



NEW AMSTERDAM YESTERDAY AND TODAY

New Amsterdam History Center Newsletter – Vol. I No. 2

Letter from the President:

As we connect the past to the present with this, our second newsletter, we wonder what our New Amsterdam predecessors would think if they could view the present-day architecture, dress, culture, and sheer hustle and bustle of humanity in our great city.

Would the 17th-century inhabitants of Manhattan Island be able to comprehend an evolution that produced today's Wall Street and the Financial District on the site where the New Amsterdam trading post once stood? Would they recognize anything about the great avenue of today's Broadway, known then as the Kings Highway? Would they find anything comparable to beaver skins at Macy's or Nordstrom? And what about St. Nicholas dressed in a red suit with white fur?

While we can only speculate on the answer to these questions, I am ready to bet a few guilders that Peter Stuyvesant would be pleased and amazed (after the shock wore off) to see that his village has turned into a premiere global city.

The Trustees of NAHC are very appreciative of the support of our audiences, and especially our members. We will continue to link the past and present as we curate and communicate the New Amsterdam story.

We wish you a Most Wonderful Holiday Season!

JUNE LECTURE AT GOVERNORS ISLAND ON ARCHAEOLOGY OF NEW
AMSTERDAM
By F.J. Sypher





Sun and sea united in a perfect day for the New Amsterdam History Center's event at Governors Island on Friday, June 9, 2017. The centerpiece was a two-part lecture titled "The Archaeology of New Amsterdam and Its Environs," presented by Anne-Marie Cantwell, Emerita Professor of Anthropology at Rutgers University, and by historical archaeologist Diana diZerega Wall, Professor of Anthropology at City College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. The setting was appropriate, since the island was one of the earliest posts of Dutch settlement in New Amsterdam.

Our group assembled at the Battery Maritime Building, 10 South Street, before boarding the 1:00 p.m. ferry to cross the stretch of New York Harbor that separates Governors Island from Manhattan. In attendance among over fifty NAHC members and guests were representatives from the Collegiate Church Corporation including Casey Kemper, Chief Operating Officer; Scott Schechter, Chief Financial Officer; and Libby Tatum, Communications Manager and Executive Assistant. Also in the NAHC group were Kenneth Chase, Esq., a member of West End Collegiate Church; Firth Haring Fabend, author of *New Netherland in a Nutshell*; Andrew Terhune, President of the Holland Society of New York; and the Rev. Rett Zabriskie. Wijnie de Groot, Professor of Dutch at Columbia University, brought about a dozen of her students to join us. In addition, a substantial crowd of tourists and other visitors had gathered to await the call to board the Lt. Samuel S. Coursen for our little cruise.

In the British colonial period Governors Island was officially reserved for the use of the governor, hence the name, and it was often used as a military base. From post-Revolutionary days the historic island was a US Army base until 1966 when it became a Coast Guard installation. For many years it was off limits to the public, except for official visitors. After the Coast Guard left in 1996, there were suggestions that the area might be turned over to private real-estate development with possible construction of a casino. However, in 2003 the US Government transferred Governors Island to New York City and State for one dollar to become a much-visited and much-admired public park, managed by the Trust for Governors Island, with a portion under administration of the National Park Service.

As soon as we got under way we were rewarded with a magnificent view of Bartholdi's Statue of Liberty—properly Liberty Enlightening the World (1886)—westward across New York Bay, while to the east the picturesquely-named Buttermilk Channel divided Governors Island from the Brooklyn shore at Red Hook. For a few glorious moments we felt as if we were sailing the ocean waves, surrounded by sun and salt breeze.

Upon disembarking at Pier 102 after a tranquil voyage of 15 minutes or so, we were led by NAHC Board Member and Society of Daughters of Holland Dames Directress General, Suzanne Roff up to the former Commanding

Officer's Quarters, also called the Admiral's House—a handsome brick building (1843) with a high neoclassic portico. Inside one of the spacious, elegant rooms we found our lecturers getting ready for their presentation. Esme Berg, NAHC Vice President and Executive Director, then greeted everyone on behalf of the New Amsterdam History Center, and NAHC Board member, Professor Patricia Bonomi introduced the speakers.

