



The Friendship Herald

Volume 2007 - Issue 7

a supplement to the Windmill Herald

Tulips add Spring colour

Royal touch to Friendship Day on May 5 at Burlington's Botanical Gardens



The May 5 event of the Canada Netherlands Friendship Day is attracting attention far and wide. So far the Burlington venue has hosted authors launching books and DVDs, producers screening documentaries, a national foundation introducing an ongoing flowering tulip promotion, all this while local Dutch Canadians mingle with area officials and WWII veterans. As well, a party of nearly twenty people belonging to the Braal family from the U.S. Midwest and Western Canada hope to come together to attend this year's edition of Friendship Day for the second time.

The flag raising ceremony at Burlington City Hall will take place at 3:00 pm. The Canada Netherlands Friendship Day on May 5 will have its evening venue, at the Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG), a very colourful floral setting and one that is free of charge for the occasion. The evening events, after the doors open at 5:00pm, include the introduction of the so-called Bad Penny project. Bad Penny is one of the two British Lancaster bombers that were assigned a test run for the Operation Manna food drops to

A Bad Penny Always Comes Back
by Glen Mitchell
Illustrated by Kristen Gallerneaux

Honouring Operation Manna

"A Bad Penny Always Comes Back" tells the true story of Bad Penny, Operation Manna's test plane and her brave crew, whose safe return from Holland on April 29, 1945 launched the Allies' courageous food relief effort.

Author Glen Mitchell will be reading his book on Friendship Day in the auditorium, and will be signing copies at his booth.

Hardcover Book: \$15
proceeds benefit ALS Society of Windsor/Essex and the Historical Canadian Aircraft Association

available online: www.badpennybook.com or phone 519.255.9898

the Netherlands on April 29, 1945. The plane's wireless operator Stan Jones hopes to be present to sign books along with author Glen Mitchell and the book's teenager Peter (Buttenaar), now a Dutch Canadian senior. Many local entrepreneurs are showcasing their services at the event as well.

CNFA's spokesman Jack Vander Laan says that the spacious RBG facility is very popular with the audience and has sufficient room for the event. Each year, the CNFA has been attracting more participation from the community. An event which promotes Canada-Netherlands ties can be assured of the interest of the local and regional Legion branches and Regiments. All indications are that CNFA officials can be happy on that score this year, too.



The tulip beds at the Royal Botanic Gardens are begging for another visit.

Royal footsteps

Burlington city councillor Rick Craven will emcee the event which also will be attended by other government officials such as Guelph MP Michael Chong, who has roots in both China and the Netherlands, and MPP Elizabeth Witmer, Ontario's Dutch-born former Deputy Premier. In addition to the representatives of the Dutch government in Toronto, officials from Apeldoorn, Burlington's twin city in the Netherlands, also plan to be present at the Friendship Day, reinforcing its Trans-Atlantic flavour.

The 2007 Canada Netherlands Friendship Day event literally follows the footsteps of Dutch Queen Beatrix who in 1988 visited the Royal Botanical Gardens to meet with the local Dutch community

Collection

Founded by local enthusiasts in 1941, the Royal Botanical Gardens includes five significantly different gardens. With four nature sanctuaries on about 2,700 acres, it rates as one of the largest of its kind in the world. RBG's sanctuaries and marshlands are accessible with scenic trails covering a total distance of 30 kilometres. During the tourist season, various parts of the garden complex are also linked by shuttle buses.

The gardens are home to more than 40,000 recorded types of plants, displayed in about 50 different collections. These include the world's largest collection of lilacs and almost two acres of roses.

The May 5 event, of course, is early in the RBG's new season. To fully appreciate what the Royal Botanical Gardens offers, a return visit definitely is a must.

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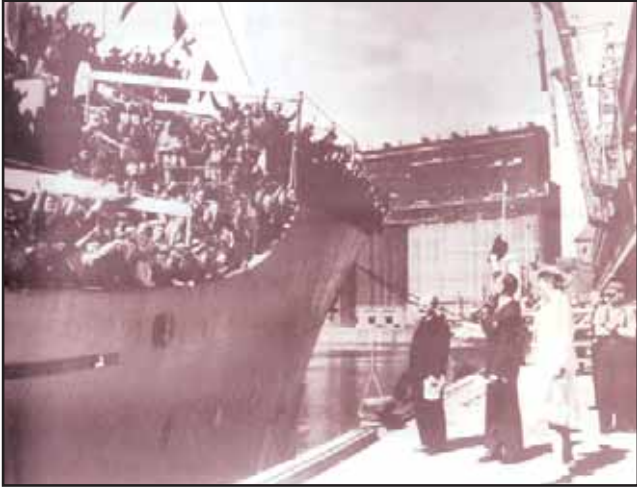
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Burlington



Post-war immigration cemented friendship

Early ties between Canada and the Netherlands date from 1800s



Dutch immigrants get a first-hand look at the welcoming party on the quay as the Waterman arrives in Montreal, in June 1947. The first of many similar journeys across the Atlantic.

