



# Somsen horizon

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*Volumme 6 - number 12 - November 2003*

Boat-trip  
May 14, 2004



Somsen Fashion  
1895-1993



Wedding in  
Alkmaar and Miami



Made of the right  
stuff



Remco:  
the one and only Son  
and Heir



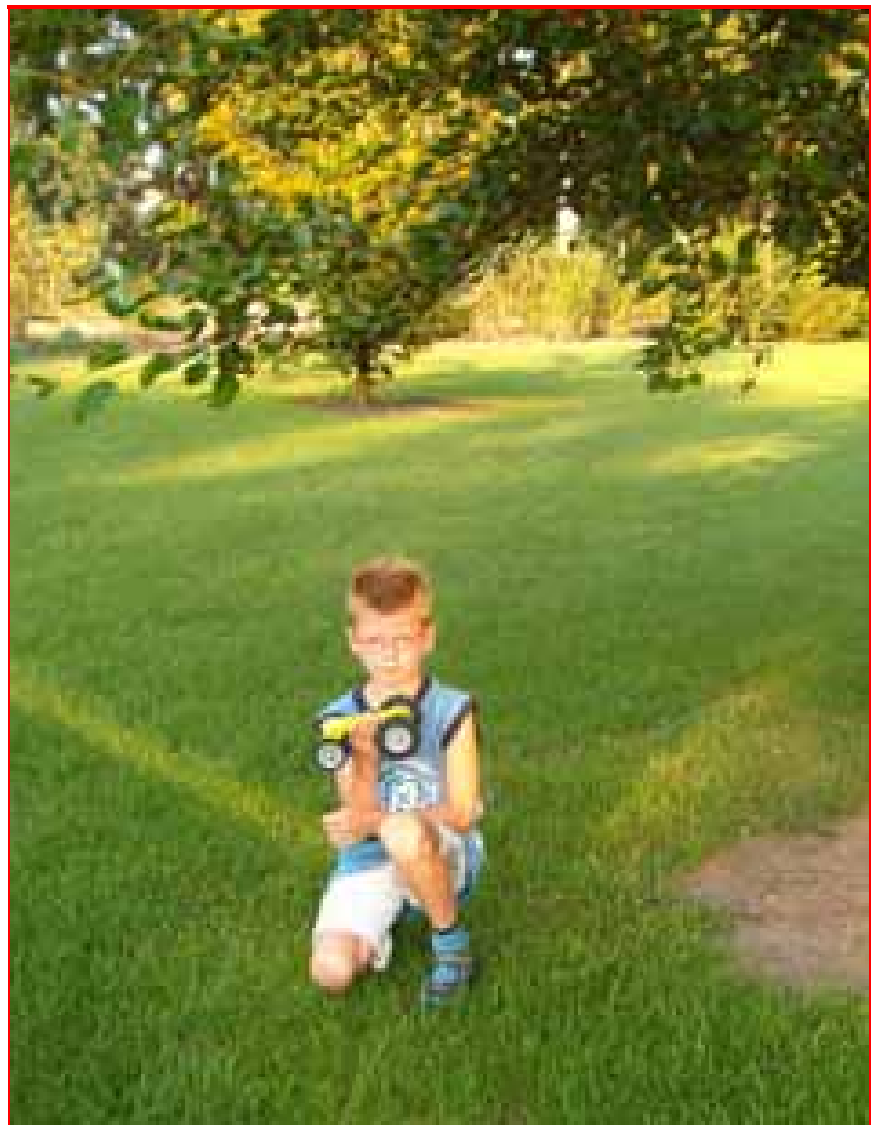
A person who writes,  
will remain . . .



Hoopman:  
True to the Ground



Campingweekend



*Half-yearly family magazine*

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**Objective of the Foundation**

*The aim of the foundation is:*

To preserve and promote the solidarity between people bearing the family name of Somsen, those who are/were related to them or those who are interested in them.

*The foundation will try to achieve this object for example by:*

- ♦ doing historical research into the family history and the history of the region
- ♦ collecting documentation and genealogical data
- ♦ keeping and taking charge of a family archive and data bases
- ♦ publishing a periodical
- ♦ providing information to persons, institutions and official authorities
- ♦ organising activities so as to realise the object of the foundation

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*We gladly permit copying of articles on  
condition that the source is mentioned.*

**Cover**

Remco Somsen [3062]  
The one and only Son and Heir

Lay-out: Bep Berkhoff  
Druk: Feluagroep, Apeldoorn

## Preface



We received many positive reactions to the new lay-out of Somsen Horizon. Especially those of the previous designers Gree and Jan van Daatselaar-Somsen were very positive. They appreciated it very much that our family-magazine got a facelift. Gree suggested that every five years every magazine should get a totally new lay-out. We are very glad with that reaction and also with Bep Berkhoff-van den Boom who managed to translate her ideas about lay-out in such a way that our readers are looking forward to the next issue.

Now that I mention you as a reader of *Somsen Horizon*: you might be a bit more proud of yourselves and your next-of-kin. As editors we notice quite regularly that some of you are rather shy to come in the spotlights to hand over an idea for an article. It would be even more splendid if you wrote an article for our magazine yourself as in this issue, for instance, is done by Gesina van Roekel-Somsen from Castricum and also by Dick Somsen from Doetinchem. We discover more and more often that there are countless fascinating family members with interesting jobs, passions or experiences. That's why we ask you: get out of your shells, share your experiences with many other family members or give the editors a clue; we will surely and gladly make use of that.

We take a very special interest in the 'next generation', say the youngsters and the young grown-ups at the ages of about 15-45. We would especially like to get them interested in the experiences of that large group of Somsens and their relations spread all over the globe.

Moreover, we saw at the USA-reunion in 2002 how refreshing the input of the younger generation can be! Therefore the oncoming worldwide reunion in 2007 will be *the reunion of the generation to come* in particular.

You would do us a great favour if you already started making this oncoming generation enthusiastic for this event. A nice suggestion: give them a subscription to Somsen Horizon as a present. Would be a nice present for Christmas!

Well, this will be on Saturday, May 14, 2004.

