminary. In his retirement, Don was serving as the general editor of the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America that he had established in 1968. The first book in the series was published in 1969. With Don's move to the institute, we could provide him with support to carry out his important work as general editor and as a member of the Historical Commission of the Reformed Church in America. The invitation to join us



Donald J. Bruggink

has meant very much to Don, and the institute fellows have enjoyed his camaraderie and his publication skills. Several of us have benefited greatly from Don's expertise in getting our scholarly works published. His many years of friendship with William B. Eerdmans Jr. continue to open doors for the institute scholars to publish their research. The first VRI book published in the Historical Series was number 44, and the most recent is number 84!

The one-of-a-kind accomplishment of Jack's work at the Van Raalte Institute was the initiation and organization of the October/November 2011 Bicentennial Celebration of the birth of Albertus C. Van Raalte, born October 17, 1811. The celebration was made up of two parts: a Founder's Festival in Holland and an academic conference which began at Hope College and continued in the city of Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, where Van Raalte was pastor from 1839

to 1844. With the partnership of George Harinck, a fine scholar and a VRI Honorary Research Fellow in the Netherlands, this celebration and festival included many original, high-quality research papers by the best scholars in the field of Dutch American studies in America and the Netherlands. The event also included celebratory events such as concerts and a play. The papers from the academic conference were edited by Jack Nyenhuis and George Harinck and published in *The Enduring Legacy of Albertus C. Van Raalte as Leader and Liaison* (2014). This book insures us that the Bicentennial Celebration left a memorable record of a glorious celebration.

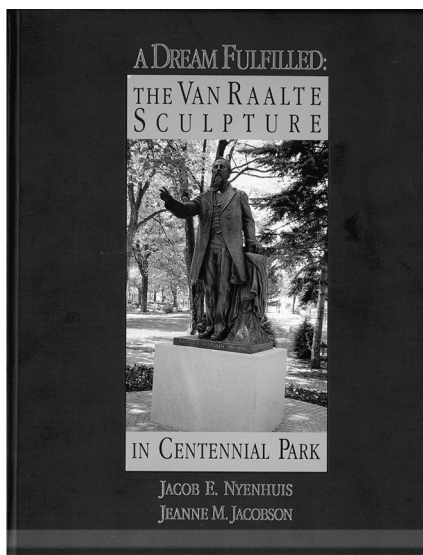


Attendees listen as Elton Bruins asks a question at the Bicentennial Conference in the Netherlands (2011)

Jack's dedication to publishing the work of VRI scholars led him to envision and develop the Van Raalte Press (VRP). The VRP publishes the papers presented at the biennial AADAS conferences, as well as monographs by visiting research fellows, and several volumes in Bruggink's Historical Series have been published by the VRP in collaboration with Eerdmans. A recent publication of the VRP, *Hope Beyond Borders: The Life and Letters of Paul Fried*, by Stephen I. Hemenway, professor of English at Hope College, continues to be in high demand.

Jack's chosen field of expertise, in which he is a recognized scholar, is in the classics, the field in which he taught at Wayne State University.

Since joining the institute, however, he has written a number of books in the field of history. One was the centennial history of his congregation, the Fourteenth Street Christian Reformed Church. Prior to joining the institute, Jack was responsible for overseeing the sculpting of the Van Raalte statute that stands in Centennial Park; it was a great achievement to have the founder of Holland recognized with a statue. A record of the project was written with coauthor, Jeanne M. Jacobson, with the title *A Dream Fulfilled: The Van Raalte Sculpture in Centennial Park* (1997). He is also the editor of my festschrift, *A Goodly Heritage: Essays in Honor of the Reverend Dr. Elton J. Bruins at Eighty* (2007).



Unknown even to some of my VRI colleagues is the leadership of Jack in the formation of the Dutch Heritage Coordinating Council (DHCC). Jack has been the chief inspiration of this group, which consists of representatives of several organizations in the area of the former Holland colony, namely: the Zeeland Historical Society, the Holland Museum/Historical Trust, Tulip Time, the VRI, the JAH, the Graafschap CRC Heritage Center, Western Theological Seminary, Tulip Time, Windmill Island Gardens, Holland Visitors Bureau, Nelis' Dutch Village, the cities of Holland and Zeeland, and several public and support members. Each organization was functioning in isolation from the others, clearly to the detriment of all. The DHCC facilitates communication and collaboration among the members, informing one another of their efforts to enhance the Dutch heritage of the

community. The DHCC member organizations joined in publishing *Historic Dutch Sites in the Holland/Zeeland Area: An Illustrated Tour Guide* (2015) to serve visitors and cyclists in viewing historical sites in Holland and the surrounding area.

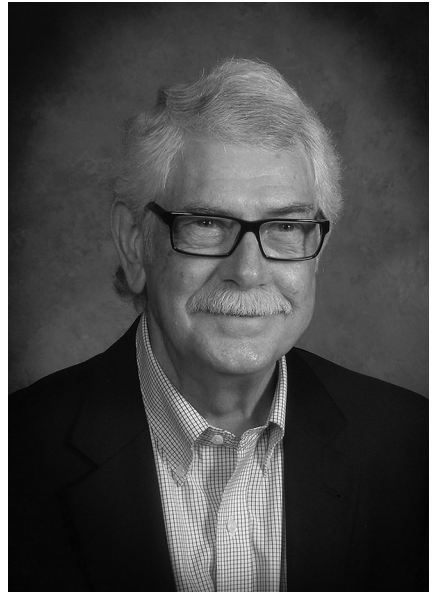
Although Jack has concluded his official work as the second director of the Van Raalte Institute, he still has much work to do. He will, of course, continue to be a Senior Research Fellow, but his major work will be the completion of the sesquicentennial history of Hope College, of which he is a coauthor. His major chapter will present the architectural history of Hope College, but he is also contributing to two other chapters, as well as constructing extensive appendices.

Jack has been my supervisor from 1975 to 2015, except for the year 2001-2 when he occupied an office at the institute's suite of offices. For that one year, I was his supervisor! In all the years that we have served together, now forty years in all, we have had a good relationship. I have learned much from him. I hope that these years have meant as much to him as they have to me. Our relationship has gone beyond the usual professional courtesies into a close friendship that I cherish, a friendship that I hope will continue for many more years. Happily he will continue to serve at the Van Raalte Institute so that our friendship can endure, and he can share his expertise as a director with his successor Dennis Voskuil.

Reports

Jacob E. Nyenhuis

After more than twelve years as director of the Van Raalte Institute, I retired on 31 August 2015 so I could devote more time to the completion of *Keeping Hope Alive: A Sesquicentennial History of Hope College, 1866-2016*, although I will continue as editor-in-chief and publisher for the Van Raalte Press. I am very pleased to have Dennis Voskuil as my successor to the directorship, for he brings strong leadership skills and significant experience to our enterprise. All of us have enjoyed his company over the past year, as I did during the seventeen years that he served so ably on the faculty of Hope College (1977-94).



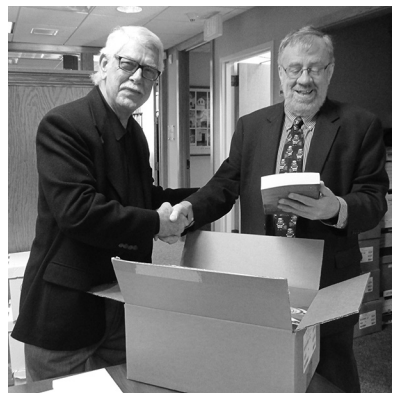
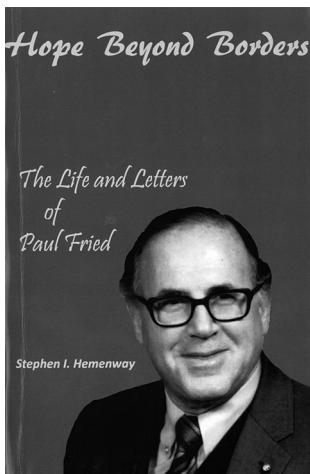
Celebrating the State History Award are colleagues, *left to right*: Lee and Jack Nyenhuis, Bob Swierenga, Jan and Anthonia Boersema, and Henk Aay

As copublisher of Robert Swierenga's very impressive three-volume *Holland, Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City*, I was delighted that he received the State History Award from the Historical Society of Michigan. The award was presented at the annual conference of the HSM held in Big Rapids in September 2014. It was a joy to be present at the ceremony with several other members of the institute, along with members of Bob's family. Hearty congratulations, Bob!

