



# Somsen

## HORIZON

Volume 22, Number 33, July 2019

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*Jo Hunse-Somsen [63], see inside to read her story: 'Strong women of the Somsen family'*

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**Colophon**

Somsen *Horizon* is a publication by the Somsen Foundation

Printings: Dutch 145. English: 65

You are cordially invited to send Photos, text or ideas for articles to: [info@somsen.org](mailto:info@somsen.org)

The Somsen *Horizon* is sent free of charge to the donors of the Somsen Foundation.

Donations (target amount: \$ 20 per year) can be transferred to Bank account NL19 INGB 0007 9098 85 BIC INGBNL2A t.n.v. Somsen Foundation in Koog aan de Zaan.

Production *Somsen Horizon* 33

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- Press: PREPRESS4U, Wormerveer, The Netherlands

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**Objectives Somsen Foundation**

*The purpose of the Foundation is:* To preserve and promote solidarity between people who bear the Somsen family name, who are or were related to them or who are interested in them.

*The Foundation seeks to achieve its goal by:*

- Conducting historical research into the regional and family history;
- The collection of historical documentation and genealogical data.
- Creating and managing a (family) archive and data files.
- Issuing a periodical.
- Providing information to persons, institutions and institutions.
- Organizing activities to realize the purpose of the foundation.

### Message from the Chairman



At last another issue of *Somsen Horizon*! It took us a year to put things together and get it done. Certainly we have missed the services of Harry who was in-charge for so many years in coordinating and publishing the *Somsen Horizon*. The last one was in March 2018.

Nevertheless, we tried to build the gap and keep the communication on to our families in the Netherlands and overseas with two Newsletters (June and December 2018).

In this issue, we report our activities and finances in 2018. Aside from your continued annual contribution, an anonymous donation provides a good basis to keep us going in the next years. Thanks to Steven for keeping a very good record of our finances in the U.S.

Keeping our spirits high, we hope to meet with you again on Saturday September 7th this year in IJzerlo for the next Somsen Day; at least, for the Somsens living in the Netherlands. Of course, in case you are travelling to Europe at that time, you may consider IJzerlo to include in your itinerary. The next grand reunion in 2022 in the US is something we look forward to. It may still be far away, but time flies.

### Are you coming too? Invitation Somsen Day. IJzerlo. Saturday, September 7, 2019.

This year it's there again. The first Saturday of September. Somsen Day New Style. This time we are at our old, familiar location at the Achterhoek stables at Boerderij 't Hoftijzer in IJzerlo. The location has been hired. A simple meal will be provided. The program is still being worked on. For those who want to, we will of course pay a visit to 'our tree.' We are still thinking about other activities, but there will also be ample opportunity to share memories and ideas with each other with a drink. There are no costs associated with this day. We only hope for your enthusiastic presence.

Will you be in the neighborhood? Then you will be very welcome. Contact the board,

preferably with an email to [info@somsen.org](mailto:info@somsen.org). We hope for another successful day.

### The strong women of the Somsen-family

*In earlier Horizons we already read about strong women in our family. But about this lady nothing has been written yet and I would like to do something about that. Although I know several strong, special women, my great aunt Jo Hunse-Somsen [63] was one of the strongest, sweetest and most special women in my life and in the lives of a lot of other people.*



*Jo Hunse-Somsen [63]*

Jo was born on 28 December 1930 as Johanna Hendrika Somsen and grew up, together with her 2 brothers, Freek and Hans, in a town called Wisch. Somewhere around 1948/49, her mother asked her to go to Drenthe to help family with spring cleaning. It was there where she met a nice guy, named Teunis Hunse [68] from Beilen, Drenthe. The two of them fell in love, but they knew it could not last long, as Teun was planning to emigrate to Canada.

Together with his father, brothers and sisters, he moved to Canada in the 1950's, hoping to have a better future there.

But they were not able to forget each other. They started to write each other (most probably very long letters as we used to receive meters of letters from aunt Jo on chain paper) about how and what they were doing, and how badly they were missing each other.



*Jo and Teun*

Jo talked to her family about her love for Teun and how much she missed him. Her best friend Antje Teeuwsen, her Aunt Mien (sister of her mother) and Uncle Ab had already left for Canada as well, making Jo miss them enormously as well. She wrote this aunt and uncle and her friend as well, which led to a plan. She also wanted to go to Canada! Obviously her mother didn't want her to go. Her father was sick and, as their only daughter, her mother wanted her to stay and take care of him. Her father, however, took Jo at his bedside and told her to follow her heart, encouraging her to leave. She was able to borrow some money from her other aunt, aunt Anna, and she left for Canada, all by herself, in 1952, leaving her mom angry and her dad very sad. This was the last time she saw her father as he passed away in 1954.

After several weeks at sea, she arrived in Halifax and took the train to Toronto. This 2 day trip was an adventure itself as she did not

speaking any English and did not know anybody. However, the prospect of seeing Teun again, made everything a lot better. But... when she arrived at the train station of Toronto, there were plenty of people, but no Teun. It was like a bad movie: he and his brother Lambert were on their way but got a flat tire and therefore arrived 2 hours late at the station. How scary that must have been for her: not being able to talk or make clear what was going on, not knowing anyone and not knowing how to reach anybody.



*Hunse family: Cora, Pat, Jane and Tom, Teun and Jo*



*Hans Somsen (brother) Rie Kemink (sister in law) and my grandmother en Jo (almost Hunse) Somsen*

Teun brought his girlfriend to her aunt Mien in St. Catharines, as she would sponsor Jo in this strange, enormous country. After a short while she found work as a maid enabling her to afford her first, small apartment. They worked very hard, because the two wanted to get married, but Jo had promised her aunt Anna that she would only marry if she had paid back all the money for her trip to Canada. The story goes that on the morning of her wedding, May 30th 1953, she finally paid back the very last part to aunt Anna. In the following years, Teun worked as a chef at the technical department of

General Motors and raised, together with Jo, 4 children: Cora, Jane, Thom and Patricia. In 1964 they came back to the Netherlands for the first time, with baby Thom and his sisters at the age of 10, 8 and 5.

