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## NEW AMSTERDAM YESTERDAY AND TODAY

New Amsterdam History Center Newsletter – Vol. 4, No. 2

Fall 2021

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Editor, Firth Haring Fabend, Production Editor, Esme Emmanuel Berg



Letter from the President  
and the  
Executive Director



Dear Friends, Enthusiasts, and Generous Supporters  
of the New Amsterdam History Center,

Welcome to the Fall 2021 New Amsterdam History Center Newsletter. We are pleased to offer this issue to you full of interesting articles by experts in New Netherland history, Lou Roper, William Starna, Andrea Mosterman and others.

Since the 2020-2021 season began, NAHC has found that the unusual circumstances caused by the pandemic presented us with new opportunities to offer programs of great interest and to reach a much greater audience. Our first offering, *New York Is a Dutch City*, featuring Russell Shorto and the late Barry Lewis, offered new insights into the strong

legacy that the Dutch left on our city in both big and small ways. We focused on the present and future with *Fighting the Flood*, and the important contributions that the Dutch have made and continue to make to water management. Architecture was the theme of, *From Netherlandic to Dutch Colonial*, with architectural historian Jeroen van den Hurk and Albany-based historical painter Len Tantillo exploring what we think of as the “Dutch Colonial House” style, which, they concluded, is neither Dutch nor colonial, but rather an evolution of the familiar sandstone houses built before the Revolution in the Dutch culture areas up an down the Hudson Valley.

With *New York Loves Vermeer*, art experts Adam Eaker and Laura Corey conducted a lively discussion about the celebrated Dutch painter’s artistic presence in New York, with contemporary artist Nigel Van Wieck adding a whole new dimension. And last but not least, we were pleased to highlight a book for young people, *The Diary of Asser Levy, First Jewish Citizen of New York*. Author Daniela Weil in conversation with historian Noah Gelfand took us back to the early days of New Amsterdam in 1654 where we experience through the eyes of a teenage boy, who had just arrived with others from Recife, Brazil, the challenges and opportunities that immigrants to the New World faced then, so similar to the ones presented to immigrants today.

On November 9, 2021, NAHC will present a program on *The Early Dutch in Brooklyn* that will center on the New Amsterdam years. It will be held at the Brooklyn Public Library which houses the Center for Brooklyn History. If possible, this will be a live event, but it will also be available live online. The two presenters will be Professor Alan Mikhail of Yale University and Professor Eric Platt of St. Francis College in Brooklyn. Both specialize in the early modern period, with Professor Mikhail having a special interest in Anthony Jansen van Salée, once thought to be the first Muslim in New Amsterdam and later Brooklyn, along with his colorful wife Grietje, and Professor Platt having done research on Lady Deborah Moody of Gravesend, who lived near and knew van Salée.

Our important *Mapping Early New York* project continues to develop and grow and garner increasing interest from funders and the general public. If you have not yet searched for your ancestors at <https://nahc-mapping.org/mappingNY/encyclopedia>, I invite you to do so. If you would like to be a supporter of this data base and encyclopedia, please let us know.

Pandemic or not, NAHC looks forward to a busy and content-filled 2021-2022 season. Please watch your inboxes and our website for announcements of future programs, and most of all, please become a contributor to allow us to continue to bring them to you.

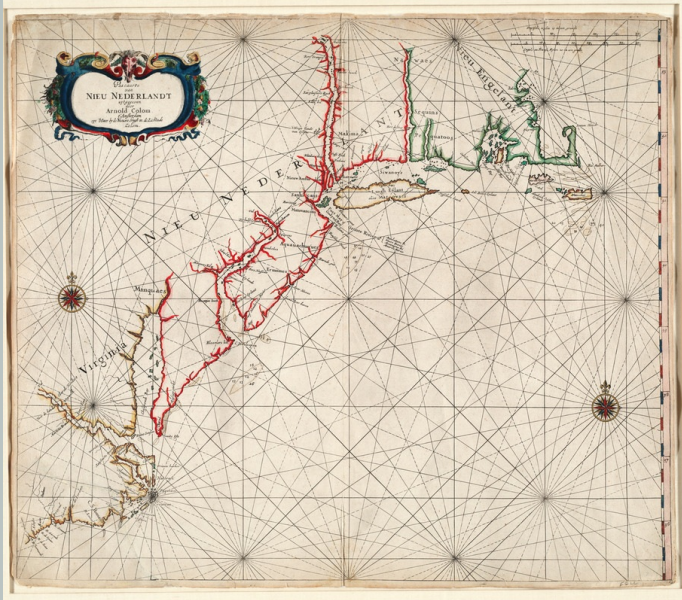
I look forward to “seeing” you at our next event or on our website, [www.newamsterdamhistorycenter.org](http://www.newamsterdamhistorycenter.org).

