

Summer 2015

The Joint Archives Quarterly, Volume 25.02: Summer 2015

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The Joint Archives *Quarterly*

Volume 25 Number 2

Summer 2015

Van Raalte Memorial Hall Fire

By Nathan Longfield

“Life is not in the candle or in the wick, but in the burning,” read the sign in Provost David Marker’s office in Van Raalte Memorial Hall. On April 28, 1980, the sign was “in the burning” as the 78-year-old hall went up in flames on an early Monday morning. Within hours, all that was left of the historic building was a brick shell void of its roof and interior.

A week before, on April 21, Van Vleck Hall, Hope College’s historic women’s dormitory, had survived yet another fire, this time at the hand of a painter’s torch. The building, which at one point had housed the entirety of Hope College, had already weathered multiple fires from wood-burning stoves early in its life, as well as the great Holland fire of 1871. The Hope College Office of Information Services published a special edition of *News from Hope College* reporting that “Historic Van Vleck Hall was extensively damaged by fire Monday, April 21, as painters were putting the finishing touches on a \$400,000 restoration of the oldest building on the Hope College campus.” It is believed that the fire started when flames from the propane torch the painters were using to touch up the building’s eave instead set the eaves on fire around 11 a.m.

The third floor was damaged severely by the fire while the rest of the building was hurt by water and smoke,

damaging many of the residents’ possessions, including class notes, just weeks before finals. The campus gathered to watch, and in many cases helped fight or rescue items from the fire. At Van Raalte Memorial Hall, 20 feet east of where the Dimnent Chapel stands, the staff members stood on the back steps and watched the fire burn the upper levels of Van Vleck.



Phyllis Hooyman, a Hope graduate, returned to work at Hope in the financial aid office as the student employment counselor. She was working with Martha Reyes, the financial aid secretary and receptionist at that time. In interviews with Geoffrey Reynolds of the Joint Archives, both noted how while watching the Van Vleck fire from the back steps of Van Raalte Memorial

Hall, they considered how that building was also a fire risk. Hooyman noted that the building was “so wooden,” and that the fire escape was a tube through an old storage room that Reyes defined as “worthless.”

Van Raalte Memorial Hall was built in 1902 to answer the need for science classes and labs. Originally the chemistry and physics departments were housed on the first floor, and general classes and biology labs were on the second floor. The third floor housed a museum for the pioneers of 1847. During the First World War, the

(continued on page 2)

From the Director



Written by two of our student research assistants, this issue features articles about significant events that have impacted Hope College. Over the next year, we will continue to spotlight key events in the *Quarterly* as the college approaches the sesquicentennial of its founding on May 14, 2016.

As summer draws to a close, we say goodbye to one of our valued volunteers, Julia Triezenberg, who has graduated from Black River Public School. We want to thank her for the many hours she volunteered at the Joint Archives, and wish her well as she continues her education at the University of Michigan. We hope that her time with us was valuable as she pursues a degree in history.

Geoffrey D. Reynolds

Van Raalte Memorial Hall Fire (continued from page 1)

third floor was transformed into a mess hall for the Student Army Training Corps (SATC) unit on Hope's campus after the museum was moved to the fourth floor in 1920. In 1941, the labs were relocated when Lubbers Hall was built, and then in 1945, President Irwin J. Lubbers placed administration in Van Raalte Memorial Hall. During its life, Van Raalte Memorial Hall was also home to the bookstore and the Kletz, located in the basement, before they were moved to the DeWitt Student Center in 1971. After the second floor ceiling collapsed in 1972, the building finished shifting to an administration center, removing all classes. Fire officials had mandated renovation in 1967 after noticing the danger of the building.

Given the flammability and risk, it was a blessing for the Van Raalte Memorial Hall staff that the fire occurred when the building was empty. Hope's administration knew that Van Raalte Memorial Hall was a fire hazard. At the time of the fire, the third floor had already been condemned and was no longer in use because the ceiling had begun to cave in. An article by Clark Goding reported:

The open stairwell and other hazardous features of the building gave the state fire marshal reason to order the college to comply with the fire regulations in December of 1969. The college board of trustees asked for and received an extension, and soon after decided to renovate the building as office space because, according to a May 1970 *Anchor*, "fire regulations for office space are not as demanding as those for classroom space, and thus renovation could be less extensive and less costly without compromising safety."