During the past year, I have divided my time between the usual responsibilities of directing the institute, carrying on my own research, and providing service to church and community. My research this past year has focused primarily on completing a comprehensive history of the buildings on campus, which will constitute chapter two of the history. I have been working concurrently on two other chapters, as well as on the collection of an extensive amount of material for the appendices of the history, with the assistance of two colleagues and two student research assistants.

I therefore have published only one brief article and made only one presentation (in two parts), but my involvement in the editorial process for the *Historic Dutch Sites in the Holland/Zeeland Area: An Illustrated Guide* map and booklet was extensive (see centerfold). As part of that process, I assembled a small ad hoc committee to develop plans for an *Elfstedenfietstocht* (bicycle tour) of the sites of Dutch influence included in this booklet. More details on this activity should be available next year.

As editor-in-chief and publisher of the Van Raalte Press, I am proud to have published the biography of beloved Hope professor Paul



Jack presents the first copy of *Hope Beyond Borders* to author Stephen Hemenway



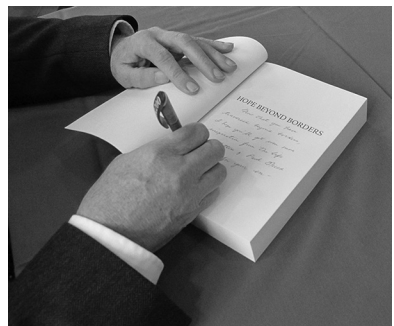
Hemenway book-signing event, *l-r*: Steven Hemenway, English Dept.; Marc Baer, History Dept.; Peter Schakel, English Dept.; and Bob Swierenga, VRI

Fried (1919-2006). This book has been our most highly sought after publication, with sales to alumni all over the world.

I served church, college, and community in these ways: (1) as secretary-treasurer of the Dutch Heritage Coordinating Council until January 2015, (2) as a member of both the Dutch American Historical Commission and the West Michigan Dutch American Heritage Day Committee, and (3) as pulpit supply coordinator for 14th Street CRC.

I am grateful to all my colleagues for the support that they have given me over the past dozen years, and I now gladly join them in giving enthusiastic support to Dennis Voskuil, my very able successor.

Large gatherings at many book signings and presentations have given evidence to the respect and admiration felt by many for Paul Fried and his contributions to Hope College and society in general



Dennis N. Voskuil



In Lochcarron, Scotland, 2015
(courtesy Dennis and Betty Voskuil)

When I was named a Senior Research Fellow of the institute in the summer of 2013, then director Jack Nyenhuis asked me to contribute a chapter to the sesquicentennial history of Hope College, of which he and James Kennedy would be the lead authors. The topic I was assigned to cover was the relationship between Hope College and the Reformed Church in America, its founding denomination. Much of my time during the last year and a half has been devoted to researching and writing on this topic.

Now readied for publication, the proposed chapter is tentatively titled: “Continuity and

Change: Hope College and the Reformed Church in America, 1866-2016.” Drawing from published and unpublished sources available through the Joint Archives of Holland and Western Theological Seminary, I was able to identify gradual changes in the relationship between the college and the denomination over time. As one who has been devoted to both institutions, I found this assignment to be both interesting and challenging.

With the completion of my contribution to the sesquicentennial history of Hope College, I will continue my next project—providing a comprehensive history of Western Theological Seminary. Considering the intimate early relationship between Western and Hope College, this project in some ways will be an extension of some of my work on the history of the college.

One of the happy discoveries of my tenure as a senior fellow and director of the institute is that I have joined a community of scholars who prize close relationships. These relationships are nurtured daily at the 11:00 a.m. coffee breaks which take place around an oval table in the small library in the Theil Center. The discussions are free flowing and

wide ranging, from world history, to local politics, to family concerns, to work-related issues, to newly released movies, to campus architecture, to art shows, and regional symphonies. While opposing positions are offered on various topics, disagreements are not disagreeably expressed. The coffee breaks are filled with good-humored bantering, teasing, and laughter. I am extremely grateful for my colleagues around the table.

In addition to my duties at the institute, I have found time to teach a few classes as an adjunct professor of church history at Western Theological Seminary. I have also taught Reformed Church history and missions courses for the Ministerial Formation Coordinating Agency of the Reformed Church in America.

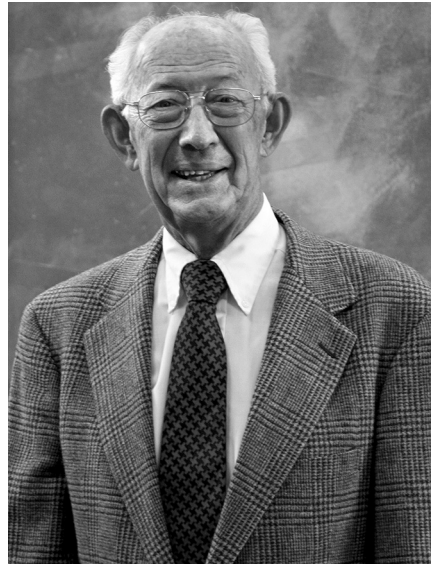
My wife Betty and I share the joy of spending time with our children and grandchildren, attending symphonic concerts, traveling, and rooting for the Boston Red Sox, the Green Bay Packers, the Wisconsin Badgers, and the teams which represent Hope College.



Dennis with wife Betty at Callanish Standing Stones, Isle of Lewis, in Scotland, 2015 (*courtesy Dennis and Betty Voskuil*)

Donald J. Bruggink

Although our last report heralded the publication of Robert P. Swierenga's three-volume *Holland, Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City*, it is within the span of this report that we received the news that the application to the Historical Society of Michigan made by our director, Jacob Nyenhuis, and myself, on behalf of Bob's book, was successful, and the excellence of Bob's work was officially recognized with the State History Award. And although such applications involve an inordinate amount of work, the honest recognition of Bob's work encourages us to persist in further recognition for work well written.



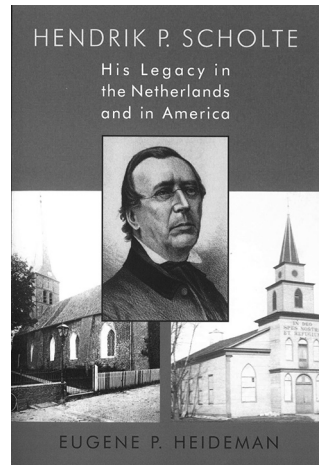
Much of the effort of this general editor this year has been in the preparation of manuscripts for publication (albeit the really arduous work is the copy editing done with excellence by JoHannah Smith). Pablo A. Deiros has prepared an engaging and insightful biography of John and Mabel Kempers, founders of the Reformed Church in America mission in Chiapas, Mexico. Written in the first person, in a style akin to narrative history, the book nevertheless remains completely true to John and Mabel by virtue of the extensive correspondence and articles which chronicled their lives together in Christ's service.

In anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the Synod of Dort in 2018-19, Eugene P. Heideman is taking "another look" at that document, which may produce another book.

In the meantime, it is the same Eugene P. Heideman who has written our published volume: *Hendrick P. Scholte: His Legacy in the Netherlands and in America*, no. 84 in the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America (Wm. B. Eerdmans and the Van Raalte Press, paperback, 314 pages). The book has already received high praise from George Harinck, professor of history, director of the Historical Documentation Center for Dutch Protestantism in the Vrije Univesiteit in Amsterdam, and professor of church history at the Theological University of Kampen. Harinck writes: "There are few American

theologians as well versed in the history of the Dutch church and Dutch theology as Gene Heideman. He is the right person not only to give us solid and balanced insight into the theology of Hendrik P. Scholte but also to situate Scholte carefully in his intellectual and ecclesial context. His book bridges the continents by explaining how the leader of a European secession movement became a Dutch American migration leader.”

Another joint publication forthcoming by Eerdmans and the Van Raalte Press is *A Commentary on the Minutes of the Classis of Holland, 1848-1876: A Detailed Record of Persons and Issues, Civil and Religious, in the Dutch Colony of Holland, Michigan*, by Earl

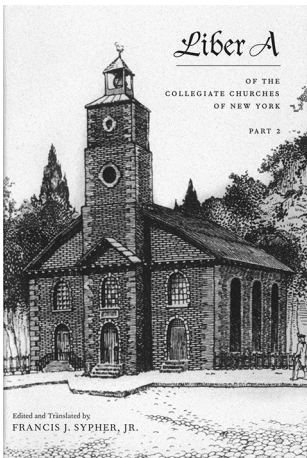


Jack Nyenhuis congratulates Gene Heideman on the publication of his book and presents him with the first copy

Wm. Kennedy. I will defer to Kennedy as a Senior Research Fellow of the Van Raalte Institute to tell you more about his incredible work of scholarly research.

