

# A. C. Van Raalte Institute

Silver Jubilee  
Annual Report  
January 2018–July 2019

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A. C. Van Raalte Institute, Hope College

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**Annual Report**  
*2018–2019*

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*A Message  
from the Director*  
*Jacob E. Nyenhuis*

This is the second and final report of my two-year tenure as interim director. The primary focus for JoHannah Smith and me over the past two years has been on producing *Hope College at 150: Anchored in Faith, Educating for Leadership and Service in a Global Society* (Van Raalte Press, 2019), so we had to postpone the annual report. This report therefore covers the significant activities and achievements of both our staff and our visiting and honorary research fellows over the past nineteen months. It also highlights our celebration of the first twenty-five years of the Van Raalte Institute. In addition, a separate section of this report includes a detailed chronology of the growth and development of the institute. It has been a privilege and pleasure to serve as director for fifteen of those years.

*Twenty-fifth anniversary of the institute*

The opening event in a six-month-long celebration of the twenty-fifty anniversary of the institute took place on November 27, 2018, and the concluding event was held on April 27, 2019. The initial event consisted of an open house at which Founding Director Elton J.

Bruins, age ninety-one, was honored with the naming of the institute's library as the Elton J. Bruins Library. Hundreds of the books in this library came from Bruins' own collection, so having his name on a doorplate is a good way to recognize both his generous gift and his faithful service to the institute. This event also included the premiere showing of a short video, *Van Raalte Institute at 25*, produced by Phil Blaauw in collaboration with Donald Luidens.

On January 11, 2019, we opened an exhibition, *Seeing Through Dutch Eyes: Landscape Images of Chris Stoffel Overvoorde*, at the Holland Area Arts Council, which we sponsored in collaboration with HAAC. The forty-two paintings and etchings in this exhibition provided a retrospective of the long career of Overvoorde as a professor of art at Calvin College (University in 2019). The exhibition closed on February 27. Sadly, it proved to be the final public exhibition of his work, for Chris passed away on September 3 at age eighty-four.

The institute also sponsored a revival of an original play by Max Bush, *Vision of a New Life*, which had been commissioned in 2011 for the Bicentennial of the Birth of Albertus C. Van Raalte.

Senior Research Fellow Henk Aay presented a lecture on Overvoorde's landscape paintings on February 20, under the sponsorship of both the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals and Hope College Retirees. Nella Kennedy wrote a play for presentation at the Hope College Winter Happening on January 26. Further details are provided in their individual reports.

On April 24, we had a dinner to celebrate the forthcoming release of *Hope College at 150*. JoHannah Smith and I both offered remarks at this dinner. JoHannah's work as project editor for my book was exceptional. I hereby acknowledge her superb management of all the details involved in assembling such a complex manuscript. Her attention to detail is exceeded only by her outstanding editorial skills. As the final deadline drew ever nearer, both of us worked very long days and many nights. During the final week, she actually worked through the night on the penultimate day. Such dedication is indeed worthy of gratitude.

The concluding event on April 27 featured the formal release of *Hope College at 150: Anchored in Faith, Educating for Leadership and Service in a Global Society* at the luncheon for Hope College's Fifty-Year Circle during Alumni Weekend. Don Luidens '69 gave the welcome and class recognitions. I then presented a copy of *Hope College at 150* to President Dennis Voskuil. After lunch, I presented an overview of my book, and three of the contributors to the book—Robert P. Swierenga, Thomas L. Renner and Alfredo M. Gonzales—offered comments pertaining to their unique contributions. Following the luncheon, I had a book signing.

I acknowledge with deep gratitude the fine work of the planning committee responsible for organizing all these excellent activities: Nella Kennedy, chair; Henk Aay; and Donald Luidens. I served in an *ex officio* position, but they did all the work.

#### *Visiting Research Fellows*

Four visiting research fellows spent varying amounts of time at the Van Raalte Institute during the past year and a half. Public lectures by several of them are scheduled to occur over the next month. A brief summary of the projects funded in part by visiting research fellowships is given here:

**Marc Baer**, professor emeritus of history at Hope College (1983–2016), served as director of the Pew Society (1997–2011), as chair of the department of history (2010–16), and as interim dean for arts and humanities immediately after his retirement (2016–17). A graduate of Iowa State University, he earned an MA (1971) and PhD (1976) in history from the University of Iowa. A specialist in British history, he has published several books, numerous articles, and over eighty reviews.

He was in residence at the institute from mid-April to the end of June 2018 to complete research for his forthcoming book, *Making Music: Hope College's Music Department, A History*, which he coauthored with his student research assistant, Allison Utting, a 2019 graduate.

**Bruce Geelhoed**, professor of history at Ball State University, spent part of his sabbatical during fall semester 2018 at the institute. A 1970 graduate of Hope College, he earned an MA degree in 1972 from

Central Michigan University and a PhD from Ball State University in 1976. He served as director of the Carmichael Residential Instruction Project at BSU from 1975 to 1981, when he was appointed as assistant professor of history at BSU. He was promoted to associate professor in 1986 and professor in 1992. During his tenure at BSU, he has served as associate director of the Office of Academic Research and Sponsored Programs, director of the Center for Middletown Studies, department chair, and interim director of graduate studies. He has also been a research historian at the University of Pennsylvania and visiting professor of American history at Westminster College, Oxford, UK. Geelhoed's research specialties are the history of the Eisenhower Administration, the history of higher education in the United States, and the history of sport. He has authored or coauthored numerous books.

His research project was focused on the history of the Hope College Pull. He is scheduled to deliver his public lecture, "The Pull at Hope College: Then and Now, 1898–2018," on October 10, 2019. The Pull is one of Hope's most enduring traditions and currently the longest-running tug-of-war on college campuses across the United States. He has identified six distinctive eras in the Pull's history and will give specific attention to the four Pulls that ended in draws—1916, 1926, 1952, and 1977—and how those draws affected future Pulls.

**Robert Schoone-Jongen**, associate professor emeritus of history at Calvin University, was a commuting visiting research fellow during 2018-19, normally coming in on Wednesdays. A New Jersey native, he received his bachelor's degree in history from Calvin College in 1971, earned a master of arts degree in European history from the University of Kentucky two years later, a master's degree in American history from the University of Delaware in 2003, and a PhD in history from U. of Delaware in 2007. In between his two master's degrees, he spent twenty-six years teaching at Southwest Minnesota Christian High School. From 2003 to 2018, he served on the faculty of Calvin College and currently serves as adjunct professor, supervising a student teacher. He is the author of numerous articles, book chapters, essays, and curriculum guides. He has served AADAS as a board member, vice president, and president.



He presented his public lecture, “Paterson, New Jersey: Dutch Immigration’s Largest Afterthought (1846–1950),” on September 19 in the Fried-Hemenway Auditorium in the Martha Miller Center. The third wave of Van Raalte’s immigrant groups was stranded in New York in December 1846 because the Erie Canal had frozen over. A number of these immigrant families were placed in the Paterson area on a temporary basis but ended up settling there. Other immigrants followed, with the result that the Paterson area hosted the fourth-largest Dutch immigrant community during the high tide of European immigration to America. By 1910 a full 10 percent of the city’s population had direct ties to the Netherlands. The Dutch had a significant role in many professions, including politics at all levels.

*Visiting Research Fellow, 2019–20*

**Andrew Klumpp**, a PhD candidate at Southern Methodist University, spent two weeks in summer 2018 doing preliminary research at the Theil Research Center at Hope College in preparation for writing his doctoral dissertation; he was awarded a travel grant from the institute to enable him to explore the documents in the Joint Archives of Holland (JAH) and to consult scholars at the Van Raalte Institute. A 2010 *Summa cum Laude* graduate in religion and music from Northwestern College (Iowa), he earned a master of divinity degree from Duke University Divinity School in 2014. Since August 2015, he has been a PhD candidate in American religious history at SMU, where he has been a Dean’s Fellow and a University Fellow; he also has served as a teaching assistant and adjunct instructor in religious studies. He has given numerous presentations and has published multiple articles, reviews, and book chapters. He also serves on the Commission on History of the Reformed Church in America (RCA) and as associate editor of the Historical Series of the RCA.

He returned for two months in early summer 2019 to conduct extensive research for his doctoral dissertation on rural Midwestern religion. He will return to Hope College in October 2019 to deliver his public lecture.

*New Honorary Research Fellows*

**Paul Heusinkveld** spent the academic year 2017–18 with us as a visiting research fellow. During that year, he completed work on a biography of a missionary doctor, “Eleanor Calverley, First Doctor in Kuwait: Celebrating 100 Years of Kuwaiti-American Friendship.” Because he wished to continue working in our midst to write biographies of two other medical doctors who were part of the Arabian Mission of the Reformed Church in America, we invited him to join us as an honorary research fellow in July 2018. Until then, all of our honorary research fellows were Dutch scholars, but we concluded that it would be wise to expand our program to include one or more American scholars.

**Jan Boersema** was a visiting research fellow in 2014–15 and has returned regularly to continue his research collaboration with Henk Aay. Because of his ongoing research agenda, we invited him in 2019 to become an honorary research fellow. He and his wife, Anthonia, also his research collaborator, spent two months in spring 2019 working at the institute, drawing upon the resources of the JAH.

*Student Research Assistants*

Throughout the history of the institute, we have employed student research assistants. During the past two years, Isabelle “Izzy” Rembert, Class of 2019, and Megumu Jansen, Class of 2019 (Calvin University), have worked at the institute. Much of their work consisted of assisting Henk Aay on his “Atlas of Dutch American History and Culture,” but they also assisted on certain aspects of *Hope College at 150*.

*Dennis Voskuil returns to the institute*

In July 2014, we welcomed Dennis N. Voskuil as our newest senior research fellow. He had just retired from his position as the Marvin and Jerene DeWitt Professor of Church History at Western Theological Seminary (WTS). He had also served as president of WTS from 1994 to 2008. Prior to his appointment at WTS, he had served as a professor at Hope College from 1977 to 1994, the last two years as the

Evert J. and Hattie E. Blekkink Professor of Religion. A former football player and honors graduate of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, he earned a BD from WTS and a PhD in the study of religion from Harvard University. In 2015 he succeeded me as director of the institute, but two years later, he was asked to serve a two-year term as Hope College interim president (2017–19). He concluded that service at the end of June and, after some time off, returned to the institute in August 2019 as a senior research fellow. The writing of the history of WTS is one of his major projects.

*Donald A. Luidens will become the next director of the institute*

Tomorrow my term ends, and Donald Luidens will become the director of the institute. Don came to the institute as a visiting research fellow in 2014–15. He was newly retired after thirty-seven years as professor of sociology at Hope College. His project for the year was to produce a memoir/biography based on the experience of his parents, Edwin and Ruth Stegenga Luidens, as Reformed Church missionaries in Iraq and Bahrain from 1944 to 1957. As a resource for that project, he had approximately one thousand letters written by his parents. He used his time at the institute in researching the RCA archives held in the JAH to place his parents' work in the larger context of the Reformed Church's Arabian Mission. His monograph, *Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Hate: A Love Story (Begins)*, was published by the Van Raalte Press in 2016. He was appointed as a senior research fellow in January 2016.

A 1969 graduate of Hope College with a major in history, Don earned an MDiv in church and society from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1972, followed by an MA and PhD in sociology from Rutgers University (1974; 1978). During his tenure at Hope, he also served as a visiting fellow at Tantur Institute for Advanced Theological Studies in Jerusalem (January to April 1985); at Sully Oaks College in Birmingham, England (April to July 1985); and at the Center for Inquiry into the Liberal Arts at Wabash College (2004–5). The recipient of numerous awards, honors, and grants, he is either the coauthor or coeditor of well over one hundred articles and reviews and five books,

including *Vanishing Boundaries: The Religion of Mainline Protestant Baby Boomers* (1994), *Reformed Encounters with Modernity: Perspectives from Three Continents* (2001), and *Divided by a Common Heritage* (2006). He served as department chair for fifteen years (1987-2002); because I was serving as provost during all but his final year as chair, I came to know him well and had developed great respect for him. I look forward to continuing at the institute under his very capable leadership.

My sole administrative responsibility as a member of the institute henceforth will be to maintain the vitality and viability of the Van Raalte Press, which I founded in 2007. I expect to continue my personal research agenda, which includes a family history. I am deeply grateful to my wonderful colleagues for their support during my years as director and, particularly, during the final drive to complete *Hope College at 150*. Being a member of the staff of the institute these past eighteen years has been a rich blessing, and I look forward to an ongoing engagement with them as we work to fulfill the mission that has guided the institute during our first twenty-five years.

**Jack Nyenhuis**

Director

30 September 2019



## *Donald A. Luidens*

It has been a busy and fulfilling year and a half since our last report. Between VRI-related activities and family excursions, I feel as though I have hardly had time to sit. I marvel again—as do many “retirees”—about how I have managed to do my job with all the other seductive demands on my life.

A highlight of my work at the VRI during 2018 was the publication of a festschrift in honor of former Hope College provost and current VRI director, Jacob E. Nyenhuis. Entitled *Jack, a Compassionate Compendium. A Tribute to Dr. Jacob E. Nyenhuis: Scholar, Servant, Leader*, it is a tribute to Jack as brother, friend, and colleague and as one of the engineers of Hope’s success in the last four decades. More than three dozen of Jack’s friends, family, and colleagues contributed articles, poems, plays, and accolades to recognize him. While this work was begun in 2018, its “confidential” nature meant that it did not appear in last year’s record. The “unveiling” came at a surprise gala in Jack’s honor attended by the contributors, as well as many of Jack’s friends, former colleagues, and extended family.



*Awaiting Jack's arrival; l-r:  
Don Bruggink, Jack's sister  
Jeanne Kragt-Barchinger,  
JoHannah Smith, Don  
Luidens, Kraig Smith,  
May 17, 2018*



*Unsuspecting, yet curious  
at seeing his colleagues  
waiting in the doorway of  
a great banquet hall, Jack  
is accompanied by his wife,  
Lee, and daughter Kathy and  
Arthur Kurtze (behind)*



*“The importance of the occasion  
merited a bit of subterfuge to  
bring you here, less you object to  
or decline the honor about to be  
so deservedly bestowed upon you.  
We have gathered to celebrate the  
publication of your festschrift,  
and we trust that your modesty  
will not prevent you from  
enjoying the evening.” –Don  
Bruggink*



*Luidens tells the story of how this publication came to be*

It was great fun for me, as a coeditor with colleague JoHannah M. Smith, to “unwrap” each of these wonderful written gifts as they were submitted. The individual pieces reflect the many sides of Jack’s remarkable professional career and ring with plaudits for his unwavering compassion and encyclopedic memory. *Jack* is one of the latest books published during the celebrated twenty-five years of the VRI’s existence. In fact, the publication of *Jack* was the preface to a full-year celebration of the twenty-five-year history of the VRI. Together with colleagues Nella Kennedy (chair) and Henk Aay, it was my pleasure to serve on the planning committee for the celebration of that milestone. We officially inaugurated the anniversary with an open house in November, during which our library was dedicated in honor of the VRI’s founding director and much cherished colleague, Rev. Dr. Elton J. Bruins.