Whenever my family came over from Canada, it always was a treat. They brought gifts and great food, and they spoke English; I loved it. Their stories about this wonderful country and our great family impressed me so that the first time I had enough money to make such a big trip I wanted to go to Canada. So, in May 1999 I made the big trip with my mother and I had the three most amazing weeks ever in St. Catharines. Aunt Jo and uncle Teun were as grandparents to me. I will never forget the bike rides Uncle Teun took me on, to see the light house and biking through the woods. Pat and Jane took us everywhere, showed us everything and told stories about the old days. My mom's most special memories from this trip were of the early morning talks she had with aunt Jo at the kitchen table. Here they had a big cup of tea while aunt Jo told stories about her life and how sad she was when leaving her dad behind.



*Jo en Teun*

Two years later, on April 9th 2001, my aunt Jo passed away. What a special life she had and how many people loved her! She was so sweet, helpful and had done so much for others. At home we still talk about that vacation, about the long letters, and about her, like she was still alive and we could visit her any day. Because we miss her and we always will.

### **Hedda Somsen [2848] and Ed Rice Jr. [3843] Half a year together in the Lab**

*Our world-wide reunions lead to special meetings every time. Sometimes the results of these meetings are very special. Below is a story of Hedda.*



*Hedda and Ed in the Lab*



*Left: On the terrace with Ed Sr. and Ed Jr.  
Right: The Scaffold at the weekend house*

As some of you may know my name is Hedda Somsen. In the last newsletter I have already written a small introduction, but I will introduce myself again. From 2016 to 2018 I was a Master Student 'Molecular Biology and Biotechnology' at the University of Groningen. This master study enabled me to gain experience abroad and by the summer of 2017 I had to think about how I would do this. I had the luck that the world-wide Somsen reunion took place in that summer. This gave me the opportunity to talk with some great scientists in the family. When I spoke to Ed Rice Jr. it appeared that the lab in which he works has many similarities with my research in molecular biology.

I first met the Rice family at the world-wide Somsen reunion in 2007. As a 12-year-old girl I hardly spoke English and communication was still somewhat limited. Fortunately, every five years I had the opportunity to get to know them better. So, I quickly learned that they are a friendly family, always in for a nice conversation. When Ed Rice Jr. indicated that the lab where he works is open to international students, I was immediately enthusiastic. Fortunately, my professor was also enthusiastic about my application and so it happened that I was given the opportunity to do five months of research at Cornell University and to spend a summer in beautiful Ithaca.



*Fam Rice at the wedding*



*Left: Kati the Bride*

*Right: Hedda with the Parents Greg and Kathy*

Not only did I get the chance to work with people who are doing wonderful research in my field, but I have also been able to spend a lot of time with my American relatives. Initially, of course, with Ed Rice Sr. [3849] and Ed Rice Jr., who live in Ithaca. They were so great to give me a warm welcome and they often invited me to dinners and weekends at Lake Cayuga. Together with the twins in the family, Pamela [3847] and Patricia [3848], we spent a lot of

time in the house of the family near the lake. Not only were we able to get the necessary sun-hours on the self-built jetty, but we could also swim and canoe. There is no better place to spend the summer in Ithaca and invite guests, such as my parents, my sister, and other relatives. This also gave me the chance to get to know the Rice family much better than during the few days that the reunions allow. My earlier findings that the Rice family is a wonderful family, with which you never finish talking about the most incredible subjects, were only confirmed. I am therefore eternally grateful for their kindness and openness to involve me in everything this summer.

But my luck getting to know my relatives didn't stop there. Coincidence wanted that in June of that year Kali Berkseth [3912], daughter of Greg [3856] and Kathy [3911] Berkseth, was going to get married. And so kind as she and her husband were, they also invited me to the wedding party. Here I had the chance to see a large number of the relatives of the previous reunions again and meet others. Together with the Rice family I travelled to Wisconsin Dells for this lovely party. On Saturday morning at breakfast we had the chance to see all the other relatives again. Almost the entire breakfast room of the hotel was filled with Berkseths and there seemed to be no end to the enthusiastic greetings. With a number of relatives we decided to do a tour in one of the Duckboats in The Dells before the wedding. These amphibious vehicles show the beautiful nature around the Wisconsin River both on land and in the water. This was a very welcome addition, as it was certainly over 35 degrees Celsius. By the end of the afternoon we prepared ourselves for the wedding and in the sun we enjoyed a wonderful ceremony. After a delicious dinner and an amazing party, it was time to say goodbye again at breakfast the next morning. The farewell was at least as heartwarming as the greetings 24 hours earlier. It was great to see the Berkseth family again and meet everyone I hadn't been able to speak before. I am very grateful to Kali and her husband Scott for the invitation and I wish them and the whole Berkseth family the very best.

After several months of research I was fortunate enough to have some time to visit

some cities along the east coast. At the wedding I talked to Corinne Berkseth Baker [3903], and she was so sweet to offer me to stay with her and her husband Scott when I was near Washington DC. Not only have they opened their house for me but during my entire stay, they have also been wonderful guides. For example, they have shown me the most beautiful places in the city, we have been at a performance at the Millennial Stage of the Kennedy Centre and visited Mount Vernon: the estate and the cemetery of George Washington. DC is certainly high on the list for my next visit to the US, so I can catch up with this great couple again. Thank you, Corinne and Scott, for your hospitality.



*With Scott and Corinne at Mt. Vernon*



*Photo with Marilyn (left) and with Jacqueline (right)*

Now that my internship in Ithaca has come to an end, I can only conclude that my summer was a great success in both academic and social respect. Everyone I have been allowed to meet during the summer I would like to thank for the great time. The reunion of 2017 could not have been better for me and I am glad I had the opportunity to get to know my relatives on the other side of the ocean much better. I would therefore recommend that all relatives go and

visit other relatives should there be a possibility. It leads to beautiful contacts and who knows great opportunities. I hope to be able to see everyone again soon and I am looking forward to the next reunion in America.



