

Trip to Holland, 29 June to 28 July, 1995

29-30 June. Ann took us to the airport, and we left Edmonton at 10:00 p.m. on AC 850 to London-Heathrow. We slept several hours on the plane and were in reasonable shape for arrival in London, a 3-hour layover, and a 1-hour flight to Amsterdam. By train to Central Station, then by tram 13 to Westermarkt, then on foot for a couple of blocks to Hotel Toren. By that time it was about 6 o'clock, and we were tired. The hotel was comfortable and our room at the back was amazingly quiet, with lots of birds singing in the morning.

1 July. We took the tram to the Rembrandt House, bought a 'Museumkaart' (annual pass, fl 45), walked to the Rijksmuseum and also along the Oudezijds Voorburgwal, the 'red light' district. The sights were interesting but also sad. Some of the entertainment at the Leidseplein was interesting, and the rider of the tall unicycle who also juggled a running chainsaw was good at what he did. We left no money, though.

2 July. We packed our suitcases and stored them in a room downstairs, and went, not to church, but to the Stedelijk (City) Museum of contemporary and modern art (a bit disappointing). We walked past the Anne Frank House, talked to a postcard peddler, and had a late pancake lunch at a place along the Rozengracht. Met an American couple there who had been hopping around western Europe for a week or two. Around 4 we were on the train to Den Haag where, after a bit of hesitation, we took a taxi to Hotel Aquarius. Much easier than carrying our heavy bags. Dixie asked for a seaside room and we settled in a bit, then went to the reception at the Congresgebouw (congress center). The opening ceremonies were over, and some of the food was already gone, but there was enough cheese and drinks left to satisfy us. I recognized almost no one but we did meet Tom Hsiao from Guelph and I talked briefly to Peter Böger from Germany.

3 July. Conference sessions all day. Dixie met up with Andre Geelen, from Napier, New Zealand (of Russian-Dutch ancestry), and we had a very pleasant dinner with him, at the Aquarius. Dixie went to a few places that I cannot remember. We met up with Robert and Roswita Norris, and had lunch with them.

4 July. Breakfast with Tom Phillips from Hawaii. Conference sessions all day. Dixie and Roswita found Het Konstkabinet (159 Noordeinde, Den Haag), the antique shop Dr. Alfred Bader referred to in his talk in Edmonton last winter.

5 July. I got to the Congresgebouw at 7:45 a.m. for the excursion to Wageningen, and came back from there at about 5:45 p.m. It was a good day. Dixie toured Den Haag, and found a few art galleries. One in which the owner told her he had more paintings on the second floor but that she might be a bit shocked by what she would find there. There were a lot of nude males in the paintings, sometimes two male figures in the same painting. The paintings on the main floor were by the same artist but they were totally different, showing perspective by using architectural features such as stairs and pillars. We had dinner at the Carlton Beach restaurant close by. Our waitress was an ex-patriate Calgarian.

6 July. We got up at 4:30 a.m. and I walked Dixie to the 5:00 first tram to Central Station. She had some train problems (no electricity!). She shared a taxi to the other station (Hollands Spoor) but the same problem existed there and, ultimately, the train people put them all in a couple of taxis to Schiphol. She arrived at Schiphol about 6:45, in time

to meet Mom who had a good trip. The train and tram trip back to Scheveningen also was not simple but it all worked. In all the confusion Dixie's train ticket was never punched on either of the trips, and I could use it the next day to travel to Schiphol. Dixie and Mom met me at the conference building at noon, along with Robert and Roswita Norris. We went back to the Carlton Beach for dinner at night. Mom will bunk in with us, on a pull-out bed that was so dusty it had to have clean bedding put on (at 10 at night!), but it all worked fine.

7 July. I left at about 7:30 a.m. for Schiphol to pick up our car, got there at 9:00, and phoned Rijnsburger, earlier than they had expected. Our car was not available yet. In any case, they picked me up, took me to Hoofddorp and, with a minimum of paperwork, gave me a bigger car, a Mazda 626, for a couple of days. Nice car. I was back in Scheveningen by 10:30. We packed up, checked out, and drove to the Mauritshuis for a look at the beautiful paintings there. I went back for the closing conference session at 1:30, and at 2:30 we met Mart and Mieke Jacobs who had driven in from Breda. It was good to meet them. They seem to trust us, and will let us do almost whatever we want at their house.