This event was followed with the premier on January 26, 2019, of Nella Kennedy’s reader’s theater: *The Diary of Christina Van Raalte: Fact or Fiction?* I enjoyed the delightful role of the caustic skeptic, doubting that Christina had ever composed the recently discovered “diary.” That same day saw the opening performance of the recrafted play by Max Bush on the early life of the *kolonie*. Entitled, *Vision of a New Life*, it portrays the challenges—expected and otherwise—that awaited the



*Dedication plaque*

*Formal naming of the Elton J. Bruins Library, November 27, 2018*

new settlers and the indigenous people who met them in 1847. I was pleased to help facilitate this production (presented four times to capacity audiences on January 26 and 27).

From mid-January through late February, the anniversary celebration of the institute sponsored an exhibition of the endearing and enduring art of Chris Stoffel Overvoorde (1934–2019), Grand Rapids artist of Dutch descent. Once again, I enjoyed working with Chris and his colleagues to mount the exhibition and applaud its opening.

An ongoing project during the last year and a half, in which I played a role with librarian Chris Nelson, has been the further integration of the VRI library holdings with the catalogue system of the college. This has been a monumental task, and all VRI members have had a hand, since we have had to carefully triage our collection in order to accommodate the shelf space available to us. Perhaps in the future we will have a large enough library to fully house all of the tomes which we have collected over the past twenty-five years.

I continue to plod through the rich and fascinating letters of



my parents, Ed and Ruth Stegenga Luidens. This “life project” is now in its fifth (or sixth?) year and shows promising signs of nearing the third-quarter pole. I have found it particularly interesting to learn how the shifting fortunes of the postcolonial Middle East were absorbed by my parents and their missionary colleagues into their daily lives and their sense of calling. At the heart of their writing and dreaming was the overwhelming question of how one should do mission work in an age transformed by technology, with oil flowing throughout the Middle East, and with the British Empire receding and nationalisms exploding (sometimes literally) on all fronts.

Bill Kennedy is the senior editor of a volume based on papers presented in 2017 at the AADAS biennial meeting in Fulton, Illinois. Entitled *Dutch Muck and Much More: Dutch Americans in Farming, Religion, Art, and Astronomy*, its publication in advance of the June 2019 AADAS meeting at Calvin College is a tribute to the teamwork of the editors, Jack Nyenhuis, and—most especially—JoHannah Smith. I have enjoyed learning the editorial ropes from Bill, and I look forward to working as the lead editor for the 2019 volume.

For my wife, Peg, and me, our grandchildren take up every “free” moment in our lives. We try to get together with them every month, which has necessitated thousands of miles of driving—with books-on-tape accompaniment. As “helicopter grandparents,” we embrace and embody that delightful appellation and propose it for inclusion in the new definitions of the year. Between flying to Florida, where we launched into a family-wide Disney cruise, taking an overnight grandparent-grandchildren railroad ride from Holland to Colorado, and enduring countless car excursions, we have now exhausted with them all the modes of transportation available to the paying public.

I continue to revel in my time at the Van Raalte Institute, where every day is anchored by a seminar. We call it “coffee hour,” but it is really a free-flowing symposium dedicated to picking apart historical and current arcana. We chew on all kinds of old things (although the pastries and grapes are fresh enough), from windmill architecture in premodern Netherlands to Dutch “internal migration” from nineteenth

century Pella to the wilds of northwestern Iowa and the windswept plains of southern Minnesota; from the relative importance of both New Amsterdam (the proverbial “island at the center of the world”)

***“I continue to revel in my time at the Van Raalte Institute, where every day is anchored by a seminar.”***

and Old Amsterdam (the “most liberal city in the world”); from the notable accomplishments of Albertus C. Van Raalte to the legacy of his compatriot and rival Hendrik Scholte. We are fond of word plays, and each of us has to be on his or her toes lest a bon mot pass us by. We may be the only *koffiekllets* in Holland where footnotes generate both a hearty laugh and a careful perusal and where

Dutch and French, Greek and Latin, German, and Arabic terms are bandied about with unabashed abandon. What fun!

# Donald J. Bruggink

In my last year as general editor of the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America, it was my pleasure to see three titles through the presses.

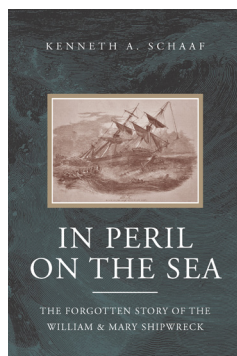


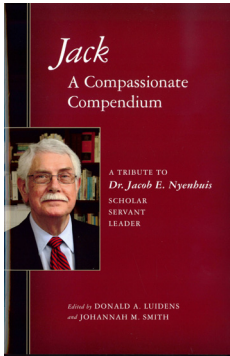
***In Peril on the Sea: The Forgotten Story of the William & Mary Shipwreck*, by Kenneth A. Schaaf.**

Van Raalte Press, no. 92 in the HSRCA, paperback, pp. xx - 304. \$30.

Meticulously researched and beautifully written by Kenneth Schaaf, the grandson of Dutch immigrants, with a career in the Library of Congress, this story is a fast-paced, gripping account of ninety-two Frisians who left on an arduous journey that would have killed most of us who are used to the comforts of the twenty-first century. The trip began with a forty-two-hour crossing to England on the open deck of a cattle boat in a storm so severe that some of the cattle on the deck below were washed overboard. More trials ensued, culminating

with the ship run aground in the Bahamas and abandoned by captain and crew. I do not wish to spoil the tale of survival, except to say that one of their progenies is none other than Prof. Lester DeKoster of Calvin College and Seminary.





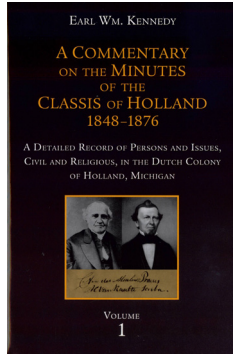
***Jack, A Compassionate Compendium.***

*A Tribute to Dr. Jacob E. Nyenhuis: Scholar, Servant, Leader*, edited by Donald A. Luidens and JoHannah M. Smith. Van Raalte Press, no. 93 in the HSRCA, hardcover, pp. xxx - 366. \$48.

This superb volume with thirty-seven contributors offers testimony to Jack's scholarship, performed as a servant, and carried out with gracious leadership. For years, his colleagues at the Van Raalte Institute have been asserting that Jack deserves a festschrift. But it remained for Don Luidens and JoHannah Smith to put a plan into action. It is through them, more than any others, that this volume became a reality.

While most festschrifts are a tribute to the honoree's scholarship, with fellow scholars offering essays in their fields of learning, it was decided that this tribute would

be written by Jack's peers, those who know him best and can attest to the stellar gifts that bettered institutions, faculties, students, the church, and his friends.



***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 Wm. Kennedy. Van Raalte Press, no. 94 in the HSRCA, three volumes in hardcover: vol. 1, lxi - 668; vol. 2, 669 - 1374; vol. 3, 1375 - 2080. \$200.

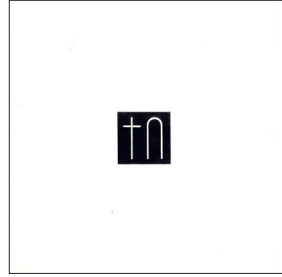
Approximately two decades ago, the Dutch-American Historical Commission decided that it would commission a new and objective translation of the Minutes of the Classis of Holland together with notes. Objectivity in the task was implied by commissioning a Presbyterian historian born in Hollywood, California, with

familiarity in the Dutch language, and an in-house assistant with Dutch as her native tongue. As for “notes” on the minutes, the DAHC did not account for Bill Kennedy’s voracious appetite for historical data and his ability to compress information into copious footnotes.

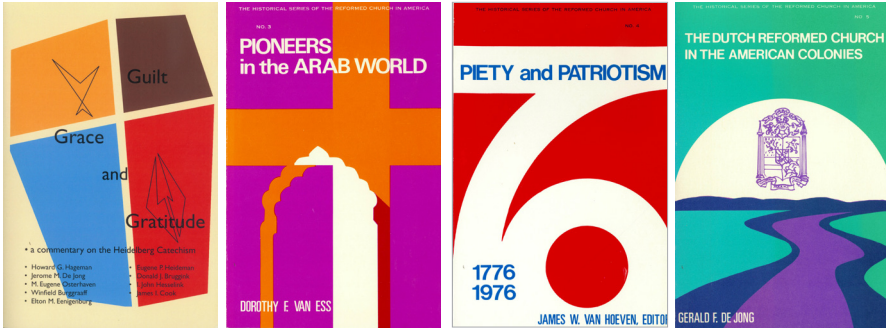
Thus the translation with notes became a commentary with a title implying the scope of the effort as well as its content. I will not intrude further upon the author’s description of his work, but I will be content to aver that no future scholars will be able to discuss this period and the area covered by the classis without referring to the exquisite and encompassing scholarship of Earl Wm. Kennedy.

*The Van Raalte Institute and the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America*

Having retired from my role as general editor of the series after fifty years and because of the growth of the series afforded by the Van Raalte Institute during my role as senior research fellow, it seems fitting that I use this report to bring closure to that portion of my life.



When the Historical Commission decided to launch the historical series, Eerdmans had just published *Christ and Architecture*, on which I had worked closely with Bill Eerdmans and which had generated twenty-nine published reviews, all positive. Perhaps this played some part in Bill graciously agreeing to become the publisher of the Historical Series.



The first volume of the series appeared in 1968, and I was one of the three editors. In the second volume, in 1970, I appear as sole editor, perhaps as the result of my editorship of *Guilt, Grace, and Gratitude: A Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism*, published at the direction of the General Synod under the auspices of the Theological Commission of which I was then a member. In 1974 our third volume, *Pioneers in the Arab World*, was followed by *Piety and Patriotism* (1976) and the *Dutch Reformed Church in the American Colonies* (1978), all with me as editor.

These volumes required soliciting funds from appropriate church entities; the funds, in turn, were overseen by Marvin D. Hoff, secretary for operations. Hoff had become keenly aware of these financial incursions from the Commission on History. At the same time, the general secretary had asked the Historical Commission to publish a digest and index of the minutes of the General Synod. Hoff suggested to the commission that Synod would fund the publication, and the monies from sales would go into a revolving fund for the Historical Series, from which future volumes could be financed. The message was clear: “the fund must be self-sustaining.” Thus, the general editor also became the business manager of the fund, without ever being designated as such. Fortunately, there was a good deal of cooperation from a succession of general secretaries: Marion De Velder, Arie Brower, and Ed Mulder. All were appreciative and supportive of the series and gave time at General Synod for promotion and sales. The fact that opportunity was given to describe the content of a series of very popular titles, meant a substantial increase in the revolving fund, although Eerdmans usually

outsold our RCA sales. At the same time, subventions were sought whenever possible. The fact that Eerdmans was publisher of the series made publishing very attractive. In addition to their reputation, their promotion meant a wider readership than if privately printed. The financial success of the Historical Series is thanks to the authors, whose works were published with the knowledge that no royalties would be paid; thanks to Russ Gasero, who did design and layout without personal payment; and thanks to the general editor and other editors, who worked without remuneration. The result of these many benefactions was that, prior to my leaving my position as general editor and “business manager,” the revolving fund had reached a high point of \$330,000.

My fifty years of service was recognized by the General Synod of 2018, and the Historical Commission honored my service by giving to synod delegates a reprint of my first published volume as an editor: *Guilt, Grace, and Gratitude*. Especially moving and appreciated was the tribute and dinner given by my friends at the Van Raalte Institute.

## *Tribute*

TO

*Rev. Dr. Donald J. Bruggink*

*We, the members of the Van Raalte Institute, join together with his family and friends to celebrate the outstanding service rendered by the Reverend Dr. Donald J. Bruggink as Founding General Editor of the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America for fifty years (1968-2018).*

*We recognize that he, while fulfilling his role as General Editor, set aside the pursuit of his own research and scholarship to advance the scholarship of others. For this generous act, his many colleagues and friends are deeply indebted.*

*We celebrate an extraordinary legacy of ninety-four titles and ninety-eight volumes, beginning with *Ecumenism and the Reformed Church*, by Herman Harmelink III, and ending with *A Commentary on the Minutes of the Classis of Holland 1848-1876*, by Earl Wm. Kennedy.*

*We honor a life lived in service to our Lord, to the church, and to the scholarly community.*

*And, finally, we give thanks for an enduring friendship that has blessed us, one and all.*

*Presented on his eighty-ninth birthday, the thirtieth day of the month of June,  
in the year of our Lord MMXVIII*



*Jack congratulates Bruggink following General Synod's official recognition of his service, June 9, 2018*



*Van Raalte Institute retirement dinner and presentation of tribute plaque; l-r: Jack Nyenhuis, JoHannah Smith, Don Bruggink, Don Luidens, June 30, 2018*



*VRI dinner; l-r: Jack Nyenhuis, Willem Mineur, Don Bruggink, Joel Nieuwenhuis, June 30, 2018*



I must return to the issue of the growth of the series as the result of the good offices of the Van Raalte Institute. In the first thirty-four years of the series, forty-three volumes were published, whereas in sixteen years at the VRI, fifty-five volumes have been published. The rise in productivity becomes even more obvious when the sizes of the publications are noted: from 1968 to 2003, the Historical Series totaled 11,618 pages. At the VRI from 2004 to 2018, page count was 24,238. During those same periods, the publication of hardcover volumes increased from two to twenty.

All of this was possible as the result of the personnel and resources provided by the VRI, including an office, with access to all of the equipment necessary for manuscript preparation; knowledgeable colleagues to answer questions and offer advice; JoHannah Smith, who seems to have memorized the *Chicago Manual of Style* and who is always ready to graciously solve computer problems; and Jack Nyenhuis for his leadership and gracious support—these have made our productivity possible.

Since having become general editor emeritus, I have seen to print *A Constant State of Emergency: Paul de Kruif, Microbe Hunter and Health Activist*, by Jan Peter Verhave (forthcoming 2019). And the conference on Hendrick P. Scholte at Pella in 2018 resulted in the decision to publish the fine lectures, for which I have been appointed as one of the editors. I also continue to receive other manuscripts, for which I then become involved in referral. Also, at this summer's AADAS conference, I delivered a paper on "Diversity at Western Theological Seminary, 1866–2019."

