

## NETHERLANDS PHILATELISTS of CALIFORNIA (now in its 45<sup>th</sup> year)

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June 2014

**May meeting.** Attending at the home of Hans Kremer were: Dennis Buss, Franklin Ennik, HansPaul Hager, Hans Kremer, Stuart Leven and Fred Van der Heyden.

### AROUND THE TABLE

**Dennis Buss** passed around a postal receipt of 1913 on which postal box rental payment is indicated with various postage stamps of the period; and the book by Gerard Forde, *Design in the Public Service: The Dutch PTT 1920–1990*, Design Museum, London. 1991. 80 pages. In 1920, Jean-Francois van Roijen became General Secretary of the PTT and began a series of notable innovations in stamp design, as well as, administrative organization, publications, sorting machines and even vehicles. These major design changes are summarized in this book. A stamp honoring Van Roijen was included in the 5-stamp Summer issue of 1947 (NVPH nr. 493).(DB)



**Stuart Leven** showed us a series of British Commonwealth stamps PERFINed with **SMN** (*N.V. Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland*, a Dutch shipping company) at a previous meeting. These stamps were used on SMN correspondence at British port offices in Southeast Asia. At this May meeting Stuart passed around various denominations of coinage (called **Boordgeld**) issued by the SMN shipping company. Boordgeld or “ship money” are coins used on Dutch ships and river boats leaving the country after WW II because no Dutch money could be taken out of the country. These coins were also issued for use on Holland-America Line ships and others. The use of these ship coins

continued for a period until the monetary system stabilized and then was discontinued.

**Fred Van der Heyden** passed around a vintage copy of the 1954 French novel, *D'entre les morts*, by Boileau & Narcejac which was the basis for Alfred Hitchcock's film *Vertigo*; a series of vintage post cards depicting Dutch and Belgian postmen, Brussels City Hall, some post cards with “return to sender” stickers, and a post card sent via Siberia to the US.

The **June 21<sup>st</sup> meeting** will be held at the home of Arno Kolster starting at 1:00pm. Arno's telephone number is (415) 348-1271.

The **July 19<sup>th</sup> meeting and picnic** will be held at the home of Franklin Ennik starting at 1:00pm. Franklin's telephone number is 925-952-9424.

**HansPaul Hager** passed around an early short-wave radio QSL reply card sent from the Netherlands; examples of 5 cent Dutch WW I tax stamps (shown here) that were applied to books published during this period; examples of municipal tax stamps applied to permits for a flea market stall; and a copy of the book, *VOC Revenue Stamps: Volume 1. Cape of Good Hope 1711-1791*, by John G.F. Fletcher.



**Hans Kremer** passed around a copy of the latest edition from Po & Po, by Arnold Holleman, *Internering van Buitenlandse Militairen in Nederland Gedurende de Eerste Wereldoorlog*, *Po & Po, Posthistorische Studies* nr. 30; a series of covers with postage due applied; and a series of advertising cancels from the 1920s and 1930s.

**Franklin Ennik** passed around a post card sent from Utrecht May 21, 1935 to Amsterdam. The post card is franked with a 2½ cent cijfer that is applied at an angle, indicating in the **language of stamps** that the sender also sends the message *Ik heb u lief* or I love you. Frank also showed a cover sent from 's-Gravenhage to Leeuwarden 10 April 1937 from the Flower Show held in the newly built Houtrusthallen Exhibition Center. See page 6.



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### **Airmail Letter from Amsterdam to Bratislava, C.S.R 1935: What's the story behind the sender N.E.E.P.?**

*by Hans Kremer*

When I saw this cover on eBay I was wondering about the 36 cent airmail stamp. This 36 cent was specifically issued for airmail to the Dutch East Indies. The surface rate to the D.E.I was 6 cent and the airmail surcharge 30 cent, making for a total of 36 cents. To facilitate its customers the PTT issued the 36 cent 'airmail' stamp on September 24, 1931. However, immediately upon issue, this stamp was also valid for regular mail.





Why was it on a registered airmail letter from the Netherlands to Czechoslovakia?

The letter was canceled in Amsterdam on March 21, 1935. The next morning it was flown to Prague with the Československá Letecká Společnost airline from where it was forwarded to Bratislava (no arrival mark).

Surface rate 12½ cent (0-20 grams), 20 cent (20-200 grams)

Registration 15 cent

Airmail surcharge 5 cent per 20 grams

If the letter weighed less than 20 grams the total postage should have been  $12\frac{1}{2} + 15 + 5 = 32\frac{1}{2}$  cent. If it was say 30 grams, it should have been  $20 + 15 + 10 = 45$  cent.