The ties of friendship between Canada and the Netherlands received a huge boost sixty years ago this Summer, when two immigrant ships docked in Montreal. The *Waterman* in June and the *Tabinta* in September brought about 2,000 Dutch farm workers and their families to Canada. These immigrants were part of a pilot program for a much bigger influx which a very cautious Canadian government was hoping to locate in rural areas of the country. As a result of the massive World War II armed forces recruitment in Canada, a serious shortage of farm workers existed. Many rural areas were rejuvenated with the arrival of the Dutch who rather quickly progressed from farm labourers to owners with their own farming operations.

The ties between Canada and the Netherlands began much sooner, however. Fifty-five years earlier, the then government put immigrants from the Netherlands basically on par with those of the British isles. As a result, the first group of immigrants arrived in Canada the following year, where they settled in Winnipeg, then still basically a frontier town.

Even earlier, Dutch Prince Hendrik the Seafarer visited Newfoundland in the 1830s where he left a mark in Cape Spear after his frigate *Rhine* ran into problems in dense fog. The visit by the young prince, a son of King Willem II, is likely the first time a member of the Dutch royal family set a foot on what later was to become Canadian soil.

The activities of the Canada Netherlands Friendship Association (CNFA) since the mid

1990s have also been strengthening ties between the two countries. Rather unique is its spontaneous character which firmed up after a director Don Allan and his Burlington Teen Tour Band for the first time participated in the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Liberation of the Netherlands in Apeldoorn in 1995. Since then they have returned to the Netherlands two more times. In return, students from Apeldoorn's high school Koninklijke Scholengemeenschap paid a visit to the Lord Nelson High School in Burlington in November of 2002 where they planted donated flowering bulbs in various locations and made a presentation to City council. During that meeting the Canada Netherlands Friendship Association formally requested that Burlington establish a twin-city relationship with Apeldoorn, the central Dutch city which in 1945 was the location of the command of the liberating Canadian army. Apeldoorn officials and other delegations have visited Burlington regularly and Burlington officials have visited Apeldoorn.

The request made by CNFA spokesman Jack VanderLaan, a long-time men's wear store owner and community activist, was received favourably



All the way from Apeldoorn, Dutch high school students were in Burlington in 2002, to plant tulips at various city locations.

by the City and wound its way through the process for the twin-city relationship. The documents were signed by both Burlington and Apeldoorn at Palace Het Loo in the Netherlands on May 6, 2005.

Undoubtedly, the annual Canada Netherlands Friendship Day held around May 5 has greatly emphasized the significance of the local Dutch community in Burlington. From its inception, the event involved City officials at the City Hall location where during the program Canadian and Dutch flags are raised, the actions of the Canadians liberators are acknowledged and saluted and various community groups participate. The first time the event was held in 1995, only a small number of people attended but the event has grown, increasing interest every year since. Very popular also is the evening program, since 2005 held at the Royal Botanical Gardens which straddles Burlington and Hamilton.



Director Don Allan with his musicians look on as students plant tulips at the Springer House.

An Apeldoorn delegation plans to be in Burlington on May 5 to share in the celebrations.

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Crew member of 1945 Operation Manna

Author of children's book on Lancaster mercy flight guest at Friendship Day

Operation Manna, one of the most unusual sidebars in the history of World War II, left a deep impression on many Dutch people. After daily seeing wave after wave of Allied bombers fly over at high altitudes to avoid anti-aircraft fire, the aircraft now flew over so low that onlookers could see the pilots wave at them.



Above: Dutch people waved at the low-flying food dropping bombers. Emotions also were at choking point in cockpits, crew members had trouble keeping their eyes dry when they saw spontaneous expressions of thanks on rooftops and on the ground. Insert: The crew of Bad Penny: back row: (l-r) Stan Jones, John Corner, Bob Upcott, Bill Walton, front row: Orval Blower, Bill Demo, Bill Gray.