Diana Wall began by noting that paleo-Indian spear points had been found in nearby regions and that 15,000 years ago the general land area was far more extensive and the shoreline was much further out than it is now. The Native Americans called the island Pagganck, which in the local language meant a place where nuts were found. Translated into Dutch this became Nooten Eylandt ("Nut Island"). One of the island's archaeological sites is a circular area about 35 feet in diameter, where nails and traces of posts have been found, possibly indicating a wind-powered sawmill built by the Dutch. Also found nearby were Dutch trade beads.

Professor Wall mentioned other sites, such as foundation structures in Manhattan for a building dating from around 1697, during the administration of Governor Lovelace. Also, excavations near present-day Whitehall street have located the warehouse of Augustine Heerman or Herman, and unearthed part of a Delft plate, a key, some beads, and other 17th-century items. She mentioned indications that Congolese spiritual rites of African tradition had possibly taken place in that area.

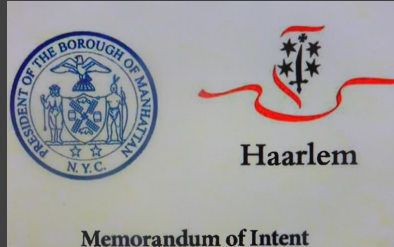
Anne-Marie Cantwell then discussed the archaeological excavation of sites in Indian country outside the immediate boundaries of New Amsterdam, as for example at Maspeth (Queens County), and in Upper Manhattan and Brooklyn. In the absence of a functional image projector, Libby Tatum did yeoman's duty in holding up a laptop screen so the audience could get a glimpse of some of the places being discussed.

Digging at a site in Maspeth dating from 1640 revealed a 17th-century fireplace of yellow brick and a dugout shelter with wood walls 15 feet by 15 feet, similar to shelters found in Albany. Among items recovered were clay pipes, 11 clay marbles, and 38 musket balls in various sizes. The fact that no ceramic ware and no domestic items were found indicates that this was perhaps a trader's hut.

At Inwood, in Upper Manhattan, archaeologists working in the early 1900s near 213th Street and the Harlem River found remains of a house thought to be that of Tobias Teuniszen, who died in the so-called Peach War of 1655, begun after a Dutch settler killed an Indian for taking peaches from his orchard. There was a cellar 13 feet by 16 feet with a fireplace and brick floor. Indian objects were also found at the site. Other sites discussed by Anne-Marie Cantwell were at Gravesend in Brooklyn, where the area included a Dutch family cemetery as well as traces of a large Canarsie Indian settlement.

After a final question period, and closing remarks by Esme Berg, we stepped out into the sunshine to explore the well-kept lawns of Governors Island around the ramparts of Fort Jay (dating from 1794) until time for the next ferry back to Manhattan. We then returned to the 21st-century world of rushing city traffic and rumbling subway trains, although our thoughts were still haunted by faraway visions of life in the early colonial days of New Amsterdam.

Our warm appreciation to Suzanne Roff, Libby Tatum, Esme Berg, and all of the NAHC members who attended for making this event a great success.



Memorandum of Intent

In May 2017, Jos Wienen, Mayor of Haarlem (Province of North Holland, The Netherlands) and Gale A. Brewer, President of the Borough of Manhattan, co-signed a Memorandum of Intent "in order to pursue exchanges, cooperation and understanding in civic affairs." The Memorandum further acknowledged that "The long history of friendship between the United States of America and the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the history between the Borough of Manhattan's Harlem and the Municipality of Haarlem should be the basis upon which a greater relationship will be formed in the name of cultural exchange and economic cooperation. This agreement memorializes our mutual desires to further develop a bond between the communities nestled between the Hudson and Harlem Rivers in Upper Manhattan, and their namesake along the River Spaarne."

I learned of the historic exchange one evening in Harlem, NY, in conversation with Honorable Dolph Hogewoning, Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands shortly before we received copies of *Dutch New York Histories*. We were seated in the auditorium of the New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Harlem makes an ideal book launch for *Dutch New York Histories*, I thought.