Not everything has been organised yet but we may unveil a few data:

- we will sail on the river IJssel
- lunch in one of the old Hanseatic towns of Doesburg, Zutphen or Deventer
- duration of the trip: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- children welcome
- place of departure and arrival: still unknown
- contribution ca. € 20-25 (discount for children € 5).



## Boat-trip: Saturday, May 14, 2004

Once before we organised a Somsen-Boat-trip. This was in 2000.



Then we made a trip with about 100 family members from Nijmegen to Emmerich in Germany and back. People still speak about this trip with great enthusiasm and they very often ask us when the next trip will be held.

All supporters of our Foundation will receive a separate letter with the final details in due time. And then there is of course an opportunity to register for this Somsen-Boat-trip. Since the number of places on the boat is limited again we offer you an opportunity to register now. This will be a temporary registration without obligations when the final details are not suitable.

But if you want to secure a place now on the Somsen-boat sign up with:

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## Somsen Mode 1895-1993

by Derk Jan (Dick) Somsen [144]

***For almost a hundred years the inhabitants of the village of Zelhem (about 13 miles from Aalten) in Gelderland, have dressed in the clothes provided by three generations of Somsens. The last owner, Dick Somsen (born 1934) brings history to life again.***



Shop (left) and dwelling house (right) in 1900

Around 1890 20-year-old Derk Jan Somsen [20] left Aalten to start work at the Leerink family in Zelhem. The Leerink family owned a grocery store and they also sold drapery and furthermore all kinds of necessities of life.

Because of death the business was split up and my granddad Derk Jan went to a more centrally located place in the village with all the drapery in stock. He bought for over 2,500 guilders and opened his own business in 1895, the beginning of nearly 100 years of *Somsen Fashion*.

Around 1900 everything was sold per yard, later per meter and shirts, pants, but also working-clothes were home-made. This usually happened in winter; then there was time for this for in summer the customers, mainly farmers, were busy providing for the winter season.

The Leerink family had one daughter Johanna Margaretha [122] who my granddad fancied a lot. They got married in 1897 and as usual they also had children: three sons and three daughters.

My granddad passed away in 1933 and the business was continued by his wife and my father Gerrit Jan [124], who was 32 at the time. It was in the middle of the crisis, a difficult time seen from a business point of view. But still my dad took over the business. As early as 1930 he had married Helena Elizabeth Meijer [141] and together they put their shoulders to the wheel. After three years the war broke out and it became extremely difficult to obtain stock, especially in the final year of the war. To keep the family income up to the mark my father also worked at a food office, where ration cards were handed out.

In 1944 he was arrested by the Germans and employed as a hostage in Zevenaar. They had to do very hard work over there. There were too few people from Zelhem who came to Zevenaar to work for the Germans there. As a means of pressure it was announced that the hostages would be shot if not more people from Zelhem would come to work for the Germans. At the very last moment the execution was cancelled.



Modernisation 1955

Just before Christmas my dad was released and together with some other people they walked all the way back from Zevenaar to Zelhem. In March 1945, just before the end of the war, the shop and the house were hit by a bomb. The building was ready for demolition but it was rebuilt. Initially they used everything they could find but later it was finished when building materials could be bought. A little over a year after the bombing the shop and the house were there again!

Then the first signs of my father's disease appeared. When he was taken to hospital they discovered that he had diphtheria, probably the aftermath of the war. They also found rheumatics and he had a heart-condition. Still he kept running the business until he suddenly died of a cardiac arrest in 1951. Fortunately the third generation already worked in the business. A bit too young to run the business, it is true, but together with mother it should be possible! In 1955 the whole shop was radically modernised after a first extension directly after the war.

In 1962, I was 28 at the time, I became the new owner of the business and together with my wife Aly Jagt [239] the shop was expanded again. At the end of the sixties an interior extension was carried out. Also the collection changed because there was a lot of growth in ladies' wear which also implied that we had to spend much more time and attention to the buying. Nearly every week we had to travel to Amsterdam to get and buy new stock.

Since it got more and more busy in the fashion shop and since the lack of space became an ever increasing problem we decided to build a new addition which was extended again in 1982.



**Innovation 1975**

Because of health problems and also because there was no successor we took the decision to sell the shop in 1992. We succeeded in doing so and in early 1993 an epoch of nearly 100 years of *Somsen Fashion* in Zelhem was finished. The

new shop-owners maintained our name for a couple of years, so that, after all, Zelhem has been familiar with the name and fame of *Somsen Fashion* for a century.



**Dick and Aly Somsen-Jagt**

## Wedding in Alkmaar and Miami

by Gesina van Roekel-Somsen [443]

***How your family can change dramatically within a year's time! This is what Gerrit [444] and Gesina [443] van Roekel-Somsen and their children Ilse [2851] and Albert [2852] experienced. To many of our family members the story that Gesina tells here will be recognisable. Some may have left this experience far behind but to the Van Roekel-Somsen family from Castricum (Noord-Holland) it was all brand-new!***

and he had decided to get married there round the turn of the year 2003. That was quite an organisation for the future bride and groom. But also the other members of the family had to arrange a few things. Tickets had to be bought, hotel rooms had to be booked for family and friends from the Netherlands (and then exactly in the busy period around Christmas and New Year when planes to America and hotels in Miami Beach are packed). We also had to give a lot of thought to the clothes we were to wear, for it was to

### **Ilse and Bart van den Hooff's wedding-day in Alkmaar**

The announcement of all the changes came actually nearly two years ago when we were told that we would become grandparents. Our daughter Ilse and her partner Bart van den Hooff had known each other for the greater part of their lives and now finally there was this addition to the family. One thing lead up to the next and they decided to get married in the city-hall of Alkmaar after all and say yes to each other in the presence of the whole family. Friday, April 19, 2002 became a festive day with beautiful weather.

### **The birth of Matthijs**

Then there was this memorable day of the birth of our first grandchild. Two weeks before the expected date of birth the future mother wanted to join a family weekend in Kijkduin near The Hague. And there, totally unexpected, Matthijs was born on Friday, June 15 2002 (in the Bronovo Hospital, where so many children of the Dutch royal family were born).



