

Fall 1998

The Joint Archives Quarterly, Volume 09.02: Fall 1998

Hope College

Larry J. Wagenaar

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.hope.edu/jaquarterly>



Part of the [Archival Science Commons](#)

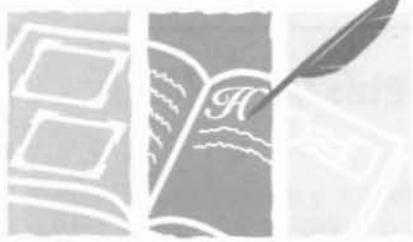
Recommended Citation

Repository citation: College, Hope and Wagenaar, Larry J., "The Joint Archives Quarterly, Volume 09.02: Fall 1998" (1998). *The Joint Archives Quarterly*. Paper 28.

<http://digitalcommons.hope.edu/jaquarterly/28>

Published in: *Joint Archives Quarterly*, Volume 9, Issue 2, Fall October 1, 1998. Copyright © 1998 Hope College, Holland, Michigan.

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the College Publications at Digital Commons @ Hope College. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Joint Archives Quarterly by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Hope College. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@hope.edu.



The Joint Archives *Quarterly*

Volume 9 Number 2

Fall 1998

The Joint Archives of Holland 1988-1998 Celebrating a Decade of Preservation

A decade can pass so quickly. The Joint Archives started very modestly in 1988. Our biggest task was to make sense of the hundreds of boxes, files, photographs, and other materials that were being moved from storage locations to our new facility. How would we make sense of it all? How could we make it possible for a visitor to find what they needed?

Our priority was to start with the basics. First get physical control--develop numbering systems, sensible arrangement on the shelves, and find out what was in the boxes. We also realized most of the collections required some type of stabilization.

Our second pressing need was to gain intellectual control. How would we organize? How would we catalog, and most importantly, what medium would we use that had the ability to track thousands of feet of archival collections and be able to find specific things? We were helped by efforts of others who had worked with the collections in the past. These valuable people played critical roles in making sure the collections were saved: Andy Vander Zee, Barbara Lampen, John Luidens, Janet Mulder, Elton Bruins and others.

We are thankful for our main institutional members--Hope College, the Holland Museum, and Western Seminary--for the opportunity to provide quality, state-of-the-art care for their archival collections and make them available to the researching public.

The dedicated staff of the Joint Archives has accomplished many things in our first decade. The reason for this can be contained in one word: innovation. The Archives has consistently "pushed the envelope." Rather than being tied to a "we've always done it that way" attitude, the staff has



Marvin Hoff, Phil Tanis, John Jacobson, Clay Stauffer

looked at new ways of doing our work, providing access, collecting new materials, and getting the word out about the collections available for you to use.

On November 19 we will be having a tenth anniversary celebration. Ms. Sandra S. Clark, director of the Michigan Historical Center, will be talking about "Michigan's History at Risk" and what we can do to preserve our story. The event is at 7:00 p.m. in Winants Auditorium of Graves Hall and will be followed by a special reception at the Archives.

Please turn to page 4 of the *Quarterly* (which is nearly as old as the Archives itself) for a timeline of some of our milestones.

From the Director

The Joint Archives focuses on helping a wide variety of people who come to us to undertake research in the collections housed here. But from time to time we like to be able to “tell” the stories too. With the development of our first exhibit, we hope to be able to feature some of the material in the Archives and give you a reason to stop in to see us even when you may not have a pressing research question.

In this issue we highlight the opening of our exhibit *Sears F. Riepma: An Ecumenical Immigrant*. I hope you will be able to stop by and experience this fascinating story.

This month we are also celebrating our tenth anniversary. In this issue of the *Quarterly* you will find a timeline of our first 10 years and some of the milestones along the way. On Thursday, November 19 at 7:00 p.m. in Graves Hall, we will host Sandra Clark, director of the Michigan Historical Center, who will talk about “Michigan's History at Risk.” A reception will follow at the Archives.

Best wishes for a blessed holiday season!

Larry J. Wagenaar

Joint Archives Staff

Larry J. Wagenaar, Director and Associate Professor

Geoffrey D. Reynolds, Collections Archivist and
Assistant Professor

Lori A. Trethewey, Secretary

Allyson Boggess, Student Research Assistant

Ena Brooks, Student Research Assistant

Kevin De Young, Student Research Assistant

Abby Platt, Student Research Assistant

Volunteers

Sue Brandsen

Lois Kayes

John Maassen

Carolyn Nienhuis

Russ Norden

Jean Postma

Bill Van Dyke

Lee Witteveen

Where Are They Now?



