



Vogelvlucht





De kerktoeren van Uithuizermeeden is slechts één van de verrassingen van de provincie Groningen. Het artikel op pag. 3 neemt u mee naar een bijna onbekende streek.

1984-1

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"Nederland in den vreemde"

In mijn 'editorial' van deze keer wil ik even uw bijzondere aandacht vragen voor een vereniging die voor u van belang kan zijn, de Vereniging 'Nederland in den Vreemde'. De vereniging zal in 1984 zijn 70-jarig jubileum vieren en als inleiding daarop had ik een gesprek met de heer J.H.C. Molenaar, voorzitter sinds september '82.

'De vereniging werd opgericht in 1914 naar aanleiding van de Wereldtentoonstelling in Gent. Het bleek daar dat de presentatie van ons land in het buitenland veel te wensen overliet. Bovendien werd ook als doel gesteld het onderhouden van contact met Holland'.

U ziet dat de doelstellingen verwant zijn met die van de redactie van Vogelvlucht. Ook nu valt het ons op dat er van alles wordt gedaan, maar weinig aan de presentatie van Nederlandse cultuur: Frankrijk heeft het Maison Descartes, Duitsland

het Goethe Instituut, Engeland the British Council, maar probeer eens een goede Nederlandse bibliotheek in het buitenland te vinden! Voor de circa 600.000 mensen met een Nederlands paspoort die in het buitenland verblijven (zoals de heer Molenaar kernachtig zegt: 'een hele provincie') zou meer gedaan kunnen worden op het gebied van de cultuur (films, boeken etcetera). Daarnaast zijn vooral de maatschappelijke problemen van belang geworden.

'Het is na jaren van voorbereiding en besprekingen gelukt voor Nederlanders in het buitenland stemrecht te krijgen, wat een verandering in de Grondwet vereiste. Bij dat initiatief was de Vereniging ten nauwste betrokken. Maar wij richten ons niet uitsluitend op mensen die de Nederlandse nationaliteit bezitten. Vooral ook de jongere generatie mensen van Hollandse afkomst is voor ons van belang.'

De belangstelling voor de vereniging is stijgende. Advies en informatie op het gebied van de AOW, overleg met de Nederlandse overheid en het houden van informatieve congressen (voor 1985 is weer een congres 'Welkom in Nederland' gepland) zijn een paar van de activiteiten. Voor het jubileumjaar 1984 wil de vereniging nog eens extra de belangstelling in buiten- en binnenland stimuleren. Wij staan daar geheel achter en zullen u op de hoogte houden van de ontwikkelingen.

Wilt u nadere inlichtingen dan is een briefje voldoende aan het volgende adres: Vereniging Nederland in den Vreemde, Noordeinde 64a, 2514 GK Den Haag.

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AUCKLAND

Journey to the past

Discovering Oost Groningen

Ask any Dutchman what there is to see in the Eastern part of the province called Groningen and chances are he will begin a complicated story about boring peat digger villages, potato starch and the cardboard industry. At least, that's what all our friends did when told we were going to explore the area. In fact, the poor souls were hiding their ignorance, for what we found was a classic example of the true character of the Netherlands – a region full of nature and culture ... and mostly empty of people.

Backwoods?

Some people still believe that everything there is to see in the Netherlands is to be found between Alkmaar and Rotterdam, roughly speaking. So Oost Groningen must be an absolute backwoods area – it is one of the remotest corners of the country, just on this side of the border with Germany. Even the villages have ominous-sounding names like Onstwedde, Jipsingbourtange or Smeerling...

What we found was a charming park-like landscape dotted with nature reserves. Stately oaks enclose small fields, for here you still find the true copses that are characteristic of man-made landscapes before the introduction of mechanized agriculture. Such a field is called an 'es', by the way, and if a village is called an 'esdorp' you're going to like it.

Talking about the villages, they were remarkably neat and there was nothing ominous about the people either. Of course, there is truth in the peat stories, a portion of the area is not called the 'Veenkoloniën' (bog colonies) for nothing.

The moors

In the beginning of this century, much of the area was moorland ('moer' in old Dutch). In fact, it was the largest and wildest moor in Europe! To the everlasting regret of subsequent generations, people there started to dig peat for fuel in the 16th century and did not stop until practically all the bogs had been transformed into fair agricultural land. Why regret? Because in order to eke out the most miserable sort of existence these people destroyed one of the rarest natural environments. A

FORTRESS BOURTANGE

small portion remains to the South, around Dwingeloo, and is now a protected area – and *still* the largest of its kind.

What is left is at least as interesting as the polders tourists gaze at: a totally flat landscape, man-made and by hand, too! And personally, I find Stadskanaal interesting also: it is no less than 25 km long and many villas show that all was not poverty in the bog colonies.

The Middle Ages – and later

But for a purely medieval trip, let's start at Ter Apel, which has a monastery that is unique in the Netherlands. It contains a museum, regular expositions are held and the surroundings are lovely.

Throughout the province, you'll find some of the oldest churches in the country. Don't expect richly sculptured cathedrals – it's a small village church you're looking at. But they are certainly charming, are mostly surrounded by beautiful trees and have a very peaceful atmosphere. And they are really

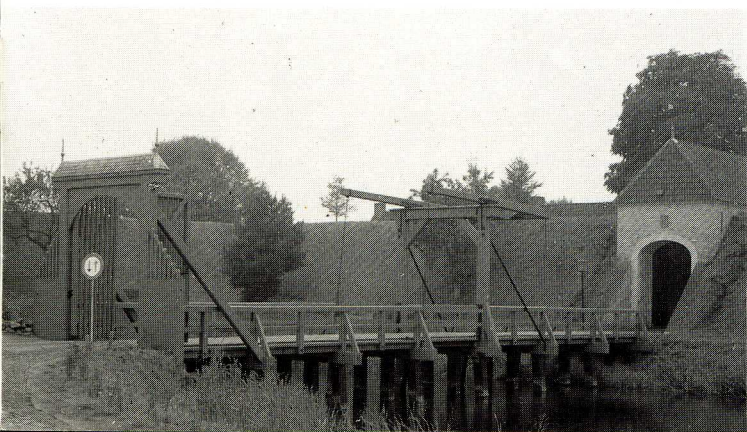
Not inviting if you think of invasion...

old: gothic or even roman, 600 years old and more. Sellingen, Vlagtwedde, Onstwedde and Finsterwolde have one each.

But by far the most surprising find in the field of architecture was a collection of farms you would hardly believe possible. Palaces would be a better word for them and I do not think any other area in the country can show anything like it. There are dozens in Finsterwolde (where 'the other half' of the population has been extremely left-wing for decades), in Beerta and perhaps best of all: in Bellingwolde.

Like a museum

An old-fashioned farmer's lunch (complete with fortifying drink) at the 'Twee Karspelen' will prepare you for the trip through Bellingwolde, which resembles an open-air museum. But it is not, it's apparently just thought of as a village in the barbarian's outback, for only with the greatest difficulty is it possible to find any reference to this necklace of jewels. Almost every other 'farm' is a gem: gardens are like parks and are expertly tended, most mansions (for that's what they look like)





have been cunningly sited by the landscape artist – just far enough from the road and just a bit higher than the garden itself. The property tells the story: these people were not just wealthy, they were grand. Reality totally refutes the tourist's idea of the Dutch farmer, complete with clogs and preferably cap in hand: it's much more likely these 'farmers' would have had the modern tourist chased off the drive by the butler should he have trespassed some 200 years ago...

It's remarkable what you can tell by looking at houses, for it's also very obvious in Bellingwolde that these people were very

A lovely village.

'with it' in their time. They had their house built in the style that was modern in that period – so they were fashion conscious. From Rococo to Empire and even to Art Nouveau, the area shows current trends in architecture over a period spanning over two centuries. Which shows that the rich merchants of the Western provinces did not have a monopoly on culture: the farmers in an area you would think was fit for exiles only were just as trendy. Given a bit of money, admittedly...

The invincible guardian

Situated most strategically, an invincible guardian protects this area, which was not at all a quiet one during the period when the Netherlands became independent. That guardian is called Bourtange and is an exception to the rule that visitors are scarce in Oost-Groningen. Bourtange is attracting crowds, and rightly so, for it is incomparable.

Picture the moors as they were in the 16th century: a vast and impassable barrier to any army. Except for one firm sandy ridge – that's what a 'tang' is. Bourtange was built as a fortress to defend that ridge against all comers, and it did a very good job

too: it has been besieged, attacked and bombarded time and again and was *never taken*.

WHEN Bourtange had lost its military significance in the 19th century, the fortress was dismantled. A visit some 15 years ago left memories of a pretty village with a perfectly round 'square' and streets radiating from it like spokes. With some difficulty, vestiges of the fortress could be distinguished in the vicinity – but that was all. Revisiting it, I could only say one thing: 'holy cow!', for what has happened in those fifteen years is no less than the complete restoration of the fortress plus village to the peak of its might in the 18th century! On the basis of the authentic plans, all ramparts, ravelins (you'll need a really good dictionary for this one), drawbridges, moats and watchtowers have been painstakingly rebuilt. The total cost: some 40 million guilders – and very wisely spent I think, for Bourtange is not only impressive, it's almost oppressive. Approaching it, you get a sinking feeling: even without people pointing murderous muskets at you and behaving in a most unfriendly manner generally, you begin to feel very vulnerable.

Even on well-oiled hinges, the gates are a treat to open. Inside this grim bulwark, Bourtange lies snugly protected. Houses, streets and gardens – all in impeccable condition like some 200 years ago. Around the market place there are 14 lime trees, planted over 300 years ago.