We left for Nunspeet via a circuitous route, through the Betuwe, then to Rhenen, ate at Veenendaal (good food but twice as much as we needed), and arrived at Nunspeet (Anje van Wouwe, Astridlaan 54 postal code 8072 CW Breda, tel. 03412 53893) about 9 p.m. Anje is all excited (it was also her last day at school) but very hospitable. We talk for quite a while, and she leaves for her friend's place.

8 July. We do a loop drive through Harderwijk, Lelystad, Emmeloord, and back to Nunspeet. We also drove around in Kampen, and looked in vain for the Theologische Hogeschool. Apparently there are several of these, from different denominations. The phone book did not help, and some people we asked, including a taxi driver, also did not know. In the church in the center of town there was a nice organ concert going on, and Mom and I climbed to the organ loft to watch the organist at work. Very old-looking organ, with rattling keys and stops, but the sound was nice.

Grocery buying is a new experience - what do all the meat names mean? We buy some hamburgers and some varkens carbonaadjes [pork chops] and assorted other things. It is hot! Anje has taken us to Cobi's Smiss Mode dress shop and Dixie bought a dress, in a very short time. Anje's place is on a quiet street, and in the morning the birds start singing before it is light outside.

9 July. Mom and I go to church in Nunspeet. Dixie does not feel great with a bad cough and perhaps some asthma problems. The church is full (about 800 of a total membership of some 1800). A good sermon from a young (35?) preacher from Voorthuizen. We did not talk after church, and went home for lunch. In the afternoon we drove to the Kroller-Muller museum at Otterlo, where they had an interesting retrospective show on Charlie Toorop (female painter). Then to Dronkelaar and Terschuur. Wim was just on his way to church, on his bike, and we surprised him and stopped in for a while. Gerrit was there for the day. We had a drink, and went to admire their new house, under reconstruction at Hoevelakenseweg 93. Dixie told them a little lie when they asked if we had eaten, and we went back to Nunspeet for our late dinner. At about 10 the man from Rijnsburger showed up to exchange the Mazda for a blue Peugeot 405. Slightly smaller and a bit less luxurious (no power locks, for example), but plenty of room inside and plenty of trunk space.

10 July. Drove to Joure, visited the 'gemeentehuis (afdeling bevolking, burgerlijke

stand)' [city hall, population department, vital statistics]. We looked at microfiches of old records for Westra or Streekstra, born in 1881, but found none in the half hour we were there. It was warm again, and we had a nice lunch in the shade in the park nearby, then drove on to Uithuizen. The VVV was not very helpful but from their phone book we found a Peter Wierenga on De Laan in 't Lage van de Weg. He referred us to his father, Bernardus Wierenga (brother or uncle to Peter Wierenga in Tucson, Arizona). We stopped there, in the middle of their supper, and talked for about a half hour. He is a farmer ('bouwboer', i.e., land farmer, no livestock), and would have loved to show me his 'bedrijf' [farm]. They are from the 'katholieke kant' [catholic side] and do not seem to be closely related to 'our' Wierenga's. We did the long drive back to Nunspeet in about an hour and a half, and ate our supper at about 10.

11 July. A light day today. We drove to Holten and ate our lunch of 'stokbroodje' and water on a bench in the shade outside the Canadian army cemetery. Dixie said to Mom that she could tell her friends that we provided her only with bread and water for her lunches. Later we visited the 'Paleis Het Loo' in Apeldoorn, and we were back in Nunspeet by about 6. Not too much driving today. It was very hot. At the palace we met a Witte Travel group from Michigan that had just arrived that morning. They were suffering both from the heat and from jet lag. We saw part of a video on the royal family, including the coronation of Beatrix. The Dutch royal family seems to be much more warm and open than the British royal family.

12 July. Today is the day for Amsterdam. We planned to leave at 8:30 but it did not happen until about 9:15. We quickly found the VVV and free parking at the Stadionplein, bought some 'strippenkaarten' [strip tickets] for the tram, and took tram 6 to the Rijksmuseum, where we spent the next couple of hours and had lunch. Then a couple of hours at the Vincent van Gogh museum nearby, and by about 4:30 we were at the Anne Frank house. Mom wanted to read and see everything and we took our time. We ate some good lasagna, cannelloni, and pizza at the Venedik Turkish pizzeria up the street a few blocks (Rozengracht), and then took a canal boat tour while it was still quite light. The tram took us back to the car and we had a peaceful trip back to Nunspeet where we arrived about 10:30. It had been a long day, but the comfortable weather had helped.

