

ANGLO-NETHERLANDS SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

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Summer 2023

President: *The Rt Hon. the Lord Taylor of Holbeach CBE*

Hon. Newsletter Editor: *Mr Hans Neher*

Vice-President: *The Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands*

Chairman: *Mr Dick van den Broek*

Administrator: *Mrs Carine Williams*



The main memorial stone at the Oosterbeek War Cemetery visited by an ANS group on 18-May - see article on page 2

New Members

We welcome:

Mr Rolf van A
Mr Ajoeb B
Mr Tijs B
Mr Jordi C and
Miss Iris J
Mr Wilco C
Mr Ferry van D
Mr Rowan F and
Mrs Davina F

Mrs Klasiena H
Mr Eri H
Mr Alan H and
Ms Madelon R
Mrs Mariska L
Mrs Michelle M
Mrs Klaartje M-V
Dr Margaret M
Mrs Catherine O'D
Ms Jiangdai O and
Mr Harry R-S

Mr Jeroen R and
Mrs Ingeborg R
Miss Candice S
Mr Tim S and
Mrs Marijke S
Dr Imogen T and
Mr Nicholas B
Mrs Mariel V and
Mrs Johanna W
Mr David W and
Miss Alexandra T

Forthcoming events

The following events are confirmed, with approximate times. Please register now via events@anglo-netherlands.org.uk

Tuesday in September: visit to the House of Lords, including light lunch. More information on p.8

Thursday in September: presentation followed by drinks at Shell Centre on the South Bank.

Friday in November: our annual dinner -with a guest speaker- at one of the Pall Mall clubs.

ANS Gelderland visit 18 and 19 May "In the tranquillity of the Veluwe zoom"

report by Paul Dimond on visit to the Oosterbeek Airborne War Cemetery and Airborne Museum

Council was very pleased that we could reinstate our regular, somewhat more extensive, visits to interesting places in the Netherlands or the United Kingdom which were interrupted by Covid. This year we focussed on the province of Gelderland in the more eastern part of the Netherlands. Organised and led by our Chairman, we enjoyed a most interesting and enjoyable trip, details of which can be read below in various articles written by some participants.

The Society's Centenary Book North Sea Neighbours highlighted the Spirit of Arnhem as so representative of the value and the emotion of the Dutch-British relationship. For our trip in Gelderland, it seemed entirely appropriate therefore for us to start at the Oosterbeek Airborne Cemetery in the Gemeente Renkum, with a guided tour

generously arranged by the Gemeentehuis, one of the four municipalities of Arnhem, Ede, Overbetuwe and Renkum that co-operate over the commemoration of the Battle of Arnhem. The



Cemetery, set in the tranquillity of the Veluwe zoom, is run by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. It was designed by Philip Hepworth, then Principal Architect of the Imperial War Graves Commission responsible for North-Western Europe.

The Cemetery has 1,684 Commonwealth graves, of which 143 are of unidentified soldiers, 79 Polish, three Dutch and four civilians. Our knowledgeable local Guides took us in two groups around the peaceful Cemetery, drawing to our attention some graves of particular note: S. Swarts, the local milkman who was awarded the

Verzetsherdenkingkruis, the twins T and C Gronert of the Parachute Regiment, Army Air Corps, the whole crew of the Dakota flown by J G Wills of the Royal Canadian Air Force, the graves of Jewish soldiers.

Two commemorative plaques were especially poignant: the message alongside the defining Pegasus symbol of the British Airborne forces that noted 'we brought death and destruction, for which you have never



blamed us' and recording admiration for the courage of the local people, especially the women who tendered the wounded, and how in the long winter that followed their families risked death by hiding Allied soldiers and airmen, while members of the Resistance helped many to safety; and Flowers in the Wind (photo left), dedicated to the children of the region who grace the Cemetery every year paying homage to the men who gave their lives for Liberation.

Whether our participants were returning or visiting the Cemetery for the first time, we could not fail to be moved by the experience and left reflectively.