*Seated l.t.r.: (at lapt) Betsie Somsen, Marie Somsen-Janssen, Stieneke Somsen, Arent Jan Somsen. Arie Somsen, (front) Hannie Somsen, Hanna Somsen-Wevers, Ria ter Horst, Mien ter Horst-Somsen, (at lap) Annie ter Horst. Standing l.t.r.: Jan Somsen, Hendrik Somsen, Dina Somsen-Teunter, Willemien Koskamp, Grada Koskamp and Henk ter Horst*



*Seated l.t.r.: Ina Somsen, Hendrik Somsen, Jan Somsen, Betsie Somsen, Henk ter Horst, (at lap) Jan ter Horst. Standing l.t.r.: Arie Somsen, Hennie, Hannie Somsen and Stieneke Somsen*

### **A book for the hamlet of Holterhoek near the town of Eibergen**

*In September 2017, the book A History of Holterhoek and its inhabitants (L.A. van Dijk, Volksfeest Vereniging Holterhoek, Holterhoek, 2017) appeared about the hamlet near the town of Eibergen and the people who lived there. Several Somsens are also described in the book, among others Arent Jan Somsen [1233] and his wife Johanna Willemina Wevers [1239] and Jan-Hendrik Somsen [1241] and his wife Grada Marie Jansen [1248] and their*

*children. We were allowed to copy a part from the book.*

Holterhoek is a hamlet in the municipality of Berkelland, located to the southeast of the centre of the town of Eibergen. It is a predominantly agrarian community near the German border crossing at Zwiilbroek. In the Kerkloo forest and in the lower area along the Ramsbrook clay was won in the past. Until far in the nineteenth century the area was largely uncultivated. The Ramsbrook begins in the peat area of Zwiilbroek and passes through Holterhoek to Eibergen and then it flows into the river Berkel east of Eibergen. Ancient farmsteads were Grootholt, Luttkholt and Ketterink, all of which were already mentioned in the Middle Ages. The introduction of fertilizers made large-scale cultivation possible. From the beginning of the twentieth century we see prominent limestone farmhouses in Holterhoek and Hupsel.

On page 430 we read: *'Arent Jan Somsen and Johanna Willemina Wevers from IJzerlo received a beautiful Bible with pictures and brass fittings from the Reformed Youth Association at their wedding in 1914, which is still in the family. They moved into a farmhouse in IJzerlo and Arent Jan made some extra money by making wooden shoes and grafting trees. In 1937 they bought the Koerhouse at the Zwiilbroekseweg from Jan Maas, a total of 13 acres (half of it uncultivated land). In 1938 they moved into the new farmhouse with their children: Hendrik Jan, Jan Hendrik and the baby of the family, Mien. Four children died at birth. With combined forces, the land was cultivated, a hell of a job.*

*The family of Johan and Derkjen Smits-Hoopman from IJzerlo (No. 52) also lived in the same farmhouse. It was all quite primitive: they had one room, a kitchen and one bedroom. They had three children: the twins Hannie and Willie and son Jos. Hans, Christien and Dick were born In the Huenderstraat.*

*Jan Hendrik Somsen married in 1951 with Grada Marie Janssen from Varseveld. They took over the farm and moved into the part where the Smits family lived. They had five children: Arie, Hannie, Stieneke, Betsie and Hennie. Through hard work the Somsens*

*expanded the farm. There was a workhorse and the livestock consisted of cows and pigs. None of the children felt like taking over the farm and in 1970 it was sold and the Somsens moved to Groenloseweg 6. Sometimes the Somsens felt sad when frog pools were built on their former land. The land they had reclaimed with lots of sweat drops was given back to nature. Before his marriage Somsen worked at the Dairy Factory and he concluded the last ten years of his working life at Groot Landeweer. They moved to Walsstukke 10, where he died in 1998.'*



*During the concert: front and top view*

### **Music in the Aalten potato barn**

Does anything happen in the Achterhoek? Yes, of course... two years ago! Saturday June 10th 2017 there was a joint concert by the music associations of Aalten. This event happened in the potato barn of the Prinzen-Somsen business, for us Dutch Somsens, a well-known enterprise. Marco Somsen [545] was present

and although it was a while ago, we would like to tell you about it.

We heard about the concert through an announcement in the *Aalten Vooruit* for June 2nd, 2017. The annual joint concerts of the music associations of Aalten were coming up. That year, 'Crescendo IJzerloo' was hosting and assured a great program with three other orchestras at a very special location. The potato barn of the Prinzen-Somsen business at the Westendorpweg 4 was changed into a concert hall.

The four performing orchestras were: 'De eendracht' from Aalten, 'Excelsior' from Barlo, 'Advendo' from Lintelo and 'Crescendo' from IJzerloo. It was fun to watch the different styles of the orchestras, each performing their own repertoire. The music was planned to be easy going and enjoyable for all. It promised to be a nice and relaxing evening.

The *Aaltens Nieuws* wrote about the concert on May 26th, 2017 (article by Karin Stronks): Rianne Kruisselbring, the brand new chairwoman of Cresendo, is happy with such an original location. Smiling, she said: 'it doesn't seem logical to host a concert in a potato barn! The owner, Anno Prinzen and many volunteers transformed the potato barn into a real concert hall with two podia, room for the audience and great sound, light and acoustics!' Hosting such an event in a special location has been done before, for example in the riding school 'De Achterhoek' or in the warehouse of CWV Barlo.

Wim Westerveld from 'Crescendo' said: 'We built walls of potato boxes around the two stages. On each podium two orchestras were located. In total, over 150 people were performing! It wasn't meant to be a concert with a serious setting. It was mostly meant to be a meeting place and to have some fun. After the concert, people enjoyed themselves talking to each other and sipping drinks.'

The event came about via a business partner of Anno Prinzen, Hilbert Somsen, who has some connections within the music associations. Anno Prinzen said: 'During this time a year, there is space in the potato barn. Later in the year, we would not have been able to host it, as we would need all the storage space for potatoes. Yes, it does require quite some work, but with many volunteers, we were more than willing to make such an event

happen!' Wim Westerveld added: 'We tried to find the right acoustics by putting up isolation sheets and straw bales, to prevent the echoes. We used pallets to build the podia, which allowed the orchestra members to sit at different heights. We were looking forward to this concert!'