After leaving the Joint Archives, **Craig Wright** served the staff at the Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan University and later at the Henry Ford Health System in Detroit. Since 1997, Craig has served as Associate Curator of Manuscript Acquisitions for the Minnesota Historical Society. Craig says, “I’d love to hear from my old friends in Holland, or, if anyone happens to be visiting St. Paul, I can give you a behind the scenes tour of the beautiful History Center here.”



Jenifer Holman relocated to Wisconsin with her husband Eric in 1996. Their first child, Ryan, is now 19 months old, and they are expecting their second child in March. Jenifer works full time at the Viterbo College library as a serials librarian and also works with the college’s small archival collection. She is responsible for the library’s web page, serving at the reference desk, and doing library instruction.

Sears F. Riepma: An Ecumenical Immigrant

Was there a time when you could get a beer for a nickel or skinny-dip in Lake Michigan and be sure no one would see you? Was it possible for a new immigrant, enveloped by a conservative ethnic community, to grow into an ecumenical leader? How does someone hold on to faith in the face of tragedy?

These are just a sampling of things you might learn from our new exhibit, *Sears F. Riepma: An Ecumenical Immigrant*.

On October 9, Sears' daughter, Mary Riepma Ross, unveiled the display at the Joint Archives of Holland. Ross, who now lives in New York City, addressed the assembled guests and spoke about her father. Dr. John Jacobson, president of Hope College, Provost Jacob Nyenhuis, and Joint Archives director Larry Wagenaar also made remarks.



Jacob Nyenhuis, John Jacobson, Mary Riepma Ross, and Larry Wagenaar

“As our community struggles with issues of tolerance between Christian traditions, we can learn from the life of one man—an immigrant who understood that each Christian’s walk of faith can be different.”

The exhibit runs through March 29, 1999, and can be viewed in the reading room of the Joint Archives of Holland on the lower level of the Van Wylen Library at 10th and College in Holland, Michigan. The Archives is open Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Unveiling the exhibit

After arriving in the United States at the age of 16, Riepma worked several manual labor jobs before pursuing a call to ministry. After graduating from Hope College and Western Theological Seminary, Riepma served the Reformed Church in America, the Presbyterian Church, and finished his career as an Episcopal priest.

“This special exhibit features the fascinating life of one of Hope’s and Western’s most ecumenical graduates,” commented Wagenaar. “Soon after arriving from the Netherlands, Riepma was given the opportunity to briefly work outside the Dutch immigrant enclaves of Holland and Grand Rapids for a time. It was during this period that he began to see the variety of Christian traditions which greatly influenced his understanding of the breadth of the Christian faith.



Bob and Marilyn Dykstra and Gord Beld are among the first to view the new exhibit

10th Anniversary Timeline

In only a decade, the Joint Archives of Holland has become a leading archival repository in Michigan and the Midwest. The program is often cited for its innovation, cutting edge public access and catalog systems, and an example of how bringing related collections together can provide the best access to historical information for the public. What follows are a few highlights from our ten year history:

- 1970s** Robert Warner (later Archivist of the United States) recommends concept to Elton Bruins.
- 1987** A committee consisting of representatives of the Holland Historical Trust, Hope College, and Western Theological Seminary, chaired by Elton Bruins, presents a proposal for a joint archives program to the boards of the three institutions and it is approved.
- 1988**
- May Larry J. Wagenaar hired as first professional archivist and program director. He presents three phased target development plan for the Archives.
- August Wagenaar proposes the name "The Joint Archives of Holland," replacing the working title "Joint Archives Program."
- September The museum, college, and seminary archival holdings are physically moved into the Joint Archives facility.
- November Dr. Robert Swierenga, the "dean of Dutch-American studies," speaks at the dedication of the Archives. The facility is open to the public, Monday-Friday, 1:00-5:00 p.m., and mornings by appointment. Initially visitor counts are around 30 per month.
- Fall The decision is made to manage all collection information using computers, aiding cataloging and searching the collection. There will be no card catalog.
- 1989**
- Spring First edition of the *Joint Archives Quarterly* appears.
- July The first *Guide to the Collections* is published containing abstracts of all processed collections. The new guide is featured at several regional archival association meetings.
- September First newspapers are microfilmed.



- November The Joint Archives agrees to provide a home and support for the Holland Area Historical Society, then numbering under 30 members.
- 1990**
- Winter The *Guide to the Collections* is brought online for full computer searching by member institutions and the public. Organization and cataloging of the photo collections is completed.
- March Robert Warner, former Archivist of the United States, is our second annual speaker.
- June The Joint Archives wins its first grant from the National Historical Publication and Records Commission (NHPRC) to fund an assistant archivist for processing collections.
- September Patrons visiting the Joint Archives of Holland exceed 50 per month.
- October Craig G. Wright is hired as the first assistant archivist (later Collections Archivist).
- 1991**
- January The first series of educational programs is planned and includes workshops on photos and basic archival skills, the *S.S. South American*, and the history of the automobile.
- March The Joint Archives adds "History Research Center" as a subtitle to help clarify the function of the Archives.
- Summer The Joint Archives takes over management of the annual Hope College Oral History Project.