Also together with the Van Raalte Press, *In Peril on the Sea: The Forgotten Story of the William and Mary Shipwreck*, by Kenneth A. Schaff, will hopefully be published next year. Similarly, *A Constant State of Emergency: A Biography of Paul De Kruif*, by Jan Peter Verhave, moves toward publication.

With a certainty of publication, albeit beyond the time span of this report, *Liber A, 1628-1700, of the Collegiate Churches of New York*,

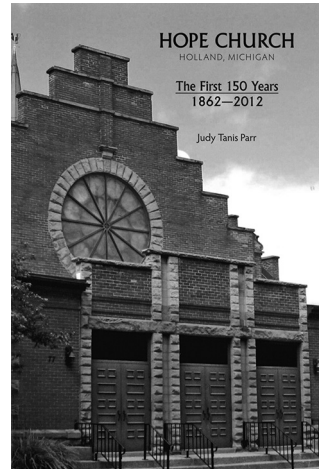


Part 2, translated, annotated, and edited by Frank J. Sypher Jr., has been published by Eerdmans in hardcover.

In our last report, we noted a sub-series of the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America, specifically, the Congregational Histories Series, George Brown, general editor. Subsequent to the first volume, *The City in Its Heart: The First 100 Years of Maple Avenue Ministries, Holland, Michigan, 1913-2013*, by John D. Cox, two more volumes have been added: *Hope Church, Holland, Michigan: The First 150 Years, 1862-2012*, by Judy Tanis Parr (Van Raalte

Press, paperback, 501 pages), and *Faithful Witness: A Sesquicentennial History of Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Holland, Michigan, 1865-2015*, by Robert P. Swierenga (Van Raalte Press, paperback, 545 pages).

The goal of the Congregational Histories Series, to produce historically rich documentation of congregations within their specific contexts, has been realized in these first three volumes. Insofar as they have set a standard for further volumes, the objectives for the series shall be richly realized. By producing such volumes through the Van Raalte Press and its knowledgeable staff, congregations are also enabled to realize considerable financial savings in the publication of their histories.



Hope Church, by Judy Tanis Parr, 303-5

An excerpt

On 18 November 1983, the Holland Sentinel published . . . a letter from [elder]

Elsie Lamb and thirty other Holland Peacemakers protesting the production of missile engines by Williams International of Walled Lake, Michigan. . . . Elsie Lamb not only wrote the letter but also put her words into actions, and she faced the consequences:

“I joined fifty other protesters at Williams International, the largest manufacturer of cruise missile engines. . . . Six of us linked arms and blockaded and prayed at the plant entrance at 6 a.m. on the first day of Advent. I was arrested and jailed for eight days and nights.

“I found myself in a large cell with eight other women who had been arrested on various charges. . . . In general, I was where I was supposed to be, unafraid and enjoying these new friends.”

Elsie Lamb and other protesters were found guilty of trespassing and placed on probation. She paid a fine, and once a month for one year, she reported to authorities in Pontiac [MI]. The editor of the Holland Sentinel rebuked her: “Civil disobedience must be answered. Although people have the freedom to express themselves, the tactics used by Lamb . . . should not be condoned.” [Her fellow elder, Jo Anne Brooks rose to her defense, and undaunted, Elsie Lamb continued her peacemaking.]

Nella Kennedy

It is appropriate in the harvest season of 2015 to show (and show off?) the fruitful endeavors of the members of the Van Raalte Institute, of which I am one. The first year of the third decade of the institute's existence has been a productive one for me. I finished translating the Dutch-language letters sent by the Rev. John R. Kempers to the *Sioux Center Nieuwsblad* [Iowa] from Chiapas, Mexico, in the late 1920s.



They described the enormous hardships encountered by this pioneer missionary in his travels to explore a large inhospitable terrain. A good portion of these translated letters have guided, and are still guiding, scholars presently working on a history of the Chiapas mission¹.

After the translation of the hefty minute book of a Holland debating society (1872-77) was completed, I began writing an overview and analysis of the contents. What had made the project especially exciting was that this volume was not known until a descendant presented it to the Van Raalte Institute on loan. The existence of this debating society was only referred to incidentally in newspapers. Originally I had intended to publish my research as an article in a magazine, but when the call for papers was issued for a joint conference by the Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies and the New Netherland Institute in Albany, I began to contextualize the content and ultimately submitted a digested version to these organizations. The title of the paper is "Of Men and Words [plagiarizing Steinbeck only slightly]: An Early Holland Debating Society."

With my paper having been written and presented and the (very successful) conference behind us, I and the other members of the Van Raalte Institute have been entertaining thoughts about future conferences with our Dutch American "relatives" along the Hudson River. Continuing the harvest metaphor, the contacts made in Albany were fruitful.

1 Pablo A. Deiros, *Kemp: The Story of John R. and Mabel Kempers, Founders of the Reformed Church in America Mission in Chiapas, Mexico* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, forthcoming 2016) [-Ed.]

The aforementioned Holland donor provided us with a variety of documents to peruse, some in English, several in Dutch. The latter are not as lengthy as the minute book (excepting the very descriptive last days of the donor's ancestress), and all have now been translated. One letter, however, did stand out. It was written to Albertus C. Van Raalte in 1868, two years after he had come back from the Netherlands. The writer, a teacher, had met the *dominie* there at that time, inquiring about the possibility of teaching in the *Kolonie*, and his letter told of the need of his family to seek the greener pastures of the United States. His job qualifications were formidable. The serious intent of his plans is demonstrated by a long list of questions about what he and his family needed to take. He also wrote that he would, however, need financial assistance to come to the United States, and that probably quashed the deal.

It appears that the teacher never did cross the big pond, but he had led a life full of controversy caused by his rather unorthodox biblical exegeses and his advocacy for homeopathic medicine. He wrote books, booklets, and pamphlets on these subjects. Since he never came, his life falls a little between the Dutch American cracks, but nevertheless, I have spent the last few weeks in research and writing an article.

I continue to employ my art history interests by offering advice to and advocacy for the Holland Museum, and I gave a course to the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals on windmills and art. I am still a member of the Dutch Heritage Coordinating Council (*cont. p. 29*).



Nella guides a group of Hope College students through the Holland Museum's Dutch Gallery

Historic Dutch Sites in the Holland/Zeeland Area: An Illustrated Tour Guide

This guide is a revision and expansion by Robert P. Swierenga of one by Henry Ippel, which was published in 1996 by the Dutch American Historical Commission (DAHC). Bob Swierenga has served as the Albertus C. Van Raalte Research Professor and Adjunct Professor of History at Hope College since 1996, when he retired from his professorship at Kent State University. He is the author of numerous books on Dutch migration and Dutch heritage, including his superb three-volume *Holland, Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City* (Van Raalte Press and Eerdmans, 2014).

This new version of *Dutch Sites* has eighteen new sites, many new photographs, and some excellent new maps by Mark Cook. One of the most significant changes is the addition of colored maps as a centerfold and as a separate enlargement that has been tucked into every guide. A special feature of this guide is the addition of the *Elfstedenfietstocht* (Eleven-City Bicycle Tour), which is modeled after the *Elfstedentocht* (Eleven-City Tour), which consists of a skating tour to eleven cities in the northern provinces of the Netherlands held whenever the canals are frozen solid. The route for the bicycle tour was developed by an ad hoc committee of Greg Holcombe, chair; Henk Aay; George Heerema; and Jacob E. Nyenhuis.

Joining the DAHC as a cosponsor of this new guide is the Dutch Heritage Coordinating Council (DHCC), which was established in 2009 to provide a forum for local heritage organizations to collaborate in the preservation and promotion of Dutch heritage in the greater Holland/Zeeland area. The DHCC consists of twenty members representing ten heritage organizations, the public, and the cities of Holland and Zeeland, whose mayors serve as liaisons between the DHCC and their city councils. We also are grateful to Sally Hallan Laukitis, executive director of the Holland Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, and to Christopher R. Shires, executive director of the Holland Historical Trust, for their financial support for this project.

The Van Raalte Institute is pleased to add its financial and editorial support to this guide which we are publishing for the DAHC and DHCC through the Van Raalte Press.

