

# **A. C. Van Raalte Institute**

**Annual Report 2004-2005**



**Hope College  
Holland, Michigan  
2005**

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A. C. Van Raalte Institute  
Hope College

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Annual Report 2004-2005

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## A Message from the Director

The past year has been a very rich and full year for the Van Raalte Institute, but it was also a year marked by sadness and grief. On February 8, our tenth president, Dr. John Jacobson, died in Sarasota, Florida, from complications following a severe stroke. He and I had worked very closely together throughout his twelve-year tenure as president (1987-1999) and he had become a close friend. We also worked together with Peter Huizenga and Elton Bruins on the founding of the Van Raalte Institute; the Institute always enjoyed his full support.

Dr. Jacobson is survived by Dr. Jeanne M. Jacobson, Senior Research Fellow Emerita of the Van Raalte Institute and Adjunct Professor Emerita of Education at Hope College, and their children and grandchildren. More information about the late Dr. Jacobson is found elsewhere in this report.

We were also saddened to receive the news that one of our Visiting Research Fellows, Drs. Hans Niemantsverdriet of Amsterdam, also suffered a severe stroke, shortly after he concluded his ten-week fellowship with us in mid-November. He suffered the stroke in Washington state, where he had gone to work with a colleague on editing his interviews in preparation for airing them on the radio in the Netherlands. During his research fellowship at the Institute, Hans worked on two projects: an academic research project on the history of Dutch entrepreneurship in Western Michigan and the Chicago area; and a smaller, more journalistic project about the history of political preferences of the Dutch in the U.S. After hospitalization in Washington, he was flown home to Amsterdam, where he has undergone extensive rehabilitation. At this writing, we understand that he has made considerable progress, but he is still far from full recovery.

I also note with sadness the passing of another person with a connection to the Van Raalte Institute, Dr. Walter Lagerwey, Professor Emeritus of Dutch Language and Literature at Calvin College, who served as the translator of *Iowa Letters* (see below). Dr. Lagerwey was my teacher for three years of Dutch language and literature in the 1950s, when he first joined the faculty of Calvin.

## Major Developments

I now turn to a description of major developments at the Institute over the past year. Most of our staff members have their own reports elsewhere in this Annual Report, so there is no need to repeat what they have written. I wish, however, to acknowledge the publication of several important books by Dr. Robert P. Swierenga, the Albertus C. Van Raalte Research Professor. He was the editor of both Johan Stellingwerff's *Iowa Letters: Dutch Immigrants on the American Frontier* and *The Dutch in Urban America*, and author of *Elim: A Chicago Christian School and Life Learning Center for the Disabled*. Bob has been extraordinarily productive throughout his career and is a model for other scholars to emulate. We consider ourselves fortunate to have him as a colleague and friend.

Our colleague Dr. Donald J. Bruggink continues to shepherd new books into print in his role as founding General Editor of the Reformed Church in America Historical Series, which now has published fifty books, including four in the past year alone. He also is the co-author of *By Grace Alone, Stories of the Reformed Church in America*, which was published in 2004.

With regret, we bade farewell to a colleague, Dr. James C. Kennedy, who served from August 1997 to June 2005 as a Research Fellow of the Institute and as Assistant Professor and, later, Associate Professor of History (on leave 2003-2005). Dr. Kennedy now is Professor of Contemporary History at the Free University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. I commend our former colleague for his co-authorship (with Caroline J. Simon) of *Can Hope Endure?: A Historical Case Study in Christian Higher Education*, which was published earlier this year. He returned to campus at the end of September to participate in a public discussion of their book.

## Visiting Research Fellows Program

In 2003 we launched this program as a new initiative; it has proven beneficial to scholars from outside the Institute, but it has also benefited us here at the Institute. Having scholars from overseas or even from within the U.S.—including colleagues from just across campus—brings new ideas and new perspectives to our informal colloquies. Dean L. Overman (Hope '65), now a retired partner in the law firm of Winston & Strawn and a former professor at the University of Virginia Law School, joined us in early August 2004 as a non-stipendiary Visiting Senior Research Fellow. Dean has also been a Templeton Scholar at Oxford University and a Visiting Scholar at Harvard University. His appointment continues while he works on a book on Christian ethics.

At the end of August, we welcomed Drs. Hans Niemantsverdriet as the first of two new Visiting Research Fellows selected for the 2004-2005 academic year. As noted earlier, he concluded his residency in November. We had expected Dr. Frederick Hale, currently at Wolfson College, University of Cambridge, UK, to join us in May, but his visit was postponed. By the time that we learned this news, we had already selected both fellows for the coming academic year. We now hope to have him with us in 2006-2007.

For the academic year 2005-2006, we will host two new Visiting Research Fellows. Dr. James A. De Jong, President and Professor of Historical Theology, Emeritus, Calvin Theological Seminary, will be with us as a commuting scholar from late August to mid-December 2005. He will be researching the history of relations between the Reformed Church in America and the Christian Reformed Church from 1857 (the date of the founding of the CRC) to the present. Dr. Jan Peter Verhave, a biomedical researcher from Radboud University Medical Center, Nijmegen, the Netherlands, will be in residence from March to June 2006. His research project is entitled "Health and Disease among Dutch Immigrants in the 19th Century." He is an authority on the history of malaria and tropical diseases, with many publications on the topic, but he has also published a book and significant articles on church history and, with his wife, Joke Verhave-van Duijn, on folk art.



## **Theil Research Center**

Our move into the Henri and Eleonore Theil Research Center took place in September. This new research facility houses both the Institute and the Joint Archives of Holland, providing a superb reading room for the Archives, a beautiful library/conference room for the Van Raalte Institute, and well-appointed offices for all of us. Being located under one roof with the Joint Archives has proven to be wonderfully synergistic, as expected, and the facility itself provides a very appealing place for research and writing. The description of the dedication of the Theil Research Center is given in a separate entry.

All of us at the Van Raalte Institute and the Joint Archives of Holland are deeply grateful to Mrs. Theil and the late Dr. Theil for their generous gift to Hope College to establish the new Theil Research Center. Every day that we enter our building, we are reminded of their wonderful generosity. Dr. Theil passed away five years ago after suffering two massive strokes, but his memory lives on through his publications, his students, and this research center.

## **Long-Range Planning Retreat**

In March, Trustee Peter H. Huizenga, who with his family donated the endowment for the Van Raalte Institute, met with several members of the college administration and several of us from the Institute. He engaged us in a stimulating conversation and challenged us with a number of significant questions about the future direction of the Institute. Those questions provided the starting point for a staff retreat in May, at which we developed our vision for the Institute over the next five years.