With kind regards,

Tom Visée  
NAHC President  
Esme Emmanuel Berg  
Executive Director

PS: Are you getting bored at home? We have video recordings of many of our past events available for you to watch for free! Have a look at [www.newamsterdamhistorycenter.org/past](http://www.newamsterdamhistorycenter.org/past)

Lou Roper  
 Department of History  
 State University of New York  
 New Paltz



Colom, Arnold. "Pas caarte van Nieu Nederlandt." Map. 1656. *Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center*,

<https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:3f462s79h> (accessed May 04, 2021).

Reproduction courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center at the Boston Public Library.

Friends of the NAHC will be familiar with the English capture of New Netherland in 1664 as well as the Dutch recapture of New York in 1673 and the return of the province to English government the following year, pursuant to the Treaty of Westminster, which ended the Third Anglo-Dutch War on 6 March 1674.[1] The subsequent emergence of Manhattan as “the island at the center of the world,” to borrow a phrase, has fueled interest in New York’s Dutch antecedents and the endurance of Dutch social and cultural practices in North America. It has also caused speculation as to “what might have been” had the Dutch retained New Orange, as New York was named in 1673-1674, rather than ceded it to England almost 350 years ago: how could the Dutch have given up what became arguably the most valuable real estate on the planet?

In large part, the answer derives, mundanely, from 17<sup>th</sup>-century European diplomatic convention, as manifested by the terms of the Treaty of Westminster. These terms confirmed the restoration of the imperial status quo in effect at the end of the Second Anglo-Dutch War in 1667 (section 6), which proclaimed the cessation of hostilities in the Western Hemisphere eight months after its ratification (6 November 1674, section 3), and directed the return of “whatsoever lands, islands, towns, ports, castles, or forts have been or shall be taken by one party from the other, either within Europe or elsewhere” from the outbreak of the war (section 7).[2]

This language makes clear that the Dutch did not *exchange*, as is sometimes thought, New York for Suriname. The English had founded a colony in Suriname, located on the Caribbean coast of South America, in 1650, but the Dutch had seized it during the second war and retained it at the 1667 peace—despite the fact that an English fleet had recaptured it in February of that year. Although certain English colonists were determined to restore English authority—a resistance not apparent in New Netherland, at least with the same vociferousness, after 1674—Suriname was returned to Dutch control.[3]

In retrospect, the ready concession of New York by the Dutch Republic—despite some colonial objections—made perfect geopolitical sense: New Netherland, which suffered from a severe demographic disadvantage relative to its New England neighbors, had been under increasingly intensive pressure from those neighbors from the 1630s, and that pressure proved beyond the capabilities of the West India Company, which had charge of the colony, to resist. Indeed, the Connecticut governor, John Winthrop, Jr., had orchestrated metropolitan support for the takeover of New Netherland earlier, in 1664.[4] On the other hand, Suriname (and Guiana more widely), with its proximity to the Dutch Caribbean colonies, especially Curaçao, and with its pushy rivals in Barbados separated by water, was relatively defensible. Moreover, a plantation society, centered on the production of sugar cane—the refining of which had long been an important economic activity in the Dutch Republic—had already been established and so offered a ready market for enslaved Africans, a commerce in which the Dutch had engaged with

increasing relish from the 1630s. The sugar-slavery formula for American success applied all-too-readily to Dutch Guiana.[5]

Regardless of these developments, which remained unforeseen, of course, in the seventeenth century, Connecticut's ambition to absorb its Dutch neighbor ran afoul of the inclusion of New Netherland in a proprietary grant made by Charles II to his brother, James, Duke of York, prior to the English attack. The Dutch capture of New York provided the opportunity to renew these longstanding designs in the form of organizing enthusiastic resistance on eastern Long Island to "New Orange" and to extend Connecticut's authority across Long Island Sound. Unfortunately for supporters of Connecticut expansionism, the 1674 peace settlement brought a new governor, Sir Edmund Andros, to New York. Andros vigorously and adroitly put paid to their pretensions: Long Island was placed under New York jurisdiction once and for all. Presented with Andros's counterclaim to all of the territory east of the Hudson River, the Connecticut leadership had to agree to the setting of their colony's western boundary halfway between the Hudson and the Connecticut River.[6]

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[1] All dates from the sources are rendered in the "new style" Gregorian calendar in effect in the Dutch Republic from 1582 but not adopted in the Anglophone world until 1752. The treaty was ratified on 24 February 1673 under the "old style" Julian calendar.