September The *Supplement to the Guide to the Collections* is published and includes the photographic, topical, pamphlet, and other secondary collections.

September The Archives hosts the biennial conference of the Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies. The conference was entitled *The Dutch and Their Faith*.

1992

January The first Joint Archives collections are cataloged for the national OCLC library database.

February Visitors undertaking research at the Joint Archives exceed 100.

May The Holland history slide program--now known as *The Story of Holland*--is completed and shown at Tulip Time in the Knickerbocker Theater.

June Televangelist Robert Schuller tours the Joint Archives. This ultimately leads to an ongoing relationship and placement of some of his ministry's historical materials.

June The NHPRC awards the Joint Archives a second grant to continue funding one more year for the assistant archivist. The Archives struggles with how to fund the position after grant monies run out.



October A plaque honoring Willard Wichers is dedicated by Hope College at the entrance to the Joint Archives of Holland.

December Guy Vander Jagt places his congressional papers at the Joint Archives of Holland.

1993

February Craig Wright departs to join the staff at the Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan University.

June Jenifer Smith joins the Joint Archives as its new Collections Archivist.

August The annual Hope College Oral History Project focuses on the Hispanic community.

Fall To address continuing funding difficulties, Larry Wagenaar proposes a major change in the structure of the Joint Archives--moving from joint administration by all three institutions to a contract for services model.

1994

Spring The contract for services model is approved. This ensures funding for the Collection Archivist position.

June Larry Wagenaar is installed as president of the Michigan Archival Association.

July The Joint Archives becomes a department of Hope College which now provides contractual archival services to the Holland Museum, Western Seminary, and other organizations needing archival services. The archivists join the faculty.

Fall The college installs new shelving in the Archives, increasing capacity by 20%. New computers are installed and networked. The Joint Archives also gets its first microfilm reader/printer. Patrons can now read and print copies in the Archives reading room.

1995

January Mayor Al McGeehan, City Clerk Jodi Syens, Museum director Ann Kiewel, and Archives director Larry Wagenaar meet to discuss the 1997 Sesquicentennial. A planning committee with various community representatives is formed later in the year.

Spring U.S. Representative Peter Hoekstra agrees to place his papers at the Joint Archives. It is one of the first agreements for archival transfer between an archives and an active (not retiring) congressman in the country.

June The Archives hosts the annual meeting of the Michigan Archival Association.

1996

January The Joint Archives expands its hours into the morning to service the growing number of researchers. The new hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

January Lori Trethewey joins the Joint Archives as its first secretary.

10th Anniversary Timeline (continued)

August	Jenifer Smith Holman departs to relocate with her husband to Wisconsin.	June	Over 150 people attend the conference <i>The Sesquicentennial of Dutch Immigration: 150 Years of Ethnic Heritage</i> .
September	Our new logo, depicting three panels and four different types of materials in the archives, is unveiled.	Fall	A wide cross-section of over 170 people are interviewed as part of the Sesquicentennial Oral History Project, <i>150 Stories for 150 Years</i> . This project is completed at the end of 1997.
September	Patrons visiting the Joint Archives exceed 200.	Fall	The City of Saugatuck places their records at the Joint Archives.
December	The new biography <i>A. C. Van Raalte: Dutch Leader and American Patriot</i> , written by Jeanne Jacobson, Elton Bruins and Larry Wagenaar, is published. The Joint Archives is involved in nearly all the historical publications which are published for the Holland Sesquicentennial.	October	Archives director hosts visiting sculptor Bert Kiewiet from the Netherlands for the dedication of his Kollen Park statue during Princess Margriet's visit.
1997		1998	
January	Geoffrey Reynolds joins the staff as our third Collections Archivist.	April	Larry Wagenaar conducts an oral history interview with President Gerald Ford.
April	The Archives joins the World Wide Web with an innovative webpage that allows searching of all processed collections. The URL is later converted to www.hope.edu/jointarchives .	June	The Joint Archives hosts the pre-Synod workshop for the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America.
		Fall	The web page is expanded to include all detailed collection inventories.

Contact us at (616) 395-7798 • Fax (616) 395-7197 • Email archives@hope.edu • www.hope.edu/resources/arc

The Joint Archives of Holland



HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER
Hope College | Holland Historical Trust | Western Theological Seminary

P.O. Box 9000 | Hope College | Holland, MI 49422-9000

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Hope College