The annual concert is the ideal event to hear what the different orchestras have been up to. Wim Westerveld said: On this evening, people can hear the differences between the orchestras and hear each style. We do regret that three other orchestras from the village of Aalten were not performing. We were hoping to provide an expanded program the next year (2018). We do not assign any theme to the event; each orchestra would be invited to play its own repertoire.

This definitely also shows in the pictures: the barn was decorated beautifully. The stages were filled with enthusiastic musicians and the audience was enjoying the evening. It was (and we looked this up) a sunny day with higher temperatures than can be expected around that time of the year, and a full day of sun. Present that day on the podium was Marco Somsen, well known as one of the enthusiastic participators of our Somsen events. He was one of the French horn players in the orchestra 'Advendo' from Lintelo, where he lives.

Marco had to dig deep to recover his memory, as it had been two years since he played at this event. However, it was very clear that he enjoyed the joint concert that is hosted by a different orchestra each year. Normally it is hosted at a regular venue, rather than a potato barn. It has also been hosted in a warehouse with farming machinery. This year (2019), 'Advendo', Marco's orchestra, is hosting the event on Saturday June 15th, at the event hall 'de Hofnar' in Aalten. Two weeks later, a concert is planned for the younger players in Lintelo.

### **Harry Somsen [146] Active**

*Many of us know that Harry Somsen [146], former editor of our Horizon Newsletter, is still active with historical research work. His exploration work regarding the areas surrounding his hometown of Zelhem is especially appreciated. But what he does is much less known. These two articles from a local magazine, Bronckhorst, and the website*

*'Het vizier op Bronckhorst, will give you a better understanding of his involvement and the history of our birthplace: the Achterhoek. This is a valuable heritage. We would like to share these two articles with you.*

*Historic Hengelo on the digital highway (articles from Feikje Breimer at 'Het Vizier op Bronckhorst' from June 13, 2018 and 'Contact Bronckhorst' of July 9, 2018)*

In 1488 there was a farm located in the village of Hengelo. It was called 'Boyeckerynck.' But where was it located exactly? We do not know. We also do not know much about Derk Sel on Bieleveltscamp from 1682. We know from old documents that he lived in Hengelo, but that is where our knowledge of Derk ends. But there is enough we do know about different farms from that time frame.



*Aerial photo of Hengelo, dated ca 1930  
Photo: Oud Hengelo*



*Harry and Irma behind the screen  
(photo: Feikje Breimer)*

Harry Somsen sits behind two computer screens and clicks on the website [oudzelhem.nl](http://oudzelhem.nl). 'In our search for the history of old farms in Zelhem we came across a lot of information about farms in Hengelo. From 1970 on, I have been collecting old photos of various farms and locations. We place them on the website with any information we have about

them. We have decided to put the information about Oud Hengelo on another website.' Irma Kroesen is one of the enthusiastic volunteers who helps with filling the website with information. Irma: 'I've always been interested in family tree research. The Achterhoek Heritage Centre, "Liemers" has all kinds of documents from 1820 up to 1939 that have been digitized. These documents are very easy to see and read. At home I love to do research on my own computer.'

Various other volunteers also provide necessary information. Rob Weetink and Judith Lettink both have ancestors from Hengelo. Rob specializes in reading old writings and Judith specializes in old land records and house numbering. Hennie Schuppers specializes in old photos. Harry: 'We know that there were about 3500 old farms in and around Hengelo, but we also do research of the history of companies and country houses in the area as well.' Harry clicks on the website of Oud Hengelo and there appears a photo of a mill in its full glory. And in the garden, a woman in a white apron. 'Look how beautiful! I have borrowed the photo from Bakery Slood from Keijenborg. I am now scanning and digitizing all the photos from that album.' Harry clicks on the screen again and a painting appears with a country house. 'This is "Het Averenck" that once stood on the Bruinderinkroad in Hengelo. It was painted in 1865 by family doctor Millies. During his career as a doctor, he helped several women to give birth there.'

For ten years volunteers worked on the website [oudzelhem.nl](http://oudzelhem.nl). Collecting information and putting it on the web. A considerable amount of time was involved getting that website to the place it is now. The Oud Hengelo website is not a replacement, but an additional one to add to the existing historical websites. 'The new website was made so that even more people can help to place related information on it. If anyone likes to help with that, you are very welcome to join us! Also, the old stories about how life was in the village are very welcome. We have described 80 of the 3500 farms available, and we have listed other buildings with their related history when we could. There is still plenty to do!'

'Oudhengelo.nl is a sequel to the [oudzelhem.nl](http://oudzelhem.nl) website from the Oud Zelhem Foundation. During a period of more than ten years

information was collected and put on that website. In addition, the farm survey also included various information from farms on the Hengelo territory,' says Harry Somsen. 'For this information at first, we decided to place a part of it on the Zelhem website with the name "Farms in Hengelo." However, data about farms in Hengelo, is not easily searched or found on the website about Oud Zelhem. So, they made a completely new website solely for Hengelo, in the same style as the one about Zelhem. This new website is not fully complete yet, but it is already accessible. This is especially interesting for those who have supplied us with material for many years, as they can read this data published now. It is almost an interactive website because everyone cooperated by supplying data.'

Because many companies, farms, shops, associations and schools are disappearing or have disappeared, it is important for us to record the history. We would love to have information about the residential history, like genealogical data, for example. Harry: 'Hennie van de Bakker and Irma Kroesen-Engelen, both from Hengelo, volunteer to work on the website. Because of them and a few more volunteers, we have recently received a lot of additional information to add to the website. They visited many farms, including some beautiful old ones, and they have been collecting old photos that we can digitize. These photos will be placed on the website soon, together with other data, such as old deeds and cards. In the caption of the photos there will be the source or name of the photographer whenever possible.'

As we mentioned earlier, since Rob Weetink and Judith Lettink both have ancestors from Hengelo, they have been able to glean more interest for this project. They participate in genealogy, the farm research, and the transcribing of old deeds. Sikke Postma and Judith Lettink are also working on the old deeds and the Former Judicial Archives from the Regional Archive Zutphen with statements from before 1811. That group digitizes everything they collect - photos and other material from farms, homes, businesses or associations. They obtain the permission of the owner, to then place it on the website. 'Perhaps it's good to know that it is certainly not our intention to make money with this website. But it is and will remain, a precious and a time-consuming hobby of a group of very

enthusiastic volunteers. Just like with the website oudzelhem.nl, they work together with various archaeological associations and other cultural-historical associations, archives, websites or foundations,' says Harry.