[2] Treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United Netherlands, concluded at Westminster, February 9/19, 16/3/4. Ratification by Great Britain, February 10/20, 16/3/4. [Ratification by the States General, March 6, 1674], in ed. Frances Gardiner Davenport, *European Treaties bearing on the History of the United States and Its Dependencies*, v. 2, 1650-1697 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1929), 229-240 at 238-239.

[3] The recapture occurred after the deadline for cessation of hostilities stipulated in the Treaty of Breda (section 6), Treaty of peace and alliance between the United Netherlands and Great Britain, concluded at Breda, July 21/31, 1667. Ratification by the States General of the United Netherlands, July 28, 1667. [Ratification by the King of Great Britain, July 29/ August 8, 1667], in Davenport, *European Treaties*, 119-131 at 129.

[4] For Dutch reaction to the return of New York, Jaap Jacobs, "'It Hath Pleas'd the Lord That We Must Learn English': Dutch New York After 1664", in ed. Deborah Krohn and Peter N. Miller, *Dutch New York, Between East and West: The World of Margrieta van Varick* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 55-66.

[5] Karwan Fatah-Black, "Paramaribo as Dutch and Atlantic Nodal Point, 1650-1795", in ed. Gert Oostindie and Jessica V. Roitman, *Dutch Atlantic Connections, 1680-1800: Linking Empires, Building Bridges* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014), 52-71.

[6] L.H. Roper, "The Fall of New Netherland and Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Imperial Formation, 1654-1676", in *The New England Quarterly* 87, no. 4 (December 2014): 666-708.

The rare map above, published in Colom's "Zee Atlas" is recognized as one of the first navigational charts of New Netherland. The chart covers the North American coast line from Cape Hatteras on the southwest to Cape Cod on the northeast, encompassing the Dutch settlements on the Delaware and Hudson Rivers. Interestingly, the chart also identifies English settlements in the Chesapeake Bay area and New England including the fledgling communities of Salem, Boston, and Plymouth. Although Colom's "Zee Atlas" was only issued in a few editions, this chart served as a precedent for other Dutch maritime chart makers including Hendrick Doncker, Pieter Goos, Joannes van Loon, Arent Roggeveen, and Jacob Colom, Arnold's father. The Coloms were two of the first Dutch publishers to produce large-format world maritime atlases.

## Origins of the Name *Manhattan*

William Starna

Professor Emeritus of Anthropology  
at the State University of New York College at Oneonta

The event is a storied one. In 1626, Peter Minuit purchased a large island at the mouth of the Hudson River from unknown and unnamed although otherwise Munsee-speaking Indians, at a yet undiscovered location, for an equally obscure price. The acquisition has been celebrated by any number of paintings and sketches—all of undeniable invention—

but also tarnished by the unmasking of a phony deed of sale. The island's name, however, is no mystery. Indeed, it is the first native language place name recorded by European interlopers between the Maine coast and Chesapeake Bay. Entered in Robert Juet's log of Hudson's third voyage of 1609 and engraved on the 1610 Velasco map are the words Manna-hata, Manahata, and Manahatin—today's Manhattan. And as is the case with all place names, no matter the original language, attempts have been made to pry meaning from this word's oldest recorded forms.