Jacob E. Nyenhuis

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Nella Kennedy (*cont.*)

“Of Men and Words”

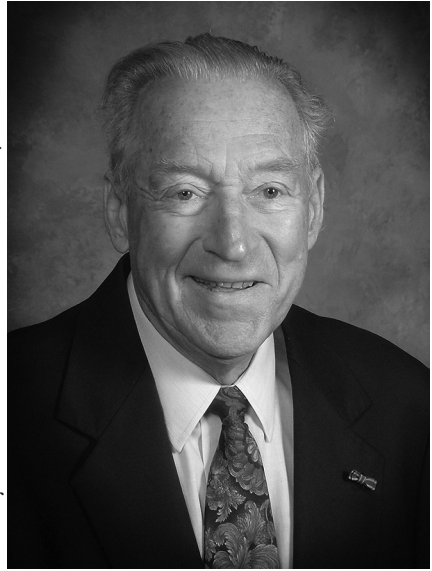
An excerpt

Drinking beer was common in Holland (there were a number of breweries), but at least one member [of the debating society] was for total abstinence. In 1874 the debaters and the Singing Society had made plans to celebrate the Fourth of July together with a “Basket Pigniek,” which was to include serving beer and lemonade. This member objected (presumably to the beer, not the lemonade). He was given a week to cool off, but he remained adamantly opposed.

That debates about alcohol appeared most frequently on the agenda is telling. The last recorded minutes, on 30 November 1877, may be indicative of the success of the temperance movement in the United States in the later 1870s. (The thesis to be debated was that only the grace of God can cure a drinker.) Temperance views are also reflected in the city itself. In 1876 an ad in the *Holland City News* made clear that no “spirituous liquors” were to be sold at the “Celebration Grounds.” The incongruity of the many ads in the same issue of the newspaper proclaiming nonalcoholic remedies that actually contained brandy as a preservative can hardly be missed.

Robert P. Swierenga

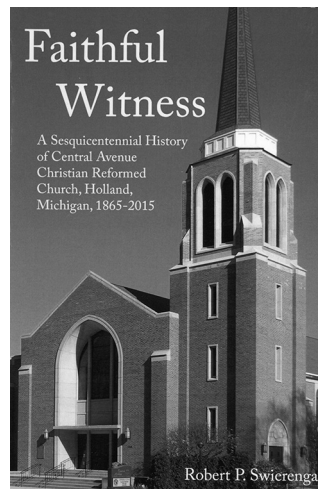
I spent much of 2014-15 lecturing for various audiences on my voluminous history of Holland, Michigan, published early in 2014, and writing two “anniversary” books: one of the church congregation of which I am a member and the other of the township in which I live. Both books were published under the Van Raalte Press imprint. The church history is *Faithful Witness: A Sesquicentennial History of Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Holland, Michigan, 1865-*

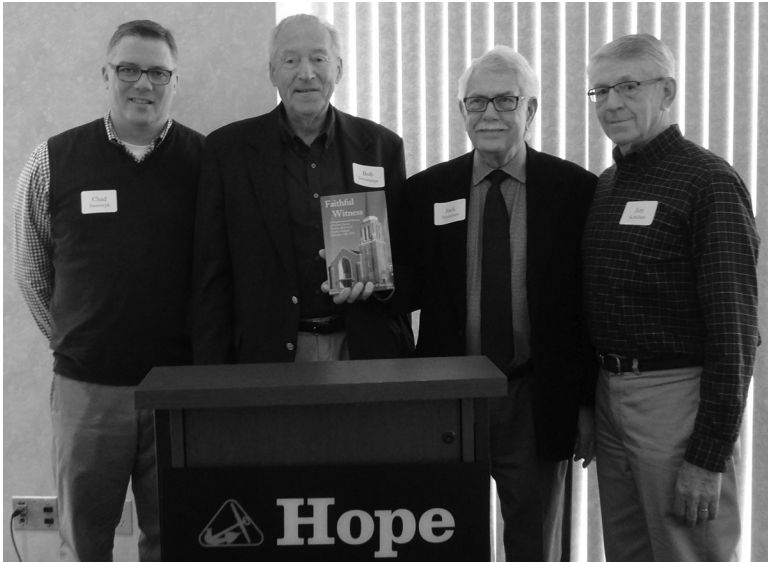


2015, no. 3 in the Congregational Histories Series of the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America. This 545-page book with 165 photographs, published in April 2015, tells the story of the first Christian Reformed congregation in Holland, a flagship body that in 1910 was the city’s largest with 1,800 souls. This “mother” congregation gave birth to a half-dozen daughter churches.

In September 2014 the Park Township Board of Supervisors asked me to write a history of Park Township for the celebration of the centennial in 2015. *Park Township Centennial History, 1915-2015: “Holland’s Water Playground,” Ottawa County, Michigan* was published in August 2015, a week after the twelve-month span covered in this annual report, so the book will be officially recognized in next year’s report. One-third of the one thousand copies printed, however, were sold in the first few weeks in conjunction with township celebrations and festivities, including a book signing at the restored Pump House Museum, maintained by Historic Ottawa Beach Society.

I also wrote the text and gathered the photographs for a revised and expanded





Celebrating the publication of the history of their enduring church are, *left to right*: Rev. Chad Steenwyk of Central Avenue Church, Bob Swierenga, Jack Nyenhuis, and Rev. Jim Scholten of Central Avenue Church

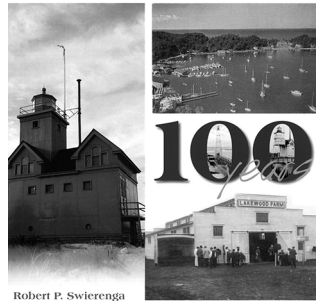
edition of *Sites of Dutch Influence in Western Michigan: An Illustrated Tour Guide*, which includes a map (compiled by Mark Cook) for an eleven-city tour by bike (*Elfstedenfietstocht*) or by car through the original colonies.

Family Quarrels in the Dutch Reformed Churches in the Nineteenth Century, coauthored with my colleague Elton Bruins in 1999, was reprinted in 2014 by the publisher, Wm B. Eerdmans, due to continuing demand.

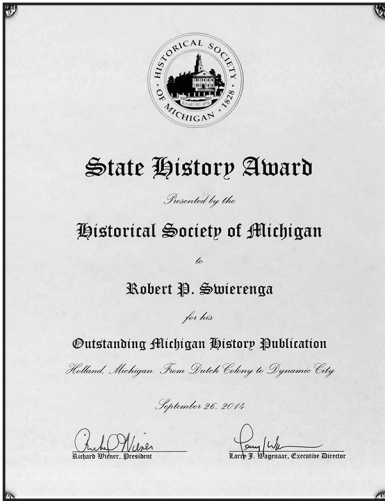
My three-volume book, *Holland, Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City* was selected by the Historical Society of Michigan for its state history award. The award ceremony took place at Ferris State University, Big Rapids, in conjunction with the annual Michigan state history conference.

I coedited with Lloyd Wolters an edited version of his father's diary as a young Christian school teacher in the 1920s, "Edward John Wolters: A Glimpse into the Life of a Young Teacher in the 1920s," *Origins* 33, no. 1 (2015): 14-24.

PARK TOWNSHIP
CENTENNIAL HISTORY 1915-2015
"Holland's Water Playground"
Ontonagon County, Michigan



Robert P. Swierenga



The Gold Seal of the State History Award

State History Award plaque

I answered a number of requests to speak on the history of Holland, including: a Calvin College CALL (Calvin Academy of Lifelong Learning) lecture on October 30, 2014, under the title “Calvin Stories in the History of Holland, Michigan”; the Century Club of Holland on November 2, 2014, under the title “Turning Points in Holland History”; and the Successful Aging lecture series at Christ Memorial Church on February 19, 2015, under the title “Uniquely Holland.”

Receiving MHS award with family: Bob with, *l-r.* daughter Sarah and daughter Suzanne Breems with husband Brent



I also lectured on the newly reprinted book, *Family Quarrels in the Dutch Reformed Churches in the Nineteenth Century*, at West Valley Reformed Church, Sun City, Arizona, on March 10, 2015, and at Freedom Village in Holland, Michigan, on July 9, 2015.