We must assume that the letter weighed less than 20 grams, in which case using the 36 cent stamp was overpaying by 3½ cent. Maybe the sender, the N.E.E.P. Company did a lot of business with the D.E.I and therefore had a lot of 36 cents stamps 'in the vault'.

Interestingly enough, it was only 11 days later (per April 1, 1935) that the airmail surcharge for letters within Europe was abolished. It would have been nice if this letter was indeed franked 32½ cents, making it a late example of the airmail surcharge.

Little did I know that there was quite a bit of history behind this letter. The letter was sent by a company named N.E.E.P.

N.E.E.P stands for **Noord-Europese Erts en Pyriet Maatschappij** or Northern-European Ore and (Iron) Pyrite Company. This company was owned by three Jewish brothers, Max, Lippmann, and Albert Bloch who originally came from Breslau (then Germany, now Wroclaw in Poland). Their main office was in Breslau with, since 1929, a subsidiary in Amsterdam. With Hitler coming to power in 1933 they moved their headquarters to the Sarphatistraat in Amsterdam. Most of the personnel moved from Breslau with them. Soon after their arrival in Amsterdam they started to receive requests for money from people who wanted to also leave Poland. The Blochs started to help with not only money but also with visas, passports, landing permits and supplying contact addresses. They were financially able to do this because they were making a lot of money trading ore. For example in 1937 they grossed 12½ million guilders.

First the requests for help came from people in Breslau, but later from other places like Vienna (and probably Bratislava) and Amsterdam (they worked with the **Comité voor Bijzondere Joodse Belangen** or Committee for Special Jewish Interests (see Notes) set up by A. Asscher and professor D. Cohen). This organization developed into **De Joodse Raad** or Jewish Council (see Notes). The Blochs also contributed to the original refugee camps, some of which unfortunately later were 'converted' to concentration camps.

The oldest brother, Max, was in poor health. A few days after Germany's invasion of Poland he dropped dead in front of the N.E.E.P. office, due to a stroke, possibly indirectly caused by the events in Poland.

Already in 1938 the brothers tried to take out Dutch citizenship, but they were not successful. They did however manage to get Liechtenstein passports and in early June 1941 they were able to leave the Netherlands, Max to New York and Albert to Brazil, where they continued in business. They appointed a non-Jewish person as Manager of the Amsterdam located company, which prevented it from being taken over by the Germans.

Aid to Jews from the Amsterdam office lasted far into 1942.

After gathering this information I would love to have read the contents of this letter. Unfortunately it is an empty cover.

After the war, Albert came back from Brazil and moved the company to the De Lairesestraat address. The company still exists, but now relocated on the Gelderlandplein, still in Amsterdam

The Blochs helped hundreds of people and saved many lives, but amazingly nowhere in the usual places where such people are given credit for their heroic WW II acts, are the Blochs mentioned.

In conclusion, a letter that attracted my attention because of its stamp turned out to be a connection to some courageous people.

#### References:

*De Volkskrant*, December 29, 1997, De stille weldoeners van de Sarphatistraat.  
<http://www.joodsamsterdam.nl/strsarphatistr.htm>  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia>  
<http://www.suskinddefilm.nl/>

## Notes:

### **Comité voor Bijzondere Joodse Belangen.**

When Jewish refugees began to flee in numbers to the Netherlands from the Nazi regime in Germany, it was Asscher, along with Professor David Cohen, who established (with government support) two organizations to deal with the situation. The **Comité voor Bijzondere Joodse Belangen** (Committee for Special Jewish Interests) and the **Comité voor Joodse Vluchtelingen** (Committee for Jewish Refugees) provided assistance and temporary accommodation to the refugees.

### **De Joodse Raad**

The Nazi occupiers, on February 12, 1941, ordered Asscher and Cohen to head up a new **Joodse Raad** or Jewish Council; the only example of a Jewish Council in the German occupations of Western Europe. The first meeting was held at the Asscher Brothers headquarters in Tolstraat. The **Joodse Raad** had to mediate the occupation government's orders to the Dutch Jewish community and, beginning in July 1942, had to help organize the selection of Jewish deportees from the Netherlands to the work camps.

In September 1943, most of the remaining staff of the **Joodse Raad**, including Asscher was deported. Asscher, like most deported Dutch Jews, initially went to the Westerbork camp in the Province Drenthe in the east of the country. From there, the Nazis transported him to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

### **Postwar and De Joodse Eereraad**

Asscher survived his imprisonment at Bergen-Belsen and returned to Amsterdam after the conclusion of the war. Aside from Professor David Cohen, who had survived Theresienstadt concentration camp, all other members of the Jewish Council perished, including the Chief Rabbi of Amsterdam L.H. Sarlouis. The Dutch government instituted investigations against Asscher and his colleague David Cohen with charges of collaboration. A **Joodsche Eereraad** (Jewish Honor Tribunal) was also established to investigate wartime collaboration charges on behalf of the Jewish community. It was particularly concerned with activity after August 15, 1942; a point from which, according to the accuser's post-war perspective, it was considered obvious that the **Joodse Raad** was assisting in a mass-murder of Dutch Jews in occupied Poland's extermination camps. However, what was obvious to either Jews or non-Jews in Holland at the time is a matter of considerable historical controversy. The Nazi occupiers went to great lengths to conceal the fate of deported Jews from the Dutch population, including Dutch Jews and the **Joodse Raad**.