The information about the farms and their residents contained on the new website, is new information, and is not listed on other websites. Therefore, this new data is a welcome addition to the existing websites of the Oudheidkundige Vereniging Hengelo Gld. and Old Hengelo by Willy Hermans. 'We already have 6489 hits for the homepage.' Harry Somsen is cautiously enthusiastic. 'We have heard positive responses from those viewing the site; that the photos are clear and that the website is being discussed and shared with friends and acquaintances.'



Jan, Harry and Ep at work. 'We get by, although help is welcome. We would be happy with one of those weed gas burners.' (photo: F. Breimer)

*Tackling the test of time with spuds (Feikje article Breimer in Het Vizieer on Bronkhorst from July 11, 2018)*

You've just retired and are going to help to maintain a cemetery: then you have something special to talk about at parties. In 2013 Harry Somsen placed a newspaper advertisement with this request for help. The graves of the two centuries old cemeteries in Zelhem were almost disappearing because of the vegetation, so the municipality of Zelhem had decided to remove the graves even though the grave rights of some graves were eternally paid.

Harry Somsen would not hear of it. He stood on top of a grave and pulled the weeds away. Jan Saalmink pulls neat lines with his rake through the sand, while Ep Oldenhave weeds. Harry has been interested in the history of Zelhem for years, but when he saw the

municipality's signs in 2013 that were placed on the graves, he was shocked. Harry: 'it turned out the municipality didn't know much about the history of the cemetery. I dove into the archives of the Achterhoek Heritage Centre at Liemers and charted the cemetery.

I suggested to restore the old part with the help of volunteers. Ep responded to the advertisement and I already knew Jan. The three of us started the job. There were some birch trees of two meters high.' Ep points to the conifers next to a grave with a fence around it. 'The branches hung to the ground; we pruned it, so there was a clear view again.' Jan makes a shearing movement with his arms and points to another grave: 'Here the hedges were so high that we sheared our way through it, until we found a tombstone.' Harry explains that the guys only maintain graves that, like the archives say, have no family or where there are other stakeholders registered. Harry: 'You don't know what relatives would or would not have wanted. Special to note is that when we cleaned up the graves, some families visited their graves again and kept them tidy.'

Jan, Ep and Harry brought their own garden tools and received a contribution from the local bank for gravel and anti-root cloth. The men are the busiest in the spring: because for the World War II commemoration on 4 May everything has to be neat and tidy. Jan points to the headstone of Francaise Jouffroy. 'Here the bushes were at chest level. We've pruned everything back and with black paint we renewed the letters on the stone.' Harry pulls some grass away from a hidden sandstone; there is a conifer of more than a hundred years old half grown over it. Hanging on the fence of another grave hangs an iron sign with the text 'Rest in peace.' Ep found it in the grass; Harry knew the grave with the fence was from a blacksmith. That's why they hung the sign there.

In grave number 1043 lies one of the mayors of Zelhem. Mister Herman Becking died 170 year ago. Thanks to Harry, Jan and Ep, he will not be forgotten.

### Quinten Somsen [1780] in history

*In this Horizon an article from one of the two Quintens in our family. The youngest, Quinten Modesto [5522], is the nephew of our chairman Oscar Somsen. The older Quinten Olivier*

*[1780] is the cousin of our newest board member Adrie. She encouraged him to talk about his work as a history researcher. Read the result below.*



Quinten and his subjects

'I am a PhD-candidate at the Leiden University Institute for History since September 2017. In my research I compare the regime of Stadholder Willem V in the Republic of the Seven United Provinces with that of Landgrave Wilhelm IX of Hesse-Kassel in the late-18th century. The entourage of these rulers, i.e. the court, is central to my research. The goal is to enquire the social composition, career patterns, and family connections of this elite group. People who held an honourable function in the household of a ruler often had influence as trusted advisor, were able to acquire important offices for themselves or their family members, and could emerge as powerful figures. Court offices, moreover, were often combined with military- or civil functions. A chamberlain of the stadtholder could, for instance, be a member of the States-General, the Council of State, or be president of the Court-Martial. Systematically charting the

careers of courtiers will elucidate the relations that existed between the court, the formal institutions of government, and the army. In this manner, I will analyse the role and function of the court within the political constellation of the late ancien régime.

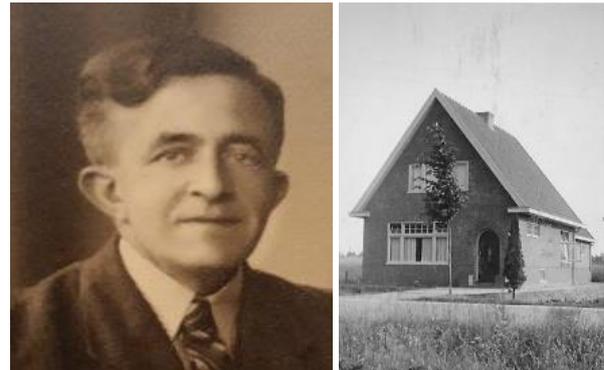
The stadtholder had another constitutional position than the landgrave of Hesse-Kassel. Despite his considerable political influence, the stadtholder formally remained an officeholder in service of the Republic's sovereign provinces. The landgrave of Hesse-Kassel, on the other hand, executed full sovereign authority in domestic affairs and had extensive powers of decisions making. What this meant for the composition and function of their courts is one of the central questions in my research.