**Baby Matthijs**



**Wedding procession in Alkmaar**

### **Preparations for the wedding-day in Miami**

As if this was not yet enough, our son Albert asked us if we wanted to come with him to Miami (Florida, USA) for his girl-friend Lissa Carrion

be a great party with everything in it that makes American wedding-parties so unique.

The bride left for America as early as November 2002. That was great for her: home with Thanksgiving!

But after that she had to start arranging things. That was not always an easy job, for even though the family owns a house in Miami, her mother lives in Columbus, OH and that is not particularly nearby. Fortunately everything went very well and on Boxing Day Albert could travel to his bride who was waiting for him in Miami.

We left on December 29 early in the morning. It was a long flight, also for baby Matthijs, but homage to KLM that took very good care of him. The next day we could relax and explore Miami Beach. This was relatively easy for our hotel was in Collins Avenue in the beautiful Art Deco district. We were also very close to the beach and it was such lovely weather that we could even swim. In the evening the bride and groom came over to explain the programme to us until their wedding-day on January 3. Fortunately, we, the parents of the groom, had no further obligations on New Year's Eve. So we got into our rental car for a long nice trip to famous Key West. The azure ocean made an unforgettable impression upon us. It was only a pity that we had to go back so soon for we did not want to miss the fireworks on Miami Beach on New Year's Eve. On New Year's Day we were invited by Lissa's mother to a Haitian dinner. We were heartily welcomed by an extensive family. What a hospitable family it was that our son was going to be married into!

Thursday, January 2, was another exiting day for us. A try-out had been planned in the church with the whole family from both sides and the bridal staff, consisting of: Matron and Maid of Honour, the Best Man, the Bridesmaids and the Junior Bridesmaid, the Groomsmen, the Flower girls and the Ring-bearers. It took hours before everybody knew his role and his place in the procession. In the evening we, as parents of the groom, were responsible for a rehearsal dinner. Our son had selected a restaurant in air force style (the '94th Squadron') near Miami airport.

### **The wedding-day of Albert and Lissa Carrion**

Then there was this wonderful day. Fortunately it did not get so warm. After all the hours of exercise on the preceding day everything went smoothly. Only the organ play was too much for our Matthijs; it set him crying. That was a pity for one of us who, because of this, missed the ceremony. After congratulations after the cere-

mony the bridal couple left in grand style (limo) for the Radisson Deauville Hotel at Collins Avenue.

What added to the atmosphere were the wonderful Christmas decorations of the endless row of hotels along the beach. It completed the fairy-tale. In the hotel we had ample opportunity, together with the next-of-kin, to give a toast to the bride and groom.



Wedding-service in Miami



Bride en groom: l-r: Gerrit, Gesina, Lissa, Albert, Ilse & Bart with Matthijs

After that we were expected in the beautifully decorated hall for parties where we were introduced to the assembled family in a typically American way, it was like the distribution of Oscars!

Then the wedding dinner could begin. We especially liked the toasts that were given to the bridal couple. We had prepared a presentation about our son Albert and our family in Holland, complete with the flag and the map of The Netherlands. Think of this that only the state of Florida is five times bigger than our country.

Accompanied by the sounds of *We are family* there was a polonaise through the hall.

After dinner the wedding cake was cut and finally there was the ritual of throwing away the bridal bouquet in the midst of the collected female singles in the family and (totally new to us) the garter among the male singles in the family. After taking pictures of the complete company the party was over. Baby Matthijs had not been bothered by the sound of revelry and had slept during all the celebrations.

#### Enjoying the afterglow

For us it was the start of a short holiday. The next day we visited the national park The Everglades and travelled north after that to visit Kennedy Space Center where we saw the space shuttle, which so dra-

matically crashed afterwards, ready for take off. What a terrible disaster. There was also time left over for a visit to Sea World in Orlando. Then we drove back to Miami to say goodbye to the bride and groom.

When we were back home in Holland the New Year had only just started but we already had *The Event of the Year* behind us. America will surely see us again for we feel more than welcome there! As for the changes in the family: we have already completely got used to them.



**Presentation: Something about Albert**  
l-r: Bart, Robert Liefing (friend), Gerrit and Gesina

## Made of the right stuff!

by Theo Somsen [227]

**Actually he is someone without patience, always in a hurry. Yet something happened to Bernard Somsen [513] from Aalten (Lintelo), because of which he is sometimes peace in person. 'How is that possible for heaven's sake?' he wonders.**

One warm Sunday afternoon in August I walk into the Lintelo yard of Bernard and Hermien Somsen-Klanderman. There is no sign of life. I ring the bell but there is no answer. Yet I hear the compelling music of German hits. One more ring and walking up and down in front of the windows. And, yes, I am detected, the music fades away and in no time Bernard, Hermien, their very curious son Marco [545] and I are having coffee with a big piece of cake for Hermien [515] celebrated her 70th birthday the day before.

Bernard has in common with many Somsens that he is an easy talker and a pleasant story-teller. But that is no big deal: he has had experience for over 74 years.



Bernard C. Somsen

Thus I soon learn that he once owned a chicken-farm with well over 30,000 chickens at the Brakenweg in the Aalten hamlet of Lintelo. He sold it in 1984 after which he started a children's zoo and drove the bus of the neighbourhood as a volunteer. He could not live without music. He is not particularly timid in this field for he very gladly listens to German hits, organ concerts, brass-bands of the Salvation Army and to light classical music. He was a member of the local brass-band 'Advendo' for 25 years. The soprano saxophone used to be his favourite instrument. But there was also an end to this.

At about the same time Bernard got fascinated by something totally different. With increasing admiration and interest he saw what beautiful things could be made of various kinds of wood. He was not a total stranger in the field of wood-carving, for once he had made a baby chair, a rocking-horse and a tray.

And a few tables for Hermien. But now he discovered a new dimension: the art of carving. It totally absorbed him and he never got rid of it anymore.

By now Bernard has enjoyed his new hobby, wood-carving, for over 10 years.