Our neat minibus then drove us round to the Airborne Museum at Hartenstein, the headquarters of British airborne troops under Major-General Roy Urquhart in September 1944. Urquhart opened the museum in 1978, since when it has been another key focus for the annual commemorative events held every September. It tells the detailed story of the Battle of Arnhem, including a vivid underground Airborne Experience presentation, and highlights the personal stories of British, Polish and German soldiers and civilians. We were most warmly welcomed

there by the Mrs Agnes Schaap, Burgemeester of Renkum since 2017. The Mayor and her team had been immensely helpful in arranging our programme and she and her husband also attended our dinner that evening in the Kleinhartestein restaurant nearby (photo). Also



welcoming us over coffee was Ronnie Weijers, the Museum Director since 2020 (before which he had been at the Nationaal Militair Museum and the Museum Catharijneconvent). Our group could then spend time touring this engaging museum. The Society hopes to maintain contact with the Gemeente Renkum with a view to possible future activity for Members' interest.

This part of our visit was rounded off with a light lunch in d'Oude Herbergh, very close to the Museum, where we were offered a local speciality with a choice between a hearty "pannenkoek" or a lighter version in respect of toppings.



report by David Clark on the visit to the Kröller-Muller Museum

In the afternoon of Thursday 18 May, we were taken by bus to the Kröller-Muller museum (www.krollermuller.nl), near Otterlo, founded



by wealthy widow Helene Kröller-Muller in 1938. The museum is of modern design, with lovely gardens showing a wide range of sculpture, set in the Hoge Veluwe National Park.

The museum boasts the world's finest Vincent van Gogh collection and contains

works by many well known modern artists, including Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Claude Monet, Georges Seurat, Pablo Picasso and Piet Mondrian ; something for everyone! And in the garden, sculptures by Barbara Hepworth, Jean Dubuffet and Marta Pan.

The museum buildings were designed by



Henry van de Velde and Wim Quist. They are located in the heart of the Veluwe and combine art with nature in a wonderful way. As the museum website says, 'a perfect day out for

young and old!'. Not many 'young' in our group though!

Our guide was a passionate young man named Patrick (shown in the accompanying photo with long dark hair and beard), who clearly loved his work and was helpful and informative. Many of the van Gogh pictures were from his youth, dark and moody, but included some of the later, including one of his portraits (he painted six) of Joseph Etienne-Roulin, a postman, whom it is believed he met





at Arles train station, in the South of France.

We enjoyed seeing a wide range of 'modern art', ranging from 19th century to contemporary, some examples of which accompany this piece. We spent just the right amount of time there, enabling the group to see what they wanted, and spend some time enjoying the garden with its sculpture, before being met by our bus, and very efficient driver, Bob. And, the weather was fine and warm!

Members' snapshots of one painting from Van Gogh's 'dark and moody' period, and one of six portraits of postman Joseph Etienne Roulin



notes by Geoff Rhodes on the visits to Paleis Het Loo and the town of Doesburg

On Friday 19 May as we awoke at Hotel de Bilderberg in Oosterbeek, beautiful sunshine greeted everyone as we looked forward to an interesting and informative day. Great breakfast buffet was available with multiple choices of differing teas, coffee, breads, cereals, juices, Dutch apple cake and even Rhubarb jam!

Our driver with his small and comfortable coach specifically chosen for our group took us initially from the hotel to visit The Bridge over



the Lower Rhine (Neder Rijn) in Arnhem, historically famous and a strategic target within the unsuccessful 1944 WWII 'Operation Market Garden' campaign by the Allies.

Lots of photos were taken and a group shot captured us all together. Even though the mission tragically failed at the time all those years ago, it was clear to observe and to learn that the local community still highly valued the bravery and the attempts made by the allied forces (predominately British and Polish) to clear the area of the German occupation.

We then travelled for about 45 minutes by coach to the Royal Palace Het Loo near



Apeldoorn and from the drop off point walked along a wildflower meadow and newly planted Oak trees, to the main entrance. See: Discover it yourself | Paleis Het Loo

Het Loo Palace is a former Dutch royal residence located near Apeldoorn in the more Eastern part of the Netherlands. Originally a hunting lodge and summer residence, the large Baroque palace erected by Stadtholder William and Mary, also later king, and queen of England, is

now a museum on how the monarchs of the House of Orange lived during the previous three centuries.