My current project fits well with my experiences as a bachelor's and master's student in Leiden. After my propaedeutic year in political science, I decided to switch to history. I took this decision during a political history course. Early on in my bachelor, I started focussing on early modern European history (1500-1800) and more particularly the history of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. The intensified use of scripture in the government administration of the 17th century Electorate of Bavaria was the topic of my bachelor's thesis. During my research master, I studied a semester at the University of Münster and travelled to Vienna to do research for my master's thesis in the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv. My master's thesis dealt with a succession conflict within the powerful Hohenzollern dynasty in which the emperor's supreme court (Reichshofrat) acted as arbiter. For my thesis I was awarded with the Mr. H. Weiland Thesis Award. After my graduation, I was lucky enough that a new research project started in Leiden in which my experience with the German-language archives was of added value. My job interview was successful and I started working on my current project. The past year was primarily dedicated to archival research in The Netherlands (The Hague) and Germany (Marburg) and I am currently working on my first chapter.'

### **Ben Somsen [438] tells about his father**

*Ben Somsen talks about his father, Johan Gerard Somsen [363], born in Aalten on May 17th, 1907. Educated as carpenter, he built his*

*own house in Eibergen. However, due to a lack of work, he moved to Ede in 1938, where he lived until he died on July 13th, 1986. Through his job, Johan contributed to the glorious days of architecture, for example in Arnhem with the renovation of the Muses Sacrum and the Eusebius church. In other ways besides his work, Johan was a representative of the mid-20th century. Ben wrote two short articles about his father's hobby and his interest in Dutch architecture.*



*Johan Somsen and the house at the Klaashofstraat*



*Muses Sacrum*



*Eusebiuskerk*

### *My father and his free time*

In his scarce spare time, my father worked for the Labor Union. He was the treasurer of the

architectural department of the CNV (Christian National Labor Union). This meant that he would collect the contributions of all members, every Saturday by bike. Once a year the union members would get their vacation money, which was paid in cash. They could hand in their vouchers, after which they were paid a few weeks later. It was often busy as even the unemployed were obligated to visit once a week. My father, however, gave a lot of these tasks to my mom, definitely the weekly meetings with the unemployed and a lot of the administrative work.

He was also involved with the church. As loyal members of the Dutch Reformed Church, we visited the church twice every Sunday. Usually we sat in the gallery, as my father felt it was his job to keep an eye on the congregation and to call to order all noisy young people. Furthermore, my father helped with the collection of money in the gallery.

In addition to his work at the union and the church, my father cared for a big kitchen garden. We regularly ate fresh vegetables and potatoes from our own garden. My mother harvested it, but my father did the heaviest labor and the removal of weeds.



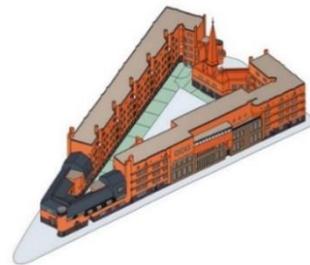
*The so-called 'ondergeschoven kind' (subjugated child)*

His extensive interest in the architecture of the 20th century was made evident by the number of books he purchased about architecture and by his interest in the construction of the Afsluitdijk (largest dike of the Netherlands). A lot of descriptions, photos and drawings of this famous project of Cornelis Lely were in his possession. Now that I'm writing this, I'm gaining even more respect for my father.

#### *The Dutch architectural art of the 20th century*

In the 19th century, during the industrial revolution, many citizens moved from the country to larger cities. This was because there was high unemployment in the country, while the industry was booming in large cities. Because of this, large cities became

overpopulated, leading to poor living conditions for the Dutch employees. A lot of families lived in poorly maintained neighbourhoods with small streets, barely seeing any daylight. Children grew up with their whole family in ruinous shacks, clammy basement houses, small rooms or attics.



*'Het Schip' (The Ship)*

In the 19th century taking care of acceptable housing for its population was not seen as a task for the government. Some of the elite started some private initiatives in the 1850s, like the establishment of the first housing association of the Netherlands: The Housing Association for the Working Class in Amsterdam. This was however not sufficient to help everyone in the fast-growing cities. Therefore, several socially evolved citizens, like doctors, alerted the government and political elite.

In 1853 King Willem III asked the Royal Institute of Engineers to report about the requirements for designing houses for the working class. In 1855 the report was published. It focused on weather resistance, the amount of sun light in the houses, clean air, access to water and drainage systems for sewage. An initial bill was written in 1854, with standards for living conditions and the health of citizens, which would have given the towns' government the ability to demand landlords to improve living conditions. However, this initial bill was rejected. It took another 50 years before the government began to legislate rental housing. This led to the first Housing act of 1901, which was active from August 1st, 1902.



*'Het Scheepvaarthuis'*

The Amsterdam School (of Architecture) started between 1910 and 1930 in the Amsterdam office of the architect Eduard Cuypers. Although Cuypers was not the

founder of this building style, he created an environment where one could give freedom to creativity and innovation. Three of his employees, Michel de Klerk, Johan van der Mey, and Piet Kramer, grew from there to become the founders of the Amsterdam School movement.

Around the Spaandammer Park in Amsterdam you can still find three monumental working-class housing complexes by Michel de Klerk: the most famous one is called 'The Ship'. It is a classic example of social housing for the working class, designed by the Amsterdam School. The Ship was designed in 1919 and contained 102 apartments for working class families, a small common area and a post office, that now functions as a museum about the Amsterdam School-movement.

#### *Het Scheepvaarthuis (Maritime Centre)*

In 1911, Johan van der Mey was appointed as the first 'Aesthetics Advisor' of Amsterdam. He was charged with designing the National Maritime Museum, a building that would serve as headquarters of the six largest shipping companies of the city. Eventually, Van der Mey worked together with De Klerk and Kamer, on this impressive architectural masterpiece of 'utility building' in the style of the Amsterdam School.

These are the two most important examples of the glorious days of the Amsterdam School. The crises that arose because of the First World War however led to a decrease in financial resources, which had great impact on the further development of this building style.

#### **On a beautiful Somsen Day**

*Saturday 1 September 2018 was finally there. The first Somsen Day new style, after we stopped organizing the annual family barbecue a few years ago. Only one year ago we held our fifth international reunion in IJzerlo, the place where our family name once arose. We were a guest at the local restaurant and community centre and talked about meeting again a year later for those that live close enough by to join us.*

So it was finally that day. A few members had already let us know they would be there, including former members of the board and members who showed interest in our foundation. We were especially pleased with a

number of people who have not been involved with us yet, and of course with Marco Somsen [545], perhaps our most loyal family member. Marco also brought some pictures he took last year at the reunion.

