

OFFICIAL REPORT

AUSTRALIAN-DUTCH HERITAGE DAY

21 February 2012, Fremantle



Photo 1: The participants of the Heritage Day (source: Western Australian Museum).

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Introduction

The CIE – Centre for International Heritage Activities has as one of its aims to make international cooperation in the field of heritage open to the public, specialists and governments. In addition, the CIE strives for further collaboration between parties in the heritage field and professionalism. One of the tools that the CIE uses is the organization of Heritage Days. On 21 February 2012 the Australian-Dutch Heritage Day was organized in collaboration with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Western Australian Museum (WAM).

The Heritage Day was part of a two-day event to celebrate the mutual heritage relations. The event started with an official launch of ‘Cultural Heritage Connections’, the online platform on mutual cultural heritage, during a formal reception on the 21st of February in the Shipwreck Galleries in Fremantle.

During the Heritage Day professionals and specialists working in the field of Australian-Dutch mutual heritage gathered in the WAM – Maritime to exchange experiences and knowledge on projects and activities. In addition, experts were given the possibility to present their project(s) through the submission of a poster. These were displayed in the function room of the Western Australian Museum – Maritime in Fremantle.



Photo 2: From left to right, Hon Ken Baston MLC, Ambassador Willem Andreae, Dr Robert Parthesius, Ms Diana Jones and Hon Consul Arnold Stroobach at the launch of the platform (source: WAM).

The Heritage Day in Fremantle was divided into two parts, a plenary part with lectures and panel discussions and an afternoon program with workshops, for which all participants were split up in three groups.

Overview of the plenary part

H.E. Willem Andreae, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands opened the day, followed by words of welcome from Mr Alec Coles, CEO of the WAM and Robert Parthesius, Director of the CIE.

The introduction speeches were followed by a panel discussion on maritime heritage, in which the emphasis was on the possible discovery of a fifth VOC wreck off the coast of Western Australia. Hugh Edwards, Jeremy Green and Robert Parthesius took place in the panel discussion that was headed by Mr Graeme Henderson.



Photo 3: The Theatre Hall at the WAM – Maritime (source: WAM).

Nonja Peters of Curtin University talked about heritage tourism in relation to migration and military heritage, highlighting the connection between heritage and the feeling of belonging and possibilities of tourism through heritage. Subsequently, Ambassador Willem Andreae spoke about mutual heritage from a Dutch policy perspective. Australian representative Lyn Allan then gave a presentation about the Australian perspective on mutual heritage.

The afternoon program was started with the second panel discussion of the day, with the subject of mercantile heritage relations between the Netherlands and Australia. The panel consisted of professionals from different backgrounds: John Rothwell (Austal Group), Marjorie Bly (National Archives of Australia), Enzo Sirna (National Trust of Australia), Nonja Peters (Curtin University) and Marcel Pieren (Shell). Robert Parthesius chaired this discussion.

Koosje Spitz of the CIE highlighted the possibilities and the use of the online platform ‘Cultural Heritage Connections’ in a short presentation and explained why this is a valuable tool in international heritage cooperation.

The last hour before the workshops contained presentations on three different mutual heritage projects. Nonja Peters and Stella Groenhof presented the Dutch Australian At A Glance project (DAAAG). Dr Phillip Playford spoke about the landing of Dirk Hartog on the coast of Western Australia and the commemoration plans for the anniversary in 2016. Rebecca Millar of the Kalbarri Development Association showed the ZEST Festival project, and gave valuable tools for community engagement.



Photo's 4-7: Top left to bottom right, presentations of Ms Lyn Allan, Dr Phil Playford, Ms Rebecca Millar and Dr Nonja Peters (source: CIE).

Detailed report panel discussion on the maritime heritage relations and the research on the Aagtekerke

Maritime Archaeology is an important element in the bilateral heritage relations between the Netherlands and Australia. This cooperation dates back to the 1970s, when the Australian-Netherlands Committee on the Discovery of Shipwrecks (ANCODS) was established. This committee focused on the mutual care of the archaeological findings resulting from the discovery of four Dutch VOC ships off the coast of Western Australia. Over the last decades, various initiatives have taken place in the field of maritime heritage involving many organizations, museums and experts in the Netherlands and Australia.