The final surprise

As you leave the area, it has one more surprise in store. Almost two miles down, there's one of the largest reservoirs of natural gas in the world. The gas



The landscape is dotted with Gothic churches.

field surrounds Slochteren and most people will have their own idea of what Slochteren will look like: pipes, pumps, utility buildings and such. Instead, you'll find one more beautiful old village, with one of the few remaining castles called 'borg': Fraeylemaborg. Privately owned until fairly recently, it is now a museum – and the restaurant is just the place to end a visit to a region where good taste is so evident. As a final after-dinner surprise I have an anecdote for you: Fraeylemaborg has a link with aviation, because it belonged to the Van der Hoop family and one of the three intrepid aviators who made the first flight to what were then called the Dutch East Indies bore that name. From this so-called outback came one of the men who proved that intercontinental flight can be done...

Believe it or not – this is a farm!



Friendly pub within Bourtange's fortress.



Public transport in The Netherlands

The Dutch tend to take their public transport for granted, except for those hobbyists who can quote connections and time tables offhand. But foreigners will agree that public transport in the Netherlands really is some-

thing special: frequent, reliable and highly attractive for the tourist as well. So for this article, we take a closer look at two public transport services in the country: the Nederlandse Spoorwegen or NS (the national railways system) and the Haagse Tramweg Maatschappij or HTM, the Hague's municipal transport company.

The NS story

Looking at the map, you will not easily guess the total length of the Dutch railway system – almost 3000 kilometres! The country has a very dense railway network indeed and some figures will help to put the NS story into its correct perspective.

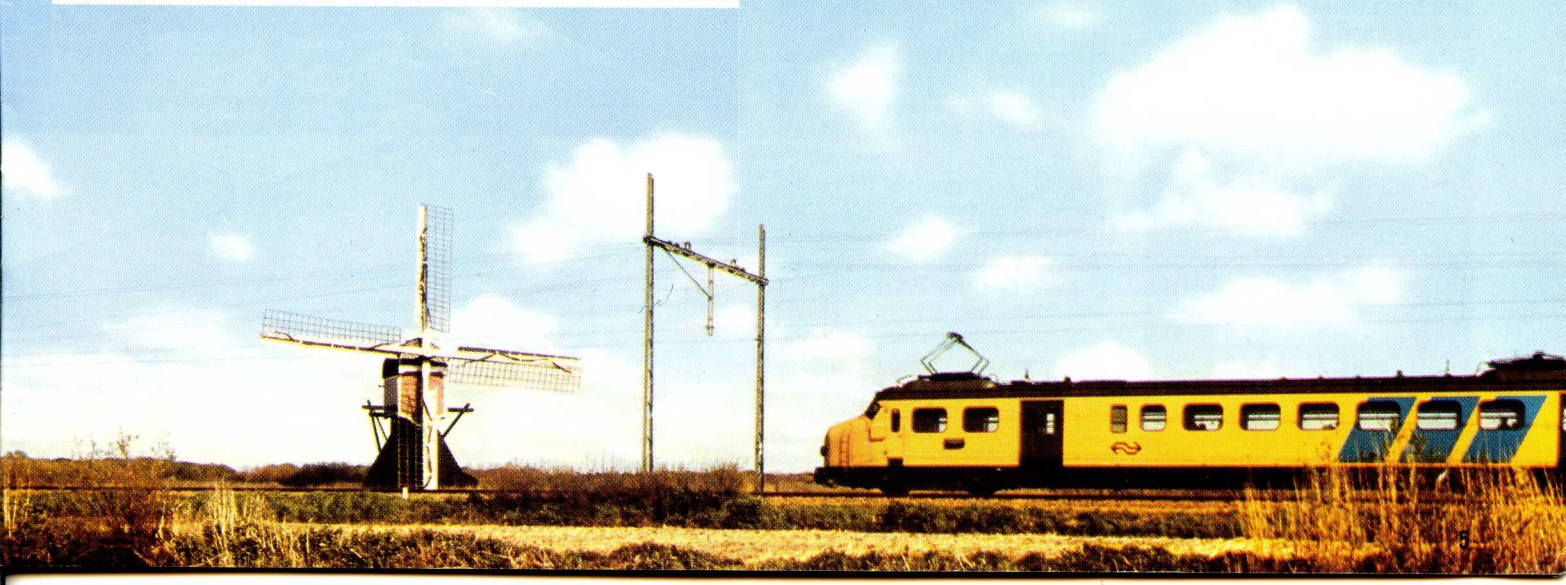
Every day, some 600,000 people travel by train. Together, they cover a total distance of over 25.5 million kilometres a day – the average trip being about 45 km long. You might use the 25.5 million for a quiz and see what people make of this question... Every day, you'll see 4355 trains on their way from A to B in the Netherlands and nearly 28,000 people are involv-

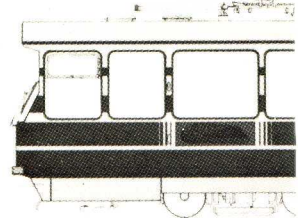
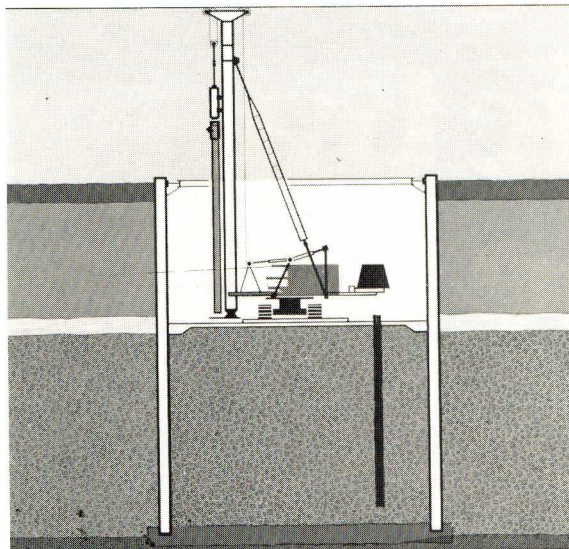
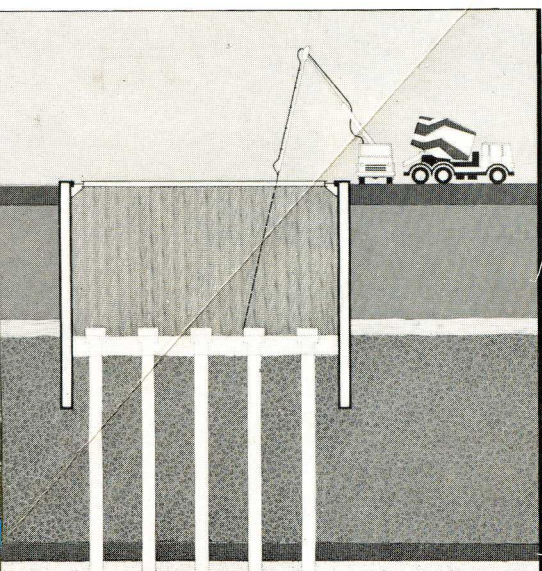
ed in keeping them running.

Now if you operate that sort of a network in a country with an infrastructure like the Netherlands, some pretty complex solutions are required. Special constructions are necessary (the official word is 'kunstwerken', not so odd when you look at an overpass and at modern sculpture...) and NS is the biggest concrete construction firm in the country!

The Schiphol line

Recently added to the operations, the Schiphol line links air travel and rail travel and is the most spectacular construction job NS ever undertook. It con-





Special methods for tunnelling: left the dry method, right the wet.

nects the airport to Amsterdam (Zuid and RAI stations) on the one hand and The Hague and Dordrecht on the other. The project, which had cost 800 million guilders when delivered on May 31, 1981, is not yet finished: in 1986 the railway will be connected to Amsterdam's Central Station.

Why is the Schiphol line so special? Because the area (the Haarlemmermeer polder) is one of the most difficult places to build in. It is far below sea level, but normally this is no problem: if you want to build a tunnel, you dig a hole that is big enough, reinforce the walls and keep the hole dry by pumping. In the Haarlemmermeer polder this cannot be done, because its sub-soil water is very salty. Dumping it into a canal would cause damage to this agricultural area. Two special methods were used, therefore. For the 'dry' method, the pit is 'sealed' by injecting an impermeable layer into the soil. With the 'wet' method the job becomes a piece of submarine engineering: a pit is dug, filled with fresh water to keep the salt water out and further excavation is by dredging! Pile driving is checked by divers...



THE SCHIPHOL LINE has to cross numerous canals, roads, highways, a super highway and even a runway of the airport. There is one stretch of 8 km long with no less than a dozen bridges and viaducts. But the clincher is the longest railway tunnel in the Netherlands (5780 metres), which not only has to carry trains while remaining firmly anchored in the mud: its roof must also be able to carry loads of over 550 tons. This is because aircraft roll over it and although a fully loaded 747 weighs only 330 tons, the tunnel has been built for the future!

Traffic control

NS' reputation for safety and reliability is second to none, all the more impressive because the traffic to be controlled is the densest anywhere. For traffic control, the country has been divided into 20 areas, each with its own control centre. All are subordinated to the main control centre in Utrecht. Manned around the clock, they see to it that the planned rail traffic flow runs smoothly. However, hitches cannot be excluded – winter has its surprises and the track Hoorn-Zaandam was once blocked by a genuine elephant! Then comes the controller's hour of glory to avoid that a delay for one train has repercussions on the other 4354 trains that day... Controlling the train requires a driver, of course, but let's leave him for last. Several modern systems are in operation to ensure safety and reliability.

The track between stations is divided into 'blocks' of about 1500 m each, which can contain only a single train each. As the

train enters a block, the signal at the beginning of the block is switched to red automatically, the light one block back being switched to orange. The first of these automatic systems was introduced in 1926! In Europe, Holland has the highest percentage of automatic block systems.