The palace is beautifully furnished but for many the true highlight are the magnificently restored baroque formal gardens that contributed to it, sometimes being referred to as the Dutch Palace of Versailles. Het Loo Palace is a popular daytrip destination from Amsterdam and other parts of the Netherlands.

Audio equipment was organised and provided by Dick van den Broek which really brought the story of William and Mary to life as the group toured the facility. Only on April 23rd did the newly renovated lower-level underground extension open, so our group had the benefit of seeing this area.

We had the opportunity to go up onto the roof and to view the beautiful symmetrical gardens from above and then go down to



ground level to walk through them as well as admiring the various water fountains and other features. A light lunch in any one of the three restaurants available could then be taken before we boarded our coach again for a 35 minutes drive to the lovely small Hanseatic town of Doesburg, on the river IJssel.

Upon our arrival by the town hall a local wedding was completing. The bride and groom looked very happy as they and their guests came out and into the street where glasses of Champagne were being served!

Our group then boarded a horse drawn carriage and had a guided tour of the town



travelling in a 'Paardentram' along with a local guide who pointed out things of interest as well as a lovely view of the river IJssel which was gently flowing past Doesburg in beautiful sunshine with the green "uiterwaarden" (forelands) on the other side. The two horses pulling us all along were beautiful Norwegian Fjord horses, renowned for being gentle, but



strong. They had a distinctive black line down their mane, which was in stark contrast to their natural honey-coloured bodies.

Time then allowed an hour or so for everyone to walk around the town and to then meet up for predinner drinks and dinner at the historical 'de Waag' Grand Café See: www.waagdoesburg.nl

A private room on the upper floor was reserved for our group and a delightful meal was enjoyed by all, sampling local specialities including the famous Mustard and Ham soup. By 20.30 it was time to leave and then be taken back to our hotel in Oosterberg to reflect on a wonderful day.

Lots of photos were taken and to round off the evening, attempts were made by many to use Air Drop (Apple) to share them around the group with some success!

Unilever Lecture: "The Van de Veldes"

Report by Meritha and Dick Paul on the Unilever Lecture on 16 March



After a three-year absence, due to the global pandemic, the Anglo-Netherlands Society came together for the 30th lecture at Unilever House on 16 March. Despite the train strike, the event was very well attended, with the Dutch ambassador, Mr. Karel van Oosterom, among the guests.

After the welcomes of our Chairman, Dick van den Broek, and Yasmin Ozaydinli on behalf of our host Unilever, the lecture, given by Dr. Imogen Tedbury, Curator of Art, centered around the exhibition "The Van de Veldes: Greenwich, Art and the Sea" at the Queen's House, Royal Museums Greenwich. Willem van de Velde the Elder, and his son, Willem the Younger, arrived in the winter of 1672/73 in England. It is unclear what their reasons to leave Amsterdam were, but they were welcomed with open arms and King Charles II made sure they were incentivised to stay by paying them a salary and allocating them a studio space in the Queen's House at Greenwich. Draughtsman and war journalist Willem van de Velde the Elder specialised in maritime drawings, while the Younger excelled in painting - using the drawings from his father as a foundation.

After 350 years of their arrival in England, the Queen's House will once again be home to the Van de Veldes. The exhibition presents two newly conserved masterpieces that were conceived in the Queen's House: the tapestry of the Battle of Solebay, and the monumental painting A Royal Visit to the Fleet by Van de Velde the Younger. Tapestries are hugely expensive and labour-intensive to manufacture. However, the Solebay tapestry series were commissioned by Charles II to illustrate the maritime power of the dynasty of the Stuart brothers. Designs for these tapestries were produced from drawings based on the sketches the Elder made while sailing as a war journalist. An interesting fact is that although the Battle of Solebay itself was inconclusive, the Van de Veldes were nonetheless enlisted to design a series of tapestries that presented the action as a great British victory. The exhibited tapestry is part of the only surviving English naval tapestry series.