We are deeply indebted to Peter Huizenga for his initial vision for the Institute and the funding to create and sustain it, and also for his ongoing interest in our work. It would be hard to find another donor who takes such interest and pride in a program that resulted from the donor's generosity. All of us at the Institute appreciate the tremendous support that he continues to provide all of us.

*Jacob E. Nyenbuis*  
Director  
A. C. Van Raalte Institute

## Dedication

The passing of Dr. John H. Jacobson was a great loss not only to his wife and family, but also to many others, including those of us at Hope College who worked closely with him and enjoyed his friendship. Because of his significant role in the establishment of the Van Raalte Institute and his enduring support for our work, we dedicate this Annual Report to his memory.

JOHN HOWARD JACOBSON  
November 6, 1933 –  
February 8, 2005

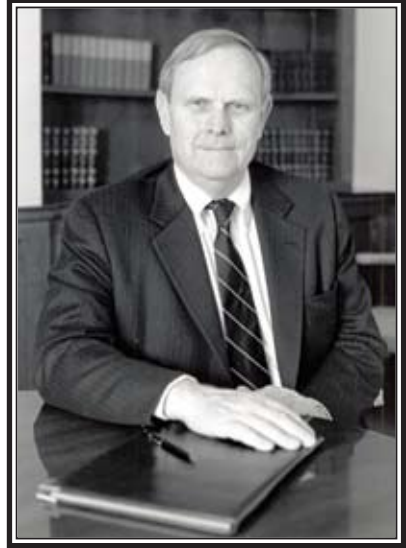
PRESIDENT OF HOPE COLLEGE  
July 1, 1987 – June 30, 1999

### DEGREES

Ph.D., Yale University, 1957  
M.A., Yale University, 1956  
B.A., Swarthmore College, 1954

### HONORARY DEGREES

L.H.D., State University  
of New York, 1996  
Litt.D., Hope College, 1987



*Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord*

John H. Jacobson became the tenth president of Hope College on July 1, 1987, bringing a strong academic background to the position. After graduating with high honors from Swarthmore College, he married Jeanne McKee, also a Swarthmore graduate, in 1954. Their children are John Edward Jacobson, Jean Katharine Pokrzywka, Dr. Jennie Grace Jacobson, and James George Jacobson, Hope College '95, who preceded his father in death. Their eight grandchildren were all born during his Hope presidency.

After he completed his doctoral program at Yale, at age 23, Dr. Jacobson taught philosophy at Hamilton College, in Clinton, New York, and Florida Presbyterian College (now Eckerd College), in St. Petersburg, Florida. He began his

career in academic administration in 1968 at Florida Presbyterian College, where he served as Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty. In 1972 he and his family moved to New York, where he served for two years as Dean of the Rochester Center of Empire State College, State University of New York, and then was appointed Vice President for Academic Affairs and later Provost, serving twice as Acting President. Thus, when he became President of Hope College, at age 53, he had a background of twenty years in academic administration.

When he came to Hope, the college's endowment was 20 million dollars; a major fund drive during the presidency of Dr. Gordon Van Wylen had just been successfully completed. After a strategic planning effort, Dr. Jacobson initiated another major fund drive, which raised 57 million dollars, surpassing its goal. Before retiring, he initiated a second major fund drive, *Legacies: A Vision of Hope*. A major purpose of the campaign was funding the construction of a new science center; 23 million dollars was raised in the drive's first phase. At the end of his final year at Hope, the college endowment stood at 105 million dollars. He worked closely with the Vice President for Advancement to achieve an annual gift goal that came to exceed 12 million dollars a year.

Throughout his twelve-year presidency, he and his wife were actively involved in fundraising for the college, meeting with alumni at gatherings around the country, and entertaining friends of the college in the President's Home. During each summer they entertained large groups of friends of the college at dinner followed by a play at Hope's repertory theater. The annual Musical Showcase in Grand Rapids, displaying the musical talents of Hope students, was originated during his presidency. The Jacobsons enjoyed entertaining faculty groups for dinner and conversation, and held receptions for students, alumni, families of minority students, and visiting speakers. They originated a series of brunches to which every person working for the college was invited with their families.

While at Hope, Dr. Jacobson served as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Michigan, of the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association, and the Great Lakes Colleges Association. He served frequently as a consultant and evaluator with regional accrediting associations, and continued to do so after retirement.

John Jacobson left an enduring legacy at Hope, through his strong commitment to maintaining the college's Christian character. He helped to craft the campus ministries program, which remains a vibrant ministry to the Hope and Holland communities. His commitment to the multicultural dimension of the college and to egalitarianism in hiring and promotion enriched the college's diversity. His tenure was marked by growth of the college itself and significant recognition for Hope and members of the college community. During his presidency, enrollment grew to over 2,900. Additions to the campus during that time included the Knickerbocker Theatre, Lugers Fieldhouse, DeWitt Tennis Center, Haworth Inn and Conference Center, and Cook Residence Hall. Hope became the only private, four-year, liberal arts college in the country to have national accreditation in art, dance, music, and theater. One Hope faculty member was named national Professor of the Year, and two others were recognized as state Professors of the Year. Three students were awarded prestigious British Marshall Scholarships.

John Jacobson used his brilliant mind and deep faith in God in dedicated service to Hope College for twelve years. His gentle spirit and his wisdom will live on in all who knew, respected, and loved him.



**Display area in the Theil Research Center**

**Left: Dr. Theil's bookcase with his 17 published books; left center: painting of Van Raalte sculpture in Centennial Park by Daniel Berhanemeskel; far center: maquette for the Van Raalte sculpture; far right: portrait of Van Raalte by Joseph Warner (1896); near right: display case with memorabilia of Dr. and Mrs. Theil**

## Henri and Eleonore Theil: A Brief Biography

Dr. Theil was an eminent economist who specialized in the new field of econometrics. His international reputation was gained through the publication of 17 books and about 250 articles in professional journals. His works have been translated into and published in more than ten different languages. His publications began just before he received his Ph.D. from the University of Amsterdam in 1951 and the last one was published in 2000, the year of his death at age 75.