By the time (in 1947) that the **Jewish Honor Tribunal** ruled to exclude Asscher and Cohen from ever holding public office in the Dutch Jewish Community, Asscher, deeply wounded by the unjust charges, as he saw them, that were leveled against him, had left the Community. When Asscher died in 1950 in accordance with his wishes he was not buried in a Jewish cemetery, but instead at the Zorgvlied Cemetery. However, in the same year, due to constant protests and appeals, the Jewish community tribunal after reconsidering the charges reversed and annulled its decree to exclude both Asscher and Cohen from official posts in the Jewish community, exonerating them completely. The Dutch government, taking its cue from the Jewish

community, dropped all charges of its own the following year. Abraham Asscher has been officially exonerated of all charges, even if it came too late for him to know about it.

This story about the plight of Dutch Jews (particularly children) was captured in a film, directed by Rudolf van den Berg, called **Süskind**, which was entered in the 2013 Dutch Film Festival and the Dutch entry for the 2013 Academy Awards in the Category of Best Foreign Language Film.

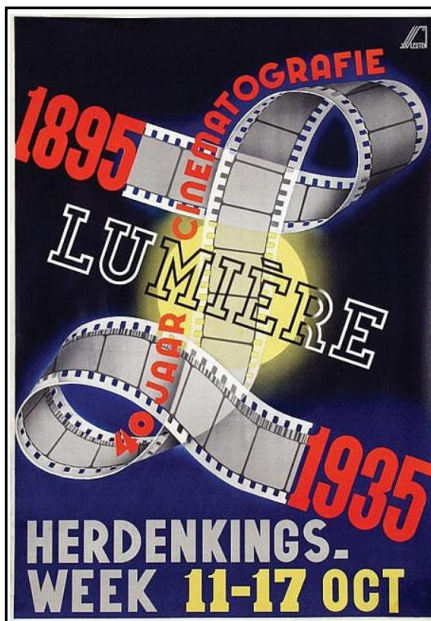
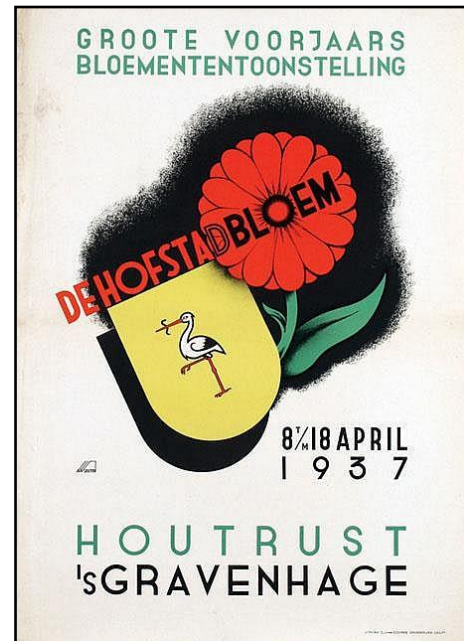
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## The 's-Gravenhage Flower Show of 1937.

By Franklin Ennik

*Bloemententoonstellingen* or Flower Shows were commonly held in various Dutch cities beginning in the 1910's, most often in the spring and summer months, to draw attention to the Dutch flower and bulb export industry. The Hofstadbloem Show was held 8-18 April 1937 in the **Houtrusthallen** or Convention/Exhibition Center in The Hague. This was the first event held in this newly constructed facility. The event attracted a total of close to 60,000 visitors, including Queen Wilhelmina.

The Dutch postal authority issued a variety of special advertising cancels for use in the temporary postal facilities at these annual events. Announcements advertising these events also appeared in the media and on wall posters. Illustrated here is a philatelic cover constructed by the well-known Rotterdam philatelic author of the period, C. Van der Lecq, and several posters designed by Sam van Vleuten (1902--1967). Van Vleuten supported the Dutch business community with many outstanding advertising posters and artworks. The cover is franked with the 1937 Boy Scout World Jamboree 6 cent issue which commemorated the event held 31 July--9 August 1937 in Vogelenzang, The Netherlands.



### References:

<http://www.tekstvanvleuten.nl/historie>  
<http://www.tekstvanvleuten.nl/klanten>