It was a beautiful Saturday and around four o'clock there were 17 family members sitting on the sunny terrace of the 'Buurthuus' (community centre) in IJzerlo.

Over the last year the community centre was completely rebuilt, and the gymnasium behind the restaurant was completely renewed. On the other side of the road they built a very nice playground. It is a pity that it was not there last year for all the Somsen kids but the youngest present this day, granddaughter Feline of Yvonne Reijs [3926] was very happy with it and had lots of fun.

Of course we first took the time to catch up with everyone. The first drink was offered by the foundation. An hour later we all went to see the 'Jaopikshuus' to visit the Verbeek family and our family tree. Mrs. Verbeek once again ensured us that the tree was fine, if a bit dry because of the heat of the past month. It was a few inches taller and got a little pruned regularly to give room to the cows that graze the meadow around it. With a toast, and a trickle of gin for the tree as well, we hope that he will grow again nicely to keep the memory up about our first reunion, to Aaltjen [572] and Jan Hendrik [577] who emigrated from here to America.

Back at the 'Buurthuus' we shared some more memories. During the reunion last year, Ben Somsen [438] and a few others made a movie about that day. A summary of this movie was showed to us; it was nice to see those moments again, including the superhero capes handed out by Jeanie [773], the quiz organized by Gesina van Roekel [443] and her son Albert [2852], the games, such as tug-of-war, which was organized by Tirza [4821] for the children on the other side of the street, and more.

This moment was also an opportunity to thank our former board members for the work they have done for the foundation all these years. They were all active during the third global reunion in 2007 and a number of them served much longer. Last year they transferred the work to the new board, so this was a good time to thank them for everything they did. Their presence, of course, indicates that the

involvement of the foundation has fortunately not ended with their departure from the board, and we hope to continue to benefit from their experience.

Time went by quickly; it was nice on the terrace of the 'Buurthuus' but we got a little hungry and the snacks that were available weren't enough, so we decided to leave for Aalten to eat at a restaurant called 't Raadhuys.' Again a 'house' and not without a reason. This restaurant was also set up last year by Kevin Walden who is also the manager of the 'Buurthuus' in IJzerlo. It was nice to take a look here too.

In the course of the evening we had to say goodbye, a little tired but happy to have met everyone again. Most attendees had the opportunity to spend the weekend, or even a little longer, at the Achterhoek. Some of them stayed in a quiet bed & breakfast nearby, others stayed at a large log cabin. The writer of this piece had, together with his better half, a quiet night and a nice breakfast in a hotel in Lievelede so that we could look around at the loam pits of Groenlo the next day; maybe another time we will write some more about those.

It was nice to see everyone. Next year we hope to see all of you again. Maybe we can find another fun activity to do on this day and of course we hope to meet our old acquaintances again, and perhaps also new ones.

### **Joost Somsen [4043]: One for the future**

*There are many talents in our family. In music, art and also in sports. Most of us older family members know who are good at one thing or another, but do we also know the younger generation? There we have Joost Somsen born in 1999 as son of board member Berto [423] and his wife Carla [2323].*

Sources mention that Joost was a fan of the Tour de France at the age of 13. He thought cycling was great and cycled quite a few kilometres between Eibergen, his hometown and Rekken. But he did not yet know more routes than those. At the place name sign he turned around again. That changed when he discovered the Triathlon. Cycling, swimming and running in one competition. For cycling he sat at one club, for running at another.

Google his name and a list of won competitions appear. From the first game of the season in

Wierden, Overijssel, to Groningen, Limburg and South Holland, nowadays it doesn't stop at Eibergen-Rekken. And he usually wins first prize.



Joost Somsen. Triathlon Hengelo

In the Gelderlander of June 6, 2017 we found another nice article by Wim Kapper: 'Zevenaarder Marcel Gierman had the longest breath in the 40+ category at the triathlon in Hengelo on Saturday. He was ahead of Guido Gosselink, former resident of Hengelo. However, it was not enough for the victory in the final classification. The best triathlete was the young Joost Somsen. The 18-year-old Eibergenaar, who is in the same premier league team as organizer Koen Vossers, set the fastest time with 1.53.20 hrs. The routers Gierman and Gosse-link were happy that they had been beaten by a young boy. When they heard the age of Somsen, they shouted in unison: "We have another person for the future." Gierman noted that the triathlons are increasingly dominated by the older participants. "The top ten in quarter triathlons often consists of athletes over 40 years of age," the 43-year-old Zevenaarder noted. "That was unthinkable when I started twenty years ago. We should really give it up to the youngsters. "The triathlons seem to be popular again with the youngsters." There are special competitions for the youngsters. I hope Joost

*develops further. I thought we were going to shake him off with the bike, but that was a miscalculation. When I saw his legs, I already knew it would be hard to beat Joost while running."*



Joost Somsen 2015

Nice compliments from routiniers in this sport. Since then Joost has also won in Eibergen and Rijssen, among others. But 2017 was not Joost's first victory. Already in 2015 we find an article about the Eibergen Fair Run: 'The 9th Fair run started on Sunday afternoon. Runners made a tour through Eibergen. With a nice trail along the Berkel. Joost Somsen was the first to cross the line among the men. Suzanne ten Have won among the female runners. The fair in Eibergen as always attracted many visitors.' *Is this the start of a great career? We are happy to wait for the news.*

### Annual Report for the Somsen Foundation

Here is a report of the activities of our Foundation in the past year. We think it is good to look back again at our activities and especially our financial situation, which has changed quite a bit due to the large anonymous donation we wrote about in our previous Newsletter.

After the great reunion of 2017, 2018 was obviously a quieter year; a year to look back at what happened. Also, a year to see how we should proceed with a new and smaller board. In March, the Somsen *Horizon* No. 32 (SH32) came out with a slight delay, in which the reunion was reviewed. This was the last *Horizon* led by our former editor Harry Somsen. Newsletters 15 and 16 (SNB15 & 16) were published in July and December. On Saturday 7 September 2018 we met again in the Dorpshuis in IJzerlo for the SomsenDag. We

visited our tree and the Somsenhuus and renewed our contacts with the residents. On this occasion, Harry handed over the *Horizon* archive to us with at least one copy of every *Horizon* and Newsletter from the past 25 years and even several spare copies. This will be kept at the chairman's home for the time being. The board also discussed our current affairs during this weekend. Further consultation took place by e-mail and telephone.