During the Australian-Dutch Heritage Day in Fremantle three experts discussed their findings and evidence on the possible discovery of a fifth ship under the chairmanship of former director of the Western Australian Maritime Museum Graeme Henderson. The experts were Mr Hugh Edwards, photographer, explorer, historian and author, Dr Jeremy Green, Head of Maritime Archaeology at the WAM, and Dr Robert Parthesius, Director at the CIE. In 1966 the wreck of the Zeewyk was discovered. This ship wrecked in the early eighteenth century off the coast of Western Australia. Close to this wreck, evidence was



Photo 8: The panel of the discussion about maritime heritage relations (source: WAM)

found of another wreck. It has been said that this could be from the Aagtekerke, a ship that sailed from the Cape to Java around the same time, but never actually arrived. The main question was whether there may be a fifth wreck and, if so, could this wreck be the VOC ship Aagtekerke that was lost in 1726 on its route from the Cape to Batavia?

Each expert presented arguments and historical and archaeological evidence to support his stance. Hugh Edwards started and pointed out that there must be a second wreck near the wreck site of the Zeewyk, as four elephant tusks were found at the wreck site of the Zeewyk that were not on the cargo list of the Zeewyk. He also referred to other historical and archaeological material, such as the presence of several cannons and anchors and the diary of Adriaen van der Graeff, second mate on the Zeewyk. After his ship was wrecked on June 9, 1727, Van der Graeff wrote in his journal that they found a “filled hand grenade, also old rope and ship’s skin, these belonging to a ship or ships which the same fate had struck here”. He later speculates that this wreckage might have belonged to “the Aagtekerke”.

The presentation was followed by a presentation of Jeremy Green, Head of Maritime Archaeology WAM. He counter argued the points put forward by Hugh Edwards. Since the Aagtekerke disappeared only a year before the Zeewyk wrecked, there should have been indications of more wreckage found by the discoverers of the Zeewyk. Nonetheless, it very well could be that more ships wrecked on the reef in the Abrolhos island group. Magnetometer [aerial] survey is needed to further support the possible discovery of more wrecks.



Photo 9: Jeremy Green presenting his findings on the possible discovery of the Aagtekerke (source: WAM).

Third panel participant Dr Robert Parthesius underlined the argument that the fifth wreck is not that of the Aagtekerke. He believes that archival research done by historian Menno Leenstra, among others, has shown that the discovered cargo does not match the archival documents that were found about the Aagtekerke. Illegal trade could explain why elephant tusks were found at the site of the Zeewyk.

An important element of the presentation was the reference to another route that VOC ships appear to have taken, one that was unknown up to now. Dr Robert Parthesius showed evidence that there was a second VOC route, hence making many more ships possible candidates for the wrecks.



Photo 10: Presentation by Robert Parthesius on mutual heritage cooperation (source: WAM).

Among these ships is the Fortuyn. Overall, it was concluded that it is very likely that there is at least one or even more ships located near the site of the Zeewyk at Half-Moon reef in the Pelsaert group of the Abrolhos islands. It is however, very unlikely that this wreck is the former Aagtekerke ship.

Furthermore, the panel discussion concluded, there is a need for more research on this possible wreck. To establish the notion that there is a fifth ship, a systematic discovery is needed. This research could fit into the 2016 Netherlands Australian bilateral celebrations. Dr Green underlined the need to collaborate with businesses (such as FUGRO), which may pro-bono assist by facilitating the means for a possible aerial survey.

The chairperson Graeme Henderson put forward the proposal to address the Maritime Institute Journal, to dedicate a volume on the ongoing research and search of the wreck.

Detailed report panel discussion on the mercantile heritage relations between the Netherlands and Australia

For the first time, a panel discussion on mercantile heritage was organized in the field of Australian-Dutch heritage relations. Dr Nonja Peters of the Curtin University, who has written her PhD on immigrant entrepreneurship, introduced this theme.

Australia and the Netherlands share ties through their mercantile relations. The investments and enterprises of Dutch migrants and Dutch companies in Australia have played an important role in the economic development of Australia. Already in the 17th and 18th century, first contacts with Australia resulted from the trading activities of the East India Company (VOC). More recently, mercantile relations were established through Dutch entrepreneurship in Australia. Currently, the Netherlands is one of the major foreign investors in Australia. These past and present mercantile relations form an important tie between the two countries and this topic was therefore chosen as one of the main themes during the Australian-Dutch heritage day.