Dr. Theil began his career as a member of the Central Planning Bureau in the Hague in 1952, taught econometrics at the Netherlands School of Economics in Rotterdam (later renamed Erasmus University), was the founding director of the Econometric Institute in Rotterdam, then accepted appointment as one of ten University Professors at the University of Chicago, where he directed the Center for Mathematical Studies in Business and Economics until 1981, when he accepted appointment as the first Eminent Scholar and the McKethan-Matherly Professor of Econometrics and Decision Sciences at the University of Florida at Gainesville, where he remained until his retirement in 1994. During his illustrious career, he received many honors.



Henri Theil and Eleonore A. I. Goldschmidt were married on 15 June 1951. A native of Germany, Eleonore Goldschmidt moved with her parents to the Netherlands in 1938. Her parents returned to Germany in 1947, and her father taught at the University of Munich. Eleonore met Henri in 1946 through mutual friends. She was trained in the law and practiced law in the Netherlands for about a decade, but she gave up her career to enable her husband to pursue his international career to its fullest degree.

# Dedication of the Henri and Eleonore Theil Research Center

On 25 October 2004 we dedicated the new Henri and Eleonore Theil Research Center at 9 East Tenth Street. We were honored to have Mrs. Theil present for the dedication and related activities. She was joined by old and new friends, including one of Dr. Theil's former research assistants, Professor Jesse I. Vorst, Professor of Econometrics and Labour and Workplace Studies, University College, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.



**Unveiling the Plaque: Gretchen Schmidt, Mrs. Theil, John Norden**

Participants in the dedication ceremony were President James E. Bultman; Associate Provost Alfredo M. Gonzales; Provost Emeritus Jacob E. Nyenhuis, Director of the Van Raalte Institute; Professor Geoffrey D. Reynolds, Director of the Joint Archives of Holland; student Erica Heeg, '05, who served as a research assistant at the Van Raalte Institute throughout her undergraduate career; and Professor J. I. Vorst. Mrs. Theil unveiled the plaque honoring her and Dr. Theil, with assistance from Gretchen K. Schmidt, '05, student designer of the signage for the building, and John M. Norden, '71, Regional Advancement Director. After the unveiling, Karen G. Schakel, Editorial Assistant and Office Manager at the Van Raalte Institute, led a Litany of Dedication, and the Reverend Paul H. Boersma, Leonard and Marjorie Maas Senior Chaplain, concluded the ceremony with a Prayer of Dedication.



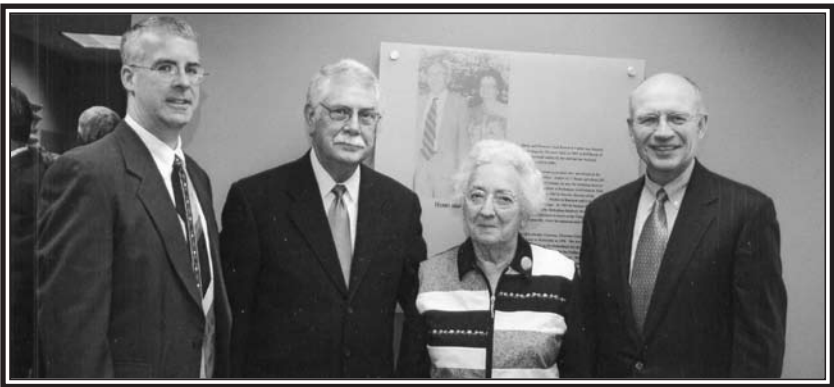
**Karen Schakel**

In the afternoon, Professor Vorst delivered a public lecture in honor of Dr. Theil, “Dr. Henri Theil: The Rotterdam Years.” His lecture has been prepared for publication in a professional journal in Canada. Information on its publication will appear in a future Annual Report.

A sixteen-page booklet was printed for the occasion. Included were not only the program for the dedication, but also biographies of Dr. and Mrs. Theil, a history of the building, a listing of the sub-contractors for the renovation of the building, and mission statements and a list of staff for both the Institute and Archives. Copies of the booklet are available upon request.



**Prof. Vorst / Mrs. Cohen, Jack Nyenhuis, Mrs. Theil at lunch**



**Geoffrey Reynolds, Jack Nyenhuis, Mrs. Theil, President Bultman after the dedication ceremony**

## Remarks on the Occasion of the Dedication *Jacob E. Nyenbuis*

A little over two weeks ago, at the dedication of the new Science Center, Dr. Judith Ramaley of the National Science Foundation declared: “Opening a new building is a manifestation of confidence in learning.” Opening the Theil Research Center is indeed such a manifestation, for the mission statements of the Van Raalte Institute and the Joint Archives of Holland confidently assert our dedication to learning.

The Theil Research Center is very significant to the Van Raalte Institute for several reasons. First, it allows us to consolidate our files and books. Files were spread throughout the offices, but now we are able to have them all lined up in the corridor across from our offices, available to all members of the Institute. Books likewise were located in several offices and the conference area, but the expanded library in the Theil Research Center enables us to consolidate our collection all in one place, again making them more readily accessible and easy to use. Second, the Theil Research Center also provides more office space for our expanded staff and program. The new office and library arrangement nurtures interaction among us as we talk about our scholarly research and writing.

Equally or even more important is the fact that we are joined in this wonderful new facility by the Joint Archives of Holland. The Joint Archives is the repository of many of the documents that we need for our research, whether we are working in local history, church history, or immigration history. Now we have immediate access to the Joint Archives’s substantial records. There is one other aspect to the significance of the Theil Research Center for the Van Raalte Institute—visibility. By having our own building dedicated entirely to research, the significant role of preserving and interpreting records from the past is greatly enhanced.

In 1981-82, the late Willard C. Wichers and I were serving together on both the West Michigan and the Mayor’s Netherlands-American Bicentennial Commission, in preparation for the celebration of the Bicentennial of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the U.S. and the Netherlands. After one of our meetings at City Hall, we were walking together across Centennial Park.



Our conversation returned to our shared vision for joining all the local archives into a single entity. Six years later, in 1988, the Joint Archives of Holland was established to house the records of Hope College, Western Theological Seminary, and the City of Holland.

The dream was larger than just bringing our collections together, although that was a noble vision that served us well for fifteen years. I turned to Bill and said, “Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we could have a facility not only for the joint archives of our community, where scholars could come to do research on the Dutch in America and especially in Western Michigan, but also an attractive place where the general public could come to learn more about our community’s history?” I pointed to the Ottawa Savings and Loan building on the corner of 10th and Central and said, “Now that would be an ideal spot for our research and information center, wouldn’t it?” We agreed that it would, because it was close to the college, the seminary, City Hall, Herrick Library, and the Netherlands Museum.