Since Van Raalte Memorial Hall was not worth rebuilding, the school was planning on tearing it down as part of a new building plan within the next 5 to 10 years. It was reported that with the leaky roof, drafts, and failing heating system, the college was going to demolish the building once "more pressing campus facility needs had been met." Hooyman noted that the "fire was a strange blessing in many ways," due to the dangers of the building. The wooden building and the open stairwell made the building an extreme fire hazard. The article "Van Raalte on its way to becoming a Legend" in the *Van Raalte Memorial Hall* memorial book noted that fear of fire was always on the mind of administration with the open wooden stairwell, especially since the "no smoking" signs were consistently ignored. The rapidity with which the building burned validated these fears as the flames raced up the stairwell.

The fire started before 5:00 a.m. on Monday, April 28, a week after the Van Vleck fire. A Hope maintenance man saw the fire when he arrived on campus, the flames already shooting out of the windows on the lower levels. A fireman, who arrived shortly after the blaze began, noted that the fire spread rapidly from the lower southeast corner to the roof. The old wood and paper in the building led the fire to quickly consume the building, and by 5:45 a.m.



*Van Raalte Memorial Hall,
April 28, 1980*

the flames had spread to the west of the building and 10 minutes later the roof began to collapse. The *Holland Sentinel* newspaper reported that the natural gas lines of the building fed the flames, which appeared blue, and there were three explosions in the building during the fire. By 9 a.m. only a few flames could be seen, and the fire was in large part extinguished.

During the fire, the firemen placed an emphasis on protecting the other buildings when they realized that Van Raalte Memorial Hall was lost. Dimnent Chapel, which sat 20 feet to the west of Van Raalte Memorial Hall, was sprayed down to protect the large stain glass window. The *Sentinel* article noted that police and students went to the roofs of other buildings to protect them from sparks and sprayed water on the roofs of Brumler Apartments and Western Theological Seminary to prevent the fire from spreading.

Various theories, ranging from arson due to approaching finals to an over-heating coffee pot, have been proposed

for the cause, but the fire marshals failed to figure out what led to the fire, though it clearly started in the south-eastern basement of the building and spread west. While the destruction of the building was not an overwhelming loss, since many saw it as a blessing and knew that the building needed to go, the bigger loss was the destruction of the files and records that were in the building. Emeritus English professor John W. Hollenbach, who was in charge of the recovery process, commented while giving a speech on file recovery:

“So, some said, it was a suspiciously fortunate fire. However, the real dismay rose over the probable destruction of almost all of the college’s records of all kinds, except for microfilmed academic records (a process started, providentially, two years before) and whatever portion of the current business and academic information stored in the brains of the college computer, fortunately located in another campus building.”



President Gordon Van Wylen and Hope College staff sort through college records damaged by the fire

While many files had been lost, the college was now trying to recover the files that hadn’t been destroyed, but were wet and smoke damaged and threatened by mold. About a third of the files were destroyed, a third damaged by water and fire, and third only hurt by smoke. The Joint Archives of Holland still has copies of many of the charred transcripts rescued from Van Raalte Memorial Hall, the edges of which begin to crumble when touched. Fire recovery and reclamation became central to the entire recovery process. Hollenbach quarterbacked the operation after volunteering his services to President Van Wylen while they watched Van Raalte Memorial Hall burn. Van Wylen called him later asking if he would “be willing to take charge of the process of identifying, sorting out and reclaiming the records that we pull from the fire.” Hollenbach and his

team moved the recovered files from Van Raalte Memorial Hall to the (mostly) vacant Carnegie Gym and requested that the Van Vleck residents remove their items saved from the Van Vleck fire at their earliest convenience.

This began a long and arduous process for Hollenbach and his team. They spread out the files in the old gymnasium based on the office from which they originated and installed two microfilm machines



and two Xerox copiers in the room. The recovery team struggled to separate wet files so that they could dry properly. The condition of the files was in large part dependent on whether the filing cabinets had opened when they fell to the basement during the fire. To prevent mold from forming on the files they were frozen, first in Hope facilities and then in a local food storage area. However, the files needed to be dried, and hand and freeze-drying both proved to be inefficient methods. After trying other services, they hired McDonnell Douglas Aircraft Co. services, based in St. Louis, Missouri, and used their vacuum chamber to dry the files before summoning the offices to examine, copy, keep, or discard their files.