Father and son were kept on call to record all sorts of Stuart maritime activity. The Younger used his father's drawings as inspiration to feed his ambition to bring marine paintings of royal subjects into the realm of history painting. The most ambitious of his paintings is perhaps the monumental canvas, especially conserved for the exhibition: A Royal Visit to the Fleet. There is still some mystery surrounding the circumstances under which this painting was created. The Younger probably began work on it as a royal commission from Charles II, but the painting never entered the royal collection. According to an early 18th century source, two Lords of the Admiralty came to see the painting before it was finished and liked it so much that they wanted to have it cut down the middle so that they each could have a picture. It is said that Van de Velde took the canvas down after they had left, vowing that they should not have it. He only returned to the painting several years later before he sold it to a private buyer.

The lecture was well received by the audience, who were engaged and asked many questions at the end. The event was a great opportunity for the Anglo-Netherlands Society to come together, and for its members to learn





about the rich maritime history of the two countries. Unilever proved once again to be a very gracious host, and the attendees were able to enjoy a beautiful meal afterwards, reminisce over the lecture and take in the stunning views over the city.

The lecture provided a fascinating insight into the Van de Velde family dynamic, the inner workings of a 17th century artist's studio and the challenges of financing large works of art. It also taught us the importance of cultural exchange even in times of conflict. The Anglo-Netherlands Society thanks Unilever for their hospitality. It was a wonderful opportunity for the society to come together and celebrate the shared cultural heritage of the British and the Dutch.



"The Van de Velde: Greenwich, Art and Sea" at the Queen's House

Report by Debbie Dikkers on our private guided tour, Wednesday 19 April

Almost hot-on-the-heels of the delightful Unilever Lecture about "The Van de Velde, Art and the Sea" exhibition, an intrepid ANS group convened in mid-April in Greenwich for a close up examination of the works and surroundings of these maritime painters.

On the premise that one cannot appreciate art on an empty stomach, the tour was preceded with a lunch at the Trafalgar Tavern. In a room richly decorated with bunting in celebration of the coronation, the lovely table for à la carte food offered a splendid view over the Thames. It was a pleasure to be joined by Lord Taylor, who could fit in the event between a tour of his own at Houses of Parliament and meetings late in the afternoon.

A short walk led to Queen's House, the first fully Classical building in England, designed initially by Inigo Jones in 1616, but not completed until 1636. The elegant building has 22 exhibition rooms over two floors, of which 12 are used for the Van de Velde exhibition. The group was met by Mr. Eri Heilijgers, the private tour guide and, as it turned out, an expert with deep knowledge of Dutch and English naval and military history.

The exhibition starts with a bang in an absolutely gorgeous blue room with stunning gilding off the Great Hall, which features the Solebay Tapestry. Made in London's very own



Mortlake, the enormous work of some four by six meters, was designed by Willem van de Velde the elder.

The scene depicts the climax of a 1672 battle between Dutch and English fleets: the destruction of the English flagship Royal James and the death of vice-Admiral Edward Montagu, 1st Earl of Sandwich. Willem the elder observed the battle from a small coastal vessel, a galjoot, but from a Dutch perspective. Willem and his son moved from Holland to

England in the winter of 1672/1673. When the elder was ultimately commissioned by Charles II and James, Duke of York, Willem had to reimagine the scene from the English side.

In the following rooms, a lot was learned about the cooperation between father and son as well as maritime painting in general. Willem the elder was by original training a draftsman. His large library of ship drawings was instrumental in later paintings. The original boats had long since the battles been beached and lay rotting. By the time either Van de Velde started on a painting, the drawings were the only point of reference. Key in maritime painting is of course to get the wind direction correct as it is reflected in the movement of waves, the position of flags and most importantly the ships' rigging. The exhibition features a highly informative series of studies on these particular aspects.

During the tour, the group was met by Robert Blythe, senior curator for general and



maritime history. He was pleased by comments that the hangings of the exhibition are very good and provides everything in context. The more so as it was for the team a difficult hanging task, combining paintings and drawings. At a drawing of the 1653 Battle of Scheveningen, Lord Taylor initiated a fascinating discussion about the flags that are seen in a variety of shapes, colours and coats of arms throughout the works.