Right: Signing books: Peter Buttenaar, Glen Mitchel and Stan Jones

Instead of bombs, the Lancasters dropped bags with (canned) food, biscuits and flour for the literally starving Dutch population.

Peter Buttenaar is one of the many Dutch Canadians with fond memories of the food drops. Although still a teenager at the time, he never forgot the life-saving Allied gesture and the pilots he had waved at. Years later, he framed a picture of an approaching Lancaster with food dropping from its belly. He prominently displayed it in his office.

One day, the advertising salesman of a local newspaper noticed the photograph and published an item about it. The item eventually came into the hands of surviving crew members of the Lancaster, nicknamed Bad Penny. It was one of the two planes that tested the verbal understanding the Allies had reached with the German command.

American song writer Glen Mitchel who lives part-time in Windsor, Ontario, also saw the news clipping and became very interested in the story of Operation Manna and the scouting mission of Bad Penny. This is something that needs to be published in a book, Mitchel reasoned. Not being able to find a publisher, he eventually decided to finish the project himself as a young children's story, A Bad Penny Always Comes Back.



Peter Buttenaar meets Stan Jones. Both men are characters in the book *Bad Penny Always Comes Back*.

On April 28, 1945 the two Lancasters could not take off for their very unusual assignment. Since the weather did not cooperate, the assignment was held over till the next day. The weather was still not very good but the mission was given

Continued on page 4, 'Lancaster...'

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Crew member of 1945 Operation Manna

Lancaster mercy flight guest at Friendship Day



Bad Penny wireless operator Stan Jones fills in the blanks on his first Operation Manna flight.

From page 3, 'Author of children's books...'

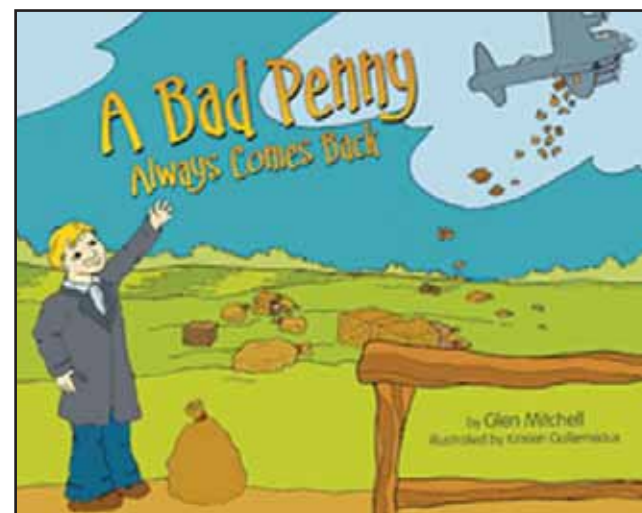
the go ahead anyway. They were to drop food over a field next to the Duindigt Racetrack, in Wassenaar, in the vicinity of The Hague.

Although the Allied commanders had obtained tacit approval for the food drops from the Germans in the Netherlands, neither side trusted the other. The Germans had said "they would not shoot, but wouldn't sign any papers," either. Wanting to help a malnourished and starving Dutch population but with no solid commitment from the distrustful German officials, the Allies organized test sorties, manned by volunteer



The Dutch village of Nieuw-Terbregge is home to a monument which honours Operation Manna. It was dedicated last year on April 28.

crews. The Germans took precautions too by having tanks near the drop zone, which kept their



guns trained at the two planes while keeping an eye out for paratroopers and weapons.

On the return trip over the North Sea, the flight crews radioed that everything had been accomplished, setting in motion the next wave of over 200 Lancasters who dropped food at ten selected sites. The RAF was later joined by the Americans with their own Operation Chowhound. The Allies also sent food by ship to Rotterdam and by truck. In all it was a massive and urgent undertaking.

To author Glen Mitchel, food drop witness Peter Buttenaar and Bad Penny wireless operator Stan Jones, Burlington's Friendship Day on May 5th is an ideal event to do readings from the book, meet Dutch Canadians and sign book copies on what is the 62nd anniversary of Operation Manna.



Remembering fallen comrades at Holten. Read more about Leo Major (above), who liberated the Dutch city of Zwolle, in an upcoming issue of the Windmill Herald.