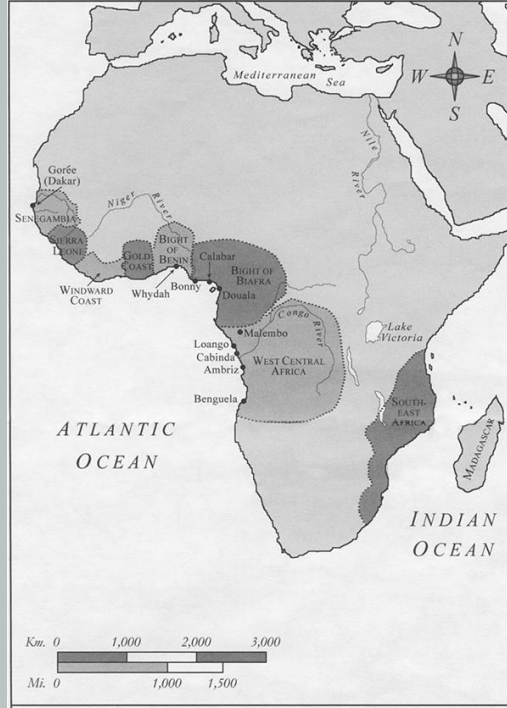
Although a comprehensive listing is not offered here, a first effort to find a meaning, a translation of Manhattan, is that of the late-eighteenth-century Moravian missionary John Heckewelder, who provided what turns out to be a folk etymology— "the island where we all became intoxicated." Henry Schoolcraft, an acknowledged authority on Indians, added "people of the whirlpool," a nod to conditions at the tidal strait called Hell Gate on the East River. J. Hammond Trumbull, a philologist of some note out of Connecticut, supplied "island," echoed some years later by William Wallace Tooker's "an island" and "a hill island." Edward Ruttenber, of Hudson Valley history fame and following what others had to say, simply made it the name of the native people who inhabited the island—the Manhattans. Today, however, there is a popular consensus that Manhattan means "land of many hills," "island of many hills," or "hilly island."

In 1907, William Beauchamp, in his notable *Aboriginal Place Names of New York*, summarized all that was known at the time of Manhattan's meaning, adding, however, an 1885 account by a Delaware Indian that "Manahatouh" (Man-ă-hă-tonh in the original) was a place where wood to fashion bows and arrows could be found. This Delaware, Albert Anthony, as linguist Ives Goddard tells us, knew full well the meaning of Manhattan as rendered in Munsee, his native language. Educated at Huron College in London, Ontario, Anthony was ordained an Anglican priest in 1873. In the 1880s he worked with ethnologist Daniel Brinton, co-authoring *A Lenâpé-English Dictionary* (Philadelphia, 1889). Still, what Anthony had offered became lost among the many guesses, misattributions, and inventions where place names are vulnerable to distortion and corruption. But thanks to Anthony, and most recently an expert historical and linguistic analysis by Ives Goddard, beginning with the three original early-seventeenth-century versions of the word "Manhattan," it can confidently be said that it carries the meanings: "where one gathers the wood to make bows"; "place for gathering the wood to make bows"; and "at the place for gathering the wood to make bows." As Goddard reminds us, "The true word recovers the true history."

Information drawn from Ives Goddard, "The Origin and Meaning of the Name 'Manhattan,'" *New York History* 92, 4 (2010): 277–293.

## West Africa in the Era of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

This map shows the major areas of slaving activities and embarkation ports. Source: "New Perspectives on the Transatlantic Slave Trade," Special Issue, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 58 (2001), between pp. 16 and 17.



## SLAVERY IN NEW NETHERLAND

Andrea Mosterman

Associate Professor of Atlantic History  
and Joseph Treagle Professor in Early American History, University of New Orleans

*The following paragraphs are from Andrea Mosterman's digital essay "Slavery in New Netherland" on the website of the New Netherland Institute. For more information, see [www.newnetherlandinstitute.org](http://www.newnetherlandinstitute.org).*

Most of New Netherland's enslaved people were brought to the colony either through the inter-colonial or transatlantic slave trade. The first enslaved laborers arrived in New Netherland as early as 1625 or 1626, soon after European families began to settle in the colony. Most often slaves were imported in small groups. Many of them were brought to the colony by Dutch or French privateers who had taken these enslaved men, women, and children from the Portuguese or Spanish ships that they had captured in the Western hemisphere. In the 1650s, for instance, the privateer Geurt Tijssen sold slaves in the colony whom he apparently had taken from a Spanish ship. Other enslaved people arrived in small groups on board West India Company ships that, along with the enslaved, transported various commodities from the Dutch Caribbean and Brazil to New Netherland. Only two ships—Witte Paert (1655) and Gideon (1664)—brought large numbers of African captives into the colony at once. . . .