13 July. We had a late start after yesterday's long day. Dixie has a hair appointment at 11, picks up her new dress, and we have an appointment with Lamers in Barneveld at 3. Mom and I wander about the busy market in Nunspeet in the morning. We buy some beautiful glads, a bag of strawberries (2 kg?) for five guilders, some peaches, and some pre-cut 'snijbonen'. I talked to some elderly men standing in the shade (waiting for their spouses?). They were very interested in Canada. One offered me some free strawberries (very good, and without 'koper smaak' [copper or money flavour]). I did not get it at first. It is hot again today, about 32 C. We get to Lamers' office by 3:05 - the drive took longer than I expected, and we had to find his place. Mr. Lamers seems to talk as little as possible but he actually is friendly, and occasionally he smiles. In Barneveld there is also lots of market activity. We walk around a bit and go back to Nunspeet for a fruity supper. In the shopping area I met a man with wooden shoes named van de Munt (70). I took his picture and talked to him a bit. 'Ik loop hier al 60 jaar!' [I have been walking around here for 60 years already!]. He seemed to know all about the Nijboer's. 'Ik heb daar nog takkebossen gebracht.' [I used to deliver bundles of wood there]. In the local museum Dixie met the man-in-charge (van de Burgt) who has a son in High Prairie.

14 July. Today we go to Alkmaar for the cheese market, via the Markerwaarddijk, Lelystad, Enkhuizen, and a detour through Andijk. It took about 2 hours to get there. It is a bit late already, but there is still some action, and the market is jammed with zillions of people watching it. We eat our lunch at the Zaanse Schans, in the parking lot. Admission to the place is free but parking costs fl 10 for 3.5 hours. The place is heavily commercialized, and we find it a bit disappointing. Some interesting bits, though. Meanwhile my runny nose that started yesterday has become worse. Dixie gets better, I get worse. We go back to Nunspeet via Amsterdam and freeway. With a half hour of slow traffic it still takes us 1.5 hours. When you are in Nunspeet it hardly seems crowded compared to Alkmaar. It is hard to believe that we have had 30+ C for almost a week now. This morning while driving we had a few thundershowers but by 11 a.m. it was all clear again.

15 July. Our time in Nunspeet is almost up. We visited Pé and Hennie and son Reinout in Garderen, had lunch with them, went to an art rental place in Ermelo with them, and then drove back to Nunspeet to pack up. Our first week in a house is over already. Pé invited us to Hennie's 50th birthday open house on 26 July, and we decided that would be good. He also showed me his GENUS computer program that seems to do a really fine job with the van den Born 'stamboom' [family tree]. He has some 500 people entered, and wants to do about 1200 more. About 2:30 or 3 we left for Breda, and got there about 5:30 (Mart and Mieke Jacobs, Middachtenstraat 17, 4834PB Breda, tel.076 654093). We had a bit of trouble with the directions Mart had given us, but we found it just the same. Everything was in good order. We scouted for churches and found mostly RC but at least one Nederlands Hervormd. Decided to go there tomorrow.

16 July. We went to the Nederlands Hervormde Kerk this morning. It was poorly attended, with almost no young people. Middle-aged guest preacher from Zundert had a fair sermon about Jesus' healing of blind Bartimeus, surrounded by a holiday crowd. After lunch we drove to Vlissingen, Middelburg, Goes, Veere, Zierikzee, and back via the long Zeelandbrug. In Middelburg we had pancakes and poffertjes near the old church. In Veere we walked around town and through the very old church (no longer in use as church). Veere was a busy place with lots of tourists. Phoned and talked to Andy and Joan briefly. Everything OK. We had to go out to eat because yesterday we got back to Breda too late to buy groceries. The 'eet-cafe' in Bavel where we had hoped to eat was closed, so we ate at a pizzeria in town, across from Hotel De Klok (where we had stayed once before). First we sat outside briefly, but a shower sent us inside. On the way home I turned into a one-way street the wrong way (it was dark), and the first car we met was police!. He politely turned us back.