It is not all maritime in the exhibit. Many portraits are displayed, about which Eric Heilijgers had fascinating insights and at times some gossip about the personalities in the painting. Three paintings are on loan from the King, including *Woman at her Toilet* by Jan Steen.

Contrary to Charles II and James, William

and Mary reigning from 1689 were not interested in maritime art. It did not stop the Van de Velde from being productive. Willem the Elder secured work for the Medici's. He collaborated with famous map-maker of the



time, Blaeu. In his 80s, the elder was still on the small boats at sea documenting scenes. Cleverly, to get a real good impression of the two artists, the last room is a mock-up of their studio.

As the group left Queen's House the sun broke through the clouds and rain. It reminded of the many Dutch paintings with exactly such weather patterns and was a fitting end to a highly successful and interesting outing. The Van de Velde exhibition runs to 14th January 2024.



photo credits for the paintings and tapestry : National Maritime Museum, Greenwich



Historical Tour Harrow School

Report by Chantal Tjon of the guided tour on 9 February

On a beautiful sunny afternoon (and for some after a steep climb up Harrow Hill), we gathered at the Speech Room underpass for the start of the historical tour of one of the oldest and famous all-boys schools.

Our tour guide Miep showed us into the Speech Room, the main assembly hall, and explained to us that she is Dutch and a Harrow (the town itself) resident for many years. She seemed very well-informed, not only about the history of the school, but also about the daily routines/life of a student nowadays, as she and her children have been involved by working and studying at Harrow School.

After the introduction about the founding of the school by John Lyon in 1615, she went more into the details of the Speech Room itself. The school started originally with 30 students, but has grown so significantly that it now must accommodate for 835 students. Therefore, the large Speech Room was built in 1871 to assemble the whole school for prayers, notices and speeches, but also to host events like drama and music performances.

The Globe Style / Greek theatre architecture of the Speech Room was truly impressive, so not surprisingly it is often hired for filmsets, weddings and conferences, which gives the school a nice extra funding. Miep also points out the paintings of some notable old Harrovians at the back of the room like Sir Winston Churchill, Prime Minister Nehru of India, King Faisal II, and Sir Robert Peel.

The second building we visited is the War Memorial. This was built in 1926 to originally

honour the WWI victims connected to Harrow, but later was also dedicated to the victims of the WWII. Miep also took us to the beautifully decorated Alex Fitch (a Harrow student) memorial room on the first floor, where on the other side the teachers' room is located as well.

The third visit was the Chapel. Though we first stopped outside at the back of the Chapel building overlooking the sporting grounds with far away a view of London. There Miep could show the extent of Harrow School's 300 acre estate with all its buildings and different sporting grounds and facilities including a golf course (and even a fishing pond). Interestingly, some of the sporting grounds and facilities are also being rented by professional teams, like American football teams, when they need to play in London or England. She also mentioned of course the invention of Harrow football.

The Chapel is located next to the library, and both were designed by the famous architect St Gilbert Scott. The Chapel was built in 1855 as an extension of St Mary's Church, located more uphill, as that church got too small to accommodate all students. The Chapel offers Mass services and Harrow School requires that all students, regardless their faith, attend the Thursday service to encourage a 'community feeling' among everyone. Through the church Harrovians are also involved in different charity projects.

We finished our tour in the Old Fourth Form Room, the first classroom and spiritual heart of Harrow School, with its wooden



Inside the Alex Fitch memorial room

benches and oak panelled walls. In the beginning, four classes went on in four corners of this room simultaneously (in Latin and Greek only). One of the features of this room is that the panelled walls are completely plastered with 'graffiti' / inscriptions. Miep pointed out to us some inscriptions of notable old Harrovians like Lord Byron, Sir Robert Peel and Sir Winston Churchill.

After the tour we were invited for tea, coffee and biscuits next to the souvenir shop (which was unfortunately already closed. Maybe a nice excuse to visit Harrow-on-the-Hill again). We like to thank Julie for organising this very interesting tour.