The panel discussion discussed the validity of this theme from a historical and business perspective. Furthermore, the panel members discussed how influential these relations were and how this link between Heritage and Economy can be intensified. The panel members were: Marjory Bly (National Archives), Nonja Peters (Curtin University), Marcel Pieren (Shell), John Rothwell (Austral Shipping) and Enzo Sirna (National Trust WA).

All panel members agreed upon the significance of the Australian-Dutch mercantile relations, however as was outlined by John Rothwell and Enzo Sirna, these mercantile relations are not per definition unique. Nonetheless, there are particular elements in these mercantile activities that are

interesting to further research. One of these elements is the Dutch work ethic. Dutch are known as 'hard workers' and always looking for business opportunities. They are also known for their self-employment. Nonja Peters analysed the different sectors in which Dutch migrants worked, who were often labourers and differed from for example Hungarian migrants who were generally higher educated. Even up to today, the Dutch dominate certain sectors and skills, such as the field of shipping and engineering. Another element within the mercantile heritage is the contemporary 'Dutch business culture abroad'.

Furthermore, it may be interesting for the Dutch government to invest in research that links heritage to contemporary corporate entities, as part of the mercantile heritage. This can be done through recording the development of companies and their influence in sectors and invite museums to use this information.



Photo 11: The panel of the discussion on mercantile heritage relations (source: CIE).

Marcel Pieren underlined that companies are interested to invest in heritage, however that from a business perspective the benefit of investing in heritage needs to be clear. Another interesting point raised was that companies are interested in the 'economics of heritage' and may be less interested in 'historical heritage'. Recent mercantile activities may be influential in the future and may affect the future heritage relations. John Rothwell underlined that it is more likely that companies will invest in research than in single activities. As also outlined by Enzo Sirna of the National Trust, it may be interesting to look into the 'Dutch footprint' in (Western) Australia. In addition, historical strengths and characteristics can be used in today's economy, creating a parallel that is relevant to companies today. Marjory Bly noted that not much archival material on business activities is available in the National and State Archives. Therefore, companies should be encouraged to archive their documentation and administration more extensively, in order for future generations to have more information about current activities. This may give insight into the scope of the mercantile relations.

With regard to 2016, the concluding advice is to use the stories of the first encounters of the Dutch, as these will fascinate a large public. It is a good idea to make 2016 into a cultural year and underline the interaction in many different sectors. Dutch entrepreneurship can be used as a framework for the events. Furthermore, it is important to invest in young people, as young people are also future employees of current businesses.

The workshops

The workshops formed a big part of the afternoon's program and are used by the CIE to enhance interdisciplinary and multilateral collaboration and to form recommendations for future mutual heritage cooperation. The participants of the Australian-Dutch Heritage Day were divided into three groups to discuss the following topics:

1. The need for a formal bilateral heritage agreement and its practical implementation.
2. How to ensure sustainability, continuation and organized mutual heritage cooperation?
3. How to create a concrete and successful coordination of the 2016 activities – from incentive to implementation?



Photo's 11 – 12: Two workshop-groups in action in the afternoon (source: CIE).

The three groups all had their own chairperson. Alec Coles, CEO of the WAM, Lyn Genoni, Executive Director of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and Enzo Sirna, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the National Trust of Australia led the discussions along the topics and made sure recommendations were formulated and conclusions and remarks could be presented.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. The need for a formal bilateral heritage agreement and its practical implementation.

- There is a need for a bilateral heritage agreement, as such an agreement may support the promotion and presentation of heritage activities. The document will function as a formal support and Memorandum of Understanding from both governments, to underline the importance/significance of the mutual heritage cooperation;
- This formal agreement, however, should not be too bureaucratic/formal, but flexible, as it may counteract the implementation of the activities. Especially in the federal system of Australia, too much bureaucracy may have a negative effect on local and small-scale activities, as it requires permission on a higher level;
- A concern was raised in achieving such a bilateral agreement, as the Australian governmental system is very complicated due to the federal system and many different bodies that deal with heritage and cultures;

- A Memorandum of Understanding needs to be practical. This was especially underlined for the Netherlands. It may be better to make arrangements at a lower level than at a national level. The formality may help from top down, but involvement of all stakeholders' needs to come from bottom up. The formality may even increase as projects grow;
- An important element within the Memorandum of Understanding is research. Links can be created through research and networks can be built on themes;
- A more formal framework for heritage cooperation is necessary because:
 - a. it would give access to funds,
 - b. it would give structure to frame activities in,
 - c. it would create a form of expectation and commitment,
 - d. it would give a form of sustainability,
 - e. it would give a form of credibility to projects;
- It would be a good idea to analyse the Memoranda of Understanding within the various countries and ask them what the experiences are so far and what could be improved for a Dutch Australian framework;
- Such a Memorandum can provide a framework/plan for 2016. However, the agreement should also look at post 2016, to avoid a 'post event burnout'.