Faithful Witness (preface)

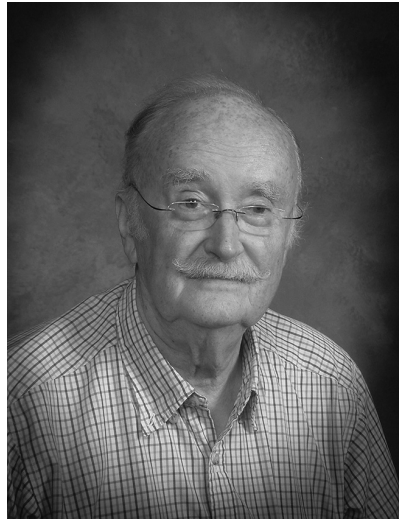
An excerpt

The year 2015 marks the sesquicentennial of Central Avenue church, the first Christian Reformed Church in Holland, Michigan. The congregation was founded in 1865 and for 150 years has held its place proudly in the heart of the city facing Centennial Park, originally Market Square. The majestic brick building with the towering spire, floodlit at night, was dedicated in 1953. It replaced a white-frame edifice on the same site that required several expansions to accommodate the largest congregation in the city. In 1910 Central Avenue membership peaked at 1,830 souls, making it the largest congregation in the Holland area. After giving birth to a half-dozen daughter churches, many on the suburban fringes of the city, the mother church today counts 450 souls.

Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church prided itself on being the “Dutch church,” and it held onto the mother tongue the longest—until 1955, when the afternoon Dutch service ended for lack of worshipers. Until the language-transition era in the 1920s, the church held three services, morning, afternoon, and evening. In 1920 the consistory bowed to demands of the young people and changed the evening worship to English. Morning English-language worship began in 1927, following the Dutch service. The minister was expected to preach the same sermon twice, but in different languages! If he was an “iron-man,” he conducted all four services. The clerk first recorded the consistory minutes in English in 1929, but after a year, they reverted to Dutch until 1937.

Earl Wm. (“Bill”) Kennedy

Another year has rolled around—even faster than the previous year(s)! Aside from preparing for the September 1st exodus of Jack Nyenhuis and *intrede* (Dutch) of Dennis Voskuil as our directors and congenial colleagues (although Jack remains a fellow traveler at the VRI), my focus has been primarily twofold: the “final” editing for publication of the annotations of the minutes of the Classis of Holland 1848-76 (my ongoing project for the past decade and a half) and the preparation of



a conference paper on the crisis in the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church (now the Reformed Church in America) in 1855 about the South’s “peculiar institution” of slavery.

I spent a good deal of time filling out and tidying up the former project. One particularly tedious, time-consuming task was to adjust the cross references in the footnotes since I had been adding notes here and there over the years in the seven sections of the whole document but had not updated the original references in one section to fit the newly-numbered references in another section; is that clear? In addition, I incorporated fresh data on various subjects/persons as I came across additional materials online (an ever-burgeoning treasure trove for us “googlers”), not to mention the occasional new book or article not yet on the web. I am grateful for having been allowed the freedom to “do my own thing” to a large extent, without the usual constraints on length or immediate relevance (or parenthetical remarks)—although, as JoHannah Smith well knows, I chafe ever so slightly under the ever-innovating “yoke” of the *Chicago Manual of Style* (I cut my academic teeth on *Turabian!*).

I have been favored, by a troika of colleagues, with the suggestion of a (new) title (composed by Don Bruggink)—with which I am more than content: *A Commentary on the Minutes of the Classis of Holland, 1848-1876: A Detailed Record of Persons and Issues, Civil and Religious, in the Dutch Colony of Holland, Michigan*. In its present form, it is 1,139 pages long, without the index (which should be mammoth), introduction, and

other “preliminaries.” The expectation is that the commentary will be number eighty-six (or possibly higher should other volumes be cleared for takeoff before mine) in the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America, edited by colleague Don Bruggink; the date of publication should be 2016. JoHannah Smith has almost finished the final, final editing process.

The second major project of the preceding year has been researching and writing a paper on the controversy in the RPDC—especially its General Synod of 1855—about the application for admission into the denomination of the German Reformed Classis of North Carolina which had slaveholding members and even ministers. This paper was to be presented (much streamlined) at a conference in Albany, New York, in September, at a (historic, first-ever) joint meeting of the New Netherland Institute (NNI) and the Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies (AADAS). But this is a story for next year (D.v.). As for publications, one article (announced last year as forthcoming) has appeared under my name: “Bertholf, Guiliam,” in W. J. op ’t Hof, ed., *Encyclopedie Nadere Reformatie, Biografieën A-K*, vol. 1 (Goudriaan, the Netherlands: De Groot, 2015), 91.

I remain an active board member of the Dutch Reformed Translation Society. Private activities include visiting our family in the Netherlands, singing tenor in our church choir, and pursuing ancestors near and far, as well as trying to bring some order out of the chaos of my ancestral papers collected over the past seven decades.

A sample footnote (annotation) from my magnum opus (*Commentary*) has, appropriately enough, a little history behind it. The school committee of the Classis of Holland made its report in September 1858 about some students who had been recently dismissed from Holland Academy (classical high school); the second part of this report mentions a certain “E. Spierings.” The minutes state that “The committee is endeavoring to place *Spierings* as colporteur along the Mississippi, with the support of one or another society, to labor as such among the Roman Catholic Dutch and Germans.” I was unable to identify him earlier, but suddenly, this year, fresh information on the Internet provided me with the clue as to who he was. The following is a condensed version of my recent, revised footnote about this mysterious (and apparently conflicted, if not confused) young man.

Kennedy, *Commentary* (forthcoming)

An excerpt

“E. Spierings” was very difficult to identify, not only because he was not a Holland Academy graduate and did not become an RCA/RPDC minister (besides the fact that only the initial of his Christian name was given in the minutes) but mainly because he lived in the 1850s’ no-man’s land between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. Egbertus Spierings (1827-1868) was born into a Roman Catholic family in Uden, Noord-Brabant, near the border with Belgium; his father was a wheelwright (also sometimes described as a carpenter). In the middle of the nineteenth century, Uden and vicinity supplied many Dutch clergy, ultimately including Spierings, for the Catholic settlements in northeastern Wisconsin (e.g., La Chute and Hollandtown). Spierings became a Capuchin monk in 1845-46 (his younger brother took the same step later) and entered a monastery in Velp, Gelderland.

Around 1850 he reportedly began to have doubts about the infallibility of the Catholic Church, and by early 1853, he had somehow come to live in the Brussels home of the Rev. Henricus van Maasdijk (1807-1873), who “adopted” him into his growing family. Van Maasdijk, another Noord-Brabant native and a former priest, was the pastor (1842-73) of a Protestant church in Brussels. In a published missionary report written in May 1853, Van Maasdijk told of the effort made by Spierings’ family and friends to persuade him to return to the Catholic Church: Spierings “has withstood the most painful attack that could have been made upon his sensibilities. His father, uncle, and cousin have just visited him. They have come from Holland for the express purpose of leading him back to the Church which he has just quitted. Upon seeing him, his father threw himself upon the floor, weeping like a child, and saying in most agonizing tones: ‘Your mother is dying, and you are the cause of it all.’ Our friend remained firm and unmoved.” (Incidentally, no record of the death of Spierings’ mother

could be found in the usual sources.) After this, Spierings was sent to study for a year (1853-54) at the seminary of the Free [Presbyterian] Church of Scotland in Amsterdam. Why he did not continue his studies after July 1854, when he returned to Van Maasdijk in Brussels, is not known. The last that is heard of Spierings in that city is in a January 1855 letter of Van Maasdijk to Abraham Capadose (one of the professors at the Amsterdam seminary); Spierings is said to have been making definite progress in the faith (i.e., Reformed Protestantism) and to have been conducting “exercises” (*oefeningen*) in small groups for several months already and even recently to have preached in the Brussels congregation to the general satisfaction and edification of the people.

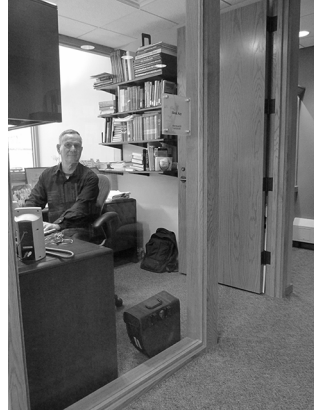
According to his monastic order’s account, Spierings immigrated to the United States in 1857. (The record of his immigration could not be found in the usual sources, but he was almost certainly the Egbert Spierings, “carpenter” [his father’s occupation], living in Uden [presumably temporarily back with his parents], who sold some timber for about 165 guilders in February 1857, perhaps to finance his impending emigration.) He served a Catholic church in Hollandtown, Wisconsin, until 1860 (this is confirmed by the 1860 federal census) and spent the last eight years of his short ministry in two successive northeastern Wisconsin Catholic congregations; nothing whatsoever is said in this source of his short “lapse” into Protestantism in the mid-1850s.