"From Dutch Dykes to English Emperors"

by Guus Greve

Thinking about links between Britain and the UK, I came across a link in nature conservation and ecological restoration which is worth a more extensive description.

As we have just passed the 70th anniversary of the February floods which caused catastrophe in Zeeland as well as in East Anglia, it is worth considering that building dykes has been practiced for hundreds of years and not only for protection against the sea, but also to reclaim land. The biggest of land reclamation effort in The Netherlands was the closure of the Zuiderzee with the Afsluitdijk completed in 1932. This protected the Zuiderzee cities including Amsterdam, and provided the opportunity for large scale reclamation of, in sequence; the Wieringer polder (1930 200 km²), the NoordOost polder (1942, 480 km²) East Flevoland (1957, 540 km²) and South Flevoland (1968 430 km²). South Flevoland was designed to have next to agricultural land a large city, Almere, to relieve the growth pressures on Amsterdam, as well a large industrial area on its north flank, between Almere and Lelystad. It turned out however that there was still enough space available on the old land for those industries and this part of the polder (some 60 km²) was left alone for a while. After only a couple of years this landscape of shallow pools, islets and swamps became a popular resting and foraging area for many species of waterfowl, to



map of Zuiderzee werken (adapted from Wikipedia)

the extent that it rapidly turned into a nature reserve of national significance and was designated as such in 1986. Greylag geese were the ones who had moved in among the first and helped form the open landscape that attracted others, but it was unsure how the area would develop going forward.

At that time one of the employees of Staatsbosbeheer, the state organisation governing the area, had developed some new

ideas on how the lowlands of the Netherlands looked in prehistoric times. Instead of dense forest, as was widely assumed, he thought that large areas might have been open, grazed low by Aurochs (very large wild cows) and other ungulates. So, reasoned conservationist Frans Vera, if you wanted to preserve the open landscape of this new area, you need to have it grazed.

I will briefly pause here to let you consider how important of a revelation this was. All that people had as evidence was what they observed happening in their environment when nature was left to its own. Wetlands would grow reeds, then grass, then trees and over time what remained in the absence of human intervention was dense forest. People cut forests, created grasslands etc. So, the assumption was that nature reverts to a forested state if people leave it to itself, and in the past (before agriculture by humans started), Europe was largely covered in 'primeval forest'.

Frans Vera and some of his contemporaries were almost as imaginative as Charles Darwin (my personal view) because they started to reason from observations available to us from the pre-human past, rather than looking at nature as we see it around us today. They realised that the shape of nature was not driven by the forces we can see today (in the absence of free grazers vegetation is king, and therefore in the end the trees win), but that a

different equilibrium existed in the past where animals shaped the environment. And Frans then was the first to consciously experiment on a large scale to see if his theory was right.

After careful consideration, it was decided to introduce Heck cattle (as a replacement for the Auroch), Konik horses, and red deer to the area and treat it as nature, ie to not interfere and see how things would develop. The results were spectacular. Spoonbills, cormorants and geese found the area and multiplied and formed large colonies and even the Sea Eagle, extinct from the Netherlands, returned and started to breed in 2006! The project was acclaimed nationally and internationally. A brilliant nature film was made showing scenes you would only think of seeing on an African wildlife documentary, and the Oostvaardersplassen were dubbed the 'Serengeti under the smoke of Amsterdam'.

I will get to a problem that then took some of the gloss off this success, but let's go to England first. It was well before that happened that Charlie Burrell, running a farm in Sussex, was doubting its ability to prosper, and looking for alternatives. The 3500 acre farm (14 km²) had been in agricultural use for generations, but struggled to make the transition to intensive farming, partly caused by poorer soil conditions. In the year 2000 he decided to stop farming, and in 2002 made the first statement around his idea to create a 'biodiverse wilderness area', not in the least because just in two years before the English translation of Frans Vera's groundbreaking book 'Grazing Ecology and Forest History' had appeared.