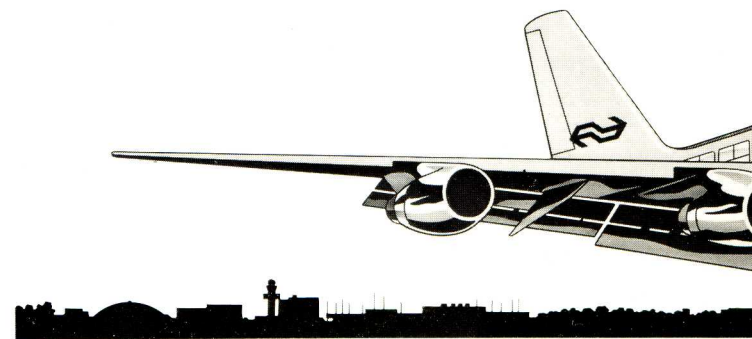
Traffic becomes complex near stations and formerly required a small army of signalmen and pointsmen. The modern system is called NX (for Entrance and Exit). By pushing two buttons,

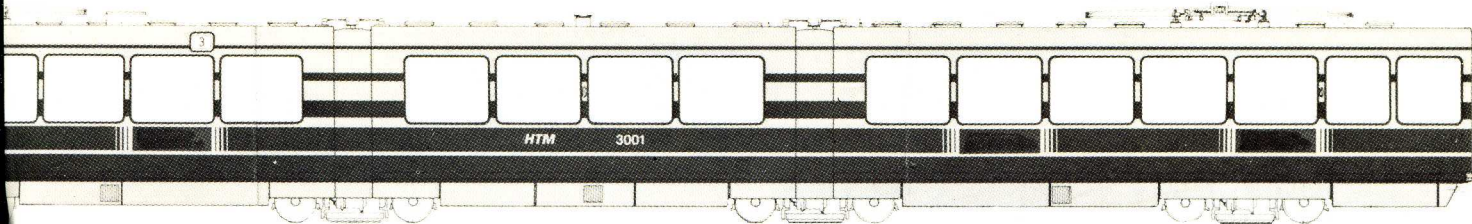
the operator can create a route between the entrance and exit, all points are automatically set and so are the lights. The system is foolproof and failsafe. An extension of NX is called CVL (central traffic control): central control of an entire track section, which may contain several stations.

And finally, there is ATB, for automatic train control. The driver must correctly interpret the traffic control signals. If he does not, ATB takes over: it senses what the train is doing and if this is contrary to the commands, the brakes come on. In addition, ATB informs the driver on the status of the signalling system along the track.

The older generation will remember NS' slogan that had three 'V's' in it. The Dutch railway system *still* is fast, safe and economical!

The Schiphol line is an achievement NS is justly proud of.





The HTM story

Where does one find the busiest public transport crossing in Europe? In The Hague! During the rush hour, the crossing Grote Marktstraat – Spui has to cope with hundreds of trams and busses an hour. This is one of the special problems HTM has to handle another being the fact that The Hague – the centre of government – sees an inordinate number of demonstrations (from angry farmers to bikers demanding more privileges) for which traffic diversions are necessary. HTM has been in business since 1864 and has enjoyed a reputation for being thoroughly modern for quite some time.

Rolling stock

The Hague's streetcars have been something special since the Sixties and the new rolling stock now being introduced continues this tradition. It is much faster than ordinary trams (as the Dutch laws say nothing about maximum speeds for trams, this opens up fantastic vistas of 100 mph tramways, but actually the maximum speed of HTM stock is about 70 kph), very comfortable and extremely silent both inside and from the outside. HTM has a definite policy of trying to make their material as friendly as possible to the environment. For instance, although the new cars have fast acceleration, they actually consume almost 40% less energy than the previous model. This has been achieved through computerised control of the motor performance. The new rolling stock is a custom design for the company; in contrast to the

usual trams The Hague's cars boast a brake and 'gas' pedal too. Finally, the colour scheme has been chosen to combine safety and a 'cheerful' look.

Automation

Another advanced aspect of the HTM system is its automation. The guiding principle for Dutch public transport is that it should have priority over other traffic. This is especially true for trams, which according to the Dutch traffic rules *have the right of way*. In The Hague, trams have been made the controlling factor in the traffic flow. Each car carries a code transmitter, which sends signals to detectors in the road. Traffic lights are then so controlled by these signals that the tram has a minimum of delay. Wherever possible, 'free lanes' have been made for trams and the result is that average speeds are higher than in other cities.

BUT the transmitters do more. Controlled by the codes sent, all points in the line are automatically set in the correct position. And at important terminals such as the Central Station the codes also inform passengers waiting for a tram what's going on, by means of automatic signboards. This terminal is also special in that it is located on the first floor – underground stations are pretty ordinary, but this is rather unique, I think...

Tourism by tram

HTM started way back in 1864 with a typical tourist line:

from the Hague to Scheveningen. And with the flourishing of that former fisherman's village as a centre of recreation, that first line has regained its tourist function. Especially on summer evenings, it is a very lively route.

But on the whole, HTM has a high percentage of tourists among its customers, because all major tourist attractions are situated along its network, or very close to it. In case you want to try this out: the Dutch ticket system has been streamlined. You can buy a so-called 'strip-

penkaart' (this has nothing to do with nightclubs) anywhere in the country – either from the public transport companies or in tobacco shops, for instance – and use it on *any* public transport system. One special attraction HTM offers is animal transport. For a dog you have to pay half the adult fare. But (and this is really unique) you can transport *any* animal – whether rattlesnake, wallaby, elephant or a family of funnelweb spiders – for free 'if suitably packed', as the official regulations state! ●

Tourism by rail

Whether you are a senior citizen or in your teens, public transport may be just the thing to see Holland -or Europe. The Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS for short) have an enormous range of specials for travellers from abroad and a trip to the nearest station once you're in Holland will be worth it. For ordinary trips, be sure to inform yourself on keywords like Dagkaart, Dagretour, Weekendretour, Avondretour and Meermanskaart, which offer considerable savings. For the real specials, the following selection may wet your appetite.

Eurailpass or Eurail Youthpass: unlimited travel throughout 16 European countries plus a wide range of extras like free ferry crossings, bus travel or reductions on fares. Eurailpass is for first class travel and valid from 15 days to 3 months, Eurail Youthpass is for second class and valid for 1 or 2 months. Prices range from US \$ 260 to \$ 680 for Eurailpass and from US \$ 290 to \$ 370 for the Youthpass (under 26). See your Travel Agent for further information.

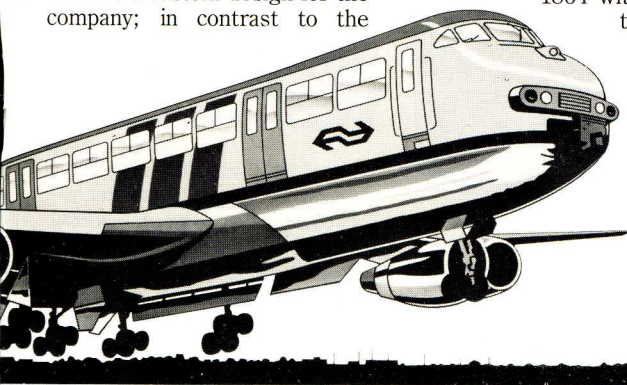
Discounts in Europe: NS have a folder called 'Voordelige treintarieven in Europese landen' showing how you can get marked discounts for even an occasional trip.

Holland by Rail: this English brochure published by NS gives a selection of day trips you can make and – most importantly – gives full information on specials like the Day Rover, 3-Day Rover, 7-Day Rover, Multirover, Family-Card and Benelux Tourrail. All offer unlimited travel for the period covered and can be combined with a 'Public Transport Link Rover' for bus travel.

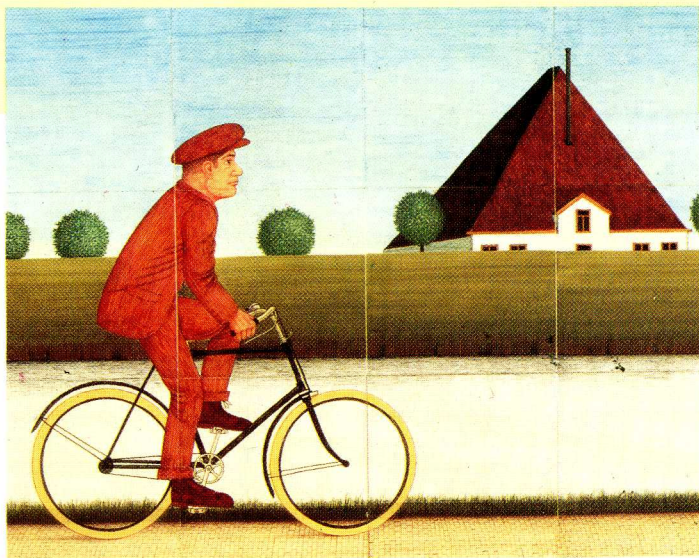
Day trips: these are very popular among the Dutch too! A free pocket book 'NS Dagtoerisme' is available from NS and contains 200 suggestions for day trips.

50 unusual destinations: a booklet '50 burens van NS' describes 50 excursions to beautiful towns, museums, nature areas and other interesting things to see, all close to a railway station. A source of ideas for doing something original!

Don't forget the powerful train-bike combination. You can hire bikes at or close to many railway stations, or you can take your bike with you on the train.



Pictures on Tiles through



Few people will have grown up in a house where the walls were picture-books showing animals, flowers, landscapes, people at work, children at play, scenes from the Bible or beautiful geometric patterns. For tiles – once an important industry that gave the Netherlands an enduring reputation – have become scarce in the home, except for the mass-produced variety.

But beware! The majority of 18th century Dutch tiles for which people now pay fancy prices were mass-produced too – by the tens of thousands. So here's a story about tiles and their decoration that will have a few surprises in store for you, we hope.