Well, we’re not right at the corner of 10th and Central, but we’re awfully close! We’re in a former bank building and we’re just off Centennial Park, very close to all our constituents and local institutions.

Seven years ago, Jeanne Jacobson and I wrote a book entitled *A Dream Fulfilled: The Van Raalte Statue in Centennial Park*. Today we are writing a new chapter: “A Dream Fulfilled: The Van Raalte Institute and the Joint Archives Together in the Theil Research Center.” This new chapter might never have been written, if Dr. Henri Theil had not read a statement by Elton Bruins quoted in the *News from Hope College* in December 1998. Elton asserted that it would be ideal to be able to combine the Joint Archives and the Van Raalte Institute in a single facility. Dr. Theil telephoned him immediately to endorse the idea, Elton told me and President Jacobson, and the rest is history.



## A Noteworthy Year for Publications - A Noteworthy Translation *Dr. Bruggink reports*

The year has been rich in publishing product, with four volumes added to the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America. *Iowa Letters: Dutch Immigrants on the American Frontier* by Johan Stellingwerff, edited by Robert P. Swierenga and translated by Walter P. Lagerwey, contains a rich trove of correspondence between the Netherlands and Iowa (Eerdmans, hardcover, 733 pages, \$49.00). The amazing aspect of this collection is that it consists of both sides of this extensive correspondence between the Buddes and Wormsers (briefly) in Iowa and the Wormsers in Amsterdam. Similarly, we have both the letters of Hendrik Hospers from Pella to his father Jan in Amsterdam, and the letters of Jan Hospers to his son, who became a leading Pella businessman, and the founder of Hospers, Iowa. Originally published in the Netherlands as *Amsterdamse Emigranten*, this American edition has been greatly enriched by the discovery of an additional cache of Wormser letters, as well as additional letters of Jan and Hendrik Hospers. This enrichment of Iowa Letters must be credited to our indefatigable A. C. Van Raalte Research Professor Robert P. Swierenga.

The massive translation project, under the capable hand of the now late Dr. Walter P. Lagerwey, was made possible by a large matching grant from the Peter H. and E. Lucille Gaass Kuyper Foundation of Pella, a generous gift from Elaine and Ralph Jaarsma, and contributions from the Dutch American Historical Society, the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America, and the Van Raalte Institute. While the Dutch in Iowa have enjoyed scant attention in earlier publications of Dutch letters, this handsomely bound tome gives an intimate insight into both optimistic and pessimistic lives on the Iowa frontier as they interface with friends and relatives in the Netherlands.

Robert P. Swierenga, A. C. Van Raalte Research Professor at the Van Raalte Institute, has authored yet another book in the Historical Series: *Elim: A Chicago Christian School and Life Training Center for the Disabled* (Eerdmans, hardcover, 374 pages, \$31.00). Elim pioneered in education for the mentally and physically impaired, and did so out of the conviction that the disadvantaged

deserved the best Christian education that could be provided. While the inspiration and drive for Elim came from the Christian Reformed Church, Elim from the beginning welcomed all of Reformed commitment. It is only fitting that the favor now be returned by publishing the account of Elim's accomplishment. Swierenga's *Elim* is fascinating reading because it is the tale of the many persons in many capacities who made Elim possible. The driving force and benefactors behind the telling of this tale of Christian commitment on behalf of the disabled were Peter and Heidi Huizenga.

Also published was LeRoy Koopman's *Taking the Jesus Road: The Ministry of the Reformed Church in America Among Native Americans* (Eerdmans, hardcover, 490 pages, \$49.00). In a very honest telling of the tale, Koopman has not avoided the truth of how shifting governmental policies were sometimes reflected in those of the church. However, it is also a story of commitment on the part of those who ministered, often under difficult and disheartening conditions. Providing both a broad overview as well as detailed accounts of ministry, it chronicles the development of native leadership, appreciation for the love of those who ministered, and the continuance of native congregations. Another publication was *Can Hope Endure?: A Historical Case Study in Christian Higher Education* by James C. Kennedy and Caroline J. Simon (Eerdmans, 265 pages, \$28.00). Kennedy, formerly associate professor of history at Hope and research fellow of the Van Raalte Institute, is now professor of contemporary history at the Free University of Amsterdam, and Simon is a professor of philosophy at Hope. The book charts the history of Hope's effort to find a faithfully Christian middle way between secularization and a fundamentalist withdrawal from mainstream academic and American culture. A useful appendix of biographical sketches of major figures has been provided by Dr. Elton J. Bruins, Philip J. Phelps Jr. Research Professor at the Van Raalte Institute.

The Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America has also found that its 2003 publication, *Doctors for the Kingdom* by Paul L. Armerding, has been translated into Arabic and published by the King Abdulaziz Foundation in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

# Oasis of Goodness: The History of Elim

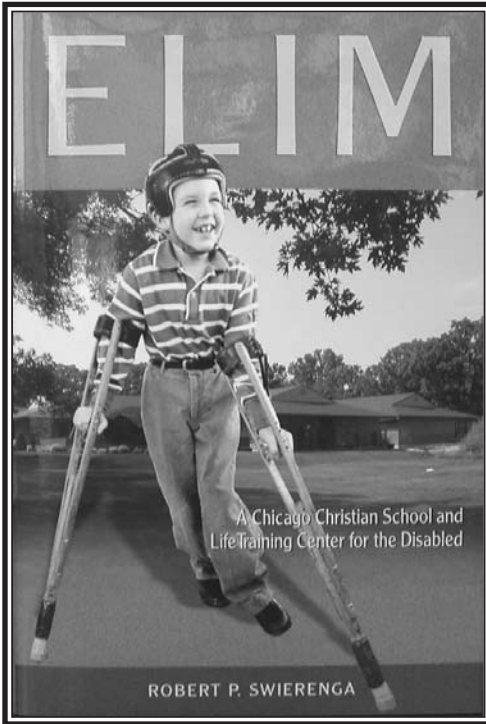
## *Dr. Swierenga reports*

After two years of research and writing, *Elim: Chicago's Christian School and Life Training Center for the Disabled* was released by the Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company in March 2005. The book tells of the astounding rise of the school from seven students in a church basement to the hundreds currently served on a thirty-four-acre campus in Palos Heights, Illinois. While the official records provide the view “from the top,” the book keeps a focus on the students and their achievements, which, after all, is the real story. The nearly two hundred photographs and illustrations of students and staff bring the story to life. The vital fundraising role and encouragement of the “women’s army”—the Women’s Service League and Mothers’ Clubs—is also told in detail.