The journey here was different from that of the Oostvaardersplassen and is well documented in the book written by Isabella Tree, Charlie's wife. Just like in the Oostvaardersplassen, new 'land managers' were appointed, here in the form of Tamworth pigs,



Exmoor ponies at the Knepp estate (photo by author)

who disturb the soil and red and fallow deer, English Longhorn cows, and Exmoor ponies all picking out different bits of vegetation. The role of these animals is not just to keep the vegetation in check. They also serve as



Grazers at the Oostvaardersplassen © Staatsbosbeheer

transporters of nutrients by dropping dung wherever they go, and spreading seeds, through dung but also for example in their hair.

We visited the park on a summer day in 2019 and took a long walk. This was different from the normal UK landscape, less maintained. I recognised the structures and shapes you also see when you go on a safari in Africa. Trees that are not always perfect, lots of places where the soil has been disturbed and animal made paths leading everywhere. And we spotted the deer and ponies, but not the pigs or cows. And in a very small but well stocked shop there were no national trust style cakes and scones, not even staff but rather an honesty box. We bought some snacks and Isabella Tree's book, 'Wilding' on which this article is largely based.

One of the most surprising developments in the park (of which there were many) was that of the Purple Emperor butterfly. The Purple Emperor the second largest and most spectacular species of butterfly in the UK, but remains only in a handful of forests in the UK. A recent Attenborough documentary on wildlife in Britain showed their behaviour, with the purple males, for a few weeks in summer, competing with each other, putting on spectacular displays to protect their territory and being aggressive to the extent that even birds are attacked.

In 2009 a visiting butterfly expert was excited to discover a few eggs on a leaf, and a few years later, hoping for maybe a dozen adults, they counted already more than a hundred. From 2018 in which year 388 emperors were counted Knepp is by far the site

with the largest amount of these beautiful butterflies, and it is no wonder that Knepp was the location chosen by the BBC for the filming of the Purple Emperors. In the process we have improved our understanding of the species. It was thought that Purple Emperors live in woodlands, as these were the only places the emperors were still to be seen. In fact, they survive there, but it turns out they thrive when large areas of willow saplings are available, just the species that was able to spread well in Knepp, due to the regular uprooting of moist soil by the Tamworth pigs, creating the perfect germination conditions for the willow seeds blowing in the wind. Similar amazing tales are told about turtle doves, nightingales, beavers and many other species.

Knepp is a place that shows us the strength and resilience of nature. It is a hopeful message for those worried about the devastation humans have caused to the natural world. This devastation is, in fact, reversible and witnessing it only takes a short drive to East Sussex. When you do so, think about the fact that it is partly inspired by what happened when the Dutch accidentally built one dyke too many, and decided to leave a reclaimed area to nature.

Postscript

So what happened at the Oostvaardersplassen? The concept here was to let nature take its course, ie completely without human intervention, but an important addition, creating a wildlife corridor from the polder to the mainland of the Netherlands, did not happen due to government cost cutting and the reserve remained a small enclosure. The animals multiplied and without predators, or the possibility to migrate, the land did not allow sufficient nutrition for the growing populations, resulting in emaciated animals in winter and death on a large scale. Not something you would be surprised at in a large nature reserve in Africa, but so near to Amsterdam animal welfare groups saw it up close and were outraged. They insisted that there should be feeding to support the animals in winter. And therefore, authorities stepped in and prescribed that the populations should be managed to certain numbers, which is the end of the experiment to 'let nature run its course', but at the same time will create a new equilibrium that would never have existed without the visionary view from people like Frans Vera. Knepp has avoided this problem by actively managing their large animals from the beginning.

King's Day Celebrations at the Dutch Church, London- 29 April



In glorious weather, a very large gathering of people, young and old, convened in and around the Dutch Church in the City of London to celebrate King's Day (in the Netherlands celebrated officially on 27 April). Plenty of stalls with food and drinks inside and outside the Church where a number of stalls were set up to promote activities of various organisations with strong connections with the Netherlands. The stall of our Society was "manned" by members of our Council and Events Committee and visited by many. With some very positive results as a large number of new applications for membership of our Society were received (as shown on page 1) and our Centenary book attracted many interested readers.