The beginnings

Although most people will almost automatically think of white squares with blue drawings produced in Holland during the past four centuries or so, there's much more to be said about tiles. First of all, the story starts much earlier, and it's not a European story at all. In Egypt and Mesopotamia, glazed bricks

were used for wall decoration of temples and palaces. Magnificent examples are known from Babylon and Persia, and during the next ten centuries this special form of ceramics spread to other countries in the Middle East. During the Crusades, the noblemen from Europe (whose artistic and cultural level was pretty unimpressive, by the way) discovered that the heathen 'Moors' were far more civilised than they themselves. Especially in interior decoration, there was a lesson to be learnt, for the floors, walls and even ceilings of the better homes were covered in rich and colourful ornaments using a very durable material: ceramic tiles.

Spread to the North

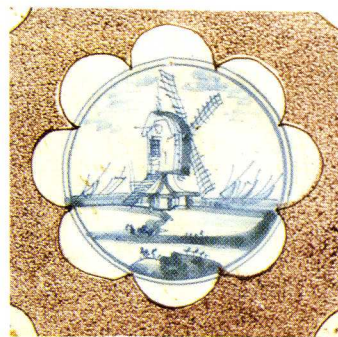
Spain and Italy were the first countries to take up production of tiles, as is still evident from the names for the technique of decoration used: *faience* or *majolica* (from Faenza and Majorca respectively). The principle of this technique is that the tiles are fired once, after which they were given a uniform white glaze. They were then decorated in colour, for which only a very limited range of pigments is suitable. Then they were fired once more and if all goes well you have a decorated tile. Refinements such as relief and glazing in colour (permitting a much wider range of hues than the *majolica* technique) greatly add to the possibilities... and price.

In the beginning of the 16th century, tiles had become so

popular in the Netherlands that enterprising Italians decided to start production in that market itself. Spanish and Flemish craftsmen followed and fairly soon afterwards several Dutchmen had also mastered the tricks of the trade.

An individual style

Not surprisingly, the decoration of the oldest Dutch tiles is practically identical to that of the South European examples. There are no two ways about it: the makers were copyists! But around 1600 this sorry state of affairs was rapidly changing. Dutch tiles became individual because the 'picture book' element began to appear. Instead of having a purely ornamental function, the pictures began to tell a story. Often, that was Nature's story: here you have a hare running away, a high-stepping heron or a prancing horse. Or possibly 'wondrous animals' like elephants and unicorns. One of the first and most popular Dutch patterns is flowers: anemones,



fritillaries and the then newest fad – tulips. The pictures were no longer just decoration, they began to tell the story of everyday life: small landscapes such as you can still see in the countryside, people doing a job we can still identify 300 years later and kids playing games that are still popular today.

Two groups

In the course of time, two groups began to develop in the production of the Dutch tile bakers. I will call them the 'specials' and 'utility ware', to emphasize the difference. The

specials are just what the name says: tiles made on special order from the customer. This might be a portrait, a landscape or – quite frequently – a story from the Bible. A showpiece, quite simply. Obviously, one tile won't do in that case, so what we're talking about is 'tableaus', something like 24 tiles (4 × 6) that together show the full picture. Specials were one of a kind, often (but not always) in more than one colour and naturally quite costly, so they are very rare.

But the other type was really mass-produced even 300 years ago and can truly be called utility ware. This is the blue-on-white tile showing a complete small picture with which we all are familiar. Because machines were not yet available in the 17th century, they had to be made by hand, but they were certainly not 'one of a kind'. The patterns were drawn on heavy paper and tiny holes were pricked along the outlines. The paper was placed on the tile and charcoal powder was blown on it so that the outlines were transferred to the unfired tile. Then the lines could be easily drawn and the coloured areas filled in. The same pattern was used for thousands of tiles and any differences depended on the care taken to copy the standard pattern.



Downfall of an industry

Mass production was necessary because of the enormous demand. Tiles are ideal for fireplaces, kitchens, halls and the like because they last long and are easy to clean. Not surprisingly, quality often suffered. If you look really critically at the

n the wall

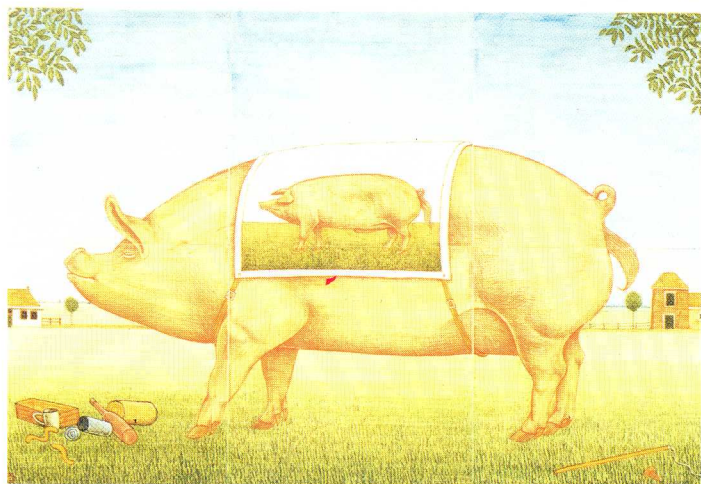
the centuries

old tiles you will see that quite a few are below par: ornaments become smaller and simpler, drawings are slapdash. Sometimes, even the patterns are primitive or gross.

With the introduction of machinery in the 19th century, permitting very complicated designs of uniform quality at cut-throat prices, the hand-made utility ware was doomed to disappear. Copies of the old pat-

here was a totally new material for his professional work. And Evelyn had an important contribution to make, because she had professional experience in the field of ceramics. So all tiles made by the two men are fired by her!

Before they knew it, their work began to sell and in addition to free designs, tableaux were made on order. As you can see, their work is totally dif-



terns are still being made by hand, but this is a souvenir industry and a totally different story. However, the specials have survived through the 19th century up to the present. Some of them can still be seen in porticos, in old shops (butchers often had them), in public buildings and offices, and even in private homes.

On the women's pages of this issue you will find one example of what contemporary artists do, and in addition I have gone to Haarlem to talk to a remarkable team of tile-bakers.

Modern views

Evelyn and Frank Eweg have a jewelry and antique shop in Haarlem. Erno Tromp is a painter and illustrator living in Amsterdam and a good friend of the Eweg family. Some five years ago, Frank had a batch of old floor tiles and purely as a hobby he began to experiment with decorating them. When Erno saw this, he became fascinated too:

ferent in style and although they do co-operate on research and the like, they could not actually combine their efforts. Commissions come from institutions and firms, but also from private individuals. Quite a few people want



to see their own house on tiles! The cost is reasonable (f 150,- for a tile) and what you get is of course much better than the copies of 'old Dutch masters' like a miniature Nightwatch on tiles...



Eweg '82

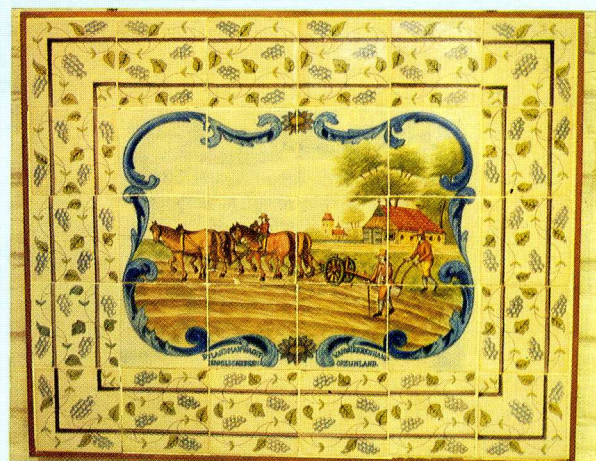
One of Frank's favourite projects was a tableau painted on some 70 old tiles, around which a kitchen has been built. The water purification building in Andijk and the St. Elisabethsgasthuis (hospital) in Haarlem are

ideal locations to enjoy Erno's work.

Tile making as a craft died out over a century ago. But as you can see, tile making as an art is still very much alive in the country! ●

Tiles in the museum

Tiles can be seen in many museums throughout the country, but four collections are outstanding.

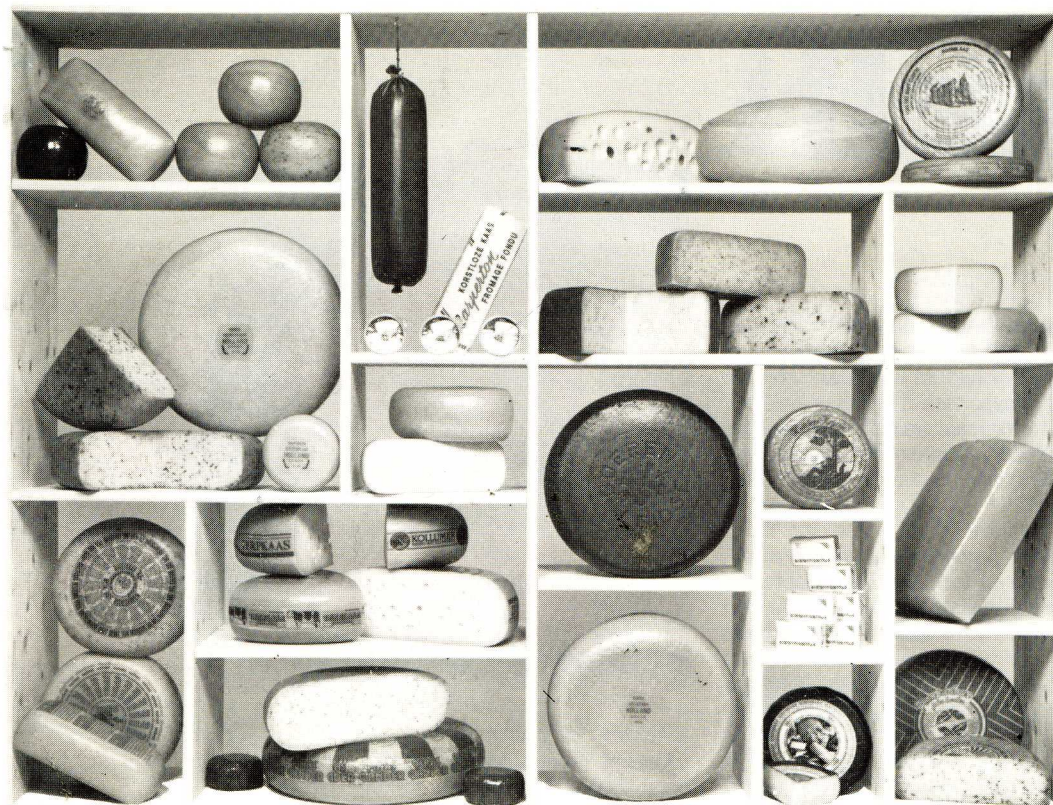


Gemeentelijk Museum Het Prinsessehof, Leeuwarden: in addition to Oriental and European ceramic ware, this has an impressive collection of tiles showing the development in East and West through the centuries.