Not all files were recovered and much was lost, resulting in a struggle to reconstruct records and information. The aforementioned computerization of the many of the files served to save the school a large amount of headache. Academic records were stored and the registration for the fall of 1980 was recovered from the computer. While some materials for the upcoming graduation had been lost, these were easily reproduced. Information services lost student information cards and Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA) information, among other materials. The larger issue was the financial aid files. About 90% of the aid letters for the incoming class had been sent and the office was requesting students send in copies so that the awards could be honored, since the records of what had been offered were gone. Guaranteed Student Loan and Student Eligibility Reports also needed to be resubmitted. Among other items lost in the fire were the recently rediscovered, painted portraits of Ralph and Elizabeth Rodman Voorhees, the latter the namesake of Voorhees Hall, and personal items, including one worker who lost about 50 pairs of shoes, and the only copy of a finished book transcript of one professor. Fortunately, the Nykerk cup was saved because the victors had decided to relish in it and still had it in their apartment.

Also recovered was the Van Raalte Memorial Hall Cornerstone. Elton Bruins provided an inventory of the contents of the recovered box. Among many items in the box were a copy of Van Raalte's biography (in Dutch); minutes of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America (RCA) of 1901 belonging to Dr. Kollen, Hope's president when Van Raalte Memorial Hall was constructed; a Holland directory; old college catalogues, reports, and essays; Western Theological Seminary and RCA records; Holland Public School materials; reports on the semi-centennial of Holland; notes on Holland and various newspapers. The contents of the cornerstone are housed in the Joint Archives of Holland and have been well preserved since the fire.

Recovery of the files was only a small aspect of lifting the college back on its feet. The day of the fire, the administration quickly reorganized and placed the homeless departments in various buildings across campus. In a report to the board of trustees, President Van Wylen noted that "By 8:30 a.m. on the morning of the fire, we were discussing how and where we could get back into operation." Most of the staff was placed in DeWitt Hall in the ballroom, faculty lounge, classrooms, art gallery, and offices in the basement, where the administration removed the bowling alley. The administration was de-centralized with other offices located in Graves, the Alumni House, the chapel basement, and the Peale Science Center.

Current students are now used to the de-centralized administration offices split between DeWitt and Anderson-Werkmen. DeWitt was originally a student center before administration occupied the building. Even with the projected opening of the Bultman Student Center, there are no plans to centralize administration. Lastly, there was a shift in some of the procedures, processes, and thinking of the administration, as many files that were no longer needed were passed on to the archives.



The arched entrance of Van Raalte Memorial Hall survived the fire and the school had to decide whether or not to keep the structure. A *Holland Sentinel* editorial published May 7, 1980, encouraged Hope to keep the arch as a link between Hope and her founder Van Raalte, whom the building was named after. The editorial

encouraged Hope not to lose its connection to the past and have a memorial since "Hope College students

should be reminded of the remarkable man whose vision in the Michigan wilderness brought them their college." Ultimately, the structurally unsound arch was torn down. Van Wylen informed the Hope College Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff that the arch would be taken down since it was not designed to stand on its own, either aesthetically or architecturally. The report noted that the arch would detract from the view of Dimnent and Graves, and would be too expensive to fix. The Van Raalte Memorial Hall stone name plate was eventually set into the wall of the hallway of the DeWitt Center north entrance.

However, there is still a memorial for Van Raalte on Hope College's campus, though most students presumably don't know what it is. Van Raalte Commons now lies to the south of Dimnent, a small green patch dedicated to Van Raalte with a piece of modern art. At the time Van Raalte Memorial Hall burned, 12th Street still ran through campus connecting College and Columbia avenues. In the summer of 1980 it was closed, and the Van Raalte name moved to a grassy knoll to preserve the man's legacy on campus. Records note that:

On May 7, 1983, a piece of modern sculpture was dedicated in honor of the founder of the college. The sculpture, entitled Ballyviktor, is by the artist Stuart Luckman. The sculptor attempted to pick up features of the college's heritage and buildings in the piece. The series of crosses arranged in a stepped fashion form the main piece, the square blocks reflect the Dutch tile floors in old Dutch master paintings and the black and white floor in the narthex of Dimnent Memorial Chapel, and the main piece picks up the stepped facade of Voorhees Hall.