He still remembers very well what cost him a lot of trouble in the beginning and as a consequence a lot of exercise. 'I could not get the eyes all right', he says about making faces when he started carving. Usually he gets his ideas when he sees a beautiful image in a photo or a picture-postcard. He prefers to represent reality as truly as possible even though this is sometimes difficult, especially since the perspective is missing in pictures.

This requires to give the matter a lot of thought before he can start with the job with his extensive set of tools (several kinds of gouges, sand-

paper and varnish) and before selecting the most appropriate kind of wood (cherry, walnut, or the expensive Jelutong-wood from Malacca). In the meantime Bernard has developed into a very experienced wood-carver, an artist.

His production is quite something: he has produced well over 40 objects of art! Pieces of art that are very much sought-after at regional exhibitions where he puts them on display and where he makes many new contacts.

His most important themes are:

- Images of animals (like bucks, eagles, chickens and horses).
- Tables with biblical representations, a cheese factory or an old ruin.
- Richly adorned barometers, consequently referred to as the 'weather-glass' by Hermien.



Bucks and Gouges



Barometers

Usually Bernard works on three objects at the same time, so that he does not have to concentrate on one and the same object of art continually, since it takes him about six months to finish a piece of carving. And so he also has a chance to give his creativity time to mature and to get new energy.

Once a work of art is ready and neatly finished (Bernard: 'Polish as little as possible and only coat with plain varnish') it may be sold. But sometimes this costs Bernard a lot of trouble. I saw the beautiful table with the biblical representation 'Suffer little

children to come unto me'. Bernard said about it: 'It will hurt me when I sell this'.

But hobbies are expensive and you do want to buy new materials to be able to make new objects of art...

Has the passion for carving also influenced Bernard himself? 'You know', Bernard says, 'in everyday life I am rather rough and I have very little patience. But as soon as I am carving I am fully concentrated, very accurate and I am peace in person. How is that possible? I only think: 'Bernard is made of the right stuff!'

*If you are interested in the work of Bernard Somsen and maybe want to buy one of his objects of art you can contact him:*

**B.C. Somsen**  
**Akkermateweg 5**  
**7122 LG Aalten**  
**Phone: +31(0)543 476362**



**Tableau: Suffer little children to come unto me**

## Remco: the one and only Son and Heir!

by Gree van Daatselaar-Somsen [53]

***It is hardly possible now to imagine how Geert [272] and Mechtelt [272] Somsen lived their lives in Aalten 350 years ago. But it is a fact that Geert and Mechtelt are the origin of everybody who is called Somsen (see Somsen Omnes Generationes, p. 31). But who might own the right of primogeniture?***

Years ago my husband and I stood with our children on a high rock at a huge statue of Cro-Magnon man, in Dordogne, France. An impressive figure. So, it was thought, prehistoric man must have looked like long before the Christian era.

'Who was that?' I answered: 'That is everybody's great-great-great-grandfather!' It was completely clear to the children.

So it is in about 1666, then Geert is born and he is to become every Somsen's great-great-great-grandfather. In our minds we go 350 years back in time and from there we take long steps forward to the present day, from generation to generation, every time from father to the eldest son. Thus we end up with Roelof Somsen [982] who was born in 1956. Next Remco Somsen [3062] was born in Aalten on Februari 8, 1995, son of Roelof Somsen [982] and Erna Lammers [1056].

This boy Remco, who went through the last turn of the century, belongs to the twelfth generation of Somsens, in the line: Roelof (Boeinck), Geert (Somsen), Roelof, Lubbert, Jan, Jan, Roelof, Jan, Roelof, Jan, Roelof, Remco.

Remco Somsen is eight years old now and he is a cheerful, sporting little chap. In the whole large Somsen family he is the one and only direct son and heir. If Remco would get a son later on, he can hardly be given another name but Jan or Roelof. This fits so nicely in the age-old series of names.

Remco is laughing a bit shyly. He is certainly not interested in that kind of future at the moment. With his strong footballer's legs he firmly stands in the life of the present day.



standing: Nicole, Mirjam, Suzanne and Roel Somsen  
seated l-r: Remco and Erna Somsen-Lammers

We sit outside in the large garden of a Somsen home in Bredevoort, near Aalten, on one of the warm summer evenings of this year. The whole family is present: Roel and Erna with their four children: Suzanne [1057], 13, Mirjam [1058], 12, Nicole [1059], 10 and Remco, the son and heir, who is 8.

It stands to reason that Remco is the main character at this first meeting. The readers of Somsen Horizon might want to know what kind of boy he is, this one and only son and heir. A cheerful, real Dutch boy. The youngest son in the family. His sisters, all three of them with beautiful long fair hair and quite skilful on the trampoline, stay modestly in the background but they listen attentively. When Remco cannot immediately find a friend's name they prompt willingly.

After the summer holidays Remco will go to the fifth class of primary school. He mentions the names of his friends with whom he goes to school or who he joins in playing football or swimming. He has already got three swimming certificates: A, B and C. So during this warm summer he can safely go to the Slinge-lake.

To my question: 'What do you want to be later?' Remco answers: 'Train-driver, then all the cars will have to wait for me!'

He likes playing with KNEX with which he builds just about everything, mills or cars. He goes



into the house to get a big undercarriage of a car. I follow him with my eyes. Proud, upright, his navy-cut shining in the sun. The gel in his hair is put there by himself. Since the looking-glass is too high for him he uses the door of the micro-wave. That is smart.

Soon he may join a camp for the first time. Sleeping in a tent for one night. Thrilling!

But what was really thrilling is the fact that his football-team became champion.

For the first time Remco plays as a defender in Bredevoort F-1. They have become the champions in the whole region. In a victorious procession they went through town. Guess who made the final winning goal? Remco Somsen! Bravo! Well, we will certainly hear more about this sporting Somsen-boy.