Henk Aay

This report describes my third year already at the VRI. This year's markers include: coordinating multiple research projects; helping organize the AADAS/NNI 2015 conference and field trip for September in Albany, New York; transitioning to a full-time presence at the VRI; and calling a brand new office with my name on it home! Let me start with the new office. Jack Nyenhuis managed to squeeze a very functional, well-integrated, and daylit workspace out of a small, underused corner of our research center. My office looks out both onto 10th Street and into the research center interior. I am thrilled and grateful to have it, and it increases my feeling of belonging here even more. The only challenge is keeping visitors off the Van Raalte furniture outside my door! With the completion of this office space, I have been able to work at the VRI every day. That has meant less time at Calvin, where I now spend just a couple of afternoons, often at the archives or with students who are helping me with research. The new office has helped me complete the physical and mental transition to the VRI and away from Calvin, my workplace home for thirty years.

I would describe my scholarly work this year as keeping a number of balls in the air, a condition that always has some associated risks.





The first project is a collaboration with Jan Boersema from the Institute of Environmental Sciences at Leiden University in the Netherlands, along with his wife Anthonia, on a project that examines how Dutch immigrants to the United States described, perceived, and interacted with their new natural environments. During the 2014-15 academic year, Jan and Anthonia spent four months altogether at the VRI as visiting research fellows. They also traveled to archives in Wisconsin and Iowa. Our sources for this project are immigrant letters, memoirs, and related writings. We prepared initial results for presentation at the 2015 AADAS/NNI conference in Albany and at Hope College in September 2015. Several publications are planned. Below is a distinctive quotation celebrating the civilizing mission of the immigrants. It is taken from a memoir penned by the Dutch-born, Minnesota RCA minister, Herman Borgers, prepared for the Semi-Centennial celebrations in Holland, Michigan, in August 1897.

Lucas, *Dutch Immigrant Memoirs and Related Writings*, II, 200

An excerpt

The desert blossoms like a rose, the wild grasses and heavy sod have vanished—made room for beautiful gardens and golden grain where but a few years ago the buffalo, fox, wild cat, skunk, and other animals roamed freely. The Psalm of praise: “Hoe lieflijk, hoe vol heilgenot . . .” [Ps 84:1] has supplanted the call of wild beasts. All this has been effected with Dutch arms and Dutch hearts, through the blessing of the Most High.

This collaborative work is very stimulating but did delay the completion of my manuscript: *Projecting the Netherlands: Dutch Documentary Films Shown in America*, a project I described in last year's report. The last section on films shown during the 1960s and early 1970s still needs to be written. Projected completion now is the end of 2015.

Atlas of Dutch American History and Culture is a project with a much longer lead time and one I plan to work on full time once the book on Dutch documentary films and the project with the Boersemas is completed. Because much of the content of the atlas requires a longer planning horizon for research and preparation of databases for mapping and other visuals, I have initiated a number of parallel undertakings staffed by student researchers and supervised by myself:

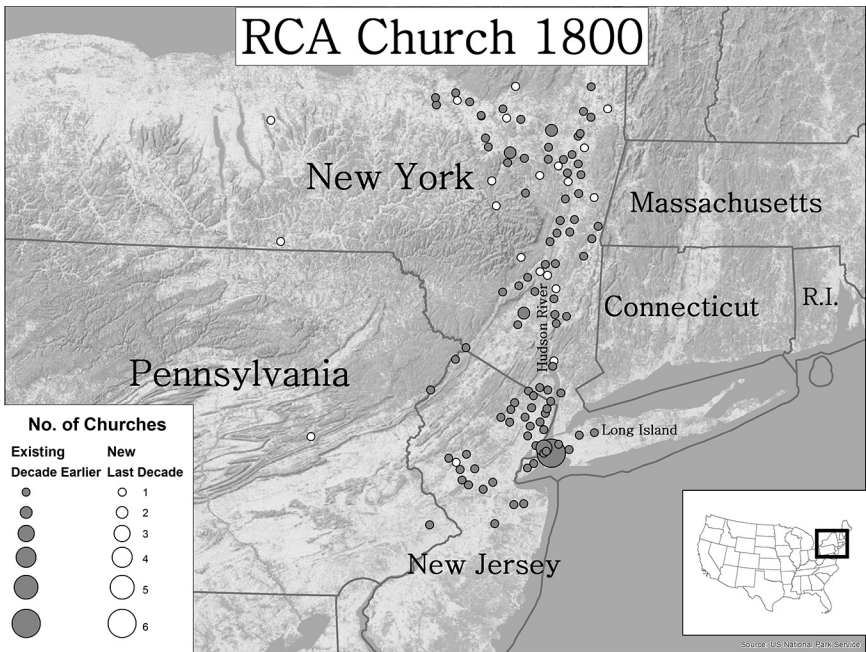
1. Dutch American nativity and ancestry data from American decennial censuses from 1790 and from 1850 to 2010. With money for student research at Calvin College, I hired Calvin College geography student Matt Raybaud, with mapping and GIS skills. He used the National Historical Geographic Information System (NHGIS) data to prepare population maps of Dutch Americans by county at national and regional scales for every census year. More detailed maps of cities by census tract/enumeration district will also be prepared.

2. Conversion of Bob Swierenga's Dutch Immigration Databases. These are databases of Dutch immigrants from US Ship Passenger Manifests, Dutch households in US censuses, and emigrants from Dutch records. With the help of the VRI, I hired computer science student Peter VandeHaar in October 2014 to decode and convert to comma-separated values files (CSVs) Swierenga's published and unpublished coded Dutch immigration databases. These were initially created on punch cards during the 1980s. Their conversion will extend their usefulness and make possible analysis with present-day software, including GIS. All these databases have now been converted and can be made available to any researcher. As part of Calvin College's 2015 student summer research program, I hired Matt Raybaud to analyze and produce maps and other visuals from these converted databases. Hundreds of digital maps and other visuals were produced. Some will be used in the atlas; others will be made accessible to the public in the future, possibly on Hope's Joint Archives website.

3. Mapping the RCA. The atlas will, of course, have a section on Dutch Americans and religion. I discovered the RCA Denominational Membership Data, 1820-2000, in the Association of Religious Data

Archives. It was compiled from RCA synodical records by professors Donald Luidens and Roger Nemeth, both of Hope College.

With VRI financial support, I was able to hire Bekah Llorens, a Hope senior and history major. She added the geographical coordinates of the place and of street address (where available) of the church and extended the database back to the beginning of the RCA (1628) and forward to the present. This expansion of the database made it possible for my Calvin 2015 summer research student to create maps showing the changing distribution of RCA churches and, with it, a measure of the changing geography of early Dutch American culture. This is important research in its own right; it also has resulted in maps and other visuals for the atlas. I presented a paper on this geographical analysis at the AADAS/NNI conference in September. Below is the map showing the distribution of the RCA in 1800, with churches existing a decade earlier and others organized in the previous decade.



4. Databases of Christian Day Schools (NUCS/CSI). The atlas will have a section on Dutch Americans and education. One important part of such a section will be the parent-run, Christian day schools begun in the late 19th century that even today are very much a Dutch American institution. With a grant from the Meijer Chair in Dutch Language

and Culture at Calvin, I hired Brianna Marshall, a Calvin student and geography major, in November 2014, to scan to editable text relevant tables of the published yearly directories of the National Union of Christian Schools (NUCS, now Christian Schools International [CSI]). This has produced databases for every decade since the 1920s. She added geographical coordinates and prepared maps that show the changing distribution of schools and their enrolment at the national, regional, and metropolitan levels. This is new research, the results of which deserve to be published; it will also provide materials for the atlas.

I need to bring each of these airborne balls to a soft landing over the next few years as independent publications and as part of the atlas.

As its incoming president, I will be responsible for leading AADAS during the next two years, including planning the 2017 conference. I will also serve as the lead editor on behalf of the VRI and AADAS for the book based on the papers delivered at the September 2015 conference. So there is much to do.

Other activities include membership on the council and consistory of Eastern Avenue CRC in Grand Rapids and the travel committee of Calvin's Academy for Lifelong Learning (CALL) that organizes educational travel opportunities at home and abroad. I am consistently thankful to God for the meaningful, enjoyable, and collegial academic work I am privileged to have the opportunity to pursue at the VRI.