This area of grass and the sculpture between Dimnent Chapel and the buildings of Western Theological Seminary was designed to serve as a reminder and memorial to the legend of Van Raalte and the impact he had on Hope and Holland.

Van Raalte Memorial Hall served as the "work-horse" for Hope's campus for 78 years before the fire brought it down. The fire did not take any lives, but it did destroy many files and resources of the college. Though the college was fortunate with the amount it could recover, the school also learned the value of storing the information on computers, which at the time were continuing to improve, and storing valuable records in the archives and other secure locations. Now students gather where it used to stand to throw around a Frisbee, lay out in the sun, study, and enjoy Spring Fling. The new Jim and Martie Bultman Center will reach out into the quad when it is built as Hope continues to grow, and

new buildings are built as Hope endures and flourishes. “Life is not in the candle or in the wick, but in the burning.” And Hope continues to let its light shine. As the Hinga-Boersma Dean of the Chapel Trygve Johnson reminds the campus every week as he lights a candle before the Gathering, “The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.” May Hope continue to flourish and heed those words from the book of John as it strives to follow Christ and let its light shine.



Nathan Longfield was born and raised in Dubuque, Iowa. He is starting his senior year at Hope College, majoring in religion with minors in both management and mathematics. After graduation he plans to go to seminary to pursue ordination as a minister.



History of Vander Werf Hall

By Alex Markos

On May 25, 1961, Hope College signed an agreement to erect a physics and mathematics building on campus. It was the third of many major campus improvements that emerged from President Irwin J. Lubber’s ambitious fundraising campaign called Looking Ahead with Hope. After raising over \$3 million during the early 1960s, Lubbers turned over the presidency to Dr. Calvin A. Vander Werf, who first used the funds to construct the Van Zoeren Library and to acquire 25 acres of land for athletic purposes (which would become the Van Raalte Complex). Constructed and equipped at the cost of \$850,000, the new physics-math building, which would become known as Vander Werf Hall, opened in September 1964. The building was designed by Ralph R. Calder, Architect and Associates, and built by the Beckering Construction Company. Among the many donors and benefactors was Ford Motor Co., which gave \$25,000 to be used for the construction of the physics-math building. The building’s purpose was to address and satisfy the needs of the expanding math and physics

departments. It was also a symbol of Hope’s commitment to the development of those programs and its pride in the research and accomplishments of its left-brained students and professors.

This building was not only well-timed in the history of Hope College, but also very appropriate in the history of America. As we emerged victorious from WWII and entered the tense and competitive atmosphere of the Cold War, America started to place more and more emphasis on the sciences. This became especially apparent in the 1960s, when an entire generation was enchanted by President Kennedy’s promise to put a man on the moon. Now that the space race had begun, colleges around the country stimulated and revamped their math and science programs to train the next generation of engineers, physicists, astrophysicists, inventors, technicians, and star-gazers. Hope also recognized this shift in focus and likewise aimed to improve its math and science programs by adding an entire new building to its growing campus.

Not everybody was thrilled about the new building going up. Leaders at Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church, which stood next to the proposed building site, were concerned that it would cause problems for the church. The close proximity of the new building to the church might pose fire hazards, and the church asked that the site be moved closer to the Van Zoeren Library. A bigger problem was the availability of parking spots. Along with the new building, the college was going to add 10 new parking spaces to the library lot (making the total of 57 spaces for both buildings), which was less than half of the number of spaces required by the city’s zoning ordinance to accommodate the size of the new building. Although the college claimed that the church could use their lot on Sundays, the lot was full of student cars. This unearthed the general problem of a student parking shortage that the college was already addressing. There was talk of only allowing juniors and seniors car



Construction began on the physics-math building in early 1962

privileges. Unsurprisingly, the first application for permission to construct the physics-math building was denied, with the stipulations that the building should be moved 11 feet to the east and the addition of a new parking lot in order to satisfy the zoning ordinance. In response to these conditions, the building was moved 11 feet to the east, and four new parking lots were developed (including one specifically for the new building) that would improve the college's parking problems as well.