Bredevoort F-1 Champion!  
Remco standing on the right

## A person who writes, wil remain . . .

by Gree van Daatselaar-Somsen [53]

**Many centuries ago a Chinese poet made the remark, that if you create something new in words, it is as if you live twice.**

**Looking back on my father and especially on his work as a secretary of the Calvinist Society of Men I will try to bring him back to life again.**

My father: Derk Jan Somsen [40], was born in Aalten on 7 April 1891 and died in Doesburg on 28 August 1954. Businessman and entrepreneur, administrator, educationalist. He would have preferred to be a teacher or a missionary. He was therefore very disappointed when his father made another decision at the beginning of the last century. I will just show you a few aspects of my father's life, although he was a man with many interests: emotional person, autodidact, creative and conscientious, poetic, very religious, beautiful voice, well mannered, courteous, a little vain.

A dad to be proud of, as I always was, and still am. A father, who gave me – his seventh child – compliments once in a while. 'Go sit in the bay window, in the sun.' He found the glow that appeared on my blond hair beautiful. He stimulated me, encouraged me to study, he thought my handwriting was important. 'You have beautiful hands, Gree, with long fingers. But you have to leave your nails a bit longer. Look, this is what you should be hearing.' And he tapped with his fingernails on the table.

He himself had very nice, big male hands with slim fingers and clean nails and a bit rounded with a small blister on the right thumbnail. A father in whom I recognise myself. That gave me a good and strong feeling of self-esteem (see S.O.G., page 165).

### A little history in two minute-books

*In the middle of the big event of the Second World war, 1940 - 1945.*

Pale, greyish folios are laying on my desk. Two almost identical folios, more than sixty years old. Although closed and introvert they already tell a story.

The edges are worn and the carton inside is grimy, the blue edge of the pages is faint of age. The backs are, however faint, still in fine condition. As if time has not moved. Two almost antique books with handwritten folios of the Calvinist Society of Men in Doesburg, which was founded in 1942 and ended in October 1956. My father became the first secretary in 1942 and he devoted his heart and soul to it.

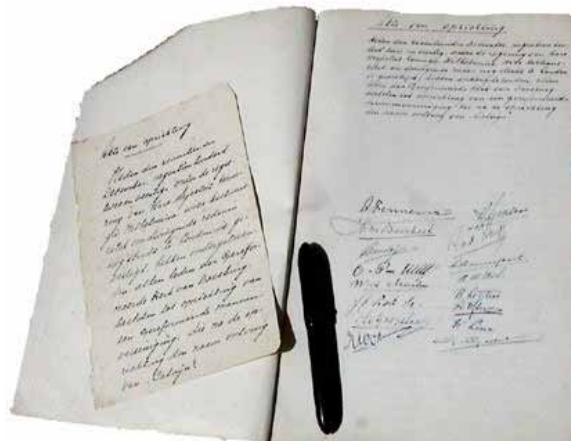
The first folio is beautiful to set eyes on. With fully written pages in my fathers characteristic, erudite handwriting. Of course written with fountain pen. I still have that pen. Perfect pages, throughout the whole book, he is economic with his paper, no space line to much.

For days I used every free moment to read everything with intense attention, with my fathers image in mind. A historic document, a splendid portrait of the age of Protestantism, especially of the Calvinist life. I have tried to conjure up the invisible story, the story to which I myself was a witness as adolescent.

The private story of my father in those turbulent, fearful years of war, which destroyed his health. As secretary, he takes minutes correctly and enthusiastically of the foundation, the development, the adventures of the Calvinist Society of Men. In the solemn language of the Men of those days.

Father as private person and father as secretary rigorously apart. Yet I perceive among those minute lines my dad, the way he was. I still see him sitting at the dinner-table.

At his own place at the head of the table. First he prepares the big book, after that an exercise book with the notes. Then he puts the big, black ashtray beside it. He takes a fine cigar from the cabinet, from which he carefully and attentively cut off the tip. It is probably one of his last cigars. With pursed lips he turns it round in his mouth, then he lights it. The first pleasant puff. After that he pushes his armchair closer by and unscrews his fountainpen.



Minute Book

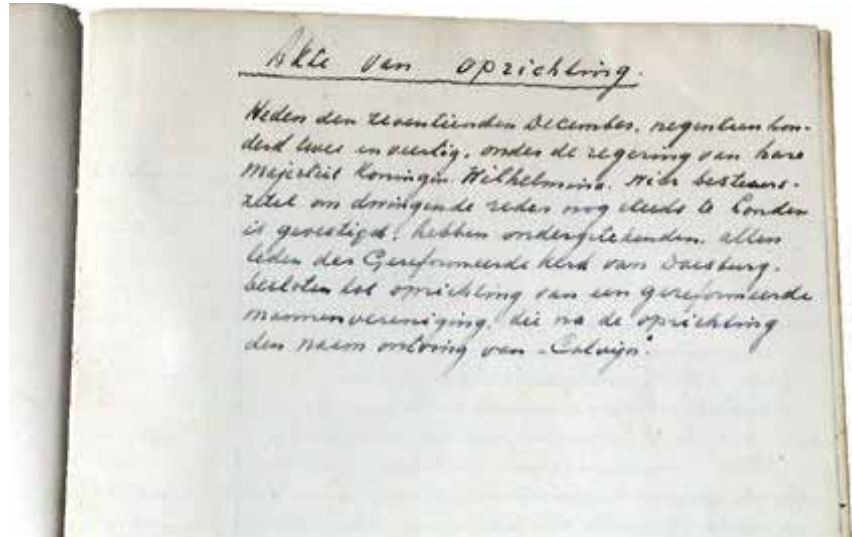
He reads attentively his notes, then he opens the big minute book, briefly he brushes the empty page with a full touch, as a light caress and starts to write.

He enjoys visibly, once in a while he looks up pensively, but then he dedicatedly continues to write. De cigar smoke floats through the room. It is quiet. We all read or write or study. Mother knits or sews something, her ears are pricked up on danger outside. There is a war. One lamp is on, one stove is burning. Quiet solidarity. This nightly ritual is repeated week after week.

### First folio

The first page affects me at once: *Document of foundation. These are the words, with an undulated under lining underneath.*

After this the solemn, dignified words. What strikes me is that father first wrote this text on a torn page of an exercise book. As it were a test. That piece of paper has also survived, fragile and yellowed. Unmistakable is there that text, in de old spelling, written in firm handwriting and with extra elegant capitals, without any hesitation. In the choice of words I recognise his principles, his determination, his patriotism, his political conviction.