# Robert Swierenga

The year 2018–19, my twenty-second at the Van Raalte Institute, was productive in terms of scholarship. I spent much of my time completing a book manuscript, *His Faithfulness Continues: A History of Timothy Christian Schools of Chicagoland*, to be published by Van Raalte Press in 2020. The



school administration and the late Peter H. Huizenga commissioned me to write this history of my alma mater. The work is somewhat autobiographical, in that my grandfather and namesake, Robert Swierenga, served on the first school board in 1911, and my father, John R. Swierenga, was vice president of the school board in the 1950s. My father's four siblings and my five siblings graduated from Timothy, as did twenty-four of my cousins. The school lies close to my heart.



*DAR chair, Sarah Beyer (l), regent, Royetta Doe, 2018*



*Swierenga (l), Ron Rietveld (center) and Huug van den Dool, Rietveld's birthplace cabin, Pella, 2018*



*Grave marker of Hendrik P. Scholte, Pella Cemetery*



*2018 Scholte conference speakers*

### ***An excerpt***

“Changes and Complications: Holland’s 1867 Charter,” *Chronicle of the Historical Society of Michigan* (Summer 2019)

On March 25, 1867, the village of Holland petitioned the Michigan state legislature to incorporate as a city, thus separating from Holland Township. Both sides of what became a fierce political debate were backed by powerful personalities—the village by state representative Moses Hopkins, a native of Holland, and the township by Albertus C. Van Raalte, founder of the original Holland Colony. But, despite its importance to the development of West Michigan, that controversial event soon faded from the collective memory of the Holland community.

Van Raalte greatly opposed the city charter movement. He believed that the governance of the village by township officials was quite adequate and that another layer of government would only increase his real estate taxes. As the community's leading landowner, his annual tax bill was already onerous. Sometimes, he had to ask his sons Benjamin and Dirk, both businessmen, to help raise cash, saying that "we must pump or drown." He was rich in land, but cash poor.

Van Raalte paid a price for his strenuous opposition. George G. Steketee, a member of the incorporation committee, wrote in a letter to Representative Hopkins that Van Raalte "has made him Self Rich out of us poor dutchmen and therefore it's no more than Right that he should help to bare [sic] the Expense of the city and in this way our taxes will be lower." Steketee's comment was a bit unfair, for Van Raalte had only reluctantly agreed to take charge of selling lots in the village of Holland in 1848.

When Van Raalte realized that he was in the minority on the charter issue, he asked that his home be left out of the city. His right-hand man and close friend, Bernardus Grootenhuis, wrote Representative Hopkins to ask that the eastern boundary line be changed to exclude Van Raalte's property. Gerrit Van Schelven, secretary of the incorporation committee, agreed with Grootenhuis. As a concession to Van Raalte, Van Schelven asked Hopkins to "withdraw [Van Raalte's] farm from the City Territory. As [the] original proprietor and Settler of this place, we respected his claim & demand." The part of the city comprising Van Raalte's homestead, now known as the Federal District, remains outside the city limits to this day.

To lessen his city taxes, Van Raalte promptly deeded ninety acres of land not yet platted to Hope College, but he still owned three hundred city lots, which proved a tempting target for the city council, who levied a special tax on lots of nonresidents. Van Raalte, who now lived outside the city limits, no longer had a vote. He had to pay for his opposition toward incorporation after all.

# Nella Kennedy



Three VRI fellows, of which I was one, formed a committee in the summer of 2018 to begin planning the year-long celebration of the institute's twenty-fifth anniversary. It would begin with a reception in November 2018, which included the naming of the library in honor of Elton Bruins; followed in 2019 with an art exhibit of Dutch landscape paintings and accompanying lecture; two plays; and the formal release of the two-volume *Hope College at 150*, by Jack Nyenhuis *et alii*. This planning process also led me to reflect on the years I have spent at the institute.

My work at the institute began about five years after its founding in 1994, joining it, as it were, in its “adolescence.” I well remember our former office at 100 East 8th Street, with its windows and door facing the hallway that led to entrances on both Eighth and Ninth Streets. At that time, I took over the part-time translation work from my (likewise, native-born Dutch) daughter-in-law, Simone, whose husband, James, held the dual position of fellow at the institute and associate professor of history at Hope College. I sat at a computer in a windowless room filled with large microfilm and microfiche machines. My husband, Bill, came along to keep me company and engage in his own research. We both enjoyed having coffee breaks with our other office mates: Elton Bruins, Bob Swierenga, and Karen Schakel. Jack Nyenhuis joined the institute a few years later (taking James' office, who had left for the Netherlands). The camaraderie that developed over the coming years continues to this day, now in a larger space at 9 East 10th Street, with a much larger staff and longer coffee times.



*Nella with granddaughter Abigail, law student at the University of Amsterdam*

Translation was not new to me. I had been involved in translation work since I “got off the boat” in the United States, dealing with all kinds of topics, including translating a bid for dredging a harbor in the Caribbean. I had learned that the process requires careful and slow reading, repeatedly going over a sentence (many times if the script is almost unintelligible) and then phrasing the translation in such a way that does justice to the Dutch contents. The writers of letters were often unschooled and used nineteenth-century language, and letters sent by recent Dutch immigrants were sometimes peppered with Anglicisms. A good example is a short memoir, now preserved in the Holland Museum, written in 1909 by a Dutch immigrant, years after coming to this nation. Although it was difficult to transcribe and then translate, Jan Boersema and I worked jointly on this project, and the memoir of Henry Takken is now published in the AADAS 2017 volume, *Dutch Muck—and Much More* (Van Raalte Press, 2019). And the lecture I gave at that Fulton, Illinois, conference on artist John H. Vanderpoel is also published in this volume.

My first task at the institute in 1999 was to finish the translation of the minutes of the Classis of Wisconsin, which William Buursma had started. After that, I began to tackle the remaining Bruins’ files that needed translation on the life of Van Raalte in the Netherlands and in the United States. In some cases, revisions of earlier translations were also necessary. Van Raalte’s correspondence offered a revealing glimpse into his desire to make “his” colony prosper. Letters written to Dutch theologians (including his brother-in-law) show Van Raalte’s eagerness to have them accept his call to fledgling congregations in

western Michigan. These calls had no success, even though Van Raalte had promised their recipients a spacious parsonage and a large garden. Van Raalte's frequently crammed script in letters and sermons clearly reflects his desire to conserve paper, but it also presents a real challenge to the reader.

On a more personal level, letters written by Van Raalte's daughter Christina from Kalamazoo give insight into not only how strapped the family was for cash but also the life and desires of a young girl in the 1860s. The letters Van Raalte wrote to his wife in the years before their departure for the United States are revealing about his demanding ministry in the 1830s, traveling long distances in the province of Overijssel to tend to his flock, while facing severe persecution. Many of the letters provided fodder for the reader's theater play I wrote, noted below.



*Bill and Nella, with Jan and Toos Boersema in the Netherlands, 2018*

The twenty-fifth anniversary was celebrated with satisfying results. The opening reception in November kicked off the celebratory events, and the reading room of the archives was filled to overflowing, no doubt also due to the respect the local community has for Elton Bruins, who was there for the unveiling of the newly named “Elton J. Bruins Library.” The reception also included the *première* of the recently completed VRI video, *Celebrating 25 Years*. Two of the three celebratory events took place in January, while the third spanned both January and February 2020. The latter was an exhibition of the works of the renowned Chris Stoffel Overvoorde. The VRI planned this in

cooperation with the Holland Area Arts Council, whose exhibition space was used. The retrospective of forty-two paintings and etchings (many of them Dutch landscapes) was opened festively on January 11, 2019, with the artist present (since deceased). Art historian Ann Heath of Hope College spoke about Overvoorde's oeuvre. On February 20, toward the end of the exhibition, Henk Aay gave a lecture to members of the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals and attending public, and using images of Overvoorde's work, Aay spoke on the shared immigrant experiences of his good friend Overvoorde and himself.

January events included two plays. *Vision of a New Life*, was written by Max Bush and performed by a cast he directed, with four performances staged on Hope's campus. The play consisted of historical episodes in the life of future emigrants in the Netherlands in the 1840s and their early years in the new *kolonie* in Michigan, under the leadership of Van Raalte. January 26 was also the day of Hope College's annual Winter Happening. One of the dozen or so choices for participants was the reader's theater *The Diary of Christina Van Raalte: Fact or Fiction*, written by me, and read by several members of the institute, wearing appropriate head apparel.

A fitting end to the year's festivities was the formal presentation of Jack Nyenhuis' *Hope College at 150* at a lunch for alumni belonging to the Fifty-Year Circle. Three of the contributors to the book made remarks, followed by the author's reflections.

There are other tasks beside translation, research, and writing. Recently the archives received a large shawl from a Van Raalte descendant. According to family lore, it belonged to Van Raalte's wife, Christina, which raises interesting questions. Was it made in the United States, or was it given to her during her trip to the Netherlands in 1866? Can pattern and weave determine age and origin?

Also, over the years, the library at the institute has grown and become filled to capacity. It was necessary this year to remove some of the Dutch-language books and store them in clearly marked and easily retrievable boxes. Dutch books are frequently donated to the institute, and I not only translate the titles but also check on either



their antiquarian value or their merit for accession into our Elton J. Bruins Library. We recently donated a valuable book to the Rare Books Room of the Van Wylen Library, whose personnel have spent hours accessioning our books into their cataloging system. We are now adjusting to the new Library of Congress shelf placement of the same books formerly placed in alphabetical order. Life is exciting at the VRI!

### *An excerpt*

*Christina Van Raalte's Diary: Fact or Fiction,*  
by Nella Kennedy

**Don Luidens:** First of all, why would Mrs. Van Raalte conceal her diary in the rafters of Van Vleck Hall?

**JoHannah Smith:** I cannot prove it, but I have an idea that it probably got there because the younger Van Raalte daughters found a safe spot to read their mother's diary. When caught there, they hastily stowed it away.

**Don:** Conjecture! Has this student who found it been thoroughly investigated?

**JoHannah:** Commencement was the day after she found it, and she has not been heard from since; apparently, she's searching for a rare toad in the Amazon rainforest.

# Earl Wm. Kennedy



My wife, Nella, and I, as the third and fourth most senior (in terms of service, mind you) denizens of the A. C. Van Raalte Institute—after Elton Bruins and Bob Swierenga—have occupied space at its two main locations for about four-fifths of its existence. Actually, although a few years my junior, Nella was the proverbial “camel’s nose in the tent” of the VRI, preparing the way for my infiltration of its exclusive fellowship by several months, as her own story explains elsewhere.

By way of historical context, I should explain that Nella and I were already well acquainted with the legendary Elton Bruins long before our retirement to Holland, Michigan, in 1998. I had known him from his visit to Orange City, Iowa, to evaluate Northwestern College’s Religion Department (of which I was a fixture), and, even before that, at early meetings of the AADAS (Association for the Advancement of Dutch-American Studies), where he and I found common bonds as Reformed Church in America ministers and American church historians. Finally, Elton had informally “adopted” our son James after he came to teach at Hope College in 1997.

Nella and I moved from Orange City to Holland, Michigan, in 1998, and I was soon engaged in completing my research and writing a paper on the Americanization of the RCA’s Rev. Egbert Winter (1836–1906), published in 2000, as “The Summer of Dominie Winter’s Discontent,” in a festschrift for Bob Swierenga, already a member of the VRI staff. That research took me initially to the basement of Hope College’s Van Wylen Library, where I had access to the riches of the Joint Archives of Holland (reading *De Hope* and *Pella’s Weekblad*) – and

even enjoyed surreptitious visits to the library's "closed" stacks. In any event, because of the involvement of other family members in the Van Raalte Institute, I was quickly caught in its web as a place where I could contentedly spin my very own web.

The first reference in my moldy diaries to the VRI occurs in the entry for May 6, 1999, when I appeared at the institute's door, only to find it closed for no reason that I bothered to record, but my disappointment turned to joy when I discovered it was open for business the very next day. Nella had preceded me there some weeks as a translator (subbing for our daughter-in-law Simone). I began spending hours intermittently at the institute, working on the text of my Winter article – using the rarely occupied, capacious office of son James, who was busy elsewhere teaching at Hope. My diaries record that I began having coffee more and more with Elton, Nella, and the late Karen Schakel (the office manager, who died in 2009) during the ensuing year, beginning November 1999. Coffee times in those days lasted no more than half an hour (contrast today's near-hour ones).

Encouraged by Elton, my intermittent mornings at the VRI gradually became a daily occurrence, and in the fall of 1999, he began to talk with me about a possible "job" there, which developed in February 2000 into my becoming engaged to "annotate" the minutes of the Classis of Holland, "1858–1876." To shorten this tale, the initial assignment evolved into the three-volume "commentary" on the classical minutes "1848–1876" that finally appeared in July 2018, nearly two decades after its inception. In the meantime, I had become a "senior fellow" (in more ways than one) of the VRI and had moved from a borrowed office on Eighth Street to a roomy and well-furnished space co-inhabited by "official translator" Nella at the Theil (pronounced "tile" because it is a German name) Research Center on Tenth Street (shared with the Joint Archives of Holland, which had also moved). I had moved from part-time, informal employment to a regular position.

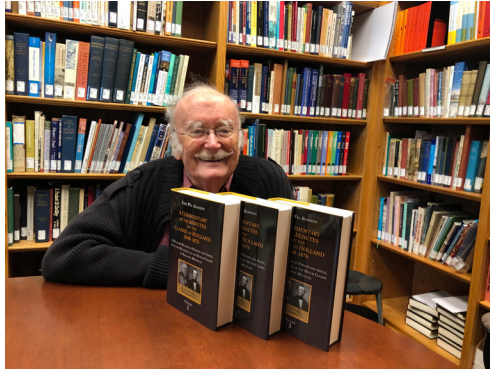
Other changes have included an increasingly rich fellowship of scholars, including Jack Nyenhuis, Dennis Voskuil, Don Bruggink, Don Luidens, Henk Aay, Paul Heusinkveld, and a number of visiting scholars,

not to mention our project editor and office manager JoHannah Smith. The focus on Dutch immigration history has been supplemented by such areas as RCA missions and geographical distribution. The Van Raalte Press has blossomed, our association with the AADAS has strengthened. Our principal early benefactors, Peter H. Huizenga and Dr. and Mrs. Theil, have died, as has Karen Schakel, while Elton Bruins has retired. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. My wife and I had never expected to spend our autumn years in such congenial surroundings as the VRI (and its coffee times). I've actually spent more than half of the time here in this fantastic "graduate school" than I earlier spent teaching undergraduates; it has been a kind of home away from home—even better than a retirement in our local Freedom Village!

As for my activities in the past year and a half, the first one, begun late in 2017, was part of a covert operation that could not be mentioned in that year's report. It had to be done "under the radar" because it was to be a surprise – a kind of "festschrift" – for our esteemed director, Jack Nyenhuis. My part in that enterprise was to provide him with an Ahnentafel (*kwartierstaat* – or ancestor table), in which I sketched every one of Jack's forebears back to the sixth generation, that is, his great-great-great grandparents. Half of them were Friesians, and the other half were either from Groningen or Drenthe. Perhaps the most interesting part of this for me was the discovery that the Nyenhuis family could be found already in Drenthe in the fourteenth century. I was able to assist my wife a little in her article on the earlier generations of the Nyenhuses and their milieu, using materials we gathered from a visit to the archives of Drenthe located in the town of Assen.