Rijksmuseum Huis Lambert van Meerten, Delft: originally home of a late Victorian manufacturer, this museum has a comprehensive collection of tiles from the 16th to the 20th century.

It noflik sté, Otterloo: a private collection of very high level gives an excellent survey of the history of tiles.

Zuiderzeemuseum, Enkhuizen: shows the wide range of ornamental designs in use in the area around the former Zuyder Zee.



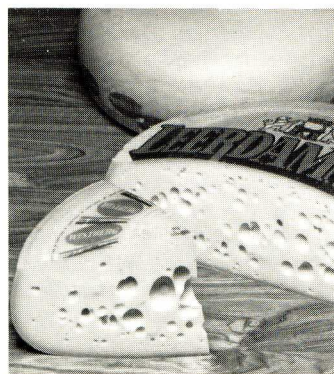
Kaas-college

Wanneer u bij het noemen van Hollandse kaas niets anders te binnen schiet dan Leidse, Goudse en Edammer, dan wordt het tijd uw kaaskennis eens op te frissen. Bij de bekende kruidenier Albert Heijn zou u heel wat onbekende namen tegenkomen: Maaslander en Leerdammer b.v., beide van het type Maasdammer, verrukkelijke, iets zoete kazen met grote gaten, Kollumer, Terpkaas en Texelaar, rauwmelkse kazen, gemaakt van ongepasteuriseerde melk net zoals de boerenkaas.

Bij een echte kaaswinkel kijkt u helemaal uw ogen uit: Pompadour, een romige kaas met tuinkruiden en knoflook of met groene pepers, Subenhara, een klein, rond kruidenkaasje met zwarte korst, Kernhem, een 'meshanger' met pikante smaak en oranje korst, schapen- en geitenkaas, Fêta, speciaal voor de Grieken in ons land en zelfs brandnetelkaas, veel smakelijker dan de naam doet vermoeden.

Met zoveel keus kunnen we hier het zoete dessert af en toe eens door een 'kaasplankje' vervangen, of zelfs een hele kaasmaaltijd aanrichten: allerlei kaassoorten, stengels rauwe bleekselderij, een appel/papri-

ka-salade, gepelde walnoten, warm stokbrood en een lekkere wijn vormen een perfecte combinatie. Maar met kaas in de keuken is er nog veel meer te doen.



PANPIZZA

- 4 slices bread (remove crusts)
- 100 g youngish sliced cheese
- small onion
- 1 tomato or ½ paprika or a combination of both
- 50 g grated cheese
- parsley

Delicious to eat and perfectly simple to prepare: tightly fit slices of bread in a greased frying-pan, cover them with slices of cheese, put onion-rings, sliced tomato and/or paprika on top and sprinkle with grated cheese. Cover the pan and put on *low* heat for about 20 minutes. Garnish with parsley. (Do not try to hurry it, as it will only leave you with something like glue on charcoal...)

KAASCAKE

- 325 g butter
- 5 eggs
- 250 g selfraising flour
- 300 g grated cheese

For this recipe you will need quite a large cake-tin. I took $\frac{4}{5}$ of the given quantities for a 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ liter tin which turned out to be too small, judging by the mess in my oven... Cream the butter and add whisked eggs, stirring

until fluffy, sift in flour and add grated cheese. Grease and flour a large tin, put in the cake-mixture and bake in the middle of a preheated oven (175° C) until golden-brown, which will take about 80 minutes. When eaten cold, you might like to butter the slices. We preferred the kaascake hot, the slices lightly grilled or fried to accompany a glass of beer or a salad.



RATJETOE

- 300 g lean minced beef
- salt, pepper, nutmeg
- 30 g butter
- 2 onions
- 1 clove garlic
- small cup sour cream (125 ml)
- 1½ dl stock
- 750 g small boiled new potatoes or bigger ones cut into cubes
- 300 g grated cheese

Mix meat with salt and spices and fry together with sliced onion and pressed garlic, stirring with a fork until the meat is done. Grease an oven-dish. Mix the sour cream with the stock. Put in potatoes, grated cheese and meat-mixture in alternative layers into the dish, taking care that the top-layer consists of potatoes. Add sour cream-mixture and put for about 20 minutes in a pre-heated oven (200° C).

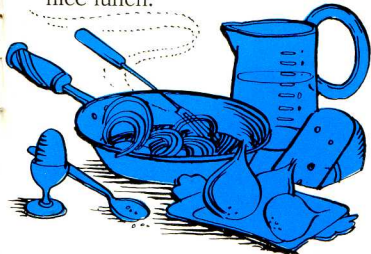


BOERENSOEP

- 2 onions
- 20 g butter
- 150 g lean ham in cubes
- 1 l stock
- 2 bay-leaves, thyme
- 200 g cooked white haricot beans
- 4 tbsp cooked rice
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley
- 100 g grated cheese
- pepper, salt

Gently fry the chopped onions in butter and add ham-cubes, stock, bay-leaves and thyme.

Sieve beans and stir this mixture into the soup. Simmer for about 20 minutes. Remove bay-leaves, stir in rice and parsley. Remove from heat, add grated cheese and serve. Combined with toasted brown bread it makes a nice lunch.



BULLEVLADDE

pastry:

- 150 g flour
- 75 g butter
- pinch salt
- ¾ dl cold water (put it in the fridge beforehand as it should be really cold)

filling:

- 500 g onions, cut in thin rings
- 25 g butter
- 10 g flour
- salt, pepper, worcestershiresauce, paprikapowder
- 2 tbsp thin cream
- 1 egg
- 100 g grated cheese

Sieve flour, add good pinch of salt, cut up hard butter with a knife into the flour until mixture looks a bit like breadcrumbs. Now carefully add enough water to make the dough into a rolling consistency. Lightly flour rolling pin and pastry board, roll pastry, fold in fours, repeating this process twice. Then leave dough in a cool place for at least 30 minutes. Line a large buttered sandwich-tin or flan-case, taking care to cover the sides right to the top.

Slowly simmer onions in butter for 5 minutes, sprinkle with flour, add salt and spices. Stir in cream and beaten egg and heat until the mixture thickens. Stir in grated cheese and allow to cool a little before spooning into the prepared sandwich-tin. Bake in the middle of a pre-heated oven (175° C) for at least 1 hour. Serve hot, preferably with a green salad.



Tips voor nederlandse dans- en muziekgroepen

TIPS VOOR NEDERLANDSE DANS- en MUZIEKGROEPEN

Voor degenen die de Nederlandse dans en muziek in ere willen houden, hebben we een aantal adressen verzameld waar u terecht kunt voor contacten, informatie en bestellingen.

– Federatie van Folkloristische Groepen in Nederland

Mevr. C.E.I. Boogerd-Ridder, Bovenkerkerkade 59, 1185 CS Amstelveen

– Bibliotheek Centraal Dans Beraad, Riouwstraat 53, 2585 GT Den Haag

– Stichting Volksmuziek Nederland, Postbus 331, 3500 AH Utrecht

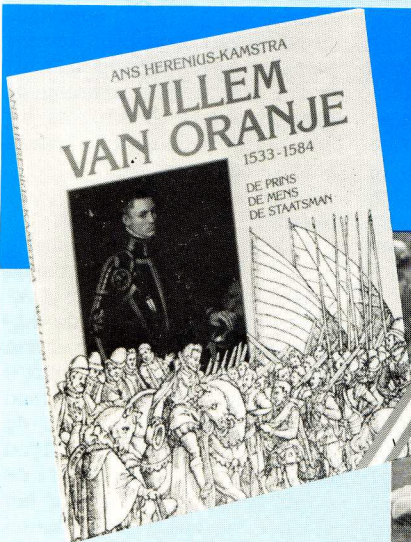
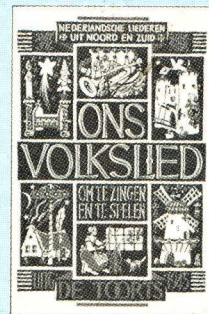
– Vereniging v. Huismuziek, Postbus 350, 3400 AJ IJsselstein

– Bij uitgeverij 'De Toorts, Postbus 576, 2003 RN Haarlem, zijn de volgende bundels te bestellen: 'Nederlands Volkslied', Jop Pollmann/Piet Tiggers (zonder begeleiding), f 18,25, 'Ons Volkslied', Albert de Klerk, Jan Mul, Herman Strategier, facsimile-druk uit 1943, 146 liederen met begeleiding, f 24,-, 'Wat Nederland zingt', Johan Oostveen, facsimile-druk uit 1923, 84 populaire volksliedjes met begeleiding uit de jaren twintig, f 26,-.

– Stichting Nederlandse Volksklederdrachten, mevr. M. Karsten-v.d. Aa, Europalaan 6, 2641 RX Pijnacker.

