

## THE MOVE DOWN UNDER - Portrait of the Dutch Migration

Towards the end of 1997 a book about the Dutch migrant experience in Australia will be published. This book, edited by Prof. Des Cahill of Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University, Benoît Grüter and Jan Stracke, both active members of the Dutch community in Melbourne, will consist of a number of specially commissioned pa-

other, from the academics present and a small number of ethnic community leaders and observers of the Dutch community in Melbourne.

This colloquium was a very interesting and also educational exercise and the authors must have learned a lot from each other.

On the occasion of the Colloquium on

Between the end of the Second World War and 1970, it is estimated that some 160,000 persons born in the Netherlands migrated to Australia. Some returned and some have died, but today there are still some 95,000 residents of Australia who were born in the Netherlands and a further 140,000 Australians claim to have at least one Dutch parent. Despite having been, until quite recently, one of the largest ethnic groups in this country, the story of the Dutch migrant experience in Australia has not yet been fully explored.

The social, political and economic significance of post-war immigration to Australia is now widely appreciated, but the significance of the emigration wave of the 1950's was a unique episode: about five percent of the population of a country without any history of emigration to speak of, decided to leave their country for good and settle elsewhere. It is striking that scant attention has been paid to this aberrant phenomenon in The Netherlands. The largest group of those migrants settled in Australia.

In some respects the Dutch Australian community provides an ideal subject for study. The Dutch were heralded as model migrants of their day - moderately successful and well assimilated. In fact they were seen to be well assim-

lated that they became known as the "invisible migrants". However, it is becoming increasingly clear that this picture of the Dutch is seriously flawed. Rather than well assimilated, the Dutch only appeared so in public. In their private and personal lives, the lives they lived beyond the front door, they remained very Dutch. This has led some researchers to speak of the Dutch as retaining the Dutch culture as a "closet culture". This phenomenon should make us look much more critically at the achievements of the assimilation policies in place at the time of the Dutch migration and at what exactly we mean when we speak about assimilation.

Of all the ethnic communities, the Dutch were the most ready to give up their language and speak English. As this group has become older there is significant evidence that Dutch Australians are again beginning to speak their mother tongue in preference to English. There is even the suggestion that they are losing their ability to speak English. This phenomenon has also been noticed in other ethnic communities. The practical implications of this for provisions of all sorts of services are enormous. Much of the research on language shift, loss and reversal in this country has been done on the Dutch community.

*Cont. on p. 25*



*Prof. Tony Adams addressed the contributors to the book and wished them success.*

pers covering the major areas of the Dutch migrant experience.

Prior to publication the contributors to the book came together for two days on 24 and 25 June 1996 to discuss their individual topics and learning of each

*The Move Down Under*, the Consul-General of the Netherlands, Mr David van Iterson invited the group of participants for cocktails at his residence.

**BACKGROUND**

18 toegankelijk - 19 dierewacht - 20 gewricht - 19 diere-  
mond - 20 zangspel - 22 huisdier  
- 24 voegwoord - 26 gesloten -  
28 plaats - 30 woonschip - 32  
vangwerktuig - 34 en dergelijke  
- 35 gewetenloos - 36 noot - 37  
part - 39 gedwee - 40 nobel - 42  
troefkaart - 44 biersoort - 45 be-  
dorven - 47 hemelgeest - 50  
dwaas - 52 kleur - 54 scheik.  
verbinding - 56 het binnenste -  
57 snelle loop - 59 brandstof - 61  
slee - 62 windrichting - 63 boom.

klier - 7 kledingstuk - 8 ruste-  
ken - 9 voorzetsel - 11 stellig -  
14 zoutig vocht - 16 insekt - 18  
vochtig - 19 ziekenverpleger - 21  
weldra - 23 nogal - 25 man v.  
adel - 27 armholte - 29 lofdicht  
- 30 behoeftig - 31 etenbereider  
- 33 roem - 38 eenjarig dier - 41  
deel v. e. drukpers - 43 vogel-  
eigenschap - 44 voegwoord - 46  
kelner - 48 wreed heerser - 49  
zwemvogel - 51 meer in N.-Ame-  
rika - 53 zijriv. v. d. Donau - 55  
vat - 56 vogel - 58 bijwoord -  
60 verlaagde toon.

Keep in good spirits and health  
Yours (for the committee)  
P. van Teylingen

The Dutch are one of the first immigrant communities in Australia to grow old in this country. Together with the Greeks, Italians, Poles they are pioneering aged care service for their community. The services

# H.A.

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Migrants have brought various religious traditions and churches to Australia. The Dutch brought the Reformed Christian churches. These churches, however, had to adapt to the new environment, just as the existing churches have had to adapt to the influx of immigrants.