New Netherland's slave trade changed significantly in the mid 1650s with the end of the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652–1654) and the Dutch loss of Brazil to Portugal (1654). The Dutch island of Curaçao soon became the Company's slave entrepot in the Caribbean, supplying slaves to the Spanish colonies in Central and South America. Several small cargoes of slaves not sent to the Spanish were sent from Curaçao to Manhattan. The slaves who arrived in the colony would become Company slaves or they were sold to local farmers or merchants. At times, some slaves would be transported to other colonies like Virginia or Maryland. On a number of occasions, the Company sold slaves at public auction. These auctions usually occurred in New Amsterdam, but in 1659 a public slave sale took place in Beverwijck (present-day Albany). New Netherland's slaveholders often resold their slaves outside of the public auctions, which led to additional exchanges of enslaved people in the colony. . . .

The Gideon [1664] experienced no natural disasters or slave resistance. Still, of the approximately 421 African captives that boarded the ship in Loango, only 348 were still alive when the ship arrived in Curaçao on July 8, 1664, and many of them suffered from scurvy. In fact, their poor health led Vice-Director Beck to exchange some of these people

with healthier captives who were already in Curaçao for the final passage to New Amsterdam. During that final journey from Curaçao to New Amsterdam, ten more enslaved people lost their lives on board the Gideon. The stories of the Gideon and St. Jan, as well as the public auctions at which men, women, and children were sold, reveal that although the number of slaves traded in New Netherland was relatively low, the human cost was very high.

*A flyer for Andrea Mosterman's forthcoming book on slavery in New Netherland appears below.*

## CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS

### Spaces of Enslavement

A History of Slavery and Resistance in Dutch New York

ANDREA C. MOSTERMAN

\$39.95 | 246 PAGES | HARDCOVER

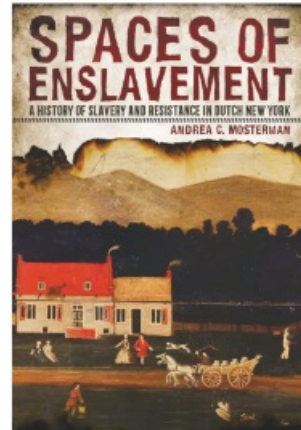
In *Spaces of Enslavement*, Andrea C. Mosterman addresses the persistent myth that the colonial Dutch system of slavery was more humane. Investigating practices of enslavement in New Netherland and then in New York, Mosterman shows that these ways of racialized spatial control held much in common with the southern plantation societies.

In the 1620s, Dutch colonial settlers brought slavery to the banks of the Hudson River and founded communities from New Amsterdam in the south to Beverwijck near the terminus of the navigable river. When Dutch power in North America collapsed and the colony came under English control in 1664, Dutch descendants continued to rely on enslaved labor. Until 1827, when slavery was abolished in New York State, slavery expanded in the region, with all free New Yorkers benefiting from that servitude.

Mosterman describes how the movements of enslaved persons were controlled in homes and in public spaces such as workshops, courts, and churches. She addresses how enslaved people responded to regimes of control by escaping from or modifying these spaces so as to expand their activities within them. Through a close analysis of homes, churches, and public spaces, Mosterman shows that, over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the region's Dutch communities were engaged in a daily struggle with Black New Yorkers who found ways to claim freedom and resist oppression.

*Spaces of Enslavement* writes a critical and overdue chapter on the place of slavery and resistance in the colony and young state of New York.

ANDREA C. MOSTERMAN is Associate Professor of Atlantic History and Joseph Tregle Professor in Early American History at the University of New Orleans. Mosterman's articles have appeared in, among others, the *Journal of African History* and *Early American Studies*.



"*Spaces of Enslavement* is clearly written, lucid, and compelling. Andrea C. Mosterman makes an essential contribution to the scholarship on early Black New York, and offers an argument about space and enslavement that will be relevant to scholars of slavery throughout the Atlantic World."—Susanah Shaw Romney, New York University, author of *New Netherland Connections*

"Andrea C. Mosterman's argument about public and personal spaces among the Afro-Dutch in New Netherland and New York expands our understanding of slavery in the North. Drawing on Dutch language and Dutch Reformed sources, *Spaces of Enslavement* exceeds current work on African American interactions with the Dutch."—Graham Hodges, Colgate University, author of *Black New Jersey*

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## THE NEW AMSTERDAM HISTORY CENTER THRIVES DURING THE PANDEMIC

Ina Lee Selden, Vice President

In early 2020 the New Amsterdam History Center was about to hold a meeting in its usual way. About 70 people, most of whom knew each other, gathered at St.-Marks-in-the-Bowery to share a glass of wine and listen to a talk on the night's topic, the influence of the gunpowder trade on New Amsterdam.