Document of foundation

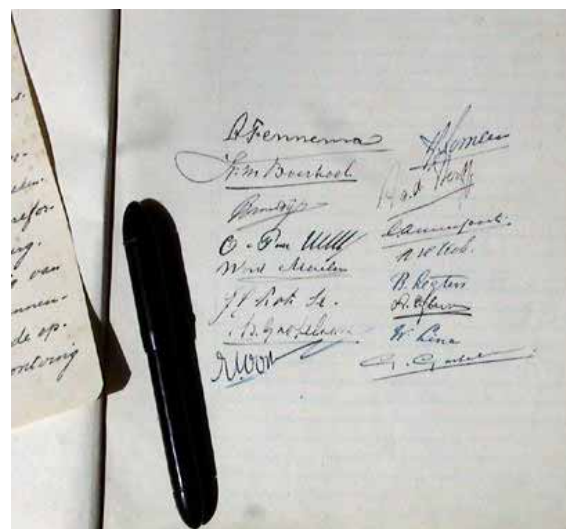
Two vertical lines of each eight signatures. D.J. Somsen, on the right at the top, in the capacity of secretary. I recognise all the names without any problem and know most of the faces that go with it. The baker, the teachers, the tobacconist, where we brought the paper *De Standaard*, the chemist and his son, the plumber and the owners of the shipyard on the IJssel. Of course, a small town, a small community. On Sunday twice to the church. The talks at home and the visitors. Of course I still know these men.

A young girl that sees and hears all and keeps it somewhere in her memory.

Leafing through and reading the years of war pass me by. Although those days were very scary, there were about ten men, who almost weekly isolated themselves in a small, consistory to lose themselves in ethical, social and theological questions, this all in a very stringent atmosphere. Each member has his turn to bring in a subject. They address each other with 'Brother'.

*At present the seventeenth of December, nineteen hundred and forty two, under the government of Her Majesty Queen Wilhelmina, who has her seat for compelling reasons still in London, subscribers, all members of the Calvinist Church of Doesburg, have decided to found a Calvinist Society of Men with the name "Calvijn"*

Signatures founders



Underneath these solemn words follow the signatures of the 'brothers'.



It was all very seriously. Even, if somebody made a joke, you will not find it in the minutes. Father took his work very seriously.

Father is almost always attending the meetings. On only a few pages I discover somebody else's handwriting from another secretary. Why he is not there, is not mentioned. Just that intrigues me.

I search the dates and compare his handwriting from week to week. In January 1944 I see that the quality of his ink leaves a lot to desire. Thick lines or thin lines where it should be even. Also I see a few times that he signs with just his family name. That is unusual. Was he in a hurry, was he nervous? Sometimes the ink is light blue. Maybe he added water? Scarcity?

In his annual report, often four or five closely written pages, he can air his poetic and emotional sides. Those annual reports are read aloud on a special meeting of the Society of Men: the Annual Meeting. With wives and other invited guests. Standing straight, his head high, -as I know him-, with a loud voice he quotes Da Costa and stanzas from the Federation song, attaches an enthusiastic debate about the changes, which will come, about the ecumenism, and about the women and their place in church and society. He does not use the word emancipation, that would be a bit premature, but he openly praises the women for their strong, stimulating supporting attitude towards the work of the Federation of Men. Very inspiring. Very good, dad, if you would have lived to see you certainly would have kept up with the times and the after war changes. With full agreement.



Doesburg on the IJssel

I watch the dates and study his handwriting over and over. I now arrive at April and May 1944. Can I find something over his big worries about Freek, (Frederik Hendrik Somsen [47]) his oldest son, who is captured and locked up in *Het Oranje Hotel*? No. Not one trace. But the ink is getting worse. The last meeting takes place on May 9th 1944 for the time being. Too dangerous. Raids, air alarm and bombings. Father hides to escape from the German compulsive orders. Only on October 4th 1945, five months after the Liberation, the minutes appear again.

His handwriting has leveled off, is dull. The cheerfulness, the gracefulness is gone. The war misery begins to show his tracks. It is not surprising. His oldest son has been killed in Vught. Much tension and uncertainty, also about other children.

The first meeting after the Liberation. There are empty places in the Federation of Men. One 'brother' is killed by the Germans, one 'brother' who, because of the schism in the Calvinist Churches, has switched over to another church with the name 'Artikel 31'. So he can not be a member anymore.

Father still tries to keep him for the Federation, but that proposal didn't get the majority of the votes. Father, always combative and uniting. Yet his handwriting in those after-war months hasn't the élan of former days any more. It hurts to see that.

With a smaller group of men the meetings continue. Sometimes nine persons are present, sometimes ten. Father stipulates time after time the poor attendance in his minutes. Also father is once in a while the substitute chairman and when the speaker is absent, father takes from his inside pocket a sermon and reads it aloud for all members present. Alert as he is.

Fortunately in 1948 his handwriting is strong again. His reports are accurate and detailed, where necessary. He still uses the old spelling: *heusich*, *zoo*, *wensich*.

On September 15th 1949 he brings up *rhythmic singing in the church*. He is absolutely for it and with him his whole family. That item causes extended discussions.

At the end of 1949 I see that father missed at least four times. There is no reason stated. On January 11th 1950 father is asking for assistance with the work of the secretariat. Are these the first signs of his illness? A new minute maker is being brought in.

This notice is also the ending of the first minute folio.

### Second folio

The second folio starts in another handwriting, but soon I come upon my father's way of writing. Of course, his annual report over the past time. A glowing annual report in a fine and striking handwriting. Fortunately. On March 15th 1950 father is reading it aloud during the annual meeting. Five fully written folio pages. It starts like this: Dear members. *God gave us a task, which we have to accept.* After that some lines from the Federation song and then father goes on:

*With these lines from our Federation song I hope to have placed you in the middle of society work.* He fulfills his task with fervor. First he brings, from the past year, the ideals

of the Society of Men elaborately up and after that he talks about the practical things, and at the end he finishes in a poetic way with the last stanza of the Federation song.