#### The early pre-WWI Dutch settlement in Queensland.

Di Gabb  
(Transcultural Psychiatry Unit, Melb.)



The Future  
Will the Dutch-Australian community survive the death of the first generation?

Authors: The editors: Prof. Desmond Cahill, Jan Stracke, Benoît Grüter



Jan Stracke Benoît Grüter

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the Dutch Australians are now developing provide models for other ethnic communities. The writing of a book about the Dutch migration experience is timely. As the Dutch community gets older the community has a growing interest in making sense of their migration experience. There is some regret that their story hasn't been told and that there is little on the public record to pass on to their children.

In the meantime The Netherlands has also become a land of immigrants. (Paradoxically a process which began at just that time when the Dutch Government was encouraging its own citizens to make a new life for themselves away from their home country.) There are signs of a growing interest in The Netherlands about their own ex-patriot communities. As the Dutch struggle with immigration issues in The Netherlands, they look at the experience of other countries and in particular at how they have handled the issues raised by Dutch immigration.

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# CONTENTS

The following authors will write chapters in the book "The Move Down Under."

## HISTORY



### The Dutch Role in the Discovery of Australia

Author: Dr. Bruce Donaldson (University of Melbourne)

### The Dutch Post War Diaspora

Why the Dutch left their home country. The role of the Dutch and Australian Governments and religious groups in encouraging migration.



Author: Prof. W. Blauw, (University of Rotterdam)

### Why the Dutch came to Australia

How many Dutch came to Australia. When they came, where they settled. The reasons why the Dutch migrated to Australia. Reasons why they stayed in Australia "De wissel emigrant".

Author: Dr. J. Elich

### Dutch Australians from the East Indies

Dutch who came to Australia by way of the East Indies and Indische Nederlanders.

Author: Dr. Wim Willems, (University of Amsterdam)

### Demography

A general overview of the demography of the Dutch in Australia and trends over time. Main topics in-

clude fertility, age structure, marriage, intermarriage, mortality and health.

Author: Dr. Christabel Young, (ANU)

## ASSIMILATION

### The Invisible Dutch

Are the Dutch really assimilated? Why do they appear to be assimilated? In what ways aren't they assimilated? What do we mean by assimilation?

Author: Prof. Desmond Cahill, (RMIT)

### Dutch Migrant Women

Why they came. Associational migration. Their role in settlement. Their role in maintaining the Dutch culture in Australia.

Author: Dr. Wendy Walker-Birckhead (LaTrobe University)

### The Later Generations

Educational and occupational outcomes. What aspects of Dutch culture have Dutch parents passed on to their children. The psychological effect of migration on children now and in adult life.

Author: Prof. Desmond Cahill (RMIT)

## SOCIAL INFLUENCES

### Dutch Australian Society Life

The history of Dutch-Australian society life. Its role in assisting or hindering assimilation and creating cohesion within the Dutch Australian community. Its links and impact,

if any, on the wider community and on other ethnic communities.

Author: H. Overberg (Deakin University)



### Religion among Dutch Migrants

The history of Dutch-Australian religious life. Its role in assisting or hindering assimilation and its impact, if any, on the wider community. How the Dutch adapted their religious traditions to the Australian environment and how the Australian churches dealt with the influx of Dutch immigrants.

Author: Prof. G. Bouma (Monash University)

### The Dutch in the Media

How have the Dutch Australian community been portrayed in the Dutch press, the Australian Press and how do they portray themselves in the Dutch Australian media.

Author: Bert van Bedaf

### Cultural Imprint

The influence of Dutch culture and Dutch-Australian culture on the wider Australian community. Prominent Dutch Australians.

Author: Dr. E. Duiker

## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF DUTCH MIGRATION

### The Economic Activities of the Dutch in Australia

How the Dutch in Australia earned their living. Income Distribu-



tion. The history, activities and influence of Dutch and Dutch-Australian businesses in Australia. Dutch Australian businesses as a springboard for trade with The Netherlands.

Author: Nonja Peters (Museum of Western Australia)

## ISSUES FACING THE DUTCH AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

### Language

The Dutch language in Australia. "Strutch". Dutch and English language loss generally and with special reference to the elderly.

Author: Prof. M. Clyne (Monash University)



### Health

Both physical and mental health problems of Dutch Australians. The question of mental health problems caused by the migration experience and war experiences.

Author: Dr. Wendy Walker-Birckhead (LaTrobe University)

### Ageing in Ethnic Communities

The particular issues facing immigrants as they age. Providing services for older migrants.

Author: Dr. D.T. Rowland (ANU)

