

B U L L E T I N

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Members of the GNE Utrecht Branch

With pleasure I introduce your Christmas Bulletin. First and foremost, the Committee wish you a healthy and happy 2008. I am happy to say that 2007 was, for our branch, both productive and beneficial. We look back to a well organized preliminary round of the BBC-GNE Awards, we have ten new members and we received very positive reactions to our events programme as well as to the Christmas party with the English Dancing Group - the introduction by Antony Heywood and the pleasing entertainment gaining lots of applause. I would like to thank our Committee whose unflinching interest and enthusiasm, mostly behind the scenes, is largely responsible for any success that we might enjoy, and to you, our members, for your continuing interest and loyalty.

However, we now have to look forward. On January 18th Andrew Lacey will give a talk on "Sir Christopher Wren and the English Baroque" and on Friday the 8th of February our Patron, Lyn Parker, will entertain us with "An illustrated mystery tour of English Music".

On 29th February 2008 (yes, 2008 is a leap year so beware all you bachelor men!) the Amsterdam Branch of GNE is organizing a special guided visit for all members to the great exhibition of one of the most successful artists of the second half of the 19th Century: Sir John Everett Millais. He lived from 1829 till 1896 and was the most important British pre-Raphaelite artist. His Orphelia floating on water is one of the most evocative paintings of all time. All information can be found in the Amsterdam Branch December Bulletin, which can be downloaded from the GNE web-site (www.nederlandengeland.nl), or can be obtained at our next meeting on 18th January.

On March 15th the regional preliminary round of the 2008 BBC-GNE Awards will be held at the Revis Lyceum in Doorn. For the second time, our branch is invited to organize local arrangements and to help with volunteers in guiding the participants and visitors, also to provide time keepers and qualified members of the jury. If you are interested, please notify our secretary (soon).

Last year we began sending press releases to local newspapers with the announcement of lectures and we also made monthly flyers for use at local libraries and stores such as bookshops. We also intend to send these flyers to our electronically accessible members with the request to disseminate them at appropriate locations. All members can obtain a flyer at our meetings for use in this way.

I hope to see you at our next meeting, Friday, January 18, 2007.

Herman Steeneken

From the Committee

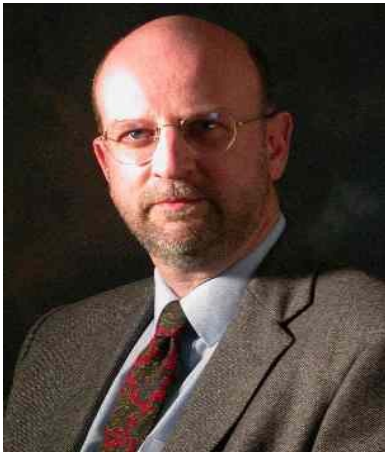
New members:

We would like to express a warm welcome to our new members, Mrs Shapol Majid and Mr & Mrs Steenhardt-Drukker.

COMING EVENTS:

JANUARY: Friday 18th in the Noorderlicht Church, Bergweg, Zeist at 8.00 p.m.

SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN and the ENGLISH BAROQUE, by Andrew Lacey



One of the most enduring images of the Second World War is the dome of St Paul's Cathedral rising above the fire and smoke of the London Blitz in 1940. Winston Churchill called the cathedral "the parish church of the British Empire", and for many contemporaries the survival of Wren's dome became a symbol for the survival of Great Britain. Wren's architecture has come to symbolise stability, order and survival; yet it was created against a backdrop of war, revolution and rapid intellectual and cultural change. Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723) was very much part of this process of change, making his name in the 1650s as an exponent of the "new science" at Oxford and Gresham College, London, and as a founder member of the Royal Society of which he was President in 1681.

This illustrated talk will examine, briefly, Wren's life and achievements and will cover such themes as his use and adaption of the classical language of architecture, the extent to which we can reconstruct his political, theological and philosophical ideas from his extant writings and buildings, his contribution to the movement known as the "English baroque" and to his subsequent reputation. Andrew Lacey completed a first degree in history followed by a postgraduate degree in Library and Information Studies. He has acted as a professional librarian in a variety of Colleges and Universities, and was College Librarian at Trinity Hall, Cambridge from 1994 to 2005. He is now part of the Faculty Library for Architecture and History of Art within the University of Cambridge. In tandem with his professional career, Andrew has pursued his academic interests and teaching in further education. This has included work on the English Civil War and the seventeenth century, the relationship between art and power, and twentieth century history. His work on Christopher Wren grew out of a long standing interest in architecture. In 1999 he was awarded a doctorate by the University of Leicester for research on the cult of King Charles I within the Church of England; the fruits of this work were published by the Boydell Press in 2003.

FEBRUARY: Friday 8th in the Noorderlicht Church, Bergweg, Zeist at 8.00 p.m.