– 'Het Nederlands Openluchtmuseum', Rijksmuseum voor Volkskunde, Schelmseweg 89, Arnhem. Voor het bescheiden bedrag van f 0,75 + portokosten kunt u hier de brochure 'Streekdrachten in Nederland' bestellen (beschrijvingen per provincie, zwart/wit illustraties).

NEDERLANDS VOLKSIED



Willem van Oranje herdacht



Dit jaar is het 400 jaar geleden dat de eerste stadhouder van een onafhankelijk Nederland – Willem I van Oranje, of Willem de Zwijger – door een huurmoordenaar werd gedood.

De betekenis van de gebeurtenissen in de zestiende eeuw kan nauwelijks worden overschat: een aantal kleine gewesten sloot zich aan en versloeg een wereldmacht van de eerste orde – want dat was Spanje in die tijd. De centrale figuur in die beslissende periode was Willem van Oranje, en in 1984 zal op allerlei manieren aandacht aan deze boeiende persoonlijkheid worden besteed. Ans Herenius-Kamstra schreef een profiel van de 'Vader des Vaderlands': Willem van Oranje, 1533-1584, de prins, de mens, de staatsman, dat werd uitgegeven door Zomer en Keuning, Ede, en f 14,90 kost. Het is een prettig leesbaar boek, haast een novelle, dat een veel menselijker kijk op Willem geeft dan de geschiedenislessen voor u zullen hebben gedaan. Het boek ziet er door de vele illustraties ook goed uit.

Tegels in kruissteek

De klederdrachttegels van Frouwien Visser (zie pag. 16) boeiden me zo dat ik haar Urker, Marker en Spakenburger vrouwen met naald en draad te lijf ging. Met toestemming van de ontwerpster geef ik het resultaat aan u door.

Algemene richtlijnen

Ik maakte 3 'tegeltjes' van 13 x 16 cm op handwerkstof van 12 weefseldraden per cm. U kunt echter aan de hand van de teltekening op elke gewenste aftelbare stof werken: hoe grover de stof, des te groter uw werkstuk. Met wol geborduurd kunt u er zelfs kussens van maken. Een andere mogelijkheid is de drie dames naast elkaar of boven elkaar op een wandkleed te plaatsen, er een leuke rand omheen te borderen en misschien tussen de figuurtjes in nog een motief uit de rand te werken.

Borduurt u met splijtzijde, denk dan eens aan de mogelijkheid om met draden van verschillende tinten te werken. Dit geeft een levendig effect, evenals het gebruik van dickere en dunneren draden. De vermelde kleurnummers zijn slechts als aanwijzing bedoeld. Kunt u ze niet krijgen of vindt u een andere tint mooier, ga dan uw eigen gang. Overigens kunt u bij een bezoek aan Holland best eens een voorraadje DMC-zijde inslaan. Deze van ouds bekende firma was zo vriendelijk mij een stalencard toe te sturen waaruit bleek dat ze maar liefst 328 verschillende kleuren zijde leveren!

De ontwerpen zijn geheel in kruissteek en stiksteek uit te voeren. Bent u een wat avontuurlijker borduurster, probeer dan eens andere steken. Mogelijkheden hiervoor geef ik bij iedere dracht afzonderlijk.

Begin altijd met een rijgdraad

door het verticale midden te trekken en horizontaal aan te geven waar uw figuurtje begint en ophoudt.

Spakenburg

Begin onderaan met de beide achtergrondblokkjes rechts en links. De schoenen werkt u met verticale platsteken over 2 x 2, 2 x 3, 6 x 4, 2 x 3 en 2 x 2 weefseldraden. De ruimte voor de kousen vult u op met horizontale platsteken over 2 draden. Het schort, de sjullek, borduurt de ik om en om met een rijtje kruissteken en een rijtje koninginnesteken (op de plaats van vier kruisjes een groot kruis met daaroverheen een plusteken) met een draad lichtblauw en een draad donker grijs, maar u kunt natuurlijk ook gewoon donkerblauw nemen. Het geblokte vries en de rood/wit geruite strook werkt u in kruissteek, evenals de armen en de kraplap. Bovenop de kruisjes, waarvoor ik 1 draadje wit gebruikte, borduurde ik de bloemen in grotere rode en kleinere groene kettingsteken en gaf ze een lichtbruin hart. Voor het gezicht nam ik halve kruissteken, voor de ogen een koninginnesteek met een randje stiksteken eromheen om het ronde effect te krijgen, voor de karakteristieke haardracht platsteken: aan de zijkanen horizontaal over 4 draden, in het midden verticaal over zes draden, op de hoeken een aantal malen onderaan in hetzelfde gat stekend opdat een geleidelijk



verloop wordt verkregen. Voor het mutsje weer horizontale platsteken over 2 draden, aan het begin en aan het eind een paar steken over 1 draad. Nadat u de achtergrond weer met kruissteekjes hebt opgevuld, gaan we alle ononderbroken lijnen van de teltekening in lichtbruine stiksteekjes aanbrengen, gewoon tussen de kruisjes in. Ten slotte borduurt u de letters in kruissteek eronder.

Marken

U kent nu het klappen van de zweep, het volgende figuurtje zal al een stuk makkelijker gaan. U begint weer op dezelfde manier, de klompjes en wat er van de kousen te zien is, borduurt u in verticale platsteken, de rand van de rok eveneens. Voor de boezel gebruikte ik uitsluitend de koninginnesteek, voor de brede schorteband en voor het stikkie bovenaan de boezel kruissteken, evenals voor de mouwen. De voorpanden werkte ik in halve kruissteken, op het linkerpand tegengesteld in richting aan het rechter. Het bouwte in het midden moet een vrolijk gebloemd katoentje verbeelden, daarin kunt u zich dus uitleven of gewoon het telpatroon volgen. Omdat we met een even aantal vakjes zitten en het motief met een kruisje in het midden begint, moeten we hier even

smokkelen. Dat kan makkelijk wanneer u het blauw/groene motief precies in het midden plaatst en de bouw dan met gele verticale platsteken opvult. Hoe het gezicht moet, weet u al. De ponnies maakt u door horizontale platsteken over 2 draden te borduren, met verticale stiksteekjes in bruin tussen de rijtjes. Het lange haar aan weerszijde wordt gevormd door horizontale platsteken over zes weefseldraden. In wat onregelmatige stiksteken in bruin brengt u daar bovenop de lijnen aan die de krullen moeten suggereren. Nu weer alle lijnen in bruine stiksteken, ook horizontaal tussen de rijen kruisjes van stikkie en schorteband, wat op de teltekening niet duidelijk was aan te geven. De letters eronder en nummer twee is voltooid.

Urker

Schoenen en kousen werkt u weer in verticale platsteek. Het schort wordt erg leuk wanneer u de blauwe strepen in kruissteek, de rode in schuine platsteken over 4 draden en de lichte strepen in horizontale platsteek over 4 draden werkt. De versiering onder de schorteband wordt gesuggereerd door een bundeltje van 4 draden witte splijtzijde op de geborduurde ondergrond te leggen en deze met de rode stiksteekjes die tussen de strepen



aangebracht worden, vast te zetten. De gesp in het midden vormt u door horizontaal tweemaal 4 platsteken over 6 weefseldraden aan te brengen. Voor de kraplap gebruikte ik de koninginnesteek waar bovenop in geel een symmetrisch patroontje in grote en kleine kettingsteken met stippen ertussen. De mouwen van de hemdrok worden gewerkt in 2 rijen v-vormige platsteken. Hebt u kleine kraaltjes, dan naait u 2 rijen 'bloedkorallen' tussen gezicht en kraplap, met eronder een rijtje witte en een rijtje rode v-vormige steekjes die een kantje verbeelden. Het haar gaat op dezelfde wijze als de Marker ponnies, op de wangen komen de uiteinden van het oorijzer, de koeie- of vogelkop, aangeduid door een paar gele steken, met een omlijning van rode stiksteekjes. De witte hul borduurt u met liggende platsteken over 4 draden. De ronding bovenaan maakt u weer door meerdere steken onderaan in hetzelfde gaatje te beginnen. De rand van gele kant aan de hul wordt gesuggereerd door ecrukleurige platsteken over 8 weefseldraden, op dezelfde wijze gewerkt als het haar van de Spakenburgse. Daar bovenop strooit u onregelmatig kleine gele kettingsteken. Als u dan ten slotte alle lijnen in rode stiksteken en de naam van het voormalige eiland geborduurd hebt, is uw werkstuk af en zult u met een mengeling van opluchting, spijt en voldoening de laatste hand aan de afwerking leggen...