Founded in 1948 by the Dutch Reformed community of Chicago, Elim Christian School (now Elim Christian Services) was the first within the vaunted Christian Reformed educational system nationwide to provide educational services to those with developmental and physical limitations. It remains the only Reformed residential school in North America for special needs children, and its workshop, Oasis Enterprises, provides occupational training and meaningful employment for nearly two hundred adults after they “aged out” of school. In the past fifty-seven years, this unique institution has been an “oasis in the desert of disability” for more than five thousand persons ages three to sixty-five.

Elim’s beginning as the Chicago Christian School for Handicapped Children and its rise to national prominence is, in microcosm, the history of special education and public policy in America in the past half-century. Intertwined with the story of the school was the emergence of specialized training for teachers at the nation’s colleges and universities, and the development of new techniques and computer-aided technologies to educate the blind, deaf, maimed, and developmentally disabled. But no change was more profound for private schools like Elim than the income shift in the 1970s from church contributions and individual gifts to government funding. Along with public dollars came ever-increasing government regulations and the risk that faith-based institutions like Elim could not maintain their Christian integrity in the classroom, dormitory, and workshop.

Elim surmounted these challenges, thanks to the determination of its board and directors and the commitment of its constituents, and has thus far remained true to its Reformed heritage.



Elim Christian Services is tied to Hope College and the Van Raalte Institute in a unique way through the Huizenga family. Peter Huizenga, a Hope board member and benefactor of the Van Raalte Institute, serves as president of the Elim Foundation, and his wife Heidi is a past Elim board member and president. It was at her suggestion that I undertook to write this book. Peter graciously underwrote the publication in a most remarkable way. When Eerdmans released the book, he arranged to purchase the entire print run of two thousand

copies and donated them to Elim for free distribution to supporters, friends, and staff. This generous gesture ensured that the book went “out of print” almost as soon as it was published, which is certainly a first in my writing experience.

Peter Huizenga also played a crucial role in the design of the dust jacket, which features a student on campus walking on crutches. Graphics designer Tim Ellens had created half a dozen exemplars, but none quite suited the purpose until Peter suggested a 1962 photo of young Mark Witteveen. The original placed Mark indoors but Ellens deftly superimposed him over the campus. The cover story doesn't end here. After publication, I learned that Mark Witteveen, now nearing fifty years of age, was living in Wyoming, Michigan, in a group home

for men. I arranged to visit him and had the pleasure of presenting him with a copy of the book. He beamed at the image from his youth, and readily recalled his years as an Elim student and relished seeing pictures of his teachers and classmates. This presentation was a fitting finish to the project. On a personal note, the book holds a special place in my heart, because both of my sons live with mental disabilities.

Two books for which I served as editor also came off the press this past academic year. *The Dutch in Urban America* (Holland, Michigan: Joint Archives of Holland) was released in December 2004, and Johan Stellingwerff's *Iowa Letters: Dutch Immigrants on the American Frontier* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans) appeared in January 2005. The first, co-edited with Donald Sinnema and Hans Krabbendam, is a collection of papers presented at the fourteenth biennial meeting of the Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies (AADAS) at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois.

*Iowa Letters* is a collection of two hundred fifteen letters between settlers of the Dutch colony of Pella (founded in 1847) and their family and friends in the Netherlands. About half the letters were originally published in the Netherlands in 1976. Retired professor Walter Lagerwey of Calvin College carefully translated the letters. It was his last scholarly effort: he died in June 2005. The book was a project of the Dutch American Historical Commission and was featured at the fifteenth biennial conference of AADAS at Dordt College in June 2005.

At present I am well along on my next writing project, a comprehensive history of Holland, Michigan, thanks to the able help of research assistant Michael Douma. He began graduate study in September 2005, so I am now "flying solo." On another happy note, my very successful book, *Dutch Chicago: A History of the Hollanders in the Windy City* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2002), has been released in a revised edition.

## Engrossing Annotations

### *Dr. Kennedy reports*

As reported last year, I finished my initial assignment at the Van Raalte Institute, which was the preparation for publication of annotations of the Classis of Holland minutes 1858-1876, translated from the Dutch by William and Althea Buursma. I have now begun annotating the



**Bill and Nella Kennedy**

minutes of the classis's first decade, 1848-1858, which had already been published in English a half century ago but with very few notes. Thus far the years 1848-1850 have been completed, that is, the period until the classis affiliated with the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church (now the Reformed Church in America). I hope to be able to finish this work toward the end of 2006, so that all the minutes 1848-1876 (the Van Raalte years), with annotations, can be published to coincide with the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary (2007) of the separation of the (future) Christian Reformed Church from the (future) RCA.

Because of extended absences in the Netherlands (for family reasons), I expect to be engaged on this project virtually full-time during the next year on this project, when I am in town. Although these earliest minutes are relatively brief (but slowly growing more detailed), they deserve very careful explanation, since the setting up of the classis, the 1850 merger with the RPDC (RCA), and the secession of 1857 have all been the subject of controversy over the years, with relatively little dispassionate analysis.

The annotations feature short sketches of every person (pastor, elder, deacon, member, et al.) mentioned in the minutes, generally with their dates and places of birth and death, as well as their relationship to the church in the Netherlands and Michigan; my experience in Dutch and American genealogy has helped in this matter. The notes also comment on the decisions, ideas, and events appearing in the minutes, in the context of the larger church and "secular" worlds.

My scholarship has been much facilitated by Elton Bruins (and his extensive nineteenth century files), Bob Swierenga (and his published volumes on the Dutch emigrants/immigrants), and my wife, Nella, as well as the Van Raalte Institute staff and library, not to mention the newly-achieved proximity of materials from the Joint Archives of Holland, our neighbor in the Theil Research Center. Our new quarters in that building provide a fine stimulus for the work.

Outside the Institute, I continue to do an occasional book review for the *Reformed Review*, write abstracts of articles in the *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* for publication in *Religious and Theological Abstracts*, serve on the Board of Directors of the Dutch Reformed Translation Society and on the Origins Book Series Editorial Board, attend conferences (e.g., the Conference on Faith and History at Hope College and the Calvin Studies Society at Calvin College), participate in the CRC-RCA Action Committee of the local classes, and do private genealogical research.