Our Patron, Mr Lyn Parker, will give a lecture on English music. We asked him to introduce his lecture in a few lines and he sent the following response:



' English Music - an illustrated mystery tour.

A hundred years ago, a German writer memorably described England as "a land without music". If so, why is Britain such a musical centre today? What about Scotland, Wales and Ireland? Is there such a thing as "English" music anyway? Come and hear for yourself....'

Lyn Parker started as a lecturer in law at Manchester University but soon joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Before the appointment in The Netherlands (2006) he carried out various European and world wide functions. Lyn Parker will also gladly take questions on his diversified work as a diplomat. A great opportunity to peep behind the scenes! Lynn Parker is married to Jane, they have two daughters.

Please come in overwhelming numbers and bring a friend: we want to welcome Mr. Parker with a large audience!

RECENT EVENTS: Monday 12th November in the Noorderlicht Church, Bergweg, Zeist.

Peter McNamara – Two Yorkshire Cities, Ripon and Leeds.

Beginning his talk by asking the audience for their personal impressions of Ripon and Leeds, we agreed that we see Leeds as a large industrial and commercial City and Ripon as more of a County Town. This set the scene for a fascinating comparison between these two Cities, how two similar middle ages towns have been shaped by history, geography and ultimately by the people who lived in them to become what they are in our modern times.

Going back in time we saw how Ripon in the dark ages was one of the first Christian Communities and how under St Wilfred it became a centre of ecclesiastical learning and excellence. It was a Bishopric with a diocese including Leeds. Leeds being, at that time, just a small country market town with a parish church. This situation held sway until the 18th century when England became the centre of the industrial revolution. Communications have always determined whether a place will grow or be left behind. Leeds had the advantage of being on the River Air, a good sized waterway. Ripon is also near a river but it is smaller and not always navigable. In this period Dutch engineers were employed to build locks on the River Air giving direct navigable access to the larger markets.



Later when canal barges became the preferred means of transport for raw materials and manufactured goods the people of Leeds built canals including a major canal, the Manchester Ship Canal, which took 40 years to build through the Pennines. Ripon also built a canal but Ripon was the terminal and it never generated the trade it was thought it would bring. Railways appeared on the scene and roads long neglected were improved, something which had not been done since the time of the Roman occupation. In Leeds manufacturing was varied so not only did Leeds have an iron industry but also innovative engineers like James Watt, the inventor of the steam engine, who could put these skills to the making of new machines and

products. Leeds had the first successful railway and became a hub for rail communications. An old Yorkshire saying is “Where there's muck there's brass (money).” This certainly applied to Leeds. Ripon also had industry and was known for the manufacture of agricultural machines and paint but its communications were not as good as those of Leeds, and because of this Leeds attracted more industry and workers. In the 1850's there were more and more people deserting the countryside for work in the industrial towns and cities. These people needed a roof over their heads. Leeds also had a large brick industry as an offshoot of the railway industry and with these, as well as slate brought by barge or rail from Wales, houses sprang up everywhere, and the sprawl which has become the Leeds of today began. Peter explained that England was not only the first industrial land but also the first urbanised Country. Ripon is seen to do everything that Leeds does but on a much smaller scale. Ripon also saw the removal of much of its religious learning to be centralised in Oxford and other greater centres of learning. Eventually Ripon became what it is today a suburb of Leeds. Although it still holds the bishopric and Leeds is still in the diocese of Ripon, Leeds does now have a cathedral, a Catholic one. Peter gave us so many anecdotes, information, social and historic facts, that on reading my notes, I know I really can't do him justice in this small space for what proved to be a fascinating tale of two Cities, how they began and how they have developed to become what they are in our Modern age.

C.B.

RECENT EVENT: Tuesday 11th December in the Noorderlicht Church, Bergweg, Zeist.

Annual Christmas Party

The Christmas party started with an introduction by Antony Heywood on “English Country Dancing”. Antony flavoured his talk with many examples of codes & etiquette (if, for example, a lady refuses an invitation to a dance, she is supposed not to accept any further invitations during

this evening - no doubt an unrequited male's pay-back - 'the kiss of death!'). Short movies, made by the BBC with professional actors, were shown to support the examples given by Antony. A highlight was the performance by the Gouda volksdans-groep "At va'ani". This means "You and me". Twelve dancers gave several demonstrations and ended by inviting the audience to dance. This was very much appreciated. Almost everybody stretched his/her legs and enjoyed the dancing, guided verbally by the dancing master.



Volksdansgroep At va'ani

After this physically challenging and thirst-making activity it was time to eat and drink.

Many members brought delicacies for the buffet, for which our grateful thanks. Both sweet and savoury dishes flowed across several tables. With a raffle, organized and controlled (well, almost) by Carol, Janny and Jan, ably backed up by our resident whippers-in, the inimitable Twins (what would we do without them all) as well as the ever enthusiastic participants, the evening ended at a late hour - as all good parties should!



The buffet



Antony Heywood supervising

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