Harlem has long been one of my personal favorite Dutch and African walking tours. In 1658, Dutch West India Company Director General Stuyvesant ordered "Company slaves" to clear a way through the Manhattan frontier from *Nieuw Amsterdam* to *Nieuw Haarlem*. By 1660, farms, shops, a tavern, and a church were active in New Haarlem. In 1664, the new government officially named the village Lancaster, but the English name never caught on with the residents of Harlem.

The story of Harlem, NY, is one of hundreds of intriguing tales in *Dutch New York Histories*. As Jennifer Tolsch, one of its four compilers has written, "The support of the New Amsterdam History Center and its members has been invaluable to us, the co-authors and members of Mapping Slavery Project, ranging from research, consulting/advising, project support, and a wide range of resources all needed to complete not only the new book, *Dutch New York Histories*, but also our first book: *Amsterdam Slavery Heritage Guide* Amsterdam." Jennifer is the founder of Black Heritage Tours, New York and Amsterdam, NL.

This interesting book is available at www.LMpublishers.nl or the Schomburg Center gift shop and book stores throughout New York State. I recommend it!

Christopher Moore, NAHC Board member



Dutch New York Histories
Connecting African, Native American and Slavery
Heritage

A Bilingual Guide – English/Dutch

*By Dienne Hondius, Nancy Jouwe, Dienne Stam,
Jennifer Tosch*

Photographs:

#1 - Location: Collegiate Church, NYC

Chris Moore

Jennifer Tosch, Co-author, Founder Black Heritage Tours NY & Amsterdam, NL

Dienne Hondius, Ph.D., Co-author, Asst Professor Vrij University Amsterdam

Gloria Wekker, Prof Emeritus Utrecht University, Netherlands

Esme Berg, Board Member NAHC

Nancy Jouwe, Co-author, Cultural Historian, Lecturer

Dienne Stam, Co-author, Historian

Andrea Mosterman, Ph.D., Asst Prof Univ of New Orleans

#2 - Event/Location: Walking tour with Chris Moore around lower Manhattan, former New Amsterdam

Gloria Wekker

Chris Moore

Jennifer Tosch

Ferida Sedoc, Artist and Designer

#3 - Book signing after the presentation at the Schomburg Center - Aug 3

In the photo from left to right is **Dolph Hogewoning**, Consul General of the Kingdom the Netherlands; **Curtis Archer**, President of the Harlem Community Development Corporation; and **Jos Wiene**, Mayor of Haarlem, Netherlands.

#4 - Event/Location: Dutch NY Histories Book Launch, Schomburg Center - Aug 3

Dienne Stam, Co-author

Dolph Hogewoning, Netherlands Consul General in New York

Nancy Jouwe, Co-author

Dienne Hondius, Co-author

Jennifer Tosch, Co-author

Chris Moore



The New Amsterdam History Center is very pleased to welcome a new member to the Board of Trustees, Tom Vissee, a native of The Netherlands, who moved to New York City in 2014. Active as a transportation planner in his professional life, he spends part of his time enthusiastically tracing the history of the New Netherland settlers. Since 2015 he has been responsible for NAHC's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS

Please support our programs or become a sponsor of one of our events. Members will receive invitations to special members-only events as well as open events.

NAHC is a 501(c)(3) corporation.
All contributions are tax-deductible.

Annual Membership Levels:

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Benefactor \$1,000

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or Esmé Berg
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November 6, 2017

"New Amsterdam in the Dutch Atlantic: A Dialogue About Trade and Entrepreneurship on the World Stage of the Seventeenth Century."

In a dialogue, Historians **Wim Klooster*** and **Dennis J. Maika*** exchanged perceptions on such topics as the operation of state-sponsored commercial monopolies and private entrepreneurship, the impact of "sustained warfare" in the seventeenth century, and the Dutch commercial legacy in the Atlantic World, with special reference to New Amsterdam and early New York.

For future events, please check our website.

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