2. *How to ensure sustainability, continuation and organized mutual heritage cooperation?*

- The participants of the Heritage Day underlined the importance of a joint feeling of ownership, both in Australia and the Netherlands. However, the word institutionalisation has a negative connotation. Nonetheless, participants noted the need for support from cultural institutes and organisations in the effort to preserve and promote the Australian-Dutch heritage relations;
- Indeed, the Dutch community is ageing and this will most likely affect the continuation and preservation of Australian-Dutch heritage;
- Interest in the Australian-Dutch heritage relations exists on many levels and not only among the Dutch migrant community. A good example of community engagement is the ZEST festival. Its participants consider this project as an important example of community involvement and local awareness;
- Education and involvement of younger generations is crucial in the continuation of the mutual heritage cooperation. There are numerous educational activities, such as exchanges, Australian-Dutch heritage in the school curriculum, research programs and apprenticeships and young ambassador programs;
- Community participation relating to mutual cultural heritage will continue in the next 20 years, but needs to get a different focus. Young people need to be activated. For now high priority should be given to capturing the stories of the aging and disappearing generation before it is too late;
- WA should connect with Dutch-Australian cultural heritage groups in other parts of Australia, too;
- Ways to institutionalise our cultural heritage would be to involve:
 - a. young people (i.e. via school curriculum)
 - b. students, to be able to perform more research
 - c. tourist business, to meet the tourist expectations (i.e. organising Heritage Tours);

- The continuation of the activities by the Dutch communities in Australia is becoming increasingly difficult, because the Dutch language has not been passed on to next generations;
- In addition, many elderly people are experiencing dementia and are therefore unable to pass on memories, culture and heritage;
- Due to the distances and the increased usage of the Internet, heritage websites are crucial. Digitization of collections and archives is crucial to ensure the sustainability of the historical material and increases sustainability;
- An important element in the preservation of the migration and military heritage are oral history programs, which provide valuable historic documentation;
- In addition, a new approach is necessary to engage younger generations with heritage/ community groups, through story telling e.g. through social media. An initiative can be set up where young people record the story of their (grand) parents on Facebook;
- The education curriculum needs to acknowledge various heritage/cultural groups, among others the Dutch. Children should be introduced to old objects and the stories behind them, e.g. by using photo albums as the main theme in story telling;
- Combine heritage with other sectors. Australia is a country dominated by a love for sports. Link heritage with sport initiatives, e.g. create link with heritage during visiting sporting groups or sport event, such as during the Sydney Olympics in 2000;
- Create apprenticeships for younger people in different cultural organizations, museums and institutes. This way young generations are involved in the mutual heritage cooperation, become specialists in this field and will become enthusiastic about heritage;
- Cultural institutes, organisations and associations should include a five percent succession in their budget, to ensure proper succession of knowledge and expertise. This ensures capacity building and imbeds succession and continuation in the organization.

3. How to create a concrete and successful coordination of the 2016 activities – from incentive to implementation?

- Define a fund and coordination body in each country for the 2016 activities;
- There is a need for a bilateral commemoration or celebration of the heritage relations in 2016;
- A timeline is needed, including important milestones and activities towards 2016. These activities include the Broome commemorations and the Zuytdorp commemorations in 2012, as well as the June 2012 Australian-Dutch Heritage Day in The Hague;
- The Embassies in both countries will need to play an important role in the coordination of the activities;
- It will be a challenge to gain enough political support for the 2016 activities, both in the West and Eastern parts of Australia. It was suggested to have members and politicians promoting the activities amongst their followers, to gain political support;
- The Dirk Hartog Committee may be a leading example. It reports to the WA Premier and puts forward recommendations on the coordination and supporting committees;
- However, the 2016 events need to include the whole of Australia, rather than only WA. In addition, local communities need to become involved to make the event a success;
- It is a pity that there is not much of remaining legacy from the commemorations in 2006. There have been no successive events. Any lessons learned from the organization of

these commemorations have not been recorded, nor are there any possible achievements to work with;