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Holland production helped launch career

Popular Travel Magazine hosts promote the Netherlands at Friendship Day



Exploring the world for armchair Travel Magazine viewers prompted many to pack suitcases to check it out themselves: Jake and Mieke de Boer 'at home' in Volendam trying out the local traditional costume.

When planning to travel, the majority of Dutch immigrants in North America think of hopping on a flight to Amsterdam, checking in on family for a few days and from there going on to discover the culture and history of old Europe. Snapshots and videos of the scenery and architecture can be shown at family get-togethers after which the pictures likely end up in an album and the videos on a shelf.

There are plenty of exceptions to the above generalization. Dutch immigrants do travel; after all they likely were not the first ones in the family to look for destinations far from home. Many of the Dutch who have settled in North America have family in such places as Australia, New Zealand and South Africa and have visited them. Fewer have family ties in Israel yet tours to that country attract many of them.

Among the explorers raised in the Netherlands is Abel Tasman who in the seventeenth century lent his name to Tasmania and charted the coast line of Australia and New Zealand. Tasman hailed

from the small northern Dutch village of Lutjegast (near Grootegast, which is quite a bit bigger and better known). Another explorer, one who documented things inland, away from the coastlines, is Jake de Boer who hails from another small Groningen village, Ten Boer (almost halfway on the way to Delfzijl from Groningen). De Boer, who left home for Canada in 1954, returned 'home' after twenty years as an upcoming Canadian travel journalist and travelogue producer to tell the world about his home country.

De Boer and his South Africa-born wife Mieke (her parents were Dutch-born and hailed from the Baarn vicinity) through their productions – they did about 160 of them - introduced millions of television viewers to exotic places in far away countries but the one on which they honed their skills was none other than the Netherlands. Television executives liked the episodes of Travel Magazine and better yet, were excited about the feedback they got from their audiences.

The Netherlands easily rates as an exotic place in many parts of the world. Just ask the Japanese, the Chinese and the Koreans. Springtime in Holland, an in-depth overview of the country, helped launch the globe-trotting travelogue host careers of the De Boers. Even today, their travelogues on the Netherlands remain near the top of their list of popular features.

Distant destinations

After the initial Travel Magazine on the Netherlands, many other places followed. Mieke's home country soon became the favourite destination for Bonaventure Travel productions, the name of their company. The game parks in Southern Africa with their roaming herds of animals especially became very popular with viewers. Often, Travel Magazine prompted viewers to check out distant destinations for themselves, creating a new constituency of travelers which made the airlines, the tour operators and the travel agents very happy.

In addition to places such as Botswana, Morocco, Polynesia, Vietnam, Croatia and Den-

mark, the De Boers have also done series on Canada, the USA and Germany to name a few.

When South Africa sent Mieke to Canada in 1971 on a diplomatic pass to promote South Africa here, they never expected her to take travel promotion to a global level. But she has, together with her husband Jake who at first owned travel agencies in Calgary.

On May 5, they plan to be part of the Canada Netherlands Friendship Day where they will do what launched their globe-trotting career: promote the Netherlands with their popular videos.

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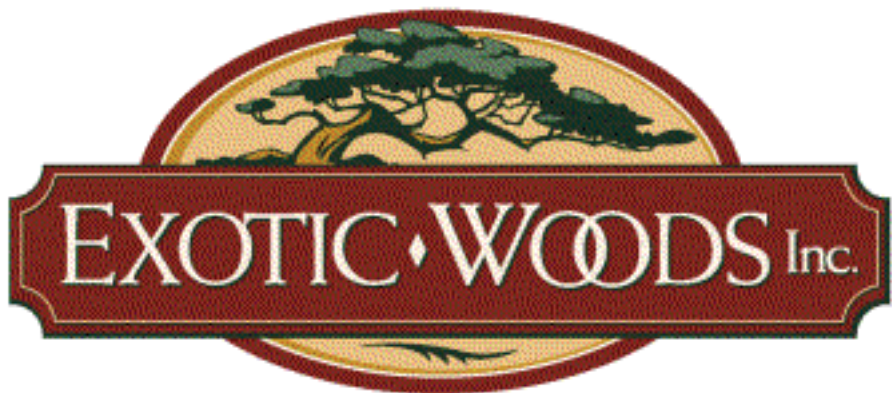
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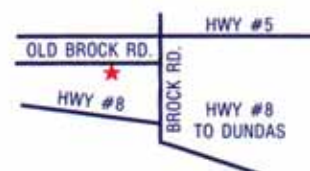
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