17 July. Off to Delft to find Delft blue. We saw 'De Porceleyne Fles'. Prices on new stuff were high, too high to suit Mom. About the same in another 'blue' place, De Pauw. Not much in the way of demonstrations in either place, and so a bit disappointing. Walked through the Nieuwe Kerk. Afterwards we drove through part of Westland and saw miles of greenhouses (no flowers in the field). Also saw lots of greenhouses from the top of the Naaldwijk Bloemenveiling [flower auction].

18 July. Market day in Breda. Shopping area is like West Edmonton mall with the roof removed. Zillions of people. In the afternoon, we did a quick tour through the Belgian countryside. Houses and farms here are different again. Already it is the last night Mom is going to be here.

19 July. After a quick breakfast we left for Schiphol at about 7:50 am, and arrived at 9:05. Traffic was busy but there were no stops, and no 'files'. Parking at the airport is costly, fl 12.50 for about 2+ hours. Inside we met Tom and Janet and Heather and Ben Greidanus, on their way home. We talked for a while, and they kind of took Mom under their wing for the trip to Edmonton. We drove through Hoofddorp (checked out the way to Rijnsburger), Hillegom, Lisse (no tulip fields) to Katwijk-aan-Zee. Found the raadhuis/gemeentehuis [town hall] and burgemeester [mayor] Boel van Wouwe, via his helpful secretary. Agreed to meet at 3:30 for tea with him and his wife Ineke (and son Alexander). They have been there only about a week so far. Nice people. They gave us a map and some ideas about Zuid-Limburg. By about 6 we were back in Breda.

20 July. It will be hot again today. We left for Maastricht about 9. Temperature in Maastricht was 35 C - hot! We parked underground in the 'centrum' (Onze Lieve Vrouwe garage), convenient and reasonable (fl 2/hour). All automated for paying. After a quick lunch at Vroom & Dreesman, we took a 1.5-hour guided walking tour (VVV). Interesting and pleasant but hot in the sun. The guide's English was quite good but left some gaps here and there. But we were the only walkers so it was OK. We stopped at a painting restoration place (Joanna Hoff), then at the Bonnefanten museum. The latter was new, with some contemporary and old art, a bit disappointing but cool). Then east to the Geuldal via secondary roads, including a stop at the Margraten WWII cemetery for 8300 US war dead. It is one of about 20 such cemeteries in Europe but the only one in Holland. Another sad commentary on the war. This area is a popular camping area. Rolling, hilly, beautiful, hot, hot. We ate a pleasant supper at the 'eet-cafe' De Dolle Leeuw in Wijlre (small town). The freeway traffic back to Breda was light and easy, and it cooled off as the sun went down. Probably only 30 C now. We drove about 400 km today. The house is still quite comfortable, and after a quick shower we slept comfortably and well. The head cold is almost gone now, a good thing after a week.

21 July. Hot again today. We went to the grocery store, did some laundry at home, and stayed inside all afternoon to read and watch TV. It was more comfortable inside than out.

22 July. We cleaned up, packed up, returned the keys to the neighbours, and left for Kinderdijk at about 10:30. Overnight the shelter in the community garden area nearby had been set on fire and had burned down. I went to see it - a sad scene. In the Kinderdijk area we walked along the stream, looked at the mills - about 15 were turning. We climbed to the top inside one of the mills. Interesting, especially since the mill was going and everything in the top moved. About 4 we arrived in Terschuur, at Wim and Hennie's place. Wim had been working hard in the garden at their new place. We returned Hennie's rain suit and gave Wim some copies of photos of our grandparents, had a beer, talked a while, and then drove to Utrecht for a nice meal at a restaurant at water's edge in the old 'binnenstad' [inner city] near the Dom. Interesting places. The buildings were old warehouses where, in earlier times, barges were unloaded for the merchants' places above. Water's edge was one level below street level. Wim paid the bill. Thank you!

23 July. All of us went to church in Zwarteboek. The church was fairly well filled. The sermon was OK but at the time of writing (August 5) I don't remember much of it. I also don't remember what we did in the afternoon. We phoned Elaine briefly from Wim and Hennie's place. She was glad to hear from us. In the afternoon Wim phoned Reina but

it was not possible for her to come and visit. At night (6:30) Wim and I went to church again ('op de fiets'). It was not as full this time. Ds. Welbedacht from Barneveld preached. On the way back we stopped at the Terschuur cemetery (Leemweg) and looked at Oom Jan and Oom Jaap's graves and Gerbrand's grave. Also the grave of a girl who had ridden her bike in front of a truck driven by Jaap (in 1992). Sad situations.