Around this same time, I was putting the finishing touches, such as layout and design on my aforementioned magnum opus. The BIG event of 2018 was thus the publication (finally) in July of *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*. It is no. 94 in the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America (Donald Bruggink, general editor) and in cooperation with the Van Raalte Institute; it had been commissioned by the Dutch-American Historical Commission and was published by the Van Raalte Press. It

is in three volumes and has 2,150 pages (including front matter, selected bibliography, and indices).



*Bill and magnum opus in the Elton J. Bruins Library*

Robert Swierenga, Mark Noll, and Richard Harms were kind enough to write recommendations (“blurbs”) for it, which appear on the back cover. I appeared with Donald Bruggink and Jack Nyenhuis at sessions of the local RCA and CRC classes to alert them to the book. Furthermore, I gave a presentation, on invitation, about the *Commentary* to the faculty and students of the Theological School of the Protestant Reformed Churches, in Wyoming, Michigan. Also, the work received a favorable review in the April 2019 *Calvin Theological Journal*. Perhaps most gratifying to me, one of my former students at Northwestern College, an RCA pastor, purchased the set and, as of April 2019, had already read the first two volumes and was looking forward to reading the third soon.

Additionally, a good deal of time was spent serving as lead editor (my first experience in that role) of the papers delivered at the June 2017 AADAS conference held at Fulton, Illinois. The fifteen articles, co-edited by Donald Luidens and David Zwart, appeared in June 2019 under the title *Dutch Muck – and Much More* (with a subtitle indicating that most of the contents have to do with the immigrants and agriculture). The volume was published just in time for the June 2019 biennial conference of the AADAS held at Calvin College. In some ways, it is easier – logistically at least – to do the work of editing alone rather than as a troika (as the experience of the Romans and the Soviets with troikas suggests), having to coordinate the job with two other people (even ones

who are easy to work with). In any case, my piece on Rev. Hendrik George Klijn (1793–1883), the (temporary) cofounder in 1857 of the Christian Reformed Church, made its appearance in this volume. I attempted to explain Klijn’s erratic career, if not to rehabilitate the man entirely.

In August 2018, several of us Van Raalte Institute members participated in an academic conference in Pella, Iowa, marking the sesquicentennial of the death of the community’s founder, Hendrik Peter Scholte (1805–1868). My contribution was to review Eugene P. Heideman’s recently published, fine volume on Scholte’s theology, with an oral response from the author himself.

Early this year, I prepared a paper, delivered at the June 2019 AADAS conference at Calvin College, on the attitudes toward public and Christian primary schools in Orange City, Iowa, during the early decades of the Dutch settlement there (beginning in 1870). I am currently preparing these materials for inclusion in a volume containing the conference papers to be published in 2020, with colleague Donald Luidens as the lead editor.

Finally, in regard to literary production, I wrote two articles in 2018 for a forthcoming three-volume encyclopedia *American Religious History: Belief and Society through Time*, edited by Gary Scott Smith, to be published by ABC-CLIO. I submitted 2,000 words (unfortunately, I was only allowed that many!) on “Predestination” and 1,250 words on “Eugene Carson Blake,” – two quite diverse subjects, on the whole, – but both (once) associated with Presbyterianism (my background).

I continue to serve on the board of the Dutch Reformed Translation Society (composed of RCA, CRC, Protestant Reformed, and Puritan Reformed members), which oversees the editing and publishing of English translations (from Dutch and Latin) of Reformed theological and devotional classics of the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries. Our major project right now is preparing for the press the magnum opus of Petrus van Mastricht’s multi-volume “theological and practical theology”; he was a major influence on Jonathan Edwards.

I evaluated anonymously a manuscript (on early Sioux County, Iowa, politics) sent to me for possible publication in *The Annals of Iowa*. I have also occasionally helped my VRI colleagues (and others) periodically

with genealogical questions involved with their work. Finally, my wife and I have kept our contacts with the Old World fresh by visiting family and friends in the Netherlands – three times in the past year and a half – not to mention a trip to visit our son and his family in Japan in early 2019.

### *An excerpt*

#### **“Predestination,” by Earl Wm. Kennedy**

Centered in New York and New Jersey, the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church (now the Reformed Church in America) endorsed the Canons of Dort in 1792 but without its sections rejecting the “errors” of the Arminians. The denomination suffered two secessions, one in 1822, when the True Dutch Reformed Church left because of the main body’s seeming tolerance of Hopkinsianism, and one in 1857, when the (future) Christian Reformed Church, composed of recent Michigan immigrants, left because of perceived laxity in the older, Eastern part of the church, such as fellowship with non-Calvinist denominations; the new body restored Dort’s Rejection of Errors parts. The (German) Reformed Church in the United States endorsed the single predestination of the Heidelberg Catechism.

# Henk Aay



A rich palette of academic opportunities again came my way during the last year and a half. I had the opportunity to conduct research, finish a book manuscript, write several articles, plan an academic conference and the institute's twenty-fifth anniversary, strategize with other stakeholders about the future tasks of Dutch Heritage and Dutch American studies in North America, give lectures and presentations, lead two educational tours in the Netherlands, and make progress on the Dutch American mapping project.

For my contribution to the festschrift for Jack Nyenhuis, I was assigned the rewarding task of delving into and writing about the entire sweep of Jack's life and career; this reconnaissance greatly increased my appreciation of his gifts and accomplishments and is fitting knowledge for me to take into the future of the institute. The AADAS (Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies) conference on Dutch Americans and education, scheduled for June 2019, gave me the opportunity to read and research the history of Reformed Dutch day schools in North America in conjunction with my Dutch American mapping project on this Christian school system. Contrary to a generally held view, Reformed Dutch American/Canadian Christian day schools have been—more or less—a continuing part of the Dutch American presence in North America from the beginning in New Netherland (1621-64). I presented the results of this research at the AADAS conference in mid-June 2019 and will prepare this material for the volume of conference papers to be published by the Van Raalte Press in 2020.



I was also asked to make several other presentations based on my research and areas of interest: a talk on Dutch water management to the seniors at Shawnee Park CRC in Grand Rapids on January 25, 2018; a seminar for the Geography Department at Calvin University on Feb. 9, 2018, on Dutch immigrants' perceptions of the natural environments of America; and several short introductory talks about my "Atlas of Dutch American History and Culture" project. My manuscript, "American Eyes on the Netherlands. Film, Public Diplomacy, and Dutch Identity, 1943–1974," delayed too long by other projects and commitments, should be published in 2020.

Together with Nella Kennedy and Don Luidens, I served on an ad hoc planning committee to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the institute. We had much to celebrate and planned a diverse program of cultural offerings related to the purpose of the institute. I contacted Dutch American painter and Calvin University colleague, Chris Overvoorde, and, together with others, organized an exhibition of his landscape paintings at the Holland Area Arts Council during January and February 2019 entitled, *Seeing Through Dutch Eyes: Landscape Images of Chris Stoffel Overvoorde*. Toward the end of that show, I presented an illustrated lecture at the exhibit: "Chris Stoffel Overvoorde: History Painter of Dutch America, Landscape Painter of the Netherlands and America." This proved to be the last exhibit during Chris Overvoorde's lifetime; he passed away on September 3, 2019.

As past AADAS president, together with the then current president, Herman De Vries, I planned the June 2019 conference at Calvin University on the theme of Dutch Americans and education. A preconference workshop on genealogy and a field trip of Dutch American sites in the greater Grand Rapids area, together with more than twenty-five papers and a keynote address presented at the conference itself, rounded out the conference, with more than eighty-five people in attendance.

Along with other members of the VRI and representatives of other stakeholders of Dutch American heritage institutions in West Michigan, I have participated in a number of meetings initiated by

the New York Dutch Consulate and the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands to strategize about common projects, partnerships, and priorities for heritage work in the Midwest. At the 2019 conference, the AADAS board agreed to organize an inventory of Dutch American archival resources.

I am very grateful that, with my work at the institute, I have been able to keep leading educational tours to the Netherlands. During the spring of 2018, I co-led a Calvin/Witte Travel tour for adults, and during January term 2019, I led a Calvin off-campus course for students.



Both tours focused on the history of Dutch water management and related hydraulic landscapes, but, of course, the contrast of creature comforts between the two trips was very apparent. The tour for adults included a professional driver and luxurious motor coach, restaurant meals, and four-star hotels; the student trip ran on group accommodations (6+ per room), eight-passenger vans driven by the professors, and buffets and sack lunches. The group photo is of the adult tour on the former island of Urk at the monument for fishermen (yes, all men), who over the centuries had lost their lives at sea; in the background are several arrays of wind turbines on land and in water.



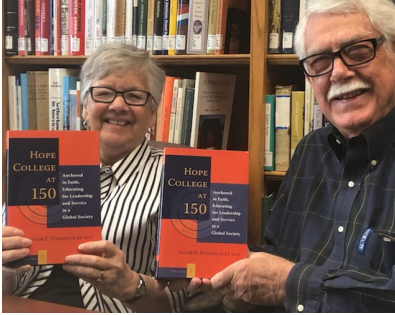
The photos of the student trip are of the thirteenth-century Castle Assumburg in Heemskerk, Noord Holland, where we slept, ate, and attended class before field trips, and of my “leading” a ragged column of students on bikes (no helmets!) through the dunes to the Heemskerk beach on the North Sea on the day we arrived—jetlagged—in the Netherlands. I am scheduled to colead two more Witte Tours to the

Netherlands in 2020: one an AADAS emigration tour and the other a more familiar water management and landscapes tour.

During 2018 and the first half of 2019, several Calvin and Hope students continued to plug away at my Dutch American mapping project, which, in due time, will make an atlas of Dutch American history and culture become reality. The Hope students readied databases for mapping from the yearbook series of the eight different Dutch Reformed denominations in North America and from the directories of Christian Schools International, formerly the National Union of Christian Schools. Calvin students gave this data visual form with maps, graphs, and charts. During the summer of 2019, the VRI provided a grant to hire a student to continue with the mapping of the Reformed Dutch day school data. The next task is to tackle the Dutch Reformed Christian colleges, universities, and seminaries in North America.

Clearly, there is much to do when it comes to Dutch American heritage in North America. It is obvious to me every year that the VRI plays a leading role in advancing Dutch American studies. For me, it is especially gratifying not only to be busy with my own specialized research and writing but also to be aware of and engaged in coordinating and partnering with the larger network of scholars, heritage workers, officials and administrators, archives, and institutions. The recent initiatives of the Dutch government in this regard are very welcome.

# Jacob E. Nyenhuis



*Jack and Lee celebrate the release of  
Hope at 150*

In July 2017, I returned to the role of director of the Van Raalte Institute when Dennis Voskuil took up an appointment as interim president of Hope College. In May 2018, I was surprised and honored to receive a festschrift from my colleagues, edited by Don Luidens and JoHannah Smith. In August 2018, I attended the Scholte Conference in Pella, Iowa, which had been organized by honorary research fellow George Harinck and for which the institute was a cosponsor. In June 2019, I attended the AADAS Conference at Calvin College, where I maintained a book table for the Van Raalte Press throughout the conference.

The year 2018 and the early months of 2019 were devoted primarily to the completion of *Hope College at 150: Anchored in Faith, Educating for Leadership and Service in a Global Society* (Holland, MI: Van Raalte Press, 2019). Readers of our annual reports will know that I had been engaged in this project for many years, but the intensity of the work increased tremendously in the last year or so of the project. Along the way, I also gave multiple presentations on the first twelve presidents of Hope College. In September 2019, the Historical Society of Michigan presented to me a State History Award for *Hope College at 150*; the award was presented at the State History Conference in Ludington.

As editor-in-chief and publisher for the Van Raalte Press, I continue to work with the general editor of the Historical Series of the

Reformed Church in America, confer and correspond with current and potential authors, and review manuscripts. Elsewhere in this report there is an account of all the publications by the Van Raalte Press since I founded it in 2007. I also had an oral interview in two sessions regarding the history of the Classics Department at Stanford University during the mid-1950s to the early 1960s.

I serve as the secretary of the Dutch-American Historical Commission and am a member of the Dutch Heritage Day Committee. In 2018 I joined the Emeritus Board of the Michigan Humanities Council. My community service has been devoted primarily to my home congregation, Fourteenth Street Christian Reformed Church, where I continue as pulpit supply coordinator and serve on the pastoral transition team.

### *An excerpt*

#### **“The Architecture of Hope,” ch. 4, *Hope College at 150*.**

A college begins with an idea, a vision, but the translation of that idea into reality requires both people and buildings. When Rev. Philip Phelps Jr., DD, in 1862 conceived the idea of Hope College, he was the principal of Holland Academy. He was living and teaching in what is now known as Van Vleck Hall but at the time was simply a beautiful brick building atop a knoll on the neatly fenced campus of sixteen acres; it overlooked the town and had a partial view of the harbor. Holland Academy had evolved in 1857 from Pioneer School, which had begun in the Orphan House in 1851. Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte and his wife, Christina de Moen Van Raalte, had donated an initial five acres in 1858 for Holland Academy and an additional eleven acres in 1860. Both Pioneer School and Holland Academy were secondary schools: elementary education was provided by the public school. The academy served as a “literary institution” providing an education for Dutch immigrant youth. The construction of the future Van Vleck Hall for Holland Academy signaled a new degree of permanence

for this young institution. This building initially served as both a residence for the principal and his family and a dormitory for the students; it also contained lecture rooms, a reading room/library, a refectory, and a chapel.

Over the past 150 years, the campus has expanded exponentially from the original five acres on which Van Vleck Hall was built. Its eastern gateway now is located at the corner of Fairbanks Avenue and Eighth Street, but parts of the campus extend well east of Fairbanks, wrapping around the northern portion of Pilgrim Home Cemetery on Sixteenth Street. The campus spreads out over more than 150 acres, filling most of the area between Central and Fairbanks Avenues and between Eighth and Fifteenth Streets. The college also either owns or has long-term leases on buildings as far west as the corner of Ninth and River, and it has a nature preserve of almost sixty acres located about five miles from the campus (see separate entry). From the first permanent building (Van Vleck Hall: 8,000 square feet), the college properties have grown to nearly sixty major buildings, plus about eighty cottages and small apartment buildings used as student residences. Excluding the leased properties, the total square footage of all these buildings is 1,897,517. Although President Phelps had a grand vision for Hope College—and for Hope Haven University as the umbrella for it and other institutions—and Van Raalte had high hopes for this fledgling institution in the community that he had founded in 1847, neither of them could have imagined the breadth and scope of Hope College in 2016.