SPAKENBURG

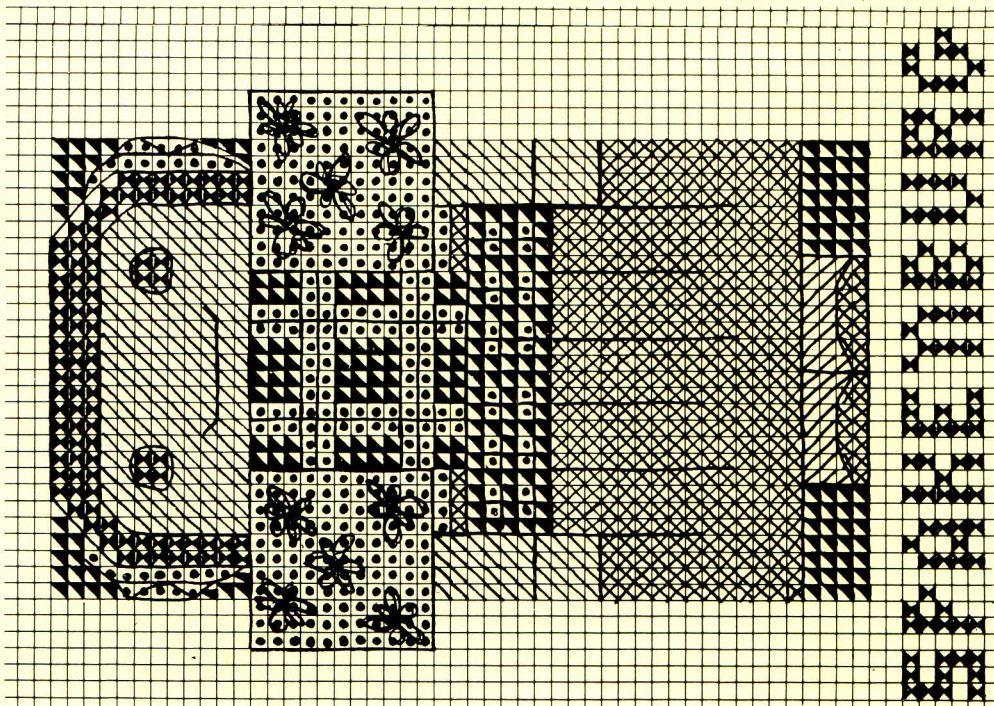
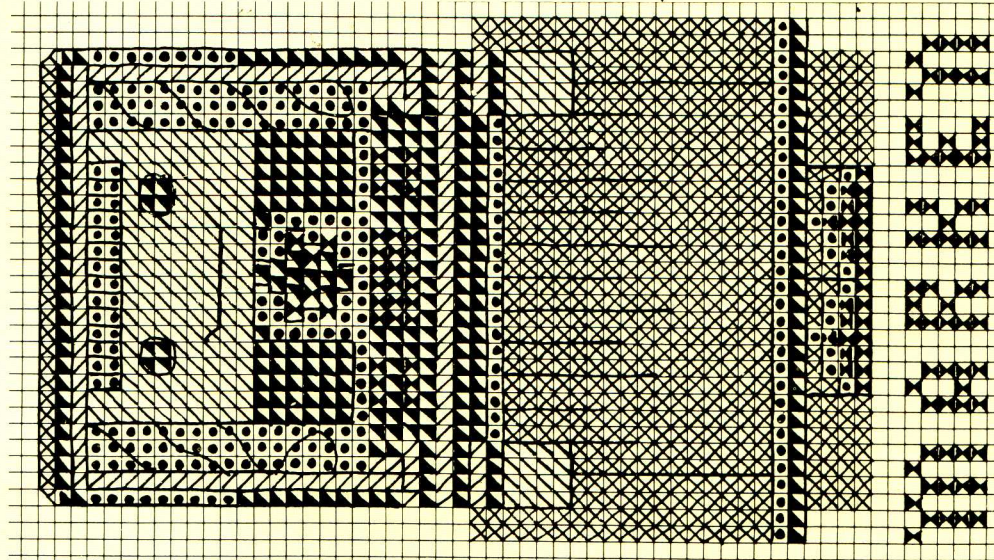
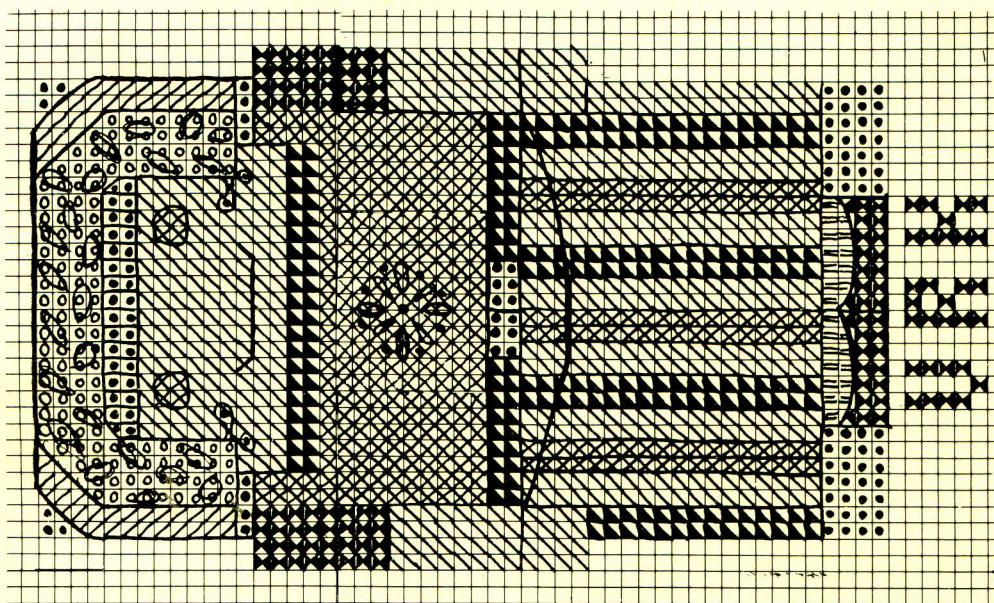
■	HUIDKLEUR	543
■	LICHT BRUIN	435
■	DONKER BLAUW	336
■	LICHT BLAUW	322
■	ROOD	304
■	WIT	-
■	LICHT GRIJS	648
○	DONKER GROEN	890

MARKEN

■	GRIJS/GROEN	926
■	PETROL	924
■	HUIDKLEUR	543
■	WIT	-
■	GEEL	783
■	ROOD	900
■	LICHT BLAUW	518

URK

■	HUIDKLEUR	543
■	DONKER GRIJS	844
■	GRIJS/GROEN	926
■	DONKER ROOD	3685
■	GOUD GEEL	3045
■	WIT	-
■	LICHT GRIJS	648
○	ECRU	-





First in the air

On February 22, 1984, KLM introduced the last innovations to its vastly improved three-class system. Three top quality products, specially designed to suit the interests of the *air traveller*, whatever the purpose of his or her journey.

ROYAL CLASS

More space is the dominant feature of KLM's Royal Class improvements.

In the 747 the number of SleepAir seats has been reduced from 21 to 18. As a result pitch increased from 55 inches to 62 inches.

Besides this, further refinements have been made in cabin service which will enhance the passenger's sense of luxury and well-being.

Altogether, KLM's new Royal Class is now the tops in travel luxury, excellent value for those who want the very best.

Features:

Meals for the gourmet: KLM is one of the very few airlines to offer a choice of no less than five main courses on every flight. Each calculated to appeal to the most epicurean palate.

Finest vintage wines: Not all wines lend themselves to air travel. The wines served

in Royal Class are all personally selected at the vineyard by an expert from KLM's catering department.

Top brands: Only the top brands of drinks are served. Like Taitinger Brut 1979 champagne, Napoleon Hennessey Cognac, Chivas Regal and Johnny Walker Black Label scotch whisky and Old Granddad Special Selection bourbon whiskey.

Individual attention: KLM Royal Class passengers receive a high degree of personal attention. In the new 747 configuration, for example, there will be an attendant to look after the needs of six passengers at most.

Exclusivity: Countless fine points of service lend KLM's Royal Class service a cachet of exclusivity and the search for further refinement never ceases. For example, the improvements introduced on February 22 include such details as a more elegant form of presenting cutlery.



BUSINESS CLASS

One of the most spectacular changes in the KLM product is the new Business Class seat. This is not a revamped version of an existing seat but a brand new chair specially designed for the job. Measuring 19 inches between armrests it is comparable with a normal first-class seat.

The project started with some pretty deep-going research which turned up some important if perhaps unexpected results.

FIRM BODY SUPPORT

For example, soft cushions and upholstery feel fine to sink into but do not offer firm body support. A firmer, well-contoured padding offers the greatest relaxation over a period of time.

This was verified by a group of frequent travellers of various heights and bodybuild invited by KLM to try out different prototypes. They included regular travellers from within the company who could be relied on to be especially critical!

The research also led to the following features of the new seat:

Easy-to-reach facilities: Controls of facilities like lighting, bell-call and audio are built into the arm of the chair, within easy reach of the passenger.

Handy table: For comfortable working as well as for meals, a folding table is also built into the armrest. It can be pulled out or stowed away in a single movement by the passenger himself.

Broad armrests: Armrests are broad and, in two abreast seating, the centre rest is fitted with an extra pull-out tray designed to hold a glass.

Strong frame: The frame of the new chair is based on recent experience gained with the latest SleepAir seat.

An aircraft seat is required to be exceptionally strong while, of course, being as light as possible in weight. This calls for specially selected materials. Small wonder that such seats cost upwards of \$6,000 a set! Because of their strength, though, aircraft seat frames are long-lived despite their intensive use.



More 'living room'

A vast increase in 'living space' accompanied the installation of the new seats.

This is because the number of seats has been greatly reduced. There are only 18 seats on the 747 upper deck, for instance, instead of the previous 26.

Two abreast seating has been used everywhere on the 747 except on a few rows on the main deck.

Wider aisles is now another noticeable feature on the 747 as a result of the smaller number of seats.

Generous pitch of 37 to 38 inches will continue to provide ample leg-room on the 747.

Advance seat selection

Securing the seat of one's preference is important for many travellers. The only way to be sure of having it is to book it in advance.

Starting April 1, 1984, seat selection will become a standard feature of KLM's CORDA reservations system for both Royal and Business Class passengers. Available at the outset for North Atlantic services, the facility will be later extended to other intercontinental routes.

FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED!

What happens if two different passengers on the same flight both want the same seat? Even KLM will not be able to satisfy them both, much as they would like to!

The answer is: The one who first books the seat gets it.

Electronic headphones

Business Class passengers' listening pleasure and comfort has been enhanced as from February 22. Electronic headphones (complimentary, of course), fitting snugly over the ears are now standard issue instead of the pneumatic type. Giving top quality stereo reproduction.

30 kilos free baggage

In addition to the various other new facilities, Business Class passengers now have right to a free baggage allowance of 30 kg, instead of the previous 20 kg.

Top Rate Service

Cabin service in Business Class is already acknowledged by most passengers to be of top standard. High quality menus with a choice of two main dishes, elegantly served with china, glassware and metal cutlery, regularly score the highest ratings in quality control surveys.