24 July. We drove to Arnhem, saw some art (including paintings by Salvador Dali) at a show in Muis Sacrum and visited a couple of antique shops, including one run by Peter Van Os, a relative of Robert Vanderleelie in Edmonton (Vanderleelie Gallery). Shopping in Arnhem took too long, and I was put out that we did not have enough time for the Airborne Museum in Oosterbeek. It also did not help that we missed a turn-off in Arnhem and took a while to get ourselves back on the right track. It was too late to go to the museum, but we did stop at the Airborne cemetery and briefly looked for the house where I boarded in 1943-44. Back in Terschuur I talked to Reina on the phone briefly - we could not work out a time to visit them. After supper with Wim and Hennie we went to visit the van der Weijde's in Barneveld, and stayed until 12! As part of the visit we went to the cemetery to look at the Nijboer graves there. They gave us a few old documents that dealt with Dronkelaar farm transactions.

25 July. We went back to Oosterbeek, visited the Airborne Museum and did some shopping. Wim phoned his mother to see if we could visit her, but she was not keen on it so we did not go. After supper we went to Barneveld to a 'beiaard' (carillon) concert. We sat in the garden of Ton Lokker (newspaper photographer) and his wife, met some other people, had some coffee, and enjoyed the concert. Afterward we had a guided tour of the tower and the carillon, and climbed right to the top of the tower (Schaffelaarstoren). Fascinating and interesting. Wim could hardly believe what we had been up to.

26 July. At about 10 we drove to Garderen with Wim and Hennie to celebrate the other Hennie's 50th birthday. Flags and a banner decorated the place. Campers had sung to her at 2:30 a.m. Neighbours also came to celebrate. Met youngest son Tycho and girlfriend Wanda. Son Writsaert was at work. Lots of drink and food. We had a quick look at two shops in Garderen, then went back to Terschuur. Wim had to be a 'vos' [fox] for a young people's event in Ede. We went to Amersfoort and shopped a bit. The carpet place that Dixie wanted to go to (Vincent carpets?) had moved to Naarden-Vesting but Dixie did buy two vases at Rita Pouleijn's Kado Shop next door (Achter de Arnhemse Poortwal 42u, and across from Hotel De Witte and Buddha Restaurant). Then to Barneveld to get some cash from the VSB Bank, plus a stop at the cemetery for some pictures, and to Garderen to shop and check out the market that was to open after supper. We bought some gifts in the shop and at the market, and ate at a small place, Het Smulhuis. The market was disappointing. On the way back we drove through the Zwartebroek farm area a bit via back roads, and also rode Wim and Hennie's bikes for about 3 km.

27 July. We packed up, said our good-byes, and left about 9:30. In Hoevelaken we bought two nice bouquets of flowers to take home with us (fl 23 for the two), then drove to Hoofddorp. Bought gas, shopped a bit in a quite large shopping area in the centrum, and arrived at Rijnsburger at 11:45 as arranged. A quick ride took us to the airport, and we checked in with lots of time for the short flight to London. We had lots of time there, and Dixie volunteered to get bumped. Close to flight time we got a quote of £150 cash plus £350 credit, and decided to take it and stay overnight. About two hours later we

were at the Forte Crest Hotel, in a nice room (but no AC in the hot weather), rested a while, phoned Joan about what had happened, went down for our free dinner, and had a nice walk down the street.

28 July. We went back to the airport on the 9:15 bus after a good breakfast. We could have sold our seats again, at £150 each, but chose not to. We were ready to go home. We were given Executive First Class seats - nice! Very comfortable for the 7.5-hour flight to Toronto. Good thing we had phoned Joan, because Air Canada did not phone her until 4 pm local time (about an hour before our scheduled arrival) and then gave a confused message. In Toronto we had to wait an hour for our bags and only just made it to the Edmonton flight. The flight then was delayed 2 hours because of thunderstorms at Toronto. We were put in Business Class this time (Airbus 320) - good but not as nice as Executive First on a 747. The flight was good, Ann met us and took us home. The flowers had survived the 40 hours or so surprisingly well. We were tired but glad to be home again.