Despite these minor setbacks, the physics-math building began rising out of the ground in early 1962. Though it was finished and filled with eager young minds by 1964, the new building would remain nameless for several years. In June 1967, Vander Werf announced new names for two of the lecture halls: No. 117 was named after Professor Albert Lampen, and No. 118 after Professor Clarence Kleis. Lampen served as the head of the mathematics department and was an instructor in navigation and astronomy from 1918 to 1957. Since 1964, an annual memorial prize has been given to a senior math student in his honor. Kleis served as chairman of the physics department from 1921-1963, and also taught in the Civilian Pilot Training Corps at Hope during the war years (1942-1944).

Finally, on October 9, 1981, the Physics Mathematics Hall was dedicated to former Hope president Calvin A. Vander Werf. It was a night of singing and rejoicing.



Dr. Calvin and Rachel Vander Werf at the Oct. 9, 1981, building dedication

Rachel Vander Werf. However, the celebration did not end in Dimment. After the convocation, guests were ushered into the newly-christened building, where they were met by the triumphant sounds of Hope's brass ensemble and participated in the Litany of Praise, Penitence, and Dedication. Guests were then able to tour the building, all stopping to take special notice of the bronze plaque in Vander Werf's honor located at the entrance, which read "Dedicated to the achievement of excellence as student, teacher, scientist, and administrator."

Vander Werf certainly deserved the honor of such a dedication. He graduated from Hope in 1937 with a dual

major in chemistry and English and went on to earn his doctorate in chemistry at Ohio State University in 1941. That same year, he took on a professorship at the University of Kansas until he came to Hope in 1963. After the Hope presidency, he taught at the University of Colorado and then became the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Florida, Gainesville.

Vander Werf served as the eighth president of Hope College, from 1963-1970, a period marked by prosperity and innovation for Hope. During his presidency, enrollment increased 30%, and the size of the faculty grew from 82 to 147. He helped procure three major grants for the college to enrich science education, which totaled \$780,000. Under his leadership, the departments of geology, communication, and theatre were created, along with the establishment of a computer center and full accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music. He also implemented an energetic building program that included the construction of the DeWitt Student Center, the Peale Science Center, two residence halls, and an addition to the Nykerk Hall of Music. It was in recognition of these great achievements that the board of trustees moved to honor Vander Werf by naming the physics-math building after him. In a letter sent to Vander Werf on the night of the dedication, then-provost David Marker remarked that the very bricks of Vander Werf Hall are "reminders of the many fruits of your years of leadership, marked by a dedication to enhance Hope's reputation in the sciences." Everywhere he went, Vander Werf was valued and remembered as a passionate and well-loved educator. He passed away in 1988, shortly after handing in his spring term grades.

As it was originally conceived, Vander Werf Hall is L-shaped, the longer east-west section has three levels and the north-south section contains two lecture halls. The ground floor houses a



One of the labs in Vander Werf Hall

mechanical drawing room, radiation lab, dark room, storage and mechanical equipment rooms. The first floor includes a receiving room, reading room, storage rooms, two general physics labs, one advanced physics lab, and four project rooms. The second floor has twelve faculty offices, a conference room, electronics lab, five classrooms, and four smaller labs. One of the most important pieces of equipment was the 2.5 mev Vande Graff accelerator, which was acquired in the late

1960s through a grant from the Sloan Foundation. Although it was originally intended to house physics and math, Vander Werf Hall also took on the computer science department, established in 1975, and the engineering program. Part of the 1990 renovations was increased space and equipment for the computer science department, such as a microcomputer lab and a main research lab.