The new major additions, together with a number of improvements on finer points of presentation, will render KLM's Business Class service truly little short of First Class.

TOURIST CLASS

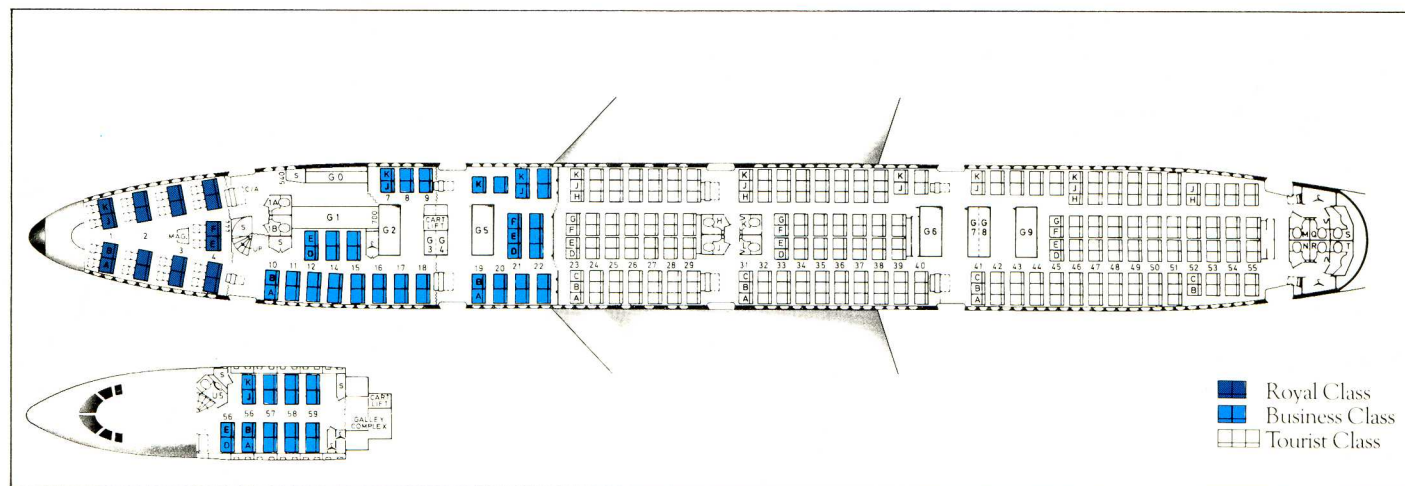
Drinks on the house

As from February 22, Tourist Class passengers have joined the ranks of the 'cashless society' on board all flights on KLM's worldwide network. From that date all drinks made available in Tourist Class, alcoholic and non-alcoholic, are 'on the house'.

Meaning for many passengers an extra happy send-off and ending to a good vacation at KLM's expense.

Complimentary earphones

Tourist Class passengers are now also able to enjoy watching the movie and listening to any of the 8 channels of stereo music on KLM's intercontinental flights without being asked to pay for the rental of earphones.



KARNAVALSCLUB

De Karnavalsclub "De Windmills", een onderafdeling van de Canberra Dutch Club, bij aankomst op Schiphol Airport.

Deze club heeft in het afgelopen jaar vele activiteiten georganiseerd om het mogelijk te maken in 1984 het Karnaval in Nederland te vieren.



It noflik sté (de genoeglijkste plek) en Frouwien Visser

HOLLAND
HEART OF THE ARTS



It noflik sté heet het tegelmuseum in Otterlo (Eikenzoom 10) waar de ontwikkeling van de Nederlandse tegelkunst vanaf 1600 tot en met de dag van vandaag op genoeglijke wijze bezien kan worden. Het leeuwendeel wordt gevormd door de permanente historische collectie, de moderne tegel wordt in wisselende tentoonstellingen belicht.

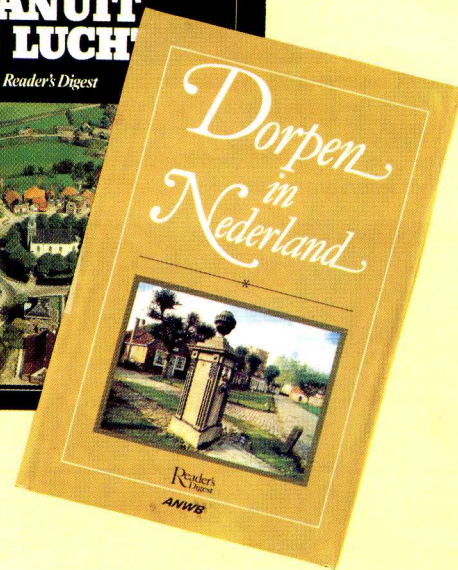
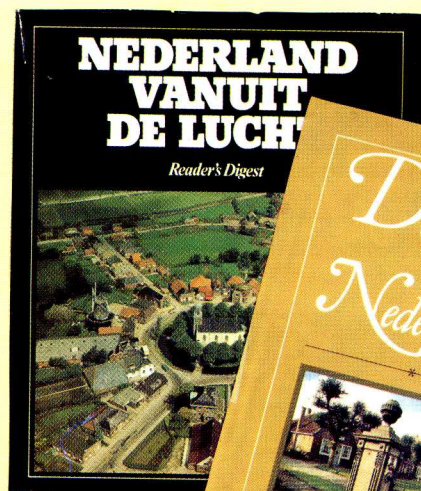
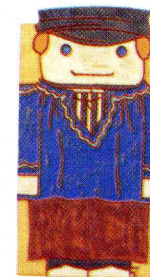
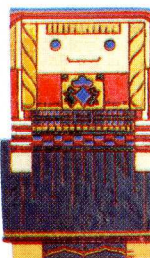
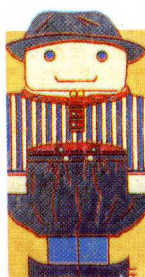
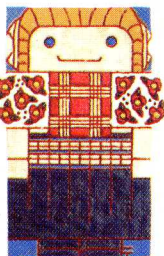
Hier zagen wij het werk van Frouwien Visser, door haarzelf beschouwd als een veredelde hobby, succesvol geïntegreerd in haar huiselijk leven zoals bij een nadere kennismaking in háár 'noflik sté' te Wageningen blijkt: potten met verf op de huiskamertafel, tegeltableaux aan de muren, eigen en buurkinderen afgebeeld op een serie tegels met kinderspelen. Ze werkt graag in series, watervogels en kruiden b.v. behoren tot haar topics maar de laatste vier jaar was ze vooral intensief bezig met Nederlandse streekdrachten.

Gek op kleur

Vanaf de tijd dat ze als kind voor de kachel lag te tekenen, zijn de potloden nooit meer ongebruikt gebleven. Wat haar echter vooral trekt, is kleur en daarmee heeft Frouwien Visser zich heerlijk kunnen uitleven in haar tegels van ruim 90 Neder-

landse streekdrachten. Het hele land trok ze schetsend en fotograferend door, bestudeerde vooral de kleding van de authentieke dansgroepen en zoog alle beschikbare informatie in zich op. Wat er uiteindelijk weer uitkwam, is een bijzonder aantrekkelijke serie tegels waarop mannen en vrouwen in dracht gestyleerd staan weergegeven. Frouwien Visser werkt volgens de oude techniek: het getekende ontwerp wordt in de natte klei geprikt, de lijnen nagetrokken en de kleine details met de hand ingevuld, de vlakken gevuld met glazuur.

Mocht u deze exclusieve klederdrachttegels (afmeting 14 x 25 cm) uit 45 verschillende plaatsen en streken willen bestellen, dan kan dat bij Frouwien Visser, Hinkeloordseweg 5, Wageningen. Ze kosten f 80,- per paar, excl. verzendkosten.



Twée unieke boeken over Nederland!

- **Dorpen in Nederland**, 480 pag., 300 kleurenfoto's, 40 wandelroutes, formaat 18,3 x 28,7 cm, prijs f 89,90.
- **Nederland vanuit de lucht**, 324 pag., 400 kleurenfoto's, 270 kaartjes, formaat 24,2 x 28,8 cm, prijs f 99,90. (Engelse versie: 'Holland from the air').

Beide uitgegeven in samenwerking met de ANWB door The Reader's Digest N.V., Assumburg 73-75, 1081 GB Amsterdam. Korting bij afname van meerdere exemplaren.

In het eerste boek worden ruim 250 historische dorpen en stadjes beschreven en afgebeeld. Zo mooi allemaal dat we een beetje argwanend werden en door het hele land een aantal steekproeven namen. 'Dorpen in Nederland' heeft de test glansrijk doorstaan: de gegevens klopten en de foto's lijken misschien sprookjesachtig maar het is allemaal echt zo – vaak op plaatsen waar we niets van wisten.

Het boek bevat een schat van gegevens, anecdotes, mini-monografieën over poorten, kroegen, drachten, ambachten en ga maar door.

Het tweede boek geeft in luchtfoto's – haast onwaarschijnlijk mooi – een systematisch overzicht van alle streken van Nederland. Zeker zo goed is de tekst daarbij: nu eens niet de gebruikelijke aardige maar nietszeggende verhaaltjes, maar achtergrondgegevens die je helpen begrijpen waarom het landschap er zo uit ziet. Gedegen research, wetenswaardige feiten op intelligente manier beschreven – zo krijg je inzicht in een klein, maar ongelooflijk gecompliceerd land.

Beide lijvige boekdelen zijn al wekenlang in huis, maar we blijven er in kijken en lezen. Er worden lijsten gemaakt van de dingen die we per se moeten zien en naar onze mening kunnen we alle aardrijkskundeboekjes over Nederland beter vervangen door deze twee boeken. Ze zijn honderd keer mooier en boeiender en je krijgt nog een enorme dosis geschiedenis en cultuurhistorie erbij. Kortom: deze twee schitterende boeken zijn een *absolute must!*