### A Note on Footnotes

#### An example of Dr. Kennedy's annotations

<sup>127</sup> *The concern for education and schools is a constant refrain in the business of classis. Van Raalte's passion for a literate upcoming generation was especially focused on an educated ministry for service at home and abroad. Here, as in regard to literature and itinerants, the western need is for eastern money, but also for English-speaking teachers, whom the RPDC is capable of supplying from its own ranks. Van Raalte expected the children of the colony to be instructed in the language of the land; the first teachers in Holland were Americans, Ira Hoyt from 1847 to 1849, who was succeeded by Elvira Langdon from 1849 to 1850 (neither of these was sent by the RPDC); but there were also instructors who taught in Dutch in some of the other settlements. The early records of the Holland school district as well as Van Raalte's own testimony plainly show that he had a very hard time inspiring his people to support even elementary education financially, not only because of their relative poverty as pioneers but also because of their limited intellectual aspirations for their children.*

*Hyma, Van Raalte, 155-159; Van Koevering, Legends of the Dutch, 401-404; Dosker, Van Raalte, 180-183; Van Hinte, Netherlanders in America, 255-257; Lucas, Dutch Immigrants Memoirs, 1:395-397, 454; Lucas, Netherlanders in America, 97...*



## Devotion to History

### *Dr. Bruins reports*

After many years of effort (and many interruptions), I have completed my annotations of the ninety-five letters written by Albertus C. Van Raalte from 1857 to 1875 to Philip Phelps Jr. During the six years I have been working on the project, I first researched the two hundred seven people Van Raalte named in his letters to Phelps. After that was done, I did the actual work of annotating, making use of the information I had gathered on these people and on the history of the Holland Academy and Hope College during the eighteen years the correspondence was written.



**Elton Bruins in his new office**

Although the letters of Philip Phelps Jr. to Van Raalte were not preserved, fortunately Phelps and his family carefully preserved Van Raalte's letters to him. The letters reveal much about the early years of Hope College and these two men who were most intimately involved in its formation. Van Raalte and Phelps had a close relationship. Van Raalte got along with Phelps very well—something that cannot be said very often about Van Raalte. Reflected in these letters are Phelps's untiring efforts to build the academy. College classes were begun in 1862, leading to the incorporation of the college in 1866 when the first class of eight men graduated. The letters reveal Van Raalte's great interest in Phelps's work and tell about Van Raalte's efforts to raise money for the establishment of the college. The letters make it clear that without Phelps to transform a vision into reality Hope College would not have been founded. Karen Schakel is now editing the manuscript.

Under my direction William and Althea Buursma serve the Van Raalte Institute as translators. They continue to translate many articles that appeared in *De Grondwet* (a Dutch language newspaper published in Holland, Michigan) in the 1880s when the community and the Reformed Church in America were embroiled in the Masonic controversy. These translated articles will serve Dr. Robert Swierenga well as he writes his planned history of the community of Holland, Michigan.

I have processed and given the Bruins family papers to the Joint Archives of Holland. The Bruins family arrived in America in 1847 when Hendrik and Hendrika Van Wechel Bruins decided to leave their home and farm in Twello, Gelderland, and emigrated to America. They chose Alto, Wisconsin, as their destination because other Twello families had gone there earlier. Hendrik suffered for the cause of *De Afscheiding* because he was arrested for having more than twenty people in their home for a worship service. He was later exonerated of the charge. A copy of the court record of 1836 is the oldest record in the family papers. The descendants of Hendrik and Hendrika have scattered all over America and in the process have Americanized to a greater or lesser degree. The extensive correspondence of family members fills four storage boxes and documents the Americanization of this Dutch immigrant family. The Joint Archives accepted this collection because there are very few Dutch immigrant families that have such extensive records of financial affairs and church and educational life. Earlier I had processed and given the papers of Rev. William Henry Bruins and Rev. Henry M. Bruins to the Joint Archives. These gentlemen were the sons of Derk and Cynthia Heusinkveld Bruins and the grandsons of Hendrik and Hendrika.

Alto, Wisconsin, virtually unknown among the many Dutch-American colonies, does have an interesting history. For many years I have been collecting documents of its history. I also processed this personal collection and presented two storage boxes of documents and pamphlets to the Joint Archives of Holland. One of the first Dutch immigrant families in Alto was the family of Roelof Sleijster, who had been a student of Van Raalte in Ommen. Sleijster's settlement in Alto prompted Van Raalte to consider founding his colony in the Alto area, but he changed his mind after some Detroit entrepreneurs enticed him to settle in western Michigan.

My current project is a study of the educational endeavors of the Reformed Dutch Church in America, 1628 to 1866. The first Dutch Reformed congregation was founded on Manhattan Island in 1628. The congregation was eventually able to follow the Synod of Dort's educational policy that every Reformed congregation found a school. Its school, which continues to the present, was founded in 1638 and is now known as the Collegiate School. In the field of higher education, the Reformed Dutch Church was instrumental in founding Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey; Union College, Schenectady, New York; and New York University in Manhattan. These institutions are now secular institutions. The denomination had greater success with the founding of Hope and Northwestern Colleges in the nineteenth century and taking Central College under its wing in 1916. This study was commissioned by Western Theological Seminary for publication in the winter 2006 issue of the *Reformed Review*.

**Excerpts from Elton J. Bruins's review of  
*By Grace Alone: Stories of the Reformed Church in America*  
by Donald J. Bruggink and Kim N. Baker**

*After having served as the founder and general editor of the Reformed Church in America's Historical Series since its inception in 1969, Donald Bruggink now makes his contribution to the series as an author of a new history of the denomination. He was joined in the major endeavor by Kim Baker, his former student at Western Theological Seminary, who was primarily responsible for the format of the book and many of the sidebars that enhance the beauty and the quality of the volume. Particularly valuable in the book are the stories about the Reformed Church that have not been significantly dealt with before in its histories. One is the role of women, who virtually moved mountains in the denomination in eras that were very male dominated. Native-, African-, and Asian-Americans are also given good space in the stories. The final chapter entitled "What's Next?" is an analysis of the Reformed Church today, showing the considerable diversity in church life throughout the denomination and the country.*

## Loving Task

*Dr. Jeanne Jacobson reports*

John and I celebrated our fiftieth wedding anniversary in August 2004. He had asked me to marry him when he was 17 and I was 19. We married three years later, and our life together was, in his words, “a great love story.” As I wait to rejoin him, I am editing his teaching and administrative papers, and continuing the on-line bookstore which we started together.