# *Chronology*

## *1994-2019*

### *History of the Van Raalte Institute*

**Jacob E. Nyenhuis**

On the ensuing pages, I provide a chronology of the first twenty-five years of the Van Raalte Institute to demonstrate how its evolution over these years has fulfilled the founding vision for the institute. The progress of the institute from a desk in the corner of the retired faculty office in Van Zoeren Hall to a suite of offices at 100 East Eighth Street, and finally, to a separate building at 9 East Tenth Street represents very significant growth. It was accompanied by an expansion of staff from one person—Founding Director Elton J. Bruins—to eight research fellows, an editorial associate/office manager, six honorary research fellows, annual visiting research fellows, and one or two student research assistants annually.

An important part of the institute's history is linked with the Joint Archives of Holland (JAH), which has shared the Theil Research Center (TRC) with the institute since 2004. The JAH was established in 1988 as a joint venture of Hope College, Western Theological Seminary (WTS), and the Holland Historical Trust (HHT), which serves as the repository of the records of the city of Holland, as well as those of the Holland Museum. Previous efforts to create this entity had twice failed, but the construction of the Van Wylen Library (opened in January 1988) and a new organizational idea finally made it possible. The acquisition of a separate building at 9 East Tenth Street by Hope College in 2002 laid the foundation for the creation of the TRC in 2004.

At the dedication of the TRC, I cited some of this history. I also recounted a conversation that I had had with the late Willard C. Wichers in 1981 or 1982, when we were walking across Centennial Park from city hall, following a meeting of the mayor's Netherlands-American Bicentennial Commission, which was planning for the bicentennial of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between our two nations. As we talked about our shared vision for joining all the local archives into a single entity, I introduced the idea of having a separate building not only for scholarly research but also to be "an attractive place where the general public could come to learn more about our community's history." I pointed at the Ottawa Savings and Loan building on the south side of Tenth Street at Central Avenue: "Now that would be an ideal spot for our research and information center, wouldn't it?" We agreed that it would be, because of its proximity to the college, the seminary, city hall, Herrick Library, and the Netherlands Museum.<sup>1</sup> But the TRC eventually found its home on the north side of Tenth Street near Central Avenue, in a different building owned at that time by Ottawa Savings and Loan.

That vision might never have become a reality if Elton Bruins had not set forth his own vision for bringing the institute and the JAH together in one facility. When Dr. Henri Theil read Elton's statement in the December 1998 issue of *News from Hope College*, he immediately telephoned Elton to endorse the idea. In March 2000, during my visit with Dr. and Mrs. Theil in St. Augustine, Florida, Dr. Theil made a verbal commitment to provide the necessary funding for this joint venture. Just over three years after Henri Theil's death in August 2000, Mrs. Theil telephoned me to inform me that she was moving out of their condominium on St. Augustine Beach and donating it to Hope College in fulfillment of that commitment.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> AR 2004-5, 11-12.

<sup>2</sup> By this time, the HHT had withdrawn from the JAH and had removed their and the city's archives from the JAH, which now houses the collections of Hope College and WTS.

## *Chronology of the Van Raalte Institute<sup>3</sup>*

### **January 1993**

Peter H. Huizenga presented to Hope College president John H. Jacobson shares in Waste Management Inc. for the endowment of a new research institute to be named the A. C. Van Raalte Institute for Historical Studies. This gift was made in honor of Peter's mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Bovenkerk Huizenga.

### **April 1993**

Elton J. Bruins, the Everett J. and Hattie E. Blekkink Professor Emeritus of Religion at Hope College, is appointed director of the new research institute.

### **January 1994**

Bruins begins work at a desk in a corner of the retired faculty office in Van Zoeren Hall at Hope College.

### **March 1996**

The Van Raalte Institute moves into a suite of offices at 100 East Eighth Street, containing five offices, a staff room, and a reception area; furnishings and equipment for this new home for the institute were provided by a major gift from Peter H. Huizenga. A library with a focus on Dutch American studies is established with Bruins' collection as its core; it grows to "about 700 books and pamphlets" by fall of 1997.

### **May 1996**

Robert P. Swierenga, professor emeritus of history at Kent State University is appointed A. C. Van Raalte Research Professor at the Van Raalte Institute and adjunct professor of history at Hope College.

### **1996**

Jeanne M. Jacobson is named senior research fellow of the Van Raalte Institute and adjunct professor of education at Hope College.

### **November 1996**

Bruins and Swierenga promote international collaboration by participating in "Sharing the Reformed Tradition," a conference held at Vrije Universiteit (Free University; hereafter, the VU) of Amsterdam; sponsored by both the Historical Documentation Center at the VU and the Roosevelt Study Center (RSC) in Middelburg, the conference was organized by George Harinck (the VU) and Hans Krabbendam (RSC), who would both become increasingly engaged with the institute in ensuing years.



*Elton J. Bruins*



*Robert P. Swierenga*



*Jeanne M. Jacobson*

<sup>3</sup> *This summary draws heavily on the annual reports of the Van Raalte Institute, as well as personal files of the author. Direct quotations in this chronology are drawn from those annual reports. The source of information for individual entries will be given only if it is based on a document other than an annual report.*

**1996-97**

Elisabeth Dekker serves as full-time translator for the institute and completes a draft translation of Henry Elias Dosker's biography of Van Raalte, *Levensschets van Rev. A. C. Van Raalte, D.D.: Een Man Krachtig in Woorden en Werken (1893)*; she also serves as receptionist until February 1997.

**1 May 1997**

A nine-foot bronze statue of Van Raalte is dedicated in Centennial Park as part of the city's sesquicentennial. Participants were Elton Bruins, who delivered the invocation; Holland mayor Albert H. McGeehan; President Jacobson; Peter Huizenga, who spoke on "The Donor's Vision"; and Provost Jacob E. "Jack" Nyenhuis, whose address was titled "A Monument More Enduring Than Bronze." Nyenhuis had been charged with the responsibility of commissioning and overseeing the completion of the Van Raalte sculpture project funded by Huizenga, and professor Billy Mayer (art/sculpture) assisted in the process; their guide was Bruins' copy of a photograph of a maquette of Van Raalte by sculptor Leonard Crunelle of Chicago for an unfulfilled commission in 1922. Nyenhuis and Jeanne Jacobson collaborated on *A Dream Fulfilled: The Van Raalte Sculpture in Centennial Park*, of which a special leather-bound version was presented to Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on October 2, 1997. A plaque in honor of the occasion was unveiled by Princess Margriet. A twenty-seven-inch bronze maquette of this sculpture was given to the institute for its permanent collection.

**June 1997**

The institute cosponsors and cohosts the biennial conference of the Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies (AADAS), "The Sesquicentennial of Dutch Immigration: 150 Years of Ethnic Heritage."

**August 1997**

James C. Kennedy joins the faculty of Hope College as assistant professor of history and research fellow of the institute.

**September 1997**

Karen G. Schakel is appointed as secretary and receptionist of the institute; her position would soon evolve into office manager and editorial assistant.



*Princess Margriet of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and P. J. Huizenga '97 unveiling the plaque*



*James C. Kennedy*



*Karen G. Schakel*

**Fall 1997**

Simone Kennedy, working on a contract basis, becomes the official translator for the institute. The stated goal of Elton Bruins was “to have all major Van Raalte documents accurately translated so that future students and scholars will not be hampered in their research by a lack of knowledge of the Dutch language.”

**Fall 1997**

The first *Annual Report of the A. C. Van Raalte Institute for Historical Studies* is published, covering 1996-97, as well as the history of the origin and development of the institute. (The next AR announced that, at the suggestion of Peter Huizenga, “for Historical Studies” was deleted from the name of the institute.) From the very beginning, the annual reports have included a record of presentations and publications by the members of the institute staff during the period covered by that report.

**1998**

Rev. William Buursma, a retired CRC minister, is recruited to translate selected church records written in Dutch.

**1998**

Graduate students from the Netherlands and Japan spend time at the institute while conducting research for their graduate degrees.

**July 1998**

Bruins is one of the first two recipients of a Friends of History Award from the HHT.

**1998**

The Van Raalte Institute announces its first website: hope.edu/vri.

**May-August 1999**

James Kennedy serves as visiting research fellow of SISWO (Netherlands Institute for the Coordination of Social Scientific Research), in Amsterdam.

**November 1998**

Bruins receives the Heritage Award at the Dutch-American Heritage Day Dinner.

**May 1999**

Bruins receives the President’s Award at the “Midwest Archives Conference,” which covers twelve Midwest states.



*Elton receiving the President’s Award*

**1999**

Judith Scholte, a graduate student at the University of Utrecht, spends five months at the institute as a visiting researcher, working on post-World War II Dutch immigration to the United States.

**1999**

Nella Kennedy, former instructor in Dutch and art history and archivist at Northwestern College (Iowa), begins work as a translator for the institute.

**1999**

Earl Wm. “Bill” Kennedy, professor emeritus of religion at Northwestern College, becomes a consultant to the institute and undertakes editing the translation of the minutes of the Classis of Holland, 1858-76; that project evolves into a major commentary on the minutes, 1848-76 (see 2018 entry below on its publication).

**9 June 2000**

Swierenga is honored with being named a Knight in the Order of the Netherlands Lion by Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Kingdom of the Netherlands; the knighthood was conferred on the queen’s behalf by Gilbert Monod de Froidville, the Dutch consul general in Chicago (the following day was Swierenga’s 65th birthday). The knighting of Swierenga coincided with the conference, “The Dutch American Experience,” organized in his honor by his former students, Hans Krabbendam and Larry J. Wagenaar, and the presentation of a festschrift to him.

**August 2000**

Descendants of Albertus C. and Christina de Moen Van Raalte gather for a four-day family reunion; family members come from across the country and as far away as Vienna, Austria. The VRI’s assistance in this effort led to the temporary loan of the letters of Julia Gilmore Van Raalte (wife of Ben) to the institute for photocopying. A second family reunion would be held the following year.

**2000**

Henry ten Hoor, professor emeritus of English, is listed among the translators for the VRI, with a focus on hundreds of files in Bruins’ collection of photocopies of the Van Raalte Papers.

**2000-2001**

Rev. Michael de Vries, recently retired pastor of Pillar Church, is in residence at the institute while working on the history of the first fifty years of Pillar Church (1847-97); Eric Ketelaar, professor of archivistics at Leiden University, and George Harinck, director of the Archief-en-Documentatiecentrum van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, Kampen, and staff member of the Historisch Documentatie-centrum voor het Nederlands protestantisme (1800-present) of the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, present guest lectures under the sponsorship of the VRI.



*Early student research assistants, l-r: Ramona Fruja (2000-2001), Essy Sakala (1997-2000), Vicky Dryfhout (summer 2000), Michelle Lubbers (1999-2001)*

**September 2001**

Jacob E. Nyenhuis, professor of classics and provost emeritus at Hope College, is named senior research fellow of the VRI. The writing of a centennial history of Fourteenth Street CRC (organized June 1902) is listed as his first task. Bruins presciently states: “We anticipate that his next project will be to research and write a history of Hope College” (AR 2001); that prediction was fulfilled in 2019.



*Jack Nyenhuis*

**2001**

The AR 2000-2001 includes, for the first time, individual reports from staff members on their work during the preceding year. This would become a standard feature of all subsequent annual reports.

**23 May 2002**

Bruins is honored by a “Resolution in Recognition of the Contributions of Dr. Elton J. Bruins to the Dutch-American Historical Commission” and is declared member emeritus of the Dutch-American Historical Commission.

**July 2002**

Nyenhuis becomes director of the institute.

**2002**

James Kennedy announces his acceptance of an appointment to a professorship at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, effective in 2003; he will take a leave of absence of at least two years from Hope College and the institute. A farewell luncheon was held in May 2003.

**November 2002**

Swierenga’s *Dutch Chicago: A History of the Hollanders in the Windy City* (Eerdmans) is released; it becomes the publisher’s best seller in December 2002 and is issued in a revised edition in 2005, with a third reprinting in 2011; its sales ultimately exceed five thousand copies.



L-r: *Jack and Lee Nyenhuis, James Kennedy, and Elaine Bruins at the farewell luncheon for James on May 13, 2003*

### **2003**

A new Visiting Research Fellows (VRF) program is approved in January. J. L. “Hans” Krabbendam, assistant director of the Roosevelt Study Center, Middelburg, Zeeland, the Netherlands, and Lynn Winkels Japinga, associate professor of religion at Hope College, are named the first VRFs; both are in residence during the first semester of academic year 2003-4. A requirement for each is the delivery of a public lecture on work completed during the fellow’s tenure, to be followed by publication in pamphlet form. (See the separate listing of all VRFs elsewhere in this annual report.)

### **January 2003**

Nyenhuis’s *Myth and the Creative Process: Michael Ayrton and the Myth of Daedalus, the Maze Maker* (Wayne State University Press) is published, and the DePree Art Gallery hosts an exhibition of the work of Michael Ayrton to celebrate its publication.

### **May 2003**

Swierenga is honored by Calvin College as a distinguished alumnus.

### **December 2003**

Donald J. Bruggink, the James A. H. Cornell Professor of Historical Theology Emeritus at WTS and general editor, Historical Series of the RCA, is named senior research fellow. As founding general editor of the Historical Series, Bruggink had guided forty-two books into print over the previous thirty-five years. Over the next fifteen years, he would bring another fifty-two books into print.

### **December 2003**

Bill Kennedy, professor of religion emeritus at Northwestern College and a specialist on church history in America in the nineteenth century, is named senior research fellow.

### **December 2003**

*Albertus and Christina: The Van Raalte Family, Home and Roots*, by Elton J. Bruins, Karen G. Schakel, Sara Fredrickson Simmons, and Marie Zingle, is published (Eerdmans).

### **23 January 2004**

Celebration of the tenth anniversary of the institute includes the appointment of Bruins as the Philip Phelps, Jr. Research Professor at the Van Raalte Institute, and trustee Peter Huizenga, patron of the VRI, is honored with the presentation of a bronze statuette of Van Raalte, created as a model for the sculpture in Centennial Park in 1997.

### **16 May 2004**

Bruggink receives an honorary doctor of divinity degree from his alma mater, Central College; in 2004, he coauthors *By Grace Alone: Stories of the Reformed Church in America* (Eerdmans).



### August 2004

Dean L. Overman ('65) is named visiting senior research fellow. A retired lawyer and former professor at the University of Virginia, he was previously a visiting scholar at Harvard University and a Templeton Scholar at Oxford University. He is currently working on a book on Christian ethics.

### August 2004

The AR 2004 is dedicated to Associate Provost Alfredo M. Gonzales, who had worked with Bruins in the establishment of the institute and supervised the work of the institute for its first decade.

### September 2004

The institute moves into the new Henri and Eleonore Theil Research Center (TRC) at 9 East 10th Street; the JAH would join the VRI a month later. The TRC is named in honor of Dr. and Mrs. Theil. An eminent economist who founded the Econometric Institute in Rotterdam in 1956, Dr. Theil served as a professor at both the University of Chicago (1965-81) and the University of Florida at Gainesville (1981-94) and authored seventeen books and about 250 articles in professional journals. Shortly before his death in 2000 at age seventy-five, he and Mrs. Theil made the commitment to fund a building at Hope College to house both the VRI and the JAH.