The photo on the left shows Connie Sangster and Marina Mathon - Clark, the photo below shows Carine Williams at the Society's King's Day stall



Forthcoming Events

Visit to the House of Lords

Tuesday in September – middle of the day

Join us and step into the heart of British democracy and explore the House of Lords and Westminster Hall during a private and informative tour led by an expert guide. We will get a sneak peek behind the scenes at Westminster, in what is not only a stunning historical site but also a fast-paced modern workplace. We will discover the history and traditions of the House of Lords and see magnificent artworks on display. The Lords Chamber itself is "Pugin" beyond belief: red, gold and luxuriously detailed. The woolsacks on the floor are the only things that are not opulent – they sit at the centre to serve a reminder of where Britain's money used to come from.

After our 60-minute tour and a sandwich with drinks lunch in one of the private Committee rooms, we will visit the Peers' Lobby prior to attending and watching some Question Time in the Lords. There will be opportunity for a visit to the Houses of Parliament shop. This very special event is most kindly sponsored by our President Lord Taylor of Holbeach. Cost £47.50 p.p. which includes the private tour, the sandwich lunch with drinks and room hire. Bookings (members only) can now be made at events@anglo-netherlands.org.uk. There is a maximum number of participants and places will be allocated on a first come, first served, basis.

Payment via Internet Banking, Anglo-Netherlands Society, account 0540 98 45, sort code (NatWest) 50-41-02, ref your name/event. If not using IB, email administrator@anglo-netherlands.org.uk for alternatives.



Planned visit, Frans Hals exhibition
National Gallery London - date and time to be determined

The Society is planning a visit for Members to this important exhibition and we shall circulate details when they are agreed with the National Gallery. www.nationalgallery.org.uk/exhibitions/the-credit-suisse-exhibition-frans-hals

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SIGNPOSTS

Hilma af Klint & Piet Mondrian, Tate Modern 20 April-3 September.

This is a unique chance to discover the visionary work of Swedish painter Hilma af Klint and experience Dutch painter Piet Mondrian's influential art in a new light.

www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/hilma-af-klint-piet-mondrian

Going Dutch: 17th century paintings from the collection, Leamington Spa, 26 May-10 September. A rare opportunity to see the Gallery's significant collection of Dutch and Flemish paintings on display together.



www.warwickdc.gov.uk/royalpumprooms/events/event/453/going_dutch_seventeenth_century_painting_from_the_collection
On the left: Abraham Bloemaert (1566-1651), The Prodigal Son, 1615
Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

Anglo-Netherlands Society

Established 1920, incorporated 2002

Company limited by guarantee, number 4322131

Registered Office: 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0DY
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e-mail: administrator@anglo-netherlands.org.uk

AIMS and OBJECTS

The Anglo-Netherlands Society exists to promote the social, artistic, literary, educational, scientific, and other non party-political interests in common to the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. Apart from publishing this Newsletter, the Society reaches its Members by organising social functions (including dinners, lectures and recitals) and by arranging visits to exhibitions, concerts, and places of interest. The Society relies on voluntary workers.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Any person or organisation desirous of promoting the objectives of the Society is eligible to apply for membership, subject to acceptance by the Society's Council. More information is available from the Administrator.

PRESIDENT

The Rt Hon. Lord Taylor of Holbeach CBE

VICE-PRESIDENT

H.E. the Netherlands Ambassador

COUNCIL

Dick van den Broek (Chairman)

Paul Dimond (Hon. Secretary)

David Glassman (Hon. Treasurer)

Guus Greve

Connie Sangster

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Connie Sangster (Chair)

Marianne Denney Marietta Freeman Evelien Hurst - Buist

Marina Mathon - Clark Julie Shelton

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The Society has for years been fortunate in having the help of several organisations. To recognise this support, which has often been sustained for decades, the following organisations are termed Corporate Patrons:

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Carpenters' Company

This form of membership can be tailored to your requirements.

Members' page at www.anglo-netherlands.org.uk

username: removed password: removed

Members can download duplicate event registration forms and various other papers as follows: surf to the Members' Page, click the link for the required document, then enter the username and password in the relevant boxes in the pop-up window.

Alternatively, please request a paper copy from the Administrator.

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