In the all-too-brief time of his retirement, John remained active both publicly and privately as a scholar, serving on the advisory board of Goshen College's branch in Sarasota and teaching their course in Religion. At our church, Siesta Key Chapel, where he was elder and Clerk of Session, he rejuvenated the adult education program. On Sundays he taught courses on each of the gospels and on historical books of the Old Testament; his Wednesday evening courses, open to the wider community, dealt with issues of global Christianity. He taught in the church's School for Christian Living: courses on St. Augustine, St. Francis, The Great Awakening, and John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. John had studied Greek in college, and resumed that study with an emphasis on Biblical Greek. One of his first goals was to memorize the Beatitudes in Greek, and his charts remain posted in our home. Throughout the months of his suffering, he continued to listen to Greek readings, and to attempt teaching me. We read widely, as we always had. He continues to inspire and guide me.

I am grateful to have been a part of ACVRI, mentored by Elton and Jack. Now it is a delight to work with Karen to prepare the annual report, which gives me the opportunity to admire how much is contributed to learning, and to good works, by its members and supporters. John is honored by having this report dedicated to him.

## **“Real pleasure in the work”**

### ***Dr. Nyenhuis reports***

Again this past year a considerable share of my time has been devoted to administration, so my research agenda had to be somewhat more limited. My long-term research project, an architectural history of Hope College, was appreciably advanced, however, during the summer of 2005, when I had the benefit of a research assistant, recent graduate Daniel J. Carter. He amassed extensive files on many of the buildings and tracked down many important leads. Reviewing materials with him gave me a renewed enthusiasm for this project and genuine excitement about the story of Hope College’s growth over the decades. A second research project involves the writing of a history of my paternal grandparents, Egbert and Pietertje van Dam Nyenhuis, and their descendants. I hope to complete it in time for our family reunion in summer 2006.



**Jack Nyenhuis in his new office**

Planning for the move to the Theil Research Center, the move itself, and preparations for the dedication of the Theil Research Center consumed a good deal of my time, but there was real pleasure in the work, for we now enjoy a splendid facility for our research and writing. I prepared a booklet for the dedication and delivered a speech during the ceremony.

It was a bittersweet honor to lead the planning for a memorial service for Dr. John H. Jacobson and to deliver a eulogy at the service, which was held in Dimnent Chapel on 7 March 2005. I prepared a memorial booklet for the service. My wife Leona and I also attended a memorial service for John in mid-February at Siesta Key Chapel Presbyterian Church in Sarasota, Florida.

My service to church and community consisted again primarily of service on the Board of Trustees of Calvin Theological Seminary. I was re-elected as Vice Chair of the Board and have also served the Seminary in other ways. I also serve on a worship planning team at our church. To gain new insights into worship and worship planning I attended a Worship Conference held in January at CTS and Calvin College. In addition I serve as Co-Convener of the Hope College Retirees, with responsibility for program planning for five meetings a year, recruiting speakers, sending out notices of meetings, and the like.

I have given various lectures and speeches throughout the year, including teaching two classes for the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals on “Myth and the Creative Process,” and have attended conferences and seminars. A special treat in late August and early September 2004 was our attendance at the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens, Greece. Afterward, Leona and I led a study tour of several Greek islands and various sites on the mainland. In the thirty-one years since our family spent a year in Greece on sabbatical, I have found renewal and inspiration from repeated visits to Greece. Last year’s visit energized me once again, and I came back with renewed enthusiasm for the work that lay ahead for the year.

I remain grateful for the wonderful colleagues with whom I work at the Institute. I consider myself truly blessed to be able to work with them in the fulfillment of the mission of the Van Raalte Institute.



## Publications

Abstracts of all articles in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 2003 for *Religious and Theological Abstracts*. (Earl Wm. Kennedy)

“Biographical Notes on Selected Figures in Hope College’s History.” In *Can Hope Endure?: A Historical Case Study in Christian Higher Education* by James C. Kennedy and Caroline J. Simon. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. (Elton J. Bruins)

*Can Hope Endure?: A Historical Case Study in Christian Higher Education* by James C. Kennedy and Caroline J. Simon. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005. (James C. Kennedy) (Donald J. Bruggink, general editor)

*Doctors for the Kingdom* by Paul L. Armerding. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003; Arabic translation published in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, by the King Abdulaziz Foundation in 2005. (Donald J. Bruggink, general editor)

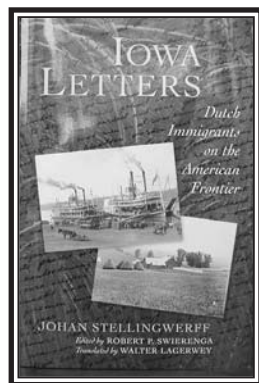
“The Dutch Imprint on West Michigan.” In the *Historical Society of Michigan Chronicle and Newsletter* 27 (winter 2005): 18-22. (Robert P. Swierenga)

*The Dutch in Urban America. Association for the Advancement of Dutch-American Studies, Fourteenth Biennial Conference Papers*, eds. Robert P. Swierenga, Donald Sinnema, and Hans Krabbendam. Holland, Mich.: Joint Archives of Holland, 2004. (Robert P. Swierenga)

*Elim: Chicago’s Christian School and Life Training Center for the Disabled*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005. (Robert P. Swierenga) (Donald J. Bruggink, general editor)

*Iowa Letters: Dutch Immigrants on the American Frontier* by Johan Stellingwerff, Robert P. Swierenga, general editor; Walter Lagerwey, translator. Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2005. (Robert P. Swierenga) (Donald J. Bruggink, general editor)

“The Low Countries—Belgium, Netherlands, Luxemburg.” In *Encyclopedia of the Midwest*,



Charlotte Dihoff, managing ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.  
(Robert P. Swierenga)

Memorial Service booklet for Dr. John H. Jacobson. 7 March 2005. 12 pp.  
(Jacob E. Nyenhuis)

Review of *By Grace Alone: Stories of the Reformed Church in America* by Donald J. Bruggink and Kim N. Baker. In *Reformed Review* 58, no. 2 (winter 2004-05): 146-47—online at <[http://www.westernsem.edu/pub/index\\_rr.htm](http://www.westernsem.edu/pub/index_rr.htm)> (Elton J. Bruins)