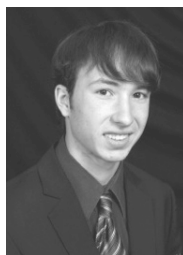
On October 12, 1990, Hope College president John Jacobson dedicated the renovated and new portions of Van Zoeren, Vander Werf, and the DeWitt Center for Economics and Business. This commemorated the western campus' major facelift that began with the construction of the Van Wylen Library in the spring of 1986. Then, starting in 1988, Vander Werf and Van Zoeren were remodeled in order to connect all three buildings together, a project that took \$4.2 million to complete. Within the two newly-renovated buildings were housed the departments of computer science, economics, business administration, education, mathematics, physics, sociology, and the Academic Support Center. The renovations in Vander Werf included improved offices, laboratories and classrooms for the computer science, physics, and math departments, and made possible the addition of a computer aided design (CAD) lab for the engineering program. In August 1990, the grounds south of the buildings were dedicated as Van Andel Plaza, which was designed to provide an attractive area for students and visitors to enjoy themselves between classes or while exploring the campus.

Above the classrooms and labs, on the roof of Vander Werf Hall, sits the Harry Frissel Observatory. Installed in August 2001, the observatory was built with the support from a \$20,000 grant from James W. Seeser through the Saint Louis Community Foundation. Seeser, who served on Hope's physics and computer science faculty, recommended the project to his colleague Dr. Harry Frissel, who served on the college's physics faculty from 1948 to 1985. The new observatory featured a 12-inch telescope in a six-foot diameter, computer-controlled dome, as well as related equipment. It is the third observatory in Hope's history: the first was the Maria Ackerman Hoyt Observatory, built in 1894 on a hill near Columbia Avenue and 12th Street. Both observatory and hill were removed in 1941. The second, which was located on the Buys Athletic Field near Fairbanks Avenue, was built by then-senior Jim Riggs in 1976 with the encouragement of physics and computer science professor Richard Brockmeier which, too, was removed. Unlike the previous two, this new telescope does not require students to look through it with the naked eye while perched on the rooftop. Instead, it offers its heavenly views via computer control and cable

connections that make its images available in classrooms and labs throughout Vander Werf Hall.

In 2004, Hope College truly entered the Space Age with the unveiling of a new particle accelerator. The Pelletron electrostatic particle accelerator was installed in the basement of Vander Werf Hall on July 2, 2004, and the new Hope Ion Beam Analysis Laboratory (HIBAL) became fully operational. This exciting new addition replaced its older accelerator and made Hope the third undergraduate institution in the U.S. to have such a device from the National Electrostatics Corp. It was made possible by a \$660,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, who was impressed with the students' use of the old particle accelerator. Chemistry professor Graham Peaslee helped lead his students to push the boundaries of undergraduate research, applying the machine for biology, chemistry, and environmental science, not just physics. The process of particle induced X-ray emission (PIXE) has broad applications in almost every field of science. For example, the Pelletron accelerator was used by Hope geology professor Brian Bodenbender and his students to analyze trace elements in dinosaur fossils excavated in Wyoming Big Horn Basin. From the information provided by the PIXE, Bodenbender could trace the fossil's history and could determine where the dinosaurs lived and how they died. This unique device has opened the door for countless scientific discoveries to be made by many generations of inquisitive Hope students.

In 2013, Vander Werf Hall received its newest addition, the Haworth Engineering Building. Hope first offered an engineering major in 1997 and has quickly become one the most popular and attractive programs that the college provides. This is only the latest step towards Dr. Vander Werf's example and vision of excellence in the sciences. As we commemorate the 51st anniversary of Vander Werf Hall, we remember the dedication of many Hope presidents and faculty who have improved and invigorated Hope College's math, physics, computer science, and engineering programs. Within the walls of its classrooms, the lives of thousands of students have been transformed. It has been the site of many scientific discoveries and the launchpad of many promising careers. Here's to looking forward to the next 50 years of development, inquiry, and discovery.



Alex Markos is a senior at Hope College, double majoring in history and classics and minoring in music. He was a Phelps Scholar his freshman year and is currently part of the Mellon Scholar Program. Alex will be spending the Fall 2015 semester in Athens, Greece with the College Year in Athens Program. After Hope, he plans to pursue a PhD. in ancient history.

COLLECTIONS NOW OPEN

W14-1419. Sikkema, LaVerne and Lorraine.

Papers, 1951-1992. 1 folder.