Soon after that, the pandemic forced a cancellation of all public gatherings for the foreseeable future. NAHC had a choice: Retrench or rethink. We could temporarily close

down until life returned to normal, or we could get creative. We got creative. We embraced technology, and we not only survived, we thrived.

Our programs had always been recorded and put on our website for those who might not have been able to attend in person. But the Internet offered us the chance to reach around the world to a more widely dispersed audience, including Dutch communities all over the U.S., university history, language, and arts departments, various cultural organizations, and the young audiences who live in the Cloud.

A wider audience meant that we could widen our selection of subjects. Yes, continuing to delve into the history of New Amsterdam, but also examining how the foundations laid from 1624-1664 deeply influenced and continues to influence New York today. From the foundational collections of Dutch art at the Metropolitan Museum to the city's more than 500 miles of coastline, from the principle of religious freedom in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the design of the High Line in the 21<sup>st</sup>, New York's Dutch influence shows no signs of fading.

We also offered programs free to students, educators, and New York City tour guides, the latter the city's "street teachers." We established a "strategic alliance" with the Guides Association of New York City (GANYC). The highly professional city guides were delighted to discover NAHC, in particular NAHC's innovative mapping project, "Mapping Early New York," which makes it possible to pinpoint the residences and lifestyles of ordinary citizens in the Dutch colonial period. As tourism returns to New York City, the insights they have gained from our programs will become part of their depictions of not just Lower Manhattan but also the Dutch influence on language, culture, and laws, even the colors of some of our major sports teams - <https://nahc-mapping.org/mappingNY/encyclopedia>.

The recorded music of Camerata Trajectina, the Amsterdam-based early music ensemble, now welcomes our viewers to our online events. We hope to work with this group on its future U.S. tour. The young tech wizard Joshua Kwassman, who guided New York University faculty through the challenges of remote teaching, has done the same for NAHC speakers and has contributed to innovative designs for our graphics.

Some event topics might at first glance not seem directly related to New Netherland, but the connections are always there. We are delighted by the dramatic increase in our audience, and the increasing support we are enjoying from our loyal followers. Eventbrite has taken notice and highlights some of our programs.

Some of the topics we covered in the last ten months include the following. Recordings of all the programs are available free of charge at [www.newamsterdamhistorycenter.org](http://www.newamsterdamhistorycenter.org).

### **NEW YORK IS A DUTCH CITY**

Our most widely viewed program, more than 500 people registered for a conversation between author Russell Shorto and the late architectural historian and lecturer Barry Lewis. Moderator Robert Snyder, the Manhattan Borough Historian, moderated. The conversation debunked the usual take on Peter Stuyvesant, openly addressed the issue of the slavery in New Amsterdam, and explored how 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch approaches to life and business determine how New Yorkers engage in the world today.

### **NEW YORK LOVES VERMEER**

The Metropolitan Museum's assistant curator Adam Eaker and contemporary realist painter Nigel Van Wieck discussed how Dutch art, and especially the Met's five and the Frick's three Vermeers, arrived on our shores and at these institutions. Laura Corey, Senior Research Associate at the Met, guided the conversation, noting that the 1909 Hudson Fulton Celebration, which celebrated Dutch legacy and art in New York, led many descendants of the first Dutch settlers to discover their roots and increased their interest in their own history. Art historians, writers, and artists offered praise. "I'll never look at a Vermeer in the same way," commented one historian.

### **FROM NETHERLANDIC TO DUTCH COLONIAL: The Story of an Evolving House Style in America**

NAHC programs are known for taking a fresh look at received history. This presentation, with our second largest audience, was no exception. Albany-based historical painter Len Tantillo and architectural historian Jeroen van den Hurk challenged the myth of the "Dutch Colonial" style. It is neither Dutch nor colonial, but rather an evolution of the native Dutch



sandstone houses of the Hudson Valley into something new, especially after the Great Exposition of the 1876 Centennial in Philadelphia. This is when Americans became aware of their Dutch history, and the so-called Dutch Colonial house became ubiquitous across the nation, beloved for its traditional, comforting, cozy evocation of a previous, perhaps less parlous time. Manhattan Borough Historian Robert Snyder guided the conversation.