Honorary Members

Hans Krabbendam



Left to right: Hans Krabbendam, John Corrigan, and Stefan Paas, speakers at the conference on American Evangelicals in Europe. Photo taken in the Abbey Herb Garden, 15 July 2015 (courtesy Hans Krabbendam)

The primary goal of the Roosevelt Study Center this year was to begin a process of developing a perspective on the twentieth century through the eyes of the Roosevelts. We identified seven themes that linked Theodore, Franklin, and Eleanor Roosevelt in their efforts to make the United States respond to a growing interdependent world, including human rights, imperialism, the environment, and international institutions. We tested our ideas in an upper-level class at the University College Roosevelt, here in Middelburg, and are now developing ideas for a book on this theme.

In addition, we continue to collect immigrant letter collections that we will deposit in Heritage Hall, Calvin College, after we digitize them. The RSC is in the process of digitizing its Dutch American collection and seeks cooperation with other institutions to create a portal.

On 13-14 July 2015, our center hosted an international workshop, “Towards a Global History of American Evangelicalism,” which prepared

a special issue for the *Journal of American Studies* on this topic. The next day, we welcomed ten American and European scholars at a conference on “Return to Sender: American Evangelical Missions in Europe, 1830-2010.” This is all part of my ongoing project to analyze the ideals and activities of American Protestants in Europe after World War II. I am creating a European network of scholars with similar interests.

Jan Peter Verhave



Just a few weeks ago, my article on Paul de Kruif and Henry L. Mencken came out in *Menckeniana* (Summer 2015, no. 210). I was invited to write an article for Shells and Pebbles, the website of Dutch science historians. Since one of its editors had written a piece on *Arrowsmith* (1925), the book of Sinclair Lewis to which De Kruif's contributions were essential, I chose the making of De Kruif's own book *Microbe Hunters* (1926) as a subject. It came in two installments, April and June 2015. A manuscript of an article on Hideyo Noguchi, was not accepted by the journal for the *History of Social Medicine*, so I have to work on it further.

The manuscript of my biography, *A Constant State of Emergency. Paul de Kruif (1890-1971) and the Health of Americans*, is in line to be edited at the VRI, and I hope that the book will be published in 2016.

The *Menckeniana* article

An excerpt

While still a bacteriologist in 1919, Paul de Kruif wrote to the journalist, critic, and editor H. L. Mencken, asking whether research and writing could be combined. De Kruif wanted to explain the rapidly expanding medical research to the public. Mencken encouraged the young Michigander, and the contact resulted in a lifelong friendly relationship. The many letters of the two were never before used in studies on Mencken.

De Kruif was fascinated by the views of his iconoclastic friend, whose criticism of American society was sharp. Mencken

wrote a laudatory review of *Microbe Hunters*, and De Kruif helped Mencken with his studies of American dialects (Yankee Dutch).

During the thirties, De Kruif exposed the appalling conditions of the life of midwestern farmers and the poor in city slums. He turned to the very left, an attitude that Mencken could not bear. There was silence between the two men for five years. When De Kruif denounced communism in the early forties, they resumed their correspondence. Jokingly, Mencken wrote: "I am delighted to hear that our Heavenly Father has rescued you from your heresies. I only hope that you and Rhea now return to the secure harbor of Dutch Calvinism." That did not happen, but the atheist Mencken did get wind of De Kruif's mingling with religion. The latter did not discuss it with his atheistic friend, but issues like the atomic bomb, of educating the poor, and of the Afro Americans (a term of Mencken) were hotly debated.

Mencken died in 1956, but before that he wrote: "Paul de Kruif was a charming fellow, and one of the best booze-companions ever heard of, but we were widely separated in space and ideas."



Arthur van Raalte family

The Van Raalte Institute hosted the Arthur van Raalte family from Ontario, Canada, for a short visit on a warm Saturday in September 2014. They were able to fulfill a life-long dream of Frans, a direct descendent of Albertus C. Van Raalte, to visit the city of Holland and Hope College and to see the Van Raalte Institute and observe first hand its work to preserve the legacy of their ancestor A. C. Van Raalte. *Left to right:* Annelies, Zsazsa, Arthur, Duco, Mathis, and Grandfather Frans van Raalte

Publications and Presentations

Publications

“Bertholf, Guiliam.” In W. J. op ’t Hof, ed., *Encyclopedie Nadere Reformatie, Biografieën A-K*, vol. 1 (Goudriaan, the Netherlands: De Groot, 2015), 91 (Earl Wm. Kennedy)

“Edward John Wolters: A Glimpse into the Life of a Young Teacher in the 1920s” (with Lloyd Wolters). *Origins* 33, no. 1 (2015): 14-24 (Swierenga)

“Opening a Market for Missions: American Evangelicals and the Re-Christianization of Europe.” *Amerikastudien* 59, no. 2 (2014): 153-75 (Krabbendam)

Swierenga, Robert P., and Jacob E. Nyenhuis, eds. *Historic Dutch Sites in the Holland/Zeeland Area: An Illustrated Guide* (Holland, MI: Van Raalte Press, 2015)

Swierenga, Robert P. *Faithful Witness: A Sesquicentennial History of Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Holland, Michigan, 1865-2015*. Historical Series in the Reformed Church in America Congregational Histories Series, no. 3 (Holland, MI: Van Raalte Press, 2015)

Swierenga, Robert P. *Park Township Centennial History, 1915-2015: “Holland’s Water Playground,” Ottawa County, Michigan* (Holland, MI: Van Raalte Press, 2015)

“The Transformers: Continuity and Change in the European Campaigns of American Evangelists Frank Buchman and Billy Graham, 1920-1960.” *Journal of Religion in Europe* 7 (2014): 223-45 (Krabbendam)

“What issues related to Freemasonry led to the CRC’s split with the RCA?” *RCA Today* (posted 23 January 2015) (Nyenhuis)

Book Reviews

Bryson, Bill. *De zomer van 1927* (Contact 2014). Published in *Reformatorsch Dagblad* (1 September 2014) (Krabbendam)

De Meer, Sjoerd en Joost Schokkenbroek eds. *Hoogtij. Maritieme identiteit in feesten, tradities en vermaak* (Zutphen/Amsterdam/Rotterdam: Walburg

Pers, 2013). Published in *Tijdschrift voor Zeegegeschiedenis* 33, no. 1 (2014): 109-11 (Krabbendam)

Hutchinson, Mark and John Wolffe. *A Short History of Global Evangelicalism* (Cambridge University Press, 2012). Published in *Church History and Religious Culture* 94, no. 1 (2014): 163-65 (Krabbendam)

Kamps, Marvin. *1834: Hendrik de Cock's Return to the True Church* (Jenison, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2014). Published in *Origins* 33, no. 1 (2015): 43-44 (Swierenga)

Schlereth, Eric R. *An Age of Infidels: The Politics of Religious Controversy in the Early United States* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). Published in *European Journal of American Studies* [online]. Reviews 2014-3, document 7; <http://ejas.revues.org/10331> (Krabbendam)

Van Mulligen, Remco. *Radicale Protestanten. Opkomst en ontwikkeling van de EO, de EH en de ChristenUnie en hun voorlopers (1945-2007)* (Buijten en Schipperheyn, 2014). Published in *Transparant* 26, no. 2 (2015): 30 (Krabbendam)

Presentations

“American Evangelicals and Religious Pluralism in Europe after World War II” (15 July 2015) (Krabbendam)

“Another Bridge too Far? American Protestants and the Spiritual Liberation of Europe, 1940-1960.” Radboud University Nijmegen (21 April 2015) (Krabbendam)

“A Transatlantic Religious Alliance? American and European Protestant Encounters, 1945-1965.” Transatlantic Studies Association Middelburg (5-7 July 2015) (Krabbendam)

“A War Against the Earth? An Examination of Theodore Roosevelt’s Militarism and Conservation.” Dickinson State University, ND (25 September 2014) (Krabbendam)

“Calvin Stories in the History of Holland, Michigan.” Calvin College CALL Program (20 October 2014) (Swierenga)

Cotaught: “Dutch Landscapes.” Off-campus, field-based course in the Netherlands for Calvin College (6-30 Jan. 2015) (Henk Aay)

“Dutch Emigration to America.” Presentation to geography students from the University of Groningen, NL, visiting Calvin College (24 April 2015) (Henk Aay)

“Dutch Propaganda Films in the United States during the 1940s.” Presentation to the Holland Area Historical Society (9 September 2014) (Henk Aay)

“Family Quarrels in the Dutch Reformed Churches.” West Valley Reformed Church, Sun City, Arizona (10 March 2015) (Swierenga)

Interview: “Celebration of Dutch American Heritage Day.” WHTC (11 November 2014) (Nyenhuis)