On the next coming meetings father is often absent. But in September and October his handwriting appears again as substitute secretary. On November 15th father makes some opening remarks and closes with a prayer.

Then, on January 3rd 1951, father has to stop because of his health. They all regret that. In the minutes it states: *He was a devoted and able secretary.*

Following there are some pages that are hard to read. New secretary, different handwriting. The minutes are getting shorter and there are many erasures.

### Postscript

After 1956, the two folios have been kept in possession of the last secretary. After his death his widow gave the two minute books to my mother, because my father, as founder and as first secretary, had been so involved with the Federation.

Between text and handwriting I conjure up my father, Derk Jan Somsen. Thus, a part of him, after so many years, comes to life again.

*Who writes, will remain...*



### Member of honor

On September 17th 1952, father, who is sick already, becomes member of honor. He must have been very happy. Two years later, on August 28th 1954, he passes away as 'the result of arteriosclerosis'. At the opening of the new meeting on September 29th 1954 the secretary reports: Brother Somsen has passed away. And the chairman calls him an example for all of us. Then, in December 1956, follows the removal of the Society of Men in Doesburg for lack of interest. Did, with father, disappear the enthusiasm and the solidarity?

Or does the post-war reconstruction demand all energy from everyone?

The minute books are handed over to the Historic Documentation center of the Dutch Protestantism.

Vrije Universiteit, De Boelelaan 1105, 1081 HV Amsterdam.

For members of the family and other interested persons, you may look through the folios at the above address after a written request.

*Father,  
My whole feeling lies in that  
single word  
Deep in my throat I taste the  
tone  
More than when you were alive  
you live in me.*

*Father,  
I smell the scent of your cigars  
I feel the dry warmth of your  
hand  
Blue thick veins  
in which I stop the flow of blood  
Just for a while, sweet game  
of a child on your lap.*

*Emphatic footsteps  
of your big feet  
Sound of your walking-stick  
and a child's voice  
You mention the names of a star  
and of planets, so far removed  
from the child's eyes  
And Father, who knows all this  
by name!  
Now that I am a mother myself  
I would have loved to talk to you  
I miss your advice, your dear and  
wise gesture  
your judgement on politics  
and state.*

*Father  
I wish I could walk , my hand in  
yours,  
or next to you along the  
city-walls  
O, I wish I could one more time  
feel the strong ties between  
you and me.*

1972

Gree A.J. van Daatselaar-Somsen



**Derk Jan Somsen [40]**  
1891 - 1954

photo: 1943



## Hoopman: True to the Ground

by Theo Somsen [227]

***In the hamlet of IJzerlo (Aalten) we find the company buildings of Hoopman Machines Company. They dominate the heart of the hamlet. Hans de Beukelaer wrote a book about the history of this company on the occasion of the celebration of its 90th anniversary. Nice to know you will say, but what is the link with the Somsens? Well, there is a strong one!***

In 1912 the one and only blacksmith Hoftijzer\* in IJzerlo emigrated to America and because of this the IJzerlo farmers did not have anyone to shoe their horses and to repair their agricultural implements. Twenty-five-year-old Jan Hoopman [351], who had started a smithy in Aalten in 1911, ambitiously took over the business of Hoftijzer and settled in IJzerlo as a blacksmith for the farmers there. In December 1912 he married 23-year-old Johanna Willemina (Anna) Somsen [350] from 'De Pellewever' in Aalten.



Jan Hoopman and Anna Somsen  
(August 1945)  
1886-1950      1889-1962

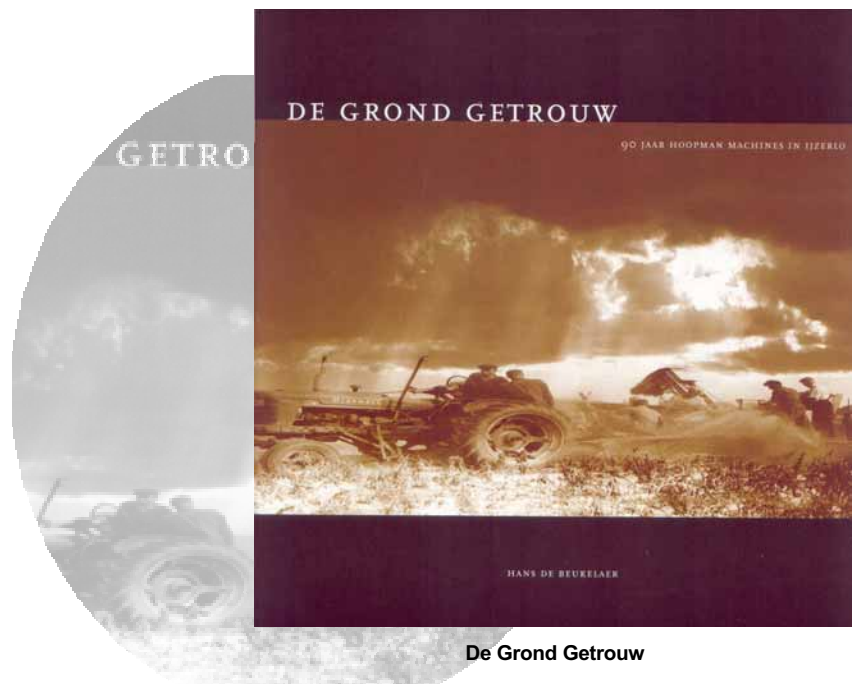


He must have known her from the time that he worked in Aalten, amongst other things as a servant of the blacksmith Somsen in the Landstraat.

The book was beautifully taken care of by Fagus publishers from IJzerlo. The title already suggests that faithfulness is a characteristic of this company: Faithfulness towards the hamlet of IJzerlo, to the employees and to the customers. As a consequence of the theme 'faithfulness' the book is full of stories by and about people. Stories that we are bound to use for *Somsen Horizon*!

Moreover, the book is so attractive since there are pictures in almost every page.

The result is a book with stories which is also very pleasant to see through.



De Grond Getrouw

The Hoopman smithy became a household word in IJzerlo, the business grew and grew and with the business also the family of Jan and Anna Hoopman-Somsen. A picture of the family is in our family-book on page 161.