### **THE DIARY OF ASSER LEVY, First Jewish Citizen of New York**

“I never knew,” was the chat comment most often offered by the viewers of this underappreciated story. Asser Levy arrived in New Amsterdam in 1654. He was a dynamo, a hero to the beleaguered band of 23 Jewish families fleeing the Inquisition in Brazil. The Dutch had established the rule of law in New Netherland, and Levy used the courts, and other tactics, to challenge Stuyvesant’s attempts to prevent the Jews from settling. His tireless efforts benefited all minorities in the colony. For this event, historian Noah Gelfand interviewed Daniela Weil, author of the recent *The Diary of Asser Levy*, targeted towards young people but appealing to all ages.

### **FIGHTING THE FLOOD:**

#### **Innovative approaches to New York’s Climate Change Challenges**

To prepare for Hurricane Sandy, the worst storm the city has ever faced, New York reverted to sandbags. NAHC invited engineers, landscape architects, and other experts to reveal their plans to protect the city’s more than 500 miles of coastline. It’s no accident that three of the firms are Dutch, and the fourth a local landscape architectural firm inspired by Dutch approaches: Long-term thinking and centuries of experience engaging with and holding back with the sea. Our speakers were:

Daniel Vasini // Creative Director of West 8 NY, Architect and Urban Designer

West 8: Transformed Governors Island, the original site of the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam, from a storm-prone to a storm-resistant island in New York Harbor.

Pippa Brashear // Principal, SCAPE Landscape Architecture. Local American ecological design firm, leader in the effort to create modern breakwaters for the most dramatically affected parts of the coastline of Staten Island.

Edgar J. Westerhof // National Director for ARCADIS, a major Dutch engineering firm, leads the effort to protect lower Manhattan from future weather disasters.

The program was moderated by Matthijs Bouw // Founder, ONE ARCHITECTURE, part of the design team for the Big U, an innovative approach to protecting Lower Manhattan, the low-lying and most vulnerable section of the island.

### **THE FIVE SEASONS – The Gardens of Piet Oudolf**

NAHC secured special permission from director Tom Piper to screen this engaging film about the revolutionary methods of Dutch gardener Piet Oudolf. Oudolf, a master of low-maintenance public and private gardens, whose visionary, revolutionary work features native grasses, weeds, and wildflowers led the transformation of an abandoned elevated freight rail line into one of the most popular destinations for visitors and New Yorkers alike: the High Line, one of his most challenging projects.

We at NAHC hope you will visit us at [www.newamsterdamhistorycenter.org](http://www.newamsterdamhistorycenter.org), enjoy our offerings and support us in any way you can.

### **Hoon’s (or Horn’s) Hook: A Treat for the Curious**

The Gracie Mansion Conservancy has announced the launch of a permanent new educational feature on its website [graciemansion.org](http://graciemansion.org).

Called the Horn’s Hook project, it consists of three illustrated essays



commissioned by the Conservancy with the goal of informing Gracie visitors both in person and online about the history of the site before 1799.

The three authors are Dr. Steven Jaffe , Dr. Nicole Maskiell, and Evan Pritchard, a descendant of the Mi'kmaq People of the northeastern woodlands. Together their essays weave the webs of interaction among the Indigenous People of the area, the enslaved Africans who worked the land, and the Dutch and other Europeans who began to develop it as we know it today. Never far from mind when one visits this exciting new site is always the stunning beauty and majestic sweep of the Gracie Mansion property hooking out into the East River to the tri-borough panorama--the most historic and strategic crossroads found anywhere in New York City's five boroughs.

Made possible by the Gracie Mansion Conservancy and Dutch Culture USA, a project of the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in New York, Horn's Hook will go miles toward bringing the history of this part of Manhattan Island to life. At [graciemansion.org](http://graciemansion.org), look for Gracie's Historic Site, and there you will find listed the three wonderfully informative essays. We will be excerpting them in future issues of the Newsletter.

## IN REMEMBRANCE

The historical community was saddened to learn of the death on August 2, 2021, of Ruth Piwonka, age 81, known for her insightful studies of the Dutch history, culture, and arts of the Upper Hudson Valley in general, and of Kinderhoek, NY, and Columbia County in particular.

A transplant from the Midwest in 1969, Ruth soon became fascinated by her new surroundings and delved into the primary data methodically and tenaciously to eke out from them the contours and depths she sought to know. Self-trained as a historian, she knew instinctively that the primary sources were her best friend. Contemporary maps, church and civil records, tax and land records, personal letters, diaries, account books, these were the roads she took to discover the metes and bounds of her newfound world—and the stubborn myths and misinformation that warped them. Her resulting works were *A Visible Heritage*, *Remembrance of Patria*, *A Portrait of Livingston Manor*, *Living in Style: Selections from the George Way Collection of Dutch Fine and Decorative Art*, and a host of seminal essays and articles published over the years.