“Prepare for Departure.” The Effect of Evangelical Gender Relations in US Missionary Training for Europe, 1945-1980 (13 July 2015) (Krabbendam)

“Religion and Empire.” Leiden University (18 March 2015) (Krabbendam)

“The RCA & CRC: Related, Separated, Reconnecting.” 14th Street CRC Adult Education. 9 November 2014 (Part I) and 11 January 2015 (Part II) (Nyenhuis)

Tour guide: Holland Dutch Heritage tour on November 12, 2014, of the original Dutch colonies in the Holland-Zeeland area, under the auspices of the Calvin College CALL program (Swierenga)

“Turning Points in Holland History.” Century Club (2 November 2014) (Swierenga)

“Uniquely Holland.” Successful Aging, Christ Memorial Church, Holland, MI (19 February 2015) (Swierenga)

Books Published from 2007 to 2015*

Van Raalte Press

Swierenga, Robert P., Jacob E. Nyenhuis, and Nella Kennedy, eds. *Dutch-American Arts and Letters in Historical Perspective* (2008)

Nyenhuis, Jacob E., Suzanne M. Sinke, and Robert P. Swierenga, eds. *Across Borders: Dutch Migration to North America and Australia* (2010)

Van Den Broeke, Leon. "Pope of the Classis"? *The Leadership of Albertus C. Van Raalte in Dutch and American Classes* (2011)

Ester, Peter. *Faith, Family, and Fortune: Reformed Upbringing and Calvinist Values of Highly Successful Dutch American Entrepreneurs* (2012)

Kennedy, Nella, Mary Risseeuw, and Robert P. Swierenga, eds. *Diverse Destinies: Dutch Colonies in Wisconsin and the East* (2012)

Harinck, George. "We live presently under a waning moon": *Nicolaus Martin Steffens as leader of the Reformed Church in America in the West in years of transition (1878-1895)* (2013)

Swierenga, Robert P., Nella Kennedy, and Lisa Zylstra, eds. *Dutch Americans and War: United States and Abroad* (2014)

Hemenway, Stephen I. *Hope Beyond Borders: The Life and Letters of Paul Fried* (2014)

Swierenga, Robert P. *Faithful Witness: A Sesquicentennial History of Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Holland, Michigan, 1865-2015* (2015)

— and Jacob E. Nyenhuis, eds. *Historic Dutch Sites in the Holland/Zeeland Area: An Illustrated Tour Guide* (2015)

—. *Park Township Centennial History, 1915-2015* (2015)

Van Raalte Press in cooperation with Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Ester, Peter, Nella Kennedy, and Earl Wm. Kennedy. *The American Diary of Jacob Van Hinte* (2010)

Bruins, Elton J. *Envisioning Hope College: Letters Written by Albertus C. Van Raalte to Philip Phelps Jr., 1857-1875* (2011)

Nyenhuis, Jacob E. and George Harinck. *The Enduring Legacy of Albertus C. Van Raalte as Leader and Liaison* (2014)

*All publications are available for purchase at bookstore@hope.edu

Swierenga, Robert P. *Holland, Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City*, 3 vols. (2014)

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

Other projects

Nyenhuis, Jacob E, ed. *A Goodly Heritage: Essays in Honor of the Reverend Dr. Elton J. Bruins at Eighty* (Eerdmans, 2007)

Nyenhuis, Jacob E., Robert P. Swierenga, and Lauren Berka, eds. *Aunt Tena, Called to Serve: Journals and Letters of Tena A. Huizenga, Missionary Nurse to Nigeria* (Eerdmans, 2009)

Forthcoming

Aay, Henk, Dennis P. Voskuil, and Janny Venema, eds. *The Dutch in America Across the Centuries: Connections and Comparisons*. (VRP, 2016)

Aay, Henk. *Documentary Films of the Netherlands Shown in the United States, 1942-1973: Viewership, Representativeness, and Visual Rhetoric* (2016)

Kennedy, Earl Wm. *A Commentary on the Minutes of the Classis of Holland, 1848-1876. A Detailed Record of Persons and Issues, Civil and Religious, in the Dutch Colony of Holland, Michigan* (VRP/Eerdmans, 2016)

Luidens, Don. *Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Hate: A Love Story* (2016)

Nyenhuis, Jacob E., James C. Kennedy, et alii. *Keeping Hope Alive: A Sesquicentennial History of Hope College, 1866 - 2016* (VRP/Eerdmans, 2016)

Aay, Henk and Jan Boersema. "We made the Wilderness to Blossom": *Nineteenth Century Dutch Immigrants and the Natural World*. (2017)

Schaaf, Kenneth A. *In Peril on the Sea* (VRP/Eerdmans, 2016/17)

Verhave, Jan Peter. *A Constant State of Emergency: Paul De Kruif (1890-1971) and the Health of Americans* (VRP, 2016/17)

VRI Visiting Research Fellows Lecture Series

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

Hans Krabbendam, Roosevelt Study Center, the Netherlands

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

Lynn M. Japinga, Hope College

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

James A. De Jong, Calvin Theological Seminary

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

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

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

Peter Ester, Tilburg University, the Netherlands

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

Harry Boonstra, Calvin College and Seminary

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

George Harinck, VU University Amsterdam

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

David Zwart, Dordt College

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

Leon van den Broeke, VU University Amsterdam

Dutch Americans and the Rise of Heritage Studies (2010)

Michael Douma, Florida State University

Hope: The Legacy of Van Raalte (2011)

Rein Nauta, Tilburg University, the Netherlands

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

Henk Aay, Calvin College

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

Eugene Heideman, RCA staff member, retired

Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Hate: A Love Story (Begins) (publication forthcoming)

Don Luidens, Hope College

"We made the wilderness to blossom": Nineteenth Century Dutch Immigrants and the Natural World (publication forthcoming)

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

Applications Invited Visiting Research Fellows Programs for Academic Year 2016-17

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

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

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

Application Process and Deadline: The candidate is to submit a written application no later than 29 January 2016. Further information about expectations, arrangements, and the application process may be obtained from our website at www.hope.edu/vri.

Van Raalte Institute Staff (2015-16)

- Henk Aay *Senior Research Fellow* (2013)
BA (Hons.) Wilfrid Laurier University
MA Clark University
PhD Clark University
- Donald J. Bruggink *Senior Research Fellow* (2003)
BA Central College
BD Western Theological Seminary
PhD University of Edinburgh
DD (honorary) Central College
- Elton J. Bruins *Philip Phelps Jr. Research Professor* (2002-9), *Emeritus*
(2009); *Founding Director, VRI* (1994-2002);
Blekkink Professor of Religion, Emeritus (1980-92);
Professor of Religion (1966-80); *Dean for Arts and*
Humanities (1984-89)
AB Hope College
BD Western Theological Seminary
STM Union Theological Seminary, New York
PhD New York University
- George Harinck *Honorary Research Fellow* (2009)
BA Leiden University
MA Leiden University
PhD VU University Amsterdam
- Earl Wm. Kennedy *Senior Research Fellow* (2003)
AB Occidental College
BD Fuller Theological Seminary
ThM Princeton Theological Seminary
ThD Princeton Theological Seminary
- James C. Kennedy *Research Fellow* (1997-2005); *Honorary Research*
Fellow (2010)
BSFS Georgetown University
MACS Calvin College
PhD University of Iowa

- Nella Kennedy *Senior Research Fellow, Official Translator, VRI (2010)*
AB Northwestern College
MA University of Iowa
- Hans Krabbendam *Honorary Research Fellow (2009)*
MA Leiden University
MA Kent State University
PhD Leiden University
- Jacob E. Nyenhuis *Editor-in-Chief, Van Raalte Press (2007); Director, VRI (2002-15); Emeritus (2015); Senior Research Fellow (2001-2); Provost Emeritus and Professor Emeritus of Classics (1975-2001)*
AB Calvin College
AM Stanford University
PhD Stanford University
LittD (honorary) Hope College
- Mackenzie Schumborg *Student Research Assistant/Intern (2014)*
- JoHannah Smith *Editorial Associate (2010)*
AB Hope College
- Robert P. Swierenga *A. C. Van Raalte Research Professor and Adjunct Professor of History (1996)*
BA Calvin College
MA University of Iowa
PhD University of Iowa
- J. P. Verhave *Honorary Research Fellow (2009)*
BS VU University Amsterdam
MA VU University Amsterdam
PhD University of Nijmegen
- Dennis N. Voskuil *Director, VRI (2015); Senior Research Fellow (2014)*
BS (with honors) University of Wisconsin
BD Western Theological Seminary
PhD Harvard University

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

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

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

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

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