In 2001 the company *Hoopman Machines* had existed for 90 years and on the occasion of this jubilee a book was published, *True to the Ground* written by Hans de Beukelaer.

Of course the book also provides a detailed insight into the (stormy) development of the company, the management and the many new agricultural machines that *Hoopman Machines* has put on the market.





**Bram and Thea Hoopman-Kaemingh  
1949**



**Jan Willem and Julia Hoopman-Böcker  
and daughter Lea**

From 1911-2001 three generations Hoopman have been closely involved with the company: Jan Hoopman (1886 – 1950) [351], Abraham (Bram) Hoopman (1921 – 1983) [381] and Jan Willem Hoopman (born 1958) [606]. Their share in the stages of development (pioneering, expanding and

consolidation) are clearly shown in this book because of which you almost automatically start to admire their involvement and their dedication and because of which you can also mildly look upon their peculiarities. Just imagine that all this would never have happened without our Anna Somsen's marriage.

**De Grond Getrouw  
Hans de Beukelaer  
Fagus Publishers, IJzerlo 2001  
ISBN 90-70017-59-8  
€ 15,85**

\* The Hoftijzer Smithy is also called Hoftiezer in the book.



**The Hoopman Smithy, IJzerlo (ca.1930)**

l-r: Willem Lammers 'Luesks' (with bike), Bernard ter Haar (servant), Jan Somsen, client [1233], Bram Sluiskes (servant), Gerrit Piek (servant), Hendrik Somsen [1236], Dina Bussink-Somsen [346], Gerhard Aalbers (client), Hendrik Bussink [347], Jan Hoopman [351], Anna Hoopman-Somsen [350] with their eldest daughter Lien Hoopman [376], who had just before the laundry and is still wearing a wet apron.

The two small girls in the foreground are the daughters Willemien Hoopman [383] and Dirkje Hoopman [385].

## Family Announcements

*In this column we would like to draw your attention to the family announcements that have reached us.*

*We are very much pleased to present them to you and are grateful to everybody who took the trouble to inform us about the merry and sad events in their and our family. This also enables our advisor Dick Somsen from Zwolle to keep our genealogical files up-to-date, so that we, in turn can inform you in Somsen Horizon.*

*We really appreciate it very much that you send in your family announcements to our secretariat:*

**Somsen Foundation, Jan Tooropstraat 2, 3817 PZ Amersfoort, The Netherlands.**



### Born

**16-01-1998:** Garrett Zane [5058] s.o. Brett Earl Somsen [3249] and Kelly Jeanne Holm [3562]

**16-02-2000:** Hester Maureen Somsen [5069] d.o. Edwin Somsen [1813] and Johanna Maria Mohr [5068]

**04-04-2001:** Anthonie Johnar (Bram) [5061] s.o. Fredrik Willem (Erik) Somsen [554] and Miranda Catharina Johanna (Miranda) ten Haaff [3886]

**04-04-2001:** Bernd Angelo (Nick) [5062] s.o. Fredrik Willem (Erik) Somsen [554] and Miranda Catharina Johanna (Miranda) ten Haaff [3886]

**11-04-2001:** Damion Somsen [5055] s.o. Marcha Somsen [695]

**13-07-2001:** Bram Willem Somsen [5070] s.o. Edwin Somsen [1813] and Johanna Maria Mohr [5068]

**15-06-2002:** Matthijs van den Hooff [5073] s.o. Bart van den Hooff [5072] and Ilse van Roekel [2851]

**30-07-2002:** Henry Elliot Quayle [5067] s.o. Douglas Brian Quayle [2956] and Mary Jane Walker [5066]

**17-01-2003:** Frederique Bernice (Lynn) [5063] d.o. Fredrik Willem (Erik) Somsen [554] and Miranda Catharina Johanna (Miranda) ten Haaff [3886]

**11-02-2003:** Anouk Marieke Somsen [5071] d.o. Edwin Somsen [1813] and Johanna Maria Mohr [5068]

**06-04-2003:** Henrique Veiga [5056] s.o. Frederik (Fred) Somsen [466] and Filipa Isabel da Luz Veiga [3920]



Anouk Somsen



### Married

**03-11-1999:** Edwin Somsen [1813] and Johanna Maria Mohr [5068]

**27-11-1999:** Douglas Brian Quayle [2956] and Mary Jane Walker [5066]

**31-05-2000:** Fredrik Willem (Erik) Somsen [554] and Miranda Catharina Johanna (Miranda) ten Haaff [3886]

**24-05-2001:** Herbert Somsen [543] and Joann Moore [5054]

**19-04-2002:** Bart van den Hooff [5072] and Ilse van Roekel [2851]

**03-01-2003:** Albertus Reinier (Albert) van Roekel [2852] and Lissa Carine (Lissa) Carrion [5074]



Wedding-card Albert and Lissa



W. TROUWEN

### Deceased

**31-01-2003:**

Garrett Zane Somsen [5058], 5 years old, Idaho Falls, ID. USA

**10-04-2003:**

Hendrika Dina (Riek) Koskamp-Somsen [512], 75 years old, Aalten

**07-05-2003:**

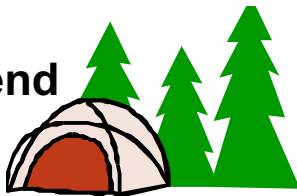
Evelyn Rosamae Tousley-Somsen [827], 83 years old, Stone Lake, WI. USA



Evelyn Tousley-Somsen

# Campingweekend

August 15-17, 2003



*It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words. These pictures are just the highlights of a very successful seventh weekend.*

*Just imagine all the excitement of the big reunions in 1997 and 2002 in miniature and in a very relaxed atmosphere.*

*Exploring during the daytime and companionship around the caravans at night, the Saturday barbecue and visit to the Somsen lime tree. The weather is always perfect so start making your plans now for next year.*

John Howard Somsen [2353]



Mini-camping 't Hoftijzer



Cycling-tour: The quarry of Winterswijk



Layers, millions of years old



Lemon brandy for farmer Veerbeek and his wife



Saturdaynight: Barbecue!