### 25 October 2004

The TRC is dedicated with Mrs. Theil in attendance, along with one of Dr. Theil's former research assistants, professor Jesse I. Vorst of the University of Manitoba. The ceremony included the unveiling of a plaque honoring Henri and Eleonore Goldschmidt Theil, designed by Gretchen K. Schmidt '05. The program booklet for this event includes information about Dr. and Mrs. Theil, the history of the building, and the history of the Van Raalte Institute.



*Maria and Alfredo Gonzales with Jack at a lecture dinner celebration*



*The Elton J. Bruins Library*



*Unveiling the plaque, l-r: Gretchen Schmidt, Mrs. Theil, and John Norden*



*L-r: Geoffrey Reynolds, Jack Nyenhuis, Mrs. Theil, and President Bultman after the dedication ceremony*



### *Henri and Eleonore Theil: A Brief Biography*

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

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, and 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 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 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.

**5 February 2005**

Members of the institute are saddened by the death of Hope president emeritus John H. Jacobson, husband of senior research fellow Jeanne M. Jacobson; President Jacobson also had played a key role in the establishment of the institute.

**June 2005**

James Kennedy, having already spent two years as professor of contemporary history at the Free University of Amsterdam, resigns as research fellow of the VRI and as associate professor of history at Hope College.

**14 October 2005**

A portrait of Van Raalte, painted in 1896 by Joseph Warner of Holland (cf. *Holland City News*, 13 March 1896) and restored by Kenneth B. Katz of Conservation and Museum Services in Detroit, with funding from Hope College trustee Peter H. Huizenga, is officially unveiled.



*Peter Huizenga and Jack Nyenhuis  
unveil restored Van Raalte portrait*

**March 2006**

The institute receives a \$10,000 grant from the Netherland-America Foundation for the establishment of the Netherland-America Foundation (NAF) Visiting Research Fellowship; the goal of this new program is to strengthen international understanding and collaboration by annually bringing Dutch scholars to the institute.

**April 2006**

WTS assigns custody of Victorian furniture from the Van Raalte home and family to the institute. This furniture is on permanent display in the TRC.

**15 June 2006**

Erasmus University Rotterdam's celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Econometric Institute by Henri Theil and Jan Tinbergen included the announcement that an endowed professorship was being established in honor of Dr. Theil. The first recipient of the Henri Theil Chair is Sir Clive W.J. Granger, Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences (2003) and professor emeritus, University of California, San Diego.

**7 September 2006**

Jan Peter Verhave, a biomedical researcher and esteemed parasitologist from Radboud University Medical Center, Nijmegen, the Netherlands, begins his tenure as the first NAF visiting research fellow, working on his research project, “Health and disease among Dutch immigrants in the 19th century.”

**6 June 2007**

Bruins is surprised by the presentation of a festschrift, *A Goodly Heritage: Essays in Honor of the Reverend Dr. Elton J. Bruins at Eighty*, ed. Jacob E. Nyenhuis (Eerdmans), at a dinner on the eve of the 2007 AADAS conference.

**7-9 June 2007**

Hope College and the VRI host the sixteenth biennial AADAS conference, “Dutch-American Arts and Letters.”

**2007**

Nyenhuis becomes the founding editor-in-chief of the Van Raalte Press (VRP), a division of Hope College publishing; its purpose is to promote appreciation for Dutch American heritage and local history by publishing pamphlets, monographs, and books written by members of the institute and VRFs (see list of publications elsewhere in this annual report). The logo for the press is designed by Derek Nevenzal, student of Judy Hillman, the Howard R. and Margaret E. Sluyter Associate Professor of Art and Design.

**15 January 2008**

Peter Ester, professor of sociology and director of the Institute for Labor Studies at Tilburg University, the Netherlands, and the 2007-8 NAF visiting research fellow, is appointed adjunct research professor of the institute, with the approval of Hope provost James N. Boelkins.

**2008**

Van Raalte Press publishes *Dutch-American Arts and Letters in Historical Perspective*, edited by Robert P. Swierenga, Jacob E. Nyenhuis, and Nella Kennedy, as the first in an ongoing series of AADAS conference papers; VRP is asked by AADAS to be the official publisher of the conference papers in the future.

**29 January 2009**

Jeanne Jacobson, senior research fellow since 1996 and editor of the annual reports for about a decade, passes away at her home in Sarasota, Florida.

**February 2009**

George Harinck (VU University Amsterdam), Hans Krabbendam (Roosevelt Study Center), and Jan Peter Verhave (Radboud University) are all named honorary research fellows.

**June 2009**

Bruggink is honored with a Festschrift presented to him at the 2009 General Synod, *Tools for Understanding: Essays in Honor of Donald J. Bruggink*, ed. James Hart Brumm.

**July 2009**

*Aunt Tena, Called to Serve: Journals and Letters of Tena A. Huizenga, Missionary Nurse to Nigeria* (Eerdmans), edited by Nyenhuis, Swierenga, and Lauren Berka '08, is published; Tena Huizenga was the aunt of Peter Huizenga, whose father maintained weekly correspondence with his sister in Nigeria, providing her with a lifeline to her family and her congregation in Chicago; the book was presented by Nyenhuis and Swierenga at the Huizenga Family Reunion at Bay Harbor Resort, in Petoskey, Michigan, on August 14.

**11 August 2009**

The VRI is one of five founding members of the Dutch Heritage Coordinating Council (DHCC), whose mission is “to provide a forum to further the preservation and promotion of Dutch Heritage in the Greater Holland/Zeeland Area.” Nyenhuis represents the VRI on this council, and Bruins and Nella Kennedy are also founding members.

**October 2009**

Planning begins for the celebration in October/November 2011 of the bicentennial of the birth of Van Raalte; Nyenhuis and Harinck serve as cochairs of the planning committee for a bilateral international conference, with Harinck responsible for the second phase, in Ommen, Overijssel, where Van Raalte served as pastor 1839-44.

**December 2009**

Nella Kennedy is named senior research fellow and official translator of the VRI.

**9 December 2009**

Karen Schakel passes away after a short illness.



L-r: Peter and Karen Schakel, Bill and Nella Kennedy, Lee and Jack Nyenhuis, Erma and Don Bruggink, Bob and Joan Swierenga, Elton and Elaine Bruins, George and Willa Brown



Student research assistants *Laura Shears '09* (Jan. 2007-9) and *Lauren Berka '08* (2006-9); both of them assisted Jack Nyenhuis on his architectural history of *Hope College*, but Berka also played a major role in the *Aunt Tena* project



*Nella Kennedy*

**5 April 2010**

JoHannah Smith '83 joins the VRI as office manager and editorial assistant, later project editor.



*JoHannah Smith*

**June 2010**

Jack Nyenhuis meets with the organizing committee for the Ommen, Overijssel, phase of the anticipated 2011 Bilateral International Conference celebrating the Bicentennial of the Birth of Albertus C. Van Raalte.



*Nyenhuis at a meeting in June 2010 in Landgoed Het Laer, Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, with the organizing committee for the Van Raalte Bicentennial Conference to be held in Ommen in November 2011; l-r: George Harinck, Leon van den Broeke, Jack Nyenhuis, Peter Ester, Gerrit te Rietstap, Hans Krabbendam*

**2010**

James Kennedy, former research fellow (1997-2005) and dean of University College, Utrecht University, is named honorary research fellow.

**13 August 2011**

Eleonore A. Goldschmidt Theil passes away at her home in St. Augustine, Florida, at age eighty-nine.

**21-25 October 2011**

The DHCC, with leadership from members of the institute, puts on the ACVR200 Founder's Festival for the community, with a rich diversity of activities in recognition of Van Raalte's legacy, including programs at the Holland Area Arts Council, the Holland Museum, and Herrick District Library; concerts featuring Dutch composers and Dutch songs, presented by the Holland Symphony Orchestra and the Holland Chorale; and an organ concert at Dimment Memorial Chapel. An original play about Van Raalte and his establishment of the *kolonie* was commissioned by the museum: *Vision of a New Life*, by Max Bush, was presented several times to large audiences.

### 24-25 October/3-4 November 2011

The VRI hosts the “Bilateral International Conference in Celebration of the Bicentennial of the Birth of Albertus C. Van Raalte (17 October 1811).” The conference begins in Graves Hall at Hope College and concludes at Landgoed Het Laer, Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands. Funding is provided by donations from five individuals and foundations, raised by Peter Huizenga, and grants from the Netherland-America Foundation and the American Embassy in The Hague.

Hans Heinsbroek, consul general of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Chicago, and J. P. “Ko” Scheele, Alderman of the village of Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, give opening remarks at Hope College, and four Dutch scholars join Van Raalte senior research fellows and other scholars in presenting a rich array of papers on Van Raalte and his influence. Gerrit te Rietstap, secretary, Stichting Van Raaltehuis, gave a “Report on the Van Raalte House Project in Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands.” Some 150 people were in attendance during the two-day conference at Hope.

The Ommen phase of the conference had 110 people in attendance. During this conference, a duplicate cast of the maquette for the Van Raalte sculpture in Centennial Park was presented to the city of Ommen, Overijssel, with Wethouder (alderman/council member) J. P. “Ko” Scheele accepting the sculpture on behalf of Ommen. The interim Burgemeester (mayor), Marriet Mittendorf, joined the conferees at a reception at Landgoed Het Laer. The AR 2011-12 is replete with photographs from and narrative about this conference. That same report also includes an extensive list of publicity about the conference and the Van Raalte Bicentennial, with over forty articles in newspapers and magazines on two continents.



*Cast members of the play, Vision of a New Life, by Max Bush, assembled in Herrick District Library on October 18, 2011*



*Performance of "Vision of a New Life"*



*Rev. Chris De Vos, pastor of Pillar Church, who led the ACVR 200 worship service on October 23, 2011, with Njenhuis*



*Balloons at the doors of Graves Hall at Hope College, welcoming guests to the conference*



*James E. Bultman, president of Hope College, offering introductory remarks*





*Les Hoogland (l), mayor of Zeeland, Michigan, presenting a gift to Ko Scheele, of Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands*



*Rev. Gerrit and Janet Sheeres with senior research fellow Donald J. Bruggink at a reception at the home of Jack and Lee Nyenhuis*



*Conference cochairs Nyenhuis and Harinck at the opening of the second stage of the conference held at Landgoed Het Laer in Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, on November 3, 2011*



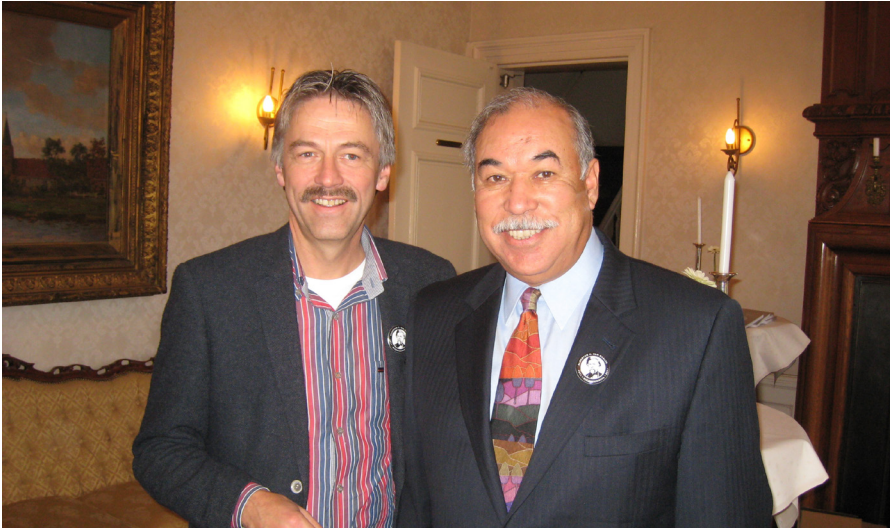
*Landgoed Het Laer*



*Elton Bruins responding to a paper at the Netherlands conference*



*Unveiling of a copy of the maquette for the Van Raalte sculpture in Centennial Park, Holland, Michigan, presented to the city of Ommen: Gonzales and Nyenhuis, Hope College, with members of the Stichting Van Raaltheuis (Van Raalte House Foundation)—l-r: Gerrit te Rietstap, G. J. Hesselink, and B. Dunnevind—November 3, 2011*



*Jan Heijink, chair of the Stichting Van Raaltehuis, with Gonzales at Landgoed Het Laer*



*Former visiting research fellow, Leon van den Broeke (l), with Gerko Warner, author of *Door het Venster van . . . Albertus Christiaan van Raalte: Het Leven van een Afgescheiden Dominicee op de Kaart* (Through the Window of . . . Albertus Christiaan Van Raalte: Mapping the Life of a Seceder Minister) (Hardenberg, NL: Heijink, 2011)*



*Senior research fellow Nella Kennedy at a reception at Landgoed Het Laer with her sisters, l-r: Ank, Else, and Sabien*



*Senior research fellows Earl Wm. and Nella Kennedy and former NAF visiting research fellow Peter Ester, coeditors of American Diary of Jacob Van Hinte, with l-r: Dorine E. G. Van Hinte-Rustavijk, Jan E. Van Hinte, Aaltje (Ada) Kästein-Van Hinte, and J. M. (Monique) Van de Horst-Van Hinte, in front of Landgoed Het Laer, Ommen (Jan is the nephew of Jacob Van Hinte and keeper of the Van Hinte diary; Dorine is his wife; and Monique, their daughter, transcribed the diary. Aaltje is the sister of Jan)*

**2011**

*Envisioning Hope College: Letters Written by Albertus C. Van Raalte to Philip Phelps Jr., 1857–1876*, edited by Elton J. Bruins and Karen G. Schakel, who had passed away before the final copying editing could be completed, is published jointly by Van Raalte Press and Eerdmans.

**7 May 2012**

Bruins is honored by WTS with a Distinguished Alumnus Award.

**21 September 2012**

Nyenhuis presents a copy of *Faith, Family, and Fortune: Reformed Upbringing and Calvinistic Values of Highly Successful Dutch American Entrepreneurs* (VRP, 2012), by former NAF visiting research fellow Peter Ester, to His Excellency Rudolf Simon Bekink, Netherlands Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to America, at the embassy, where Ester also delivered a public lecture.



*Nyenhuis (right) presents a copy of Faith, Family, and Fortune to His Excellency Rudolf Simon Bekink (center), ambassador from the Netherlands to the United States; author Peter Ester is on the left*

**Summer 2013**

Philip VanderMeer, associate professor of history at Arizona State University, is in residence as a visiting scholar.

**1 September 2013**

Henk Aay, professor emeritus of geography and environmental studies and Meijer Chair Emeritus at Calvin College and VRF of the institute in 2012-13, is named senior research fellow.