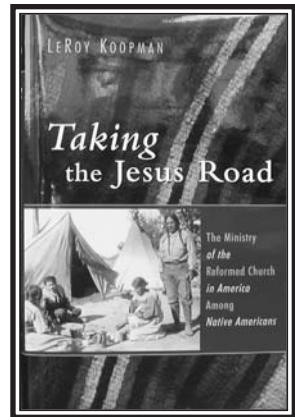
Review of *The Future of Religious Colleges*, ed. Paul J. Dovre. In *Reformed Review* 58, no. 1 (autumn 2004): 8-9—online at <[http://www.westernsem.edu/pub/index\\_rr.htm](http://www.westernsem.edu/pub/index_rr.htm)> (Earl Wm. Kennedy)

Review of *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield, and the Wesleys, vol. 1 of A History of Evangelicalism: People, Movements, and Ideas in the English Speaking World* by Mark A. Noll. In *Reformed Review* 58, no. 3 (spring 2005): 238-39—online at <[http://www.westernsem.edu/pub/index\\_rr.htm](http://www.westernsem.edu/pub/index_rr.htm)> (Earl Wm. Kennedy)

*Taking the Jesus Road: The Ministry of the Reformed Church in America Among Native Americans*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005. (Donald J. Bruggink, general editor)

“A Tale of Two Cities: Acculturation and Its Long-term Impact on Chicago’s West Side Reformed Churches.” In *Origins* 23, no. 1 (2005): 12-21.  
(Robert P. Swierenga)

Theil Research Center Dedication brochure. 25 October 2004. 16 pp.  
(Jacob E. Nyenhuis)





## Presentations

“The Artistic Context for Michael Ayrton’s *Reflected Head*.” Address at the unveiling and dedication of this monumental sculpture in Troy, Michigan, 20 February 2005. (Jacob E. Nyenhuis)

Campus Tour (twice) during Alumni Weekend, 7 May 2005. (Jacob E. Nyenhuis)

“Christian Schools and the Three-Legged Stool.” Talk for the Reformed Heritage Christian School society dinner, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 9 February 2005. (Robert P. Swierenga)

“The Dutch in Urban America.” Lecture for the Netherlands-America Foundation, New York City, 19 October 2004. (Robert P. Swierenga)

“Dutch Immigrants in West Michigan.” Paper presented to the West Michigan Genealogical Society Regional Conference, Grand Rapids, 2 October 2004. (Robert P. Swierenga)

“The Dutch Imprint on West Michigan.” Presentation for the Century Club of Holland, 3 January 2005. (Robert P. Swierenga)

“The Early Reformed Churches of the Holland Colony.” Lecture for the Holland Genealogical Society, 20 November 2004. (Elton J. Bruins)

“Elim: Reflections on the History of Elim Christian Services of Chicago.” Lecture for Elim’s Founders’ Day Celebration, Palos Heights, Illinois, 26 August 2004. (Robert P. Swierenga)

“Garbios’: Chicago’s Dutch Scavengers.” Lecture for Calvin College Heritage Alumni Chapters, Bradenton, Florida, 21 February 2005, and Naples, Florida, 22 February 2005. (Robert P. Swierenga)

“Holland’s First Family: High Points and Low Points from the Perspective of Mrs. Christina de Moen Van Raalte.” Lecture for Holland’s Woman’s Literary Club, 18 January 2005. (Elton J. Bruins)

*Iowa Letters: Dutch Immigrants on the American Frontier.* Book panel with Douglas Anderson and Robert Schoone-Jongen at the Fifteenth Biennial Conference of the Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies, Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa, 3 June 2005. (Robert P. Swierenga)

“Myth and the Creative Process.” Lecture classes for the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals, 18 and 25 April 2005. (Jacob E. Nyenhuis)

“Old Wing Mission of Holland, Michigan, and the Dutch.” Lecture for the Holland Historical Society, 14 June 2005. (Robert P. Swierenga)

“Our American Heritage and Our Responsibility for Preserving It.” Address at DAR Good Citizens Award Ceremony, Holland, Michigan, 17 March 2005. (Jacob E. Nyenhuis)

“The Reformed Church in America: Its History, Nature, and Relationship to Hope College.” Lecture for a Hope College faculty seminar, 31 May 2005. (Elton J. Bruins)

“Significance of the Theil Research Center to the A. C. Van Raalte Institute.” Speech at the dedication of the Theil Research Center, 25 October 2004. (Jacob E. Nyenhuis)

“The Verduin Family: Three Theological Issues and Four Locations.” Lecture for the Verduin Family Reunion, 3 July 2005. (Elton J. Bruins)

“Walls or Bridges: A Comparative History of Reformed and Christian Reformed Churches in North America.” Paper for the “Morsels in the Melting Pot” Conference, Free University of Amsterdam, 29 September 2004. (Robert P. Swierenga)

“The West Michigan Dutch.” Talk for the Genealogical Society of Holland annual luncheon, 11 December 2004. (Robert P. Swierenga)

“Words of Remembrance and Honor.” Memorial Service for John H. Jacobson (1933-2005), 7 March 2005. (Jacob E. Nyenhuis)

## Interviews

“The Theil Research Center.” Interview by Greg Olgers on 27 September 2004, aired on WFUR radio on 9 October 2004. Interview was held jointly with Geoffrey D. Reynolds, Director of the Joint Archives of Holland. (Jacob E. Nyenhuis)

“Showcasing the New Theil Research Center.” Interview on 17 November 2004 by Frank Kraai for “West Michigan Today,” broadcast on MAC TV the week of 22 November 2004. (Jacob E. Nyenhuis; with Geoffrey D. Reynolds)



**Van Raalte Institute Library**



**Theil Research Center Reading Room**

**Applications Invited**  
**Visiting Research Fellows Program for**  
**Academic Year 2006-2007**

The Van Raalte Institute at Hope College invites applications from qualified scholars for a fellowship offered through the Visiting Research Fellows Program.

**Criteria for Selection:** Proposals for support must demonstrate that the proposed research fits the Mission Statement of the Institute (p. 36), that the scholar is qualified to conduct such research, and that the resources of the Institute and that 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 Deadline:** Proposals are due no later than 15 January 2006. Further information may be obtained by contacting the Institute at [vanraalte@hope.edu](mailto:vanraalte@hope.edu) or <http://www.hope.edu/vri/>.



**Don Bruggink and Hans Niemantsverdriet at Dedication Luncheon**

## **Mission Statement**

### **A.C. Van Raalte Institute at Hope College**

The A. C. 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 and Hope College, 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 people who have comprised 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 immigrants throughout the United States. The bold Christian vision that he had for the church, education, and 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 its 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.