LaVerne and Lorraine Sikkema served as missionaries to Africa (Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya) with the Reformed Church in America (RCA) from 1952 to 1978. In 1968, the RCA commissioned LaVerne and his family with Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF) to serve in Ethiopia. While there, LaVerne made flights for supplies, patients, and fellow missionaries among remote mission stations in the African bush. He also served as a mechanic. Lorraine kept logs of flight information at the station in Jimma, Ethiopia, and took messages from pilots and other flight stations. This collection consists of newsletter articles, letter reports to missionary supporters, and a program for the dedication of the Sikkemas to missionary service with the RCA. Articles focus on the biographies of the life and work of the Sikkemas, including descriptions of both LaVerne's and Lorraine's childhoods, their banishment from Sudan in 1962, and their work with MAF in Ethiopia (the last written by Lorraine for the *Ethio-Echo* newsletter). The collection also includes articles about other missionaries and their work in Sudan, Kenya, and Ethiopia. (S)

Father Charlon Mason of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Pewamo, Michigan, recently donated four envelopes (1879, 1883, 1888, 1919) and letters of call to Rev. Henry K. Boer to serve at the Spring Lake Reformed Church, 1879 (English) and Albany, New York, 1883 (Dutch). Mason purchased these valuable papers, years ago, as a young man who enjoyed collecting stamps and postmarks. The Dutch language letters are being translated into English for Mason and others to read and enjoy. What a find!

W88-0011.5. Boer, Henry K. (1845-1919).

Papers, 1873-1992. 0.25 linear ft.

Student at the Holland Academy, Hope College class of 1870, Western Theological Seminary class of 1873, ordained in the Reformed Church in America by the Classis of Grand River in 1873. Resident of Drenthe, Michigan. Materials include biographical information, correspondence to Rev. H. K. Boer, letters of call, letters of condolence upon Boer's death in 1919, and an unidentified photographic postcard.

W13-1407. Palen, Ernest Raymond (1899-1973).

Papers, 1934-1972. 7.50 linear feet

Minister of the Reformed Church in America, 1929-1972. The collection consists of sermons he preached during his pastoral career in the Johnstown Reformed Church (New York) and at the Middle Collegiate Church in New York City. Significant sections of the sermons

were messages given on several New York City radio stations. One series of radio messages was entitled, "Gems for Thought." His collection also includes messages for special occasions, such as his Easter message delivered at Radio City Music Hall.

H13-1834. Berka, Lauren.

Papers, 2008. 0.25 linear ft.

Hope College class of 2008 graduate. The collection includes student papers written by Berka while an undergraduate at Hope College. They include "'This is Our Town Too': Community Identity and the Power of Portrayal in Holland, Michigan," 2008; "No More 'Cookies, Kool-Aid, and Clothing': Farmworkers, Activists, and the Changing Relationships between Residents and Migrants in Holland, Michigan," 2008; and "Hispanic Holland: The Growth of the Latino Community in Holland, Michigan: 1920-2000," 2008.



Holland Area Historical Society 2015-2016

The Holland Area Historical Society focuses on the history and heritage of the Holland area. Its programs are designed to inform the membership through a series of quality presentations, tours, and other events focusing on the area's past. If you are not a member, we encourage you to join our group and participate in an exciting year of programs!

The Not-So-Promised Land:

The Dutch in Amelia County, Virginia, 1868-1880

Tuesday, September 8, 2015 – 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center, 264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

After establishing a successful Dutch colony in Holland, Michigan in 1847, Albertus C. Van Raalte turned his attention to the warmer climes of Amelia County, Virginia, where he attempted to establish a second colony. Join Janet Sheeres as she presents the first major study of the Amelia settlement, a carefully researched account of that colonization attempt, with a thorough analysis of why it failed.

The William Ferry Family of Ottawa County and Beyond

Tuesday, October 13, 2015 - 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center, 264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

William Montague Ferry and his sons dominated the early history of Ottawa County and played important roles in business, war, and religion in Michigan, Utah, and the nation. Come hear historian Paul Trap tell more about this father and his four sons.

A Killing in Capone's Playground: Gangsters in West MI

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 – 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center, 264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

Following the 1929 St. Valentine's Day Massacre, Chicago gangsters made their way into the rural neighborhoods of southwestern Michigan and northern Indiana. Using never-before-published police reports and interviews with family members of key witnesses and leading experts, historian and author Chriss Lyon establishes the foundation for what would develop as a haven for gangsters.

History of Central Avenue CRC and Christmas Dessert

Tuesday, December 1, 2015 - 6:30 p.m.