**September 2013**

Sander deHaan, professor of German and Dutch at Hope College, begins a two-year term as research fellow on a fractional-time basis.

## 2013

The Commission on History of the RCA establishes a new Congregational History Series, with the Van Raalte Press as the official publisher. The first volume in this series is John D. Cox's *The City in Its Heart: The First 100 Years of Maple Avenue Ministries, Holland, Michigan, 1913–2013*. Now a joint ministry of the RCA and the CRC in North America, Maple Avenue Ministries began as a daughter church of Fourteenth Street CRC, where Rev. Peter A. Hoekstra, grandfather of Bob Swierenga, was pastor. Swierenga's *Faithful Witness: A Sesquicentennial History of Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Holland, Michigan, 1865–2015* appeared in 2015 as no. 3 in the series.

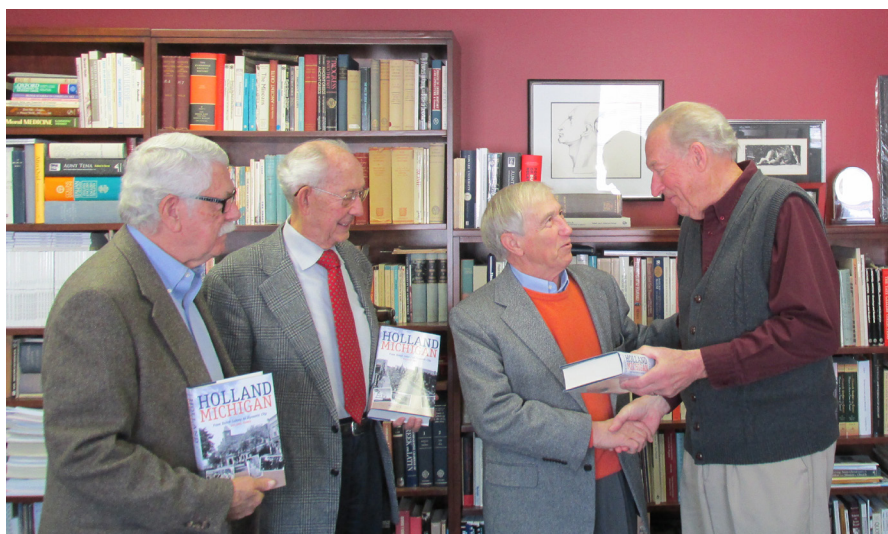
## January 2014

Celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the VRI begins with a colloquium by Michael Douma, former research assistant and former VRF and then current assistant professor of history at James Madison University: the focus of his lecture is on documents in the Van Raalte collection of Rev. Dr. Melis "Mees" te Velde, rector magnificus of Kampen Theological Seminary (Vrijgemaakt), including a 434-page handwritten copy by Jan van Baalen of Van Raalte's "Compendium (Handbook) of Church History," i.e., his class notes for his course on church history for students at the seminary in Ommen and, later, Arnhem (with his brother-in-law, Anthony Brummelkamp).

During the first two decades of the institute, members (and a few VRFs) have collectively published thirty-seven books and more than two hundred articles and reviews.

## January 2014

The three-volume, *Holland, Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City*, by Robert P. Swierenga (VRP/Eerdmans), is published.



*Jack Nyenhuis and Don Brugink look on as Bob Swierenga presents his history of Holland to Peter Huizenaga*

#### April 2014

*The Enduring Legacy of Albertus C. Van Raalte as Leader and Liaison*, edited by Nyenhuis and Harinck (VRP/Eerdmans), is published.



*Don Bruggink, Wm. B. Eerdmans Jr., and Jack Nyenhuis celebrate joint publication at book signing event for Enduring Legacy and Holland, Michigan*

#### 8 May 2014

Joan Swierenga, wife of Bob Swierenga, passes away at age seventy-nine.

#### 9 May 2014

Nyenhuis presents copies of *Holland, Michigan* and *Enduring Legacy* to His Excellency Rudolf Simon Bekink and to the Honorable Klaas van der Tempel, consul general of the Netherlands, Chicago, during a luncheon hosted by Hope president John C. Knapp.



*Participants in the luncheon (l-r): Nathan Bocks, City of Holland; Charles Mason, Director and Margaret Feldmann Kruizenga Curator, Kruizenga Art Museum; Jacob E. Nyenhuis, Director, Van Raalte Institute, and Provost Emeritus, Hope College; Hon. Klaas van der Tempel, Consul General, Kingdom of the Netherlands, in Chicago; President John C. Knapp, Hope College; His Excellency Rudolf Simon Bekink, Ambassador to the United States from the Kingdom of the Netherlands; Hon. Kurt Dykstra, Mayor of Holland, MI; (unidentified); Greg Maybury, Director of Operations, Hope College; Gwen Auwerda, Executive Director of Tulip Time; Mrs. Anneke van der Tempel; Mrs. Kelly Knapp.*



**2014**

The VRP receives a new logo, designed by professor Stephanie Milanowski (Art Department, Hope College, and recipient of many design awards). By this time, the VR Press has published twelve books, including four jointly with Eerdmans. *Holland, Michigan* and *Enduring Legacy* are among these joint publications.



**July 2014** Dennis N. Voskuil, the Marvin and Jerene DeWitt Professor Emeritus of Church History, past president at WTS, and former professor of religion at Hope College (1977–94), is named senior research fellow.



*Dennis Voskuil*

**September 2014**

Swierenga's *Holland, Michigan* receives a State History Award from the Historical Society of Michigan at the annual "State History Conference," held at Ferris State University in Big Rapids.



*L-r: Lee and Jack Nyenhuis, Bob Swierenga, Jan and Anthonia (Toos) Boersema, and Henk Aay*

**2014**

The VRP publishes the first book by a scholar not directly connected with the institute: Stephen I. Hemenway's *Hope Beyond Borders: The Life and Letters of Paul Fried*. Hemenway is professor of English at Hope and has been the director of the Vienna Summer School (VSS) since 1976; Fried (1919–2006) was a professor of history at Hope (1953–84), founding director of the VSS (1956–76), and founding director of international education at Hope (1956–81). Hemenway spent a sabbatical working in the Reading Room of the JAH researching the papers of Fried.



*Hemenway book-signing event, l-r: Steven Hemenway, Marc Baer, Peter Schakel, and Bob Swierenga*

**2015**

A new office is created in the TRC to house senior research fellow Henk Aay.



*Original display area renovated into new office space for Henk Aay*



**July 2015**

JoHannah Smith is promoted to editorial associate and office manager

**1 September 2015**

Voskuil becomes director of the VRI.

**January 2016**

Donald A. Luidens, Hope professor emeritus of sociology and VRF in 2014–15, is named senior research fellow of the VRI.



*Don Luidens*

**1 July 2017**

Voskuil becomes interim president of Hope College for a two-year term and Nyenhuis reassumes the role of director during Voskuil's absence.

**22-24 September 2017**

The institute cohosts the 143rd annual “State History Conference,” organized by the Historical Society of Michigan. Members of the institute and the JAH are actively involved as presenters (Nyenhuys and Reynolds) and keynote speaker (Swierenga; also preconference tour leader).

**14 November 2017**

Nyenhuys receives the Leadership Service Award at the Dutch-American Heritage Day Dinner.

**November 2017**

The institute welcomes the Honorable Louis W. M. Piët, consul general of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Chicago, and his wife, Dyonne Steijns, as well as Joost Taverne, cultural attaché of the Kingdom of the Netherlands posted in New York.



*Peter H. Huizenga  
(1939–2018)*

**2 May 2018**

Peter H. Huizenga passes away.

In Memoriam and Obituary published in the 2017 annual report

### ***In Memoriam***

The work described in the pages of this annual report would not have been possible without the ongoing strong support of Peter H. Huizenga, who endowed the VRI as a research institute dedicated to honoring the memory and vision of the Reverend Albertus C. Van Raalte, DD, founder of the city of Holland and cofounder of Hope College.

Throughout our history, Peter Huizenga has taken a keen interest in the research and writings of our members, often providing additional financial support to enable us to sponsor conferences and to publish our work. He commissioned the publication of the journals and correspondence of his Aunt Tena: Jacob E. Nyenhuis, Robert P. Swierenga, and Lauren M. Berka, eds., *Aunt Tena, Called to Serve: Journals and Letters of Tena A. Huizenga, Missionary Nurse to Nigeria* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009). He supported and raised funds for the celebration of the bicentennial of the birth of Albertus C. Van Raalte, with conferences at Hope College and in Ommen, Overijssel, the Netherlands, in 2011, and he underwrote publication of the papers from those conferences. Peter's latest commission was for Robert P. Swierenga to write the history of Timothy Christian Schools, nearly finished at this writing. His generosity was exceeded only by his enthusiasm for the work of the fellows of the Van Raalte Institute; he often remarked that its establishment was his most important contribution during his long service on the Hope College Board of Trustees.

It is therefore with great sadness and a deep sense of loss that we report the passing of Peter H. Huizenga, on May 2, 2018. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to his cherished wife of fifty years, Heidi, and their four children and their families. We also extend our sympathy to Peter's siblings: Sue and Herm Kanis, Virginia "Ginger" and James Jurries, and J. C. and Tammy Huizenga. We publish this annual report *In Memoriam* to Peter, with love and gratitude.

Peter H. Huizenga Sr. (14 March 1939 – 2 May 2018)

### *Obituary*

Peter H. Huizenga, age 79, of Oak Brook, Illinois, died on Wednesday, May 2nd, and was received into glory by his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He was the loving husband of his cherished wife, Heidi, for fifty years. Peter loved his children: Betsy (Dave) Bradley, Greta Huizenga, Peter Jr. (Abby) Huizenga, and Tim Huizenga. His ten grandchildren include Elizabeth, Matthew, William, and Michael Bradley; Soleil and Noah Huizenga Giesen; and Hally, Hope, Peter III “Tripp” and Hannah Huizenga. Peter also had four siblings: Sue Kanis, Virginia “Ginger” Jurries, John Charles “J. C.” Huizenga, and the late Elizabeth “B. J.” Buntrock.

Peter Huizenga was born in a Dutch community outside Chicago in 1939 to a family of garbage haulers. As a child during summers he worked on a garbage truck from 2 a.m. until noon every day. It is this background where he learned the value of hard work and the power of friendship, faith, and determination.

After graduating from Hope College, he was a captain in the US Army Reserve and then attended the University of Illinois Law School. Huizenga practiced law at the firm of Hlustik, Huizenga, Williams, and Vander Woude. In 1968 Peter joined his family’s garbage business, which evolved into Waste Management Inc. and became a Fortune 500 company. At Waste Management he served as a director for thirty years, held various officer roles, and helped take the company public in 1972. Waste Management was the largest waste disposal company in the world. Peter was an early investor in Blockbuster Video and many other businesses. He was very active with Big Shoulders Fund, Timothy Christian Schools, Christ Church of Oak Brook, Trinity Christian College, Elim Christian Services, Hope College, Boy Scouts of America, and many other organizations.

Of his father, PJ said: “I am incredibly fortunate to have had a mentor, friend, and father all in the same man. He loved his family, faith, and making a difference in people’s lives through philanthropy and business pursuits.”

A memorial service was held on May 8, 2018, at Christ Church of Oak Brook, Illinois, and gifts were recommended for this church and for Timothy Christian School.

**30 June 2018**

On his eighty-ninth birthday, Bruggink concludes a fifty-year tenure as founding general editor of the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America; he had seen ninety-four books (97 individual volumes) into print during that time. The institute honored him with a celebratory dinner and the presentation of a special citation to mark this significant occasion.



L-r: Jack Njenhuis, JoHannah Smith, Don Bruggink, and Don Luidens with the citation presented to Don Bruggink

**14-16 August 2018**

The institute cosponsors the H. P. Scholte Sesquicentennial Conference held in Pella, Iowa, organized by George Harinck.

**July 2018**

The three-volume *A Commentary on the Minutes of the Classis of Holland, 1848-76: A Detailed Record of Persons and Issues, Civil and Religious, in the Dutch Colony of Holland, Michigan*, by Earl Wm. Kennedy, is published (VRP).

**27 November 2018**

A six-month celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the institute begins with a reception in the TRC, during which there is a premiere showing of a new video, *A Celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Van Raalte Institute*, produced by Phil Blauw, in collaboration with Derek Emerson and Don Luidens. Activities also include the dedication of the institute's library as the Elton J. Bruins Library, with the unveiling of a new plaque on the door; in honor of our founding director, who at ninety-one was still able to be present for the celebration. All the events of the celebration were planned and organized by a committee consisting of Nella Kennedy, chair, Henk Aay, and Don Luidens.



Elton being interviewed by Frank Kraai in Dimment

**11 January to 27 February 2019**

Exhibit, *Seeing through Dutch Eyes: Landscape Images of Chris Stoffel Overvoorde*, at the Holland Area Arts Council, cosponsored by VRI as part of the twenty-fifth anniversary.

**11 January 2019**

Opening reception for the exhibit.

**26 January 2019**

*The Diary of Christina Van Raalte: Fact or Fiction*, a reader's theater by Nella Kennedy, presented by staff of the institute in conjunction with Hope College's annual Winter Happening.

**26-27 January 2019**

Four performances of a revival of *Vision of a New Life*, by Max Bush (see p. 63)

**20 February 2019**

Lecture by Henk Aay, “A Geographer Looks at Dutch Landscape Paintings,” cosponsored by the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals and Hope College Retirees.

**27 April 2019**

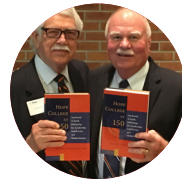
The final event in the six-month celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the institute was marked by the release of *Hope College at 150: Anchored in Faith, Educating for Leadership and Service in a Global Society*, by Jacob E. Nyenhuis *et alii* (VRP), at the luncheon for the Fifty-Year Circle of the Hope College Alumni. Presentations were made by Nyenhuis and coauthors Alfredo Gonzales, Thomas Renner, and Bob Swierenga. This two-volume, 1410-page book was later nominated for and awarded a State History Award, presented to Nyenhuis at the annual “State History Conference” in Ludington, in September 2019.

**August 2019**

Voskuil rejoins the VRI as senior research fellow.

**1 October 2019**

Luidens assumes the role of director of the VRI; Nyenhuis continues as editor-in-chief of the Van Raalte Press.



*Jack Nyenhuis presents  
HC:150 to Dennis Voskuil.*

## Honorary Research Fellows

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### *Jan Peter Verhave*

In June I presented the Kilian Lecture at the University of Amsterdam on Paul de Kruif and Yankee Dutch. A summary appeared in the newsletter of the Meertens Institute (Royal Academy of Sciences), July 5th. Meanwhile, correction work of the manuscript of *A Constant State of Emergency* has been done, as well as work on the design of the cover and blurbs for the back cover.