- The commemoration or celebration of the heritage relations in 2016 should be better structured, with several milestones on the way to 2016. There should be a crescendo towards 2016, but the bilateral relations should not come to a halt after that year. After 2016, the cooperation should be continued with new milestones towards other future time commemorations and celebrations;
- Funding is needed, as large-scale projects need to get support from sponsors. The business community should be closely involved and connections should be built from an early beginning onwards;
- Funding is also needed for academic research in the field of Dutch-Australian heritage, which can be presented in 2016;
- It was recommended that 2016 should be a whole year event, rather than just one celebration. It should be a year with many initiatives, large and small. The activities should include educational and showcase activities highlighting the joint activities and achievements between Australia and the Netherlands. In addition, these activities should vary in that they address different (age) groups, from children to the elderly;
- Ensure that there are facilities for the general public to actually visit the major assets of the mutual heritage;
- Activities should be taken up in a broader regional program, for example the activities undertaken by the Maritime Museum and their cooperation with the ZEST festival;
- Organize exchange programs for different groups, such as on an educational and an organisational level;
- Use an already existing cultural and social infrastructure in the efforts to preserve and continue activities, such as the Australian Social Responsibility Programs, and the Nuffic Cultural working holiday and exchange programs;
- Joint exhibitions in both countries, to introduce the Dutch and Australian public to the mutual heritage;
- Ways to improve the preparation towards the activities in 2016 would be to:
 - a. Develop a calendar with milestones.
 - b. Create more awareness amongst the Dutch and Australian public and (national) politicians in Australia as well as in the Netherlands.
 - c. Organise a Dutch-Australian Heritage Day in The Netherlands.
 - d. Create an equivalent of the CIE in Australia.



Photo's 13 – 14: Left, H.E. Willem Andreae and Mr Graeme Henderson. Right, Dr Susan Broomhall, Mr Alec Coles, Ms Rebecca Millar and Patricia Gliddon (source: WAM).

Towards 2016

With regard to the commemorations of and lead up to 2016, the CIE has so far planned the following activities:

- A Dutch-Australian Heritage Day in The Hague in June 2012.
- A Coordination Meeting in Canberra, Australia (Autumn 2012).

With regard to the commemorations of and lead up to 2016, different proposals have already reached the CIE:

- Relive the sailing trip with old ships (TBA, Geraldton)
- Zest Festival (5 years starting in 2012, Kalbarri)
- Film Festival based in Perth and the Netherlands, with cultural ties as theme for the films (Example is the Japanese Film Festival, see: <http://filmfestivalsaustralia.org>)
- Festival that is held in different countries at the same time, such as Tropfest (<http://tropfest.com/au>).
- A bi-annual Sailing Regatta, possible name 'Dutch Cup' and replica of a cup recovered from the Batavia as the trophy.
- Aboriginal art exhibition (possibly June 2012, Middelburg, the Netherlands)
- Replica of the Duyfken coming back to WA (2012, Sydney – Perth)
- Tall ship race (2013, TBA)
- Dutch Philharmonic Orchestra coming to Australia (TBA)
- International Archaeological Convention (2016, Perth)
- Activities on commemorating the ship wrecking of the Zuytdorp (2013, Geraldton)
- 50 years since the discovery of the Vergulde Draeck (2013).
- Translating and publishing of famous books on the Australian Dutch mutual heritage in Dutch.
- Cooperation with the UWA Archaeological Society.
- Cooperation with Dutch Care – their 20-year anniversary coincides with the 2016 celebrations.

Other ideas are:

- Young ambassadors program, such as proposed by the Kalbarri Development Association. Make young people ambassadors of the celebrations and promoters of their heritage activities.
- Tell the stories of the first sailors that wrecked off the coast of Australia, their experiences and on the other hand the stories of their families at home. Show the impact of such a journey on the lives of 17th / 18th century Dutch men and their families at home, as well as that of the first contacts with the Aborigines.

The following activities could/should become milestones towards 2016:

- Outcome genetic research between VOC shipwreck survivors in the 17th and 18th century and current members of the Aboriginal community in Western Australia.
- 50 years since the discovery of the Batavia

Involve the business community, through initiatives:

- Discovery of the Fifth Wreck – Aerial Survey, work together with companies that may support these efforts.
- Tell the stories of the histories of the companies, such as the story of the first multinationals of Dutch origin in Australia.

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