Central Avenue CRC, 259 Central Ave., Holland

This year marks the sesquicentennial of Central Avenue Church, the first Christian Reformed Church in Holland. Come hear historian and author Dr. Robert Swierenga talk about this important downtown church and its part in our community's long history of worship.

The Warm Friend Turns 90

Tuesday, January 12, 2016 – 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center, 264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

The Warm Friend Tavern and Hotel opened in 1925 as a premier hotel of the Midwest. Built by the Holland Furnace Company, it brought entertainers, sports figures and hundreds of visitors to downtown Holland. The Warm Friend, now operated by Resthaven as an independent living center, continues to be a Holland landmark. Join Glenn Lowe and Susan Etterbeek DeJong as they present the 90 year journey of the hotel.

Our West Michigan Waterways in Peril: History, Uses and Abuses, and Reality

Tuesday, February 9, 2016 – 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center, 264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

Are our waters swimmable, fishable, and drinkable? What should be done? What can be done? Who will do it? Be part of the conversation and solution with Patty Birkholz, the West Michigan Director of the League of Conservation Voters and former member of the Michigan State Senate, Michigan House of Representatives, Allegan County Treasurer, and trustee for Saugatuck Township.

Antique Anecdotes

Tuesday, March 8, 2016 - 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center, 264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

Author Randy Vande Water will present an illustrated potpourri of Holland happenings from the past 150 years. Through vignettes from Holland's newspapers, community life tales are told through triumphs and trials.

The Trajectory of Hope

Tuesday, April 12, 2016 - 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center Auditorium, Hope College
264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

Hope College received its charter in May 1866, and in 2016 celebrates the college's sesquicentennial year. Dr. Jacob E. Nyenhuis, Provost Emeritus of Hope College and Director of the A. C. Van Raalte Institute, will tell stories drawn from his forthcoming book on this important milestone charting the development of the college over the intervening years.

George Michael Schwarz: His Life and His Castle

Tuesday, June 14, 2016 – 7:30 p.m.

Maas Center Auditorium, Hope College
264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

The castle at Castle Park is a local landmark, but its history is largely unknown to those living in the area. Come hear David and Sally Nye talk about the man who built the castle in Laketown Township, by retracing his life in Germany, immigration to America, and building and moving his family into their castle-like home near Holland.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TERM EXPIRES

Lois Jesiek Kayes, President	2015
Brenda E. Bos, Vice-President	2015
Bill Van Dyke, Treasurer	2016
John Hoogstra, Secretary	2016
Harold Gazan	2017
Kristi Knoll	2017
Geoffrey Reynolds, Director	ex-officio

HAHS MEMBERSHIP FORM

The major goal of the Society is to bring together persons with an interest in history and at the same time promote awareness in the general public of the cultural heritage of the Holland area. In accordance with this goal, the Historical Society sponsors, on a regular basis, a variety of lectures, field trips and other historical activities. Monies collected through membership fees and fundraising activities go towards financing the activities of the Society. For more details about the meetings or membership, contact Geoffrey Reynolds at the Joint Archives of Holland (616-395-7798).

MEMBERSHIPS

Individual: \$15 per year - entitles you to vote, hold office and participate in all activities sponsored by the Society.

Family: \$20 per year - covers all members of family; benefits same as Individual with one vote per family.

Sustaining: \$30 per year - this category is for individuals who would like to provide greater financial support for the Society.

Life: \$300 - enables you to enjoy regular membership benefits on a continuous basis.

Student: \$5 per year - benefits same as Individual.

Senior Citizen (55 years and older): \$10 per year - benefits same as Individual.

Non-Profit Institutional: \$15 per year.

Corporate: \$50 per year.

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Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Membership Type _____

Mail to: Holland Area Historical Society
c/o The Joint Archives of Holland
Hope College
PO Box 9000
Holland, MI 49422-9000

The Joint Archives of Holland



HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER
Hope College • Western Theological Seminary

Contact us at (616) 395-7798 • Fax (616) 395-7197 • E-mail: archives@hope.edu • www.jointarchives.org



*Onlookers watch as firemen attempt to save
Van Raalte Memorial Hall from total ruin, April 28, 1980*