### *Paul Heusinkveld*

During the last year, I have been working on a number of projects. I completed the biography of Eleanor Calverley, the first woman doctor to Kuwait. She was a missionary in the Arabian Mission and served in Kuwait where my parents also were missionaries. I served two tours with the Department of State at the US Embassy in Kuwait and heard many stories of this courageous woman. It is my goal to retell her inspiring story as a means of reconciliation between East and West and between Kuwait and the United States, as well as serving as inspiration for young women who are looking for role models.

For two years I've been working with Margaret Doorenbos (who lives in Freedom Village) to document her life and career as a missionary in Arabia and Africa. Harvey (a surgeon) and Margaret (a teacher) Doorenbos graduated from Hope College and were colleagues of my parents in the Arabian Mission. I have worked with Margaret to compile her letters—from thirty-four years in the mission field—into a book. This work has required significant rewriting, associated research, revisions, and drafts to prepare it for publishing. I have also drawn four maps and prepared photographs for inclusion in the book. The book is intended to celebrate these lives dedicated to making the world a better place.



I continue to work on preparing Harvey Staal's translation of the Arabic Bible for publication. This rare Arabic book (a single copy exists at St. Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai) was written in 867 AD and has the potential to provide new insights into Christianity. Staal's translation was published in 1984 in a small publishing run; thus the book is virtually unavailable and is in a format that makes difficult reading. My goal is to reformat the text and add pictures, maps, and appendices that will make it much more readable and that this additional content will add historical and cultural context to this rare document. I have been working on this project for over eight years.

In August 2019, I began a project to digitize the *Field Reports* of the Arabian Mission that began in 1890. The VRI recently acquired a complete set of these extremely rare documents. The reports are too fragile to be used by the public; thus I am scanning and digitizing them and then using optical character reading software to turn them into editable text. The intent is to make the reports available for study by academics, as well as the general public. The reports provide a unique documentation of the history and culture of the Arabian Gulf region.



# ***Student Research Assistants***

1994–2019

## **1994–2003**

Karsten Voskuil  
Elisabeth Dekker  
John Krueger  
Seth Bruggers  
Jodie Grabill  
Theresa Hansen  
Esnart “Essy” Sakala  
Nathan Klay  
Michelle Lubbers  
Vicki Dryfhout  
Ramona Fruja  
Christina Van Regenmorter

## **2013–2019**

Stephanie Rogers  
Mackenzie Schumborg  
Rebekah Llorens  
Annika Gidley  
Cullen Smith  
Fred Ottensmeyer  
Isabelle “Izzy” Rembert  
Megumu Jansen

## **2003–2013**

Cindy Bachhuber  
Erica Heeg  
Michael Douma  
Daniel J. Carter  
Lauren Berka  
Shea Tuttle  
Laura Shears  
Kimberly Boyd  
Brigid Maniates  
Rachel Syens  
Anthony Bednarz  
Kara Robart  
Conner Mulcahy

# *Books and Monographs Published by the Van Raalte Press 2007–2019*

## **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)
- Douma, Michael J. *Dutch Americans and the Rise of Heritage Studies* (2011)
- Van Den Broeke, Leon. “Pope of the Classis”? *The Leadership of Albertus C. Van Raalte in Dutch and American Classes* (2011)
- Zwart, David. *Preachers, Pews, and Pupils: Commemorating the Past in Twentieth-Century Dutch America* (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 Kolonies in Wisconsin and the East* (2012)
- Nauta, Rein. *Hope: The Legacy of Van Raalte* (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)
- Cox, John D. *The City in its Heart: The First 100 Years of Maple Avenue Ministries, Holland, Michigan, 1913 - 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)
- Luidens, Donald A. *Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Hate: A Love Story* (2016)
- Schafer, Robert. *Sheet music for I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes. Sesquicentennial Anthem* (2017)
- Aay, Henk, Janny Venema, and Dennis Voskuil. *Sharing Pasts: Dutch Americans Through Four Centuries* (2017)
- Luidens, Donald A., and JoHannah M. Smith. *Jack: A Compassionate Compendium. A Tribute to Dr. Jacob E. Nyenhuis, Scholar, Servant, Leader* (2018)
- Schaaf, Kenneth A. *In Peril on the Sea: The Forgotten Story of the William & Mary Shipwreck* (2018)
- 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*, 3 vol. (2018)
- Nyenhuis, Jacob E. *et alii. Hope College at 150: Anchored in Faith, Educating for Leadership and Service in a Global Society*, 2 vol. (2019)

**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)
- Swierenga, Robert P. *Holland, Michigan: From Dutch Colony to Dynamic City*, 3 vol. (2014)
- Heideman, Eugene P. *Hendrik P. Scholte: His Legacy in the Netherlands and in America* (2015)

### **Van Raalte Press Forthcoming**

Baer, Marc and Allison Utting. *Making Music: Hope College's Music Department, A History* (2020)

Renner, Tom. *In Pursuit of Excellence* (2020)

Swierenga, Robert P. *His Faithfulness Continues: A History of Timothy Christian Schools of Chicagoland* (2020)

Verhave, Jan Peter. *A Constant State of Emergency: Paul de Kruif, Microbe Hunter and Health Activist* (2020)



*Descendants of A. C. Van Raalte, l-r: Paul Winter and Linda Sharp, Rich and Cathy VanderBroek, Paul Tracy Fredrickson and Carrie Andrews, John and Sara Fredrickson Simmons, Gretta Kleis and Roger Straze, Charlie and Laura VanderBroek*

# *Publications, Presentations, Awards* 2018–2019

## **Publications**

“Dutch Immigrants and Nature: Environmental Observations in Letters from Dutch Pioneer Settlers in the United States.” In *Dutch Muck—and Much More*. (Aay)

“Synopsis of a Remarkable Career.” In *Jack: A Compassionate Compendium*. (Aay)

*Guilt, Grace, and Gratitude, A Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism*, ed. Donald J. Bruggink (Reformed Church Press). A reprint by the Historical Commission of the RCA in honor of my fifty years of service as General Editor of the Series. (Bruggink)

*Dutch Muck—and Much More: Dutch Americans in Farming, Religion, Art, and Astronomy*, edited by Earl Wm. Kennedy, Donald A. Luidens, and David Zwart. Van Raalte Press, 2019. (Kennedy and Luidens)

“John Henry Vanderpoel—Who?” In *Dutch Muck—and Much More*. (N. Kennedy)

“The Path to Zuidlaren” and “If Only . . . or Aristophanes Hi-Jack-ed.” In *Jack: A Compassionate Compendium*. (N. Kennedy)

“Introduction and Notes on Contributors.” In *Jack: A Compassionate Compendium*. (Luidens)

*Jack: A Compassionate Compendium. A Tribute to Dr. Jacob E. Nyenhuis, Scholar, Servant, Leader*, ed. Donald A. Luidens and JoHannah M. Smith, Van Raalte Press, 2018. (Luidens)

*Hope College at 150: Anchored in Faith, Educating for Leadership and Service in a Global Society*, by Jacob E. Nyenhuis *et alii* (Holland, MI: Van Raalte Press, 2019); lead author: introduction, chapters on the academic program (115 pages), architecture (305 pages), and diversity (coauthor, 138 pages), plus many of the twelve appendices; editor, 1378 + xxxii. (Nyenhuus)

“Changes and Complications: Holland’s 1867 Charter,” *Chronicle of the Historical Society of Michigan* (Summer 2019). (Swierenga)

“Dutch on the Muck: Celery Cropping in Michigan and Elsewhere.” In *Dutch Muck—and Much More*. (Swierenga)

### **Presentations**

“Chapters in the History of Reformed Dutch Day Schools in North America, 1638–2018: A Cartographic Survey.” Paper presented at the 2019 AADAS conference at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI, June 12–15, 2019. (Aay)

“Chris Stoffel Overvoorde: History Painter of Dutch America; Landscape Painter of the Netherlands and America.” Presentation to the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals (HASP) and Hope College Retirees at the Holland Area Arts Council as part of the Van Raalte Institute twenty-fifth anniversary celebration, Feb. 20, 2019. (Aay)

“A History of Water Management in the Netherlands.” Presentation to the senior citizen group of Shawnee Park CRC in Grand Rapids, January 25, 2018. (Aay)

“Dutch Immigrants in American Natural Settings: Environmental Observations from Letters 1835-1860.” Presentation to the Geology, Geography, and Environmental Studies Department at Calvin College, Feb. 9, 2018. (Aay)

“Diversity at Western Theological Seminary, 1866–2019.” A paper delivered at the AADAS Conference at Calvin College, June 2019. (Bruggink)

“Ocean Monitoring and Surveillance.” Lecture to HASP, November 27, 2018. (Heusinkveld)

“Ocean Monitoring and Surveillance.” Lecture at Holland Professional Club, January 3, 2019. (Heusinkveld)

“Elephant Baseball.” Lecture at Fourteenth Street CRC in Holland (for Sunday school), January 13, 2019, and at Third Reformed Church in Holland (Young Hearts group), June 27, 2019. The talk covered my years as a missionary child in Arabia and India. (Heusinkveld)

“When Science and Politics Clash. Lecture to HASP, January 22, 2019.  
(Heusinkveld)

One of four presenters of missionary stories at a dinner at Hope Church in Holland, with over sixty people in attendance, August 14, 2019. (Heusinkveld)

“Middle East: Regional Disorder.” Lecture at HASP on the political turmoil in the Middle East, October 14, 2019. (Heusinkveld)

Explained my *Commentary* to the faculty and students of the Theological School of the Protestant Reformed Churches, Wyoming, Michigan, March 6, 2019.  
(E. W. Kennedy)

Wrote and directed a Christmas play for third to fifth graders at Third Reformed Church, Holland, MI, December 2018. (N. Kennedy)

*The Diary of Christina Van Raalte: Fact or Fiction*, a play, written by Nella Kennedy, performed at Hope College’s Winter Happening, January 26, 2019. VRI readers: Nella Kennedy, Bill Kennedy, Don Luidens, Jack Nyenhuis, and JoHannah Smith, with PowerPoint assistance by Paul Heusinkveld.  
(N. Kennedy)

“Profiles of Hope College Presidents from 1866 to 2016,” Presidential Search Committee, March 26, 2018; Hope College Board of Trustees, May 3, 2018.  
(Nyenhuis)

“Twelve Presidential Eras at Hope College: 1866–2016,” Hope College Alumni Association Board, October 19, 2018. (Nyenhuis)

“History of Twelve Presidential Eras at Hope College,” First Year Seminar, taught by Prof. Dawn DeWitt-Brinks, November 20, 2018. (Nyenhuis)

“Overview of *Hope College at 150*,” Hope College, Fifty-Year Circle Luncheon, April 27, 2019. (Nyenhuis)

“Native Americans in West Michigan.” Presentation for Daughters of the American Revolution, Holland Chapter, Feb. 8, 2018. (Swierenga)

“Heideman’s Provocative Interpretation of the Secession of 1834.” Paper presented at the “Scholte’s Legacy” conference, Pella, Iowa, Aug. 17, 2018, based on Eugene Heideman, *Hendrik P. Scholte: His Legacy in the Netherlands and America*. (Eerdmans 2015) (Swierenga)

**Interview**

“The 25th Anniversary of the Van Raalte Institute,” on WHTC Morning News, November 26, 2018. (Nyenhuis)

**Awards**

Named General Editor Emeritus by the Historical Commission of the Reformed Church in America, *2018 Acts and Proceedings of the General Synod*, p. 278. (Bruggink)

“Tribute to Rev. Dr. Donald J. Bruggink, by members of the Van Raalte Institute, June 30, mmxviii.”

*Holland, Michigan: From Wilderness to World-Class City*: Holland Film Group documentary film, with premier screenings at the Knickerbocker Theater in Holland, November 2017, was awarded Best Documentary by the Historical Society of Michigan, Sept. 21, 2018. I was one of two historical advisors on the two-year film project. (Swierenga)

State History Award for *Hope College at 150: Anchored in Faith, Educating for Leadership and Service in a Global Society*, Jacob E. Nyenhuis *et alii* (Van Raalte Press, 2019), September 27, 2019, at State History Conference in Ludington. (Nyenhuis)



# *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

*Dutch Entrepreneurship: Spirit or Ideology?* (2004)  
Hans Niemantsverdriet, Amsterdam

*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)  
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* (2013)

Henk Aay, Calvin College

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

Eugene Heideman, RCA staff member, retired

*“We made the Wilderness to Blossom”: Nineteenth Century Dutch Immigrants and the Natural World* (2015)

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

*Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Hate: A Love Story (Begins)* (2016)

Don Luidens, Hope College

*A Japanese and a Dutchman in Science: Stories of a Dramatic Disaster* (2017)

Jan Peter Verhave, Radboud University, Nijmegen, NL

*Plugging in the Electric Church: Robert Schuller, the Crystal Cathedral and Entrepreneurial Evangelicalism* (2018)

Mark Mulder, Calvin College

*Eleanor Calverley, First Doctor to Kuwait: Celebrating 100 Years of Kuwait-American Friendship* (2018)

Paul Heusinkveld, Honorary Research Fellow

*Paterson, New Jersey: Dutch Immigration’s Largest Afterthought (1846–1950)* (2019)

Robert Schoone-Jongen, Calvin University

*The Pull at Hope College: Then and Now, 1898–2018* (2019)

Bruce Geelhoed, Ball State University

*Patriots and Internationalists: Dutch American Religion and Global Consciousness in the Late 19th Century* (2019)

Andrew Klumpp, Southern Methodist University

## ***Applications Invited Visiting Research Fellows Program for Academic Year 2020–21***

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, each 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.

**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. The NAF Fellowship is intended solely for respected scholars from the Netherlands.

**Application Process and Deadline:** The candidate is to submit a written application no later than 15 January 2020. Further information about expectations, arrangements, and the application process may be obtained from our website at [www.hope.edu/vri](http://www.hope.edu/vri).

# *Van Raalte Institute Staff*

(2018–2019)

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); *Acting Provost* (fall 1989)  
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

Paul Heusinkveld        *Honorary Research Fellow* (2018)  
BA Hope College  
MA studies University of Arizona

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* (2010)  
AB Northwestern College  
MA University of Iowa

Hans Krabbendam     *Honorary Research Fellow* (2009)  
MA Leiden University  
MA Kent State University  
PhD Leiden University

Donald A. Luidens     *Senior Research Fellow* (2016)  
BA Hope College  
MDiv Princeton Theological Seminary  
MA, Rutgers University  
PhD Rutgers University

Jacob E. Nyenhuis     *Editor-in-Chief, Van Raalte Press* (2007); *Director Emeritus, VRI* (Director, 2002–15; Interim Director, 2017–19); *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

JoHannah Smith      *Project Editor and Office Manager* (2010)  
AB Hope College  
MA studies University of Houston

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      *Senior Research Fellow* (2014); *Director* (Sept. 2015–  
16); *Interim President* (July 2017–June 2019)  
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.