She was the recipient of many awards and honors, including most recently the Martha Washington Woman of the Year designation from the Washington's Headquarters Society in Newburgh, NY, and Trustee Emerita of the Jacob Leisler Institute for the Study of Early New York. She was an elected Fellow of the Holland Society of New York, the New Netherland Institute, and the New York Academy of History. In all she accomplished as a historian and in positions of Executive Director of both the Columbia Land Conservancy and subsequently the Columbia Historical Society, Ruth leaves a legacy to be long remembered and long appreciated. Her like will not soon come again.

Firth Haring Fabend, President

The Jacob Leisler Institute for the Study of Early New York History, in Hudson, NY

## NAHC UPCOMING EVENTS

SAVE THE DATE! GET YOUR TICKETS

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October 23, 2021, 2 to 5 PM

There has been an explosion of research into the lives of the Black inhabitants of the Dutch colony of New Netherland in recent years. This special virtual event, which takes the place of the annual New Netherland Institute Conference, brings together scholars who are at the cutting edge of this work. How did Blacks live in New Amsterdam? What was “slavery” in the colony? When did the first Africans arrive?

Andrea Mosterman, Associate Professor of History at the University of New Orleans, will give the keynote address, on the topic of her newly released book, *Spaces of Enslavement: A History of Slavery and Resistance in Dutch New York*. Her talk will be followed by a panel discussion featuring Nicole Maskiell, Assistant Professor of History at the University of South Carolina, author of the forthcoming *Bound by Bondage: Slavery and the Creation of a Northern Gentry*; Jaap Jacobs, Honorary Reader at the University of St. Andrews, author of a soon-to-be-published article about the first Blacks in New Amsterdam; and Debra Bruno, author of a recent *Washington Post* article about her search for her slave-owning ancestors. The panel will be moderated by Lavada Nahon, culinary and cultural historian.

Sponsored by the New Netherland Institute in Collaboration with the New Amsterdam History Center and the New York State Office of Cultural Education.

In the break between the keynote and the panel discussion we will announce the 2021 Wendell Research Scholar and the winners of the New Netherland Institute’s 2021 Hendricks Award and the Clague and Carol Van Slyke Article Prize.



## THE EARLY DUTCH IN BROOKLYN

November 9, 2021, 6:30 TO 8 PM

The New Amsterdam History Center is developing with the Center for Brooklyn History a program entitled The Early Dutch in Brooklyn. It will focus on the New Netherland years, the history of Dutch settlement in the area between the Narrows and Coney Island in Brooklyn, on certain tensions that arose between the Dutch and English, and will update the story of Anthony van Salée, the first New Netherland resident of Muslim background, and his feisty wife Grietje. Our speakers will be Professor Alan Mikhail of Yale University, and Professor Eric Platt of St. Francis College in Brooklyn. This in-person event (Covid permitting), scheduled for November 9, 2021, has the enthusiastic support of the Center for Brooklyn History and will take place at the Brooklyn Public Library.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)

Please check your inboxes or the NAHC website for future information.  
[www.newamsterdamhistorycenter.org](http://www.newamsterdamhistorycenter.org)

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NAHC relies on volunteer help and contributions for its existence. Only by partnering with history enthusiasts like you we can continue to preserve, share, and enrich public understanding of this singular American story.

Your contribution to the NAHC large or small continues to help us:

- Maximize our story-telling capacities
- Further develop our website as an information-rich and dynamic educational portal
  - Organize events and substantive public programs
- Further develop a virtual experience that reveals the multifaceted history of New Amsterdam
- Help us achieve our ultimate goal – creation of a physical center of exploration and learning about New Amsterdam.

Please consider using the AmazonSmile NAHC link to make your next purchases and help support our upcoming programs and beyond! Please remember, the pennies add up.

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Thank you,  
NAHC Board of Trustees

## NAHC GIVING PROGRAM

**JOIN THE NAHC FAMILY AND support our mission to inform the public about the history of New Amsterdam and New Netherland during the short period of Dutch rule in the 17th Century.**

**Support our programs or become a sponsor of some of our events. All contributors will receive invitations to exclusive events as well as free or reduced admission to general programs.**

NAHC is a 501(c)(3) corporation. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

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