Financially, 2018 was a special year. The changes during the course of the year can be seen in the overview below. Our finances are managed in three places: two euro accounts in the Netherlands (ING bank), managed by the treasurer; the US dollar account which is managed by Stephen Somsen and the Paypal account online (also in dollars). The expenses mainly consisted of publishing and sending the *Horizon* and the Newsletters with smaller items for the website, Somsen Day, and bank charges. The donations that came in, in euros and dollars, were less than the costs this year,

perhaps also because we did not send any reminders last year. But due to the large donation that we received at the end of the year, the situation is now much better financially. In the previous years, our reserve has always decreased by €500-€1000 per year. At the moment our reserve is high again. This offers us more room for various activities. It will, therefore, not be necessary to increase the amount of the donation.

The number of supporters of the Foundation last year has slightly decreased, from 181 to 176 donors. This is almost entirely due to the death of older donors. We naturally hope that new donors will be added in the coming years. Although our financial situation is favourable for the time being, it remains important to continue to receive your donations. Without donors, readers of our publications and participants in various activities, the work of our foundation is no longer possible. We, therefore, hope that you will continue to actively follow us.

EURO Uitgaven / Expenses		EURO Inkomsten / Income	
Kosten ING Bank	€ 37.91	Donaties	€ 1,148.00
Kosten ING Bank	€ 39.79	Rente / Interest	€ 1.69
Kosten ING Bank	€ 38.60		
Kosten ING Bank	€ 36.76		
SH32	€ 953.25		
SNB15 NL	€ 140.51		
SNB15 US	€ 90.76		
porto SNB15	€ 459.00		
SNB16 US	€ 77.06		
SNB16 NL	€ 120.81		
porto SNB16	€ 236.80		
SomsenDag	€ 143.22		
Website	€ 72.60		
	<b>€ 2,447.07</b>		<b>€ 1,149.69</b>

USD (US Account)	
Balance 1 Jan 2018	\$2,087.12
Donations via US	\$10,698.34
Balance 31 Dec 2018	\$12,785.46

USD Paypal	
Balance 1 Jan 2018	\$159.51
Donations	\$205.00
Cost	-\$9.92
Balance 31 Dec 2018	\$354.59

EURO Saldi / Balance	01-Jan-18	31-Dec-18
ING Betaalrekening	€ 468.89	€ 189.82
ING Spaarrekening	€ 1,688.54	€ 690.23
	<b>€ 2,157.43</b>	<b>€ 880.05</b>

Sponsors	Geschiedenis / History		
176	31-Dec-18	€ 1,197.00	\$13,140.05
181	31-Dec-17	€ 2,287.43	\$2,087.12
189	31-Dec-16	€ 2,407.10	\$1,922.12
	31-Dec-15	€ 3,034.25	\$1,572.12
	31-Dec-14	€ 3,633.63	?
	31-Dec-13	€ 5,469.83	\$994.93

## Family Announcements

In this section our genealogy advisor Dick Somsen [130] from Zwolle informs you about the family announcements. We thank everyone who has informed us again about happy or sad events in the family. This helps to keep the genealogical database 'up to date' and to report about them in the *Horizon* or Newsletter. We appreciate being able to share this with our relatives. Kindly remember us with any events happening in your family. We appreciate if you could send your family announcements (preferably with a photo) to [somsengenealogie@kpnplanet.nl](mailto:somsengenealogie@kpnplanet.nl) or Monteverdilaan 175, 8031 DL Zwolle

### Born:

- no announcement received

### Married:

- no announcement received

### Deceased:

- 09-12-2018: Teunis (Teun) Hunse [68], 87 years old, St. Catharines, ON. Canada
- 11-12-2018: Eleonor A. Voskuil [8006], 96 years old, Oostburg, WI. USA
- 26-02-2019: Anna Louise (Anna) Heilmann - Somsen [464], 58 years old, Roetgen, BRD.



Anna L. Somsen



Eleonor A. Voskuil



Teunis Hunse

Zwolle, 26-06-2019

## Newsletter and Somsen Horizon

We are happy that we have once again been able to produce an issue of the Somsen Horizon. We are grateful for those who helped us with this task. Thank you to Adrie van Dijk [185], Bente Somsen [2847], Hedda Somsen [2848], Yeng Somsen [2042] and our former chairman Johan Somsen [1089] for their help with translating the articles. Thank you also to Coby Somsen [2699], Jeanie Somsen [773], Pennell Somsen [2458], Stacey Vargecko Aikens [2541], Jacqueline Winquist [3893], Brigitte Kerr [3900] with proof reading all the English text. Thank you to Quinten Somsen [1780], Ben Somsen [438] and Adrie van Dijk [185] for sharing about their family and to Harry Somsen [146] for providing articles from his 'news archive'.

### With Your Help

While many have helped us in the production of this Horizon your help is urgently needed for a next issue. Please help us with your memories, stories and photographs. We hope to share what you can tell us about your (grand) parents and other ancestors. But also inspiring stories from the 'new generation'. Or noteworthy events in your area. Please let us know if you have any ideas for stories to pass on to the family. We can help you with writing the articles.

We will do our best to make the Somsen Newsletter appear next fall and next year another *Somsen Horizon* 33. But we can only do this with your help. Please contact us with photos or memories that you would like to share. Newspaper clippings are also welcome. Help with writing and translation is also urgently needed. Contact any of the board members or email to [info@somsen.org](mailto:info@somsen.org). Please contact us before September 30 so we can include your ideas in the next issue.



*Once hanging proudly at the Somsenhuis in IJzerlo for many years. Now kept carefully by our chairman. Replaced by a new sign during the 2017 Reunion. Does anyone know about the history of this beautiful sign? Who made it? How long has it been hanging? Who